

## PRESS RELEASE

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### MANISTEE COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU OFFERS FREE FALL PLANNING TOOLS TO HELP VISITORS PLAN FALL GETAWAY TO REGION BOASTING TWO DISTINCT COLOR SEASONS

*Visitor Tools Include Fall Color Guide, Weekly Fall Color Updates and Self-Guided Driving Tours, in addition to Seasonal Attractions like Scenic Airplane Rides and Sunset Cruises*

MANISTEE, Mich. – *Sept. 18, 2019* – With thousands of visitors flocking to Northern Michigan annually to catch the peak of autumn color, the [Manistee County Visitors Bureau](#) (Visit Manistee County) is making it easier to see fall colors in the region that also boasts two distinct fall color seasons. Visit Manistee County is offering [free fall planning tools](#) to help visitors plot their autumn visit, along with a host of seasonal events and attractions.

“The fall season is a key draw to our beautiful part of the state, and we are so fortunate to have two distinct phases that extend our season – our inland region shows earlier signs of fall color, and our Lake Michigan coastline stays green longer with warmth from the lake,” said Kathryn Kenny, executive director of Visit Manistee County. “We want to make it easy for visitors to find everything they need at their fingertips to have a wonderful autumn getaway while enjoying the longer color season here.”

Visitors planning a fall trip to Manistee County can go to [visitmanisteecounty.com/fallcolor](http://visitmanisteecounty.com/fallcolor) for the following:

- 2019 Fall Color Guide** – Developed for the first time this year as a stand-alone guide for the fall season, this free, [downloadable 36-page fall color guide](#) provides top photo spots; three color tour driving routes ([inland](#), [coastal](#) and [Lake Michigan coastal tour/M-22 scenic drive](#)) with food, shopping and lodging stops along the way; plus evening activity suggestions. Visitors also can request a free printed guide in the mail by contacting the visitors bureau at 877.626.4783.
- Biweekly fall color update videos** – Visit Manistee staff provide twice-a-week, short video updates about where the leaf color is around the county to help with travel plans. The latest video appears on the fall landing page, and past videos are archived on [Facebook](#).
- Fall “color dial”** – Two color dials are updated every few days – one for the coastal region and one for the inland region – visually depicting the leaf color from green for “still early” or “here and there,” to yellow for “feels like fall” and “good color,” to red for “great color” and “peak color.” A short description of the current status is listed below the dial.



- **Other fall suggestions** – The [fall website landing page](#) gives suggestions of other unique ways to experience fall in Manistee County, such as via a [hiking trail](#) or [river paddle](#), from the air on a [scenic flight](#), or on a [sunset boat cruise](#).

### Self-Guided Fall Driving Tours

Visit Manistee County highlights three primary fall color driving routes in its new [2019 Fall Color Guide](#), which can also be combined with additional tours from the [Manistee County Self-Guided Tour series](#) of the county for fall leaf peeping. Driving tours for the best chance to see fall colors include:

- **Inland Fall Color Tour** – This 175-mile scenic inland loop takes visitors east into Manistee County toward higher elevations and dense hardwoods of Manistee National Forest, plus along winding dirt roads and through tunnels of trees. *(Can be combined with the [Bridges and Dams Tour](#) and [Quilt Trail Tour](#).)*
- **Coastal Fall Color Tour** – This scenic route traversing 130 miles of Manistee County’s shoreline along both Lakeshore Drive and the start of the famous M-22 passes through coastal towns like Onekama and Arcadia while offering expansive glimpses of Lake Michigan at vistas like Arcadia Overlook. Fifteen points of interest are mapped out, along with fun facts and diversions. *(Can be combined with the [Natural Wonders Tour](#) and [U-Pick & Farm Markets Tour](#).)*
- **Lake Michigan Coastal Tour /M-22 Scenic Drive** – Manistee County is the gateway to scenic Michigan Highway M-22, which this 150-mile route follows from Manistee County north along Lake Michigan past 21 points of interest and through 11 communities, all the way to Northport and down to Traverse City. *(Suggested in conjunction with the above-mentioned [Coastal Fall Color Tour](#).)*

### Fall Events and Attractions

Manistee County also features fall events and attractions that cater to adults and families alike:

- **Hops and Props on the River**, Manistee, Sept. 21. This fall favorite features classic wooden boats and craft beer, cider and wine. Visitors can taste their way through more than 100 beers from 35 Michigan breweries, view classic Century boats (originally manufactured in Manistee), and listen to live music.
- **Little Manistee River Weir - Fall Egg Harvest**, Manistee, tours scheduled in the fall and group tours by appointment. *(Call 231.775.9727, ext. 6072 to check tour dates.)* This occurs once a year when the DNR Fisheries Division harvests chinook salmon eggs from the weir that is used to block fish on the Little Manistee River. The eggs are sent to state fish hatcheries to be reared and stocked across Michigan and other states. During the fall egg take, visitors can tour the operation and view salmon from a platform.
- **Onekama Fall Festival**, Onekama, Oct. 12. This annual tradition features live entertainment, arts and crafts, scarecrow and pumpkin decorating contests, pet parade, hay rides, food wagon and other family-friendly activities.
- **Manistee Ghost Ship**, October weekends. The historic 1931 S.S. City of Milwaukee car ferry transforms into the Manistee Ghost Ship, where visitors explore five decks of thrills, scares and ghostly beings. Admission fee.
- **Scenic Airplane Tours**, October weekends. Enjoy a bird’s-eye view of Michigan’s fall colors on a scenic flight over Manistee County. [Orchard Beach Aviation](#) conducts two scenic flights – one over downtown Manistee and the Lake Michigan shoreline, and one of the M-22/Portage Lake area – for \$30 per person (two person minimum) departing from Manistee County Blacker Airport.

- [Sunset Cruises](#), Manistee, Daily through mid-October. Enjoy a privately chartered cruise on Lake Michigan with someone else captaining the boat. [Inn Fun Cruises](#) offers day trip and two-hour evening sunset cruises on its 28-foot Bayliner where guests are treated to light snacks and beverages from local restaurants. Guests can bring alcoholic beverages as well. Guests meet on the dock behind Taco 'Bout It and cruise around Manistee Lake, Manistee River channel, and out to Lake Michigan (weather permitting) to see the sun set. Groups of up to six are welcome, with pricing for the sunset cruise ranging from \$250 for 1 to 2 people, to \$450 for 5 to 6 people.

### **#MyManistee #FallFilter**

Visit Manistee County encourages visitors this fall to tag their photos and posts on social media with #MyManistee and #FallFilter for a chance to be featured in Visit Manistee County's fall campaign.

### ***About the Manistee County Visitors Bureau***

*Incorporated in 1997, the Manistee County Visitors Bureau (known as Visit Manistee County) is the official destination marketing organization promoting Manistee County to grow the local travel economy. The visitors bureau is a partner in the Pure Michigan campaign and member of the West Michigan Tourist Association, Michigan Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association, Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan and the Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce. Information is available at [VisitManisteeCounty.com](http://VisitManisteeCounty.com), [facebook.com/ManisteePureMichigan](https://facebook.com/ManisteePureMichigan), [instagram.com/manisteepuremichigan](https://instagram.com/manisteepuremichigan) and [twitter.com/manisteePureMI](https://twitter.com/manisteePureMI).*

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