

Celebrate!

2020's Lake Minnetonka Running Series

Rev your new decade with a winning initiative: Race the three Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka road races in 2020 that constitute the classic Lake Minnetonka Running Series and become a winner.

With a unique award designed just for the series, runners enjoy new features this year, such as a presentation tent and finisher's ceremony to recognize this accomplishment. Carry a big smile for those photo opportunities sure to abound.

The three events span the year. Toe the start line with Bridgewater Bank's Luck O' the Lake 5K on Saturday, March 14. First, stop in Excelsior Brewing Company's registration for the distinctive souvenir glass. Plus, a festive day continues after the race in charming downtown Excelsior as many continue the good times wearing their exclusive long-sleeve race shirt and race number still attached. The town jams with music, displays, an all-day heated tent party, and one's favorite beverages everywhere, including Kowalski's complimentary bottled water and bananas to refresh and rehydrate after the competition. Onstage magic performances keep the attention of young celebrants. Go ahead, spend the day here. Note, an accompanying one-mile race, though not part of the series, may be your preferred distance.

Then, one of the venerable races in Minnesota, the 45th Excelsior Firecracker Run, kicks off the Lake Minnetonka 4th of July Celebration with a rousing sendoff promising plenty of time remaining to celebrate our country's birthday. Either the 5K or 10K distances qualify for the running series, plus the 1-mile offers a challenge for the fleet-a-foot runner. The large Excelsior Elementary building hosts entrants and guests with swag, real bargains, and souvenirs along with race information and registration. A live drum corp spices up the Firecracker's route and one's enthusiasm. The finish in Excelsior Commons park stirs patriotic emotions as the large flag-waving crowd cheers your finish through the huge ALARC columns and finishing lanes. Go ahead, give 'em a fist-pump!

Meanwhile, a unique finisher's medal hangs from your neck while entering a festive wonderland for all sorts of gaiety and fun. Nothing like a postrace treat from a food truck helping you recover while overlooking the charms and yachting on Lake Minnetonka as sailboats tack to windward. What a great scene in America!

Spend the day celebrating as the downtown offers a book of choices. After eating at Maynards and the Excelsior Brewing Company, make sure to schedule time at the Excelsior Commons for one of the grandest fireworks displays in the state culminating the holiday.

The big finale of the Lake Minnetonka Running Series, Park Nicollet's Apple of the Lake 5K, races on Saturday, September 19, ushering in the Autumnal Equinox just 72 hours later. Let Fall unfold with

the event's eighth-year start turning down Excelsior's famous Water Street. As you return, the racecourse peels off near Maynard's Restaurant and provides a unique finish on the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail. Push to the finish line where music welcomes you to one of the most beautiful times of the year.

The fifth annual one-mile race precedes the 5k and also covers the LRT Trail.

Smile big for those photos friends and family will snap as series finishers receive their Lake Minnetonka Running Series commemorative stein at a special tent close to the finish. Then celebrate at the annual Apple Day Festival throughout downtown Excelsior.

Each event creates its unique racecourse though sharing some roadways. Lake Minnetonka backdrops make one feel at home. Three different starts, three different finishes, three distinct challenges to earning your finish make a terrific and easy-to-get-to race destination, plus the honor of becoming a series honoree.

What do you do to win a finisher's award for the 2020 Lake Minnetonka Running Series? Finish all three events in (generous) regulation time. Oh, and register for the competitions. Go [HERE](#) for that step.

With one of the truly remarkable features of nature in Minnesota by your side, that being Lake Minnetonka, plus the splendor of one of the country's best main streets, the challenge of finishing the running series gets lost in Excelsior's charm. That's why this race series seems to go by so quickly: absorbing a beautiful and healthy way to use your time. And, enjoy a rousing start to the new decade.

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