



PRESS RELEASE

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MANISTEE WINTER SEASON FEATURES CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING, FAT TIRE BIKING, SNOWMOBILING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES PLUS HOLIDAY EVENTS

Manistee County Visitors Bureau Helps Visitors Plan Winter Getaway with New Winter Trails Guide and Pull-Out Trail Map

MANISTEE, Mich. – Dec. 3, 2019 – Manistee County is primed and ready for winter visitors, boasting more than 20 miles of groomed cross-country ski trails, 30-plus miles of groomed fat tire biking, 80 lakes and four rivers for winter fishing and paddling, access to 500 miles of snowmobile trails, and two neighboring downhill ski resorts. And that’s not to mention the more than 10 holiday-themed events.

“Winter in Manistee County is just breathtaking and is when our trails especially come to life,” said Kathryn Kenny, executive director of the [Manistee County Visitors Bureau](#) (Visit Manistee County). “Manistee County is a perfect place to celebrate that sparkle and natural beauty of winter with our abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities plus holiday-themed events. And our new Winter Trails guide will make it easier to plan.”

Visit Manistee County offers a new free, downloadable 36-page [Winter Trails Guide](#) with top photo spots in winter, winter nightlife, trails, lodging and dining lists, and a two-sided fold-out trail map with the regional snowmobile trail network on one side and area trails on the other side. Visitors also can request a printed guide [from the website](#) in addition to downloading various trail maps, or contact the visitors bureau at 877.626.4783. Visit Manistee staff also will provide weekly “snow day” video updates sharing snow conditions in various parts of the county plus links to trail conditions to help with travel plans. Videos will be archived on [Facebook](#).

Winter activities outlined in the guide include:

- [Cross-country skiing](#) – Manistee County is home to more than 20 miles of groomed skiing trails in a few major trail networks - Big-M Recreation Area that is home to 18 miles of groomed, classic skiing, and the Manistee Non-Motorized Park offering nearly four miles of classic and skate-style skiing.
- [Fat tire biking](#) – Manistee County offers two trails with full winter fat bike grooming. Big M Recreational Area offers 25 miles of single-track biking trails at three levels of difficulty groomed throughout the winter season, one of the first bike trail systems in Michigan with dedicated grooming. The Non-Motorized Park includes the MTB Terrain Park boasting 5.4 miles of groomed fat bike trail featuring boards, trails and obstacles great for the beginner to intermediate biker.
- [Snowshoeing/hiking](#) – Manistee County’s diverse hiking terrain becomes a snowshoer’s paradise when the snow accumulates. Top hiking trails become perfect snowshoeing destinations, whether along the lakeshore at Magoon Creek Nature Area and Arcadia Dunes/Old Baldy Trailhead, or inland on the North Country Trail and Manistee River Trail Loop.
- [Snowmobiling](#) – With a trail network extending well beyond the borders of Manistee County, the region offers 250 miles of groomed trails in Manistee County alone, plus access to 500-plus miles in a five-county trail network – connecting all of the northwest corner of the Lower Peninsula. [Find a downloadable snowmobiling map here.](#)

- **[Winter fishing](#)** – As the temperatures drop and a thick layer of ice begins to form, fishermen flock to the 80 inland lakes and four rivers of Manistee County. Throughout the winter months, ice shanties populate the surface of lakes as anglers cast lines for pike, walleye, perch, smelt, bluegill and crappie.
- **[Winter paddling](#)** – Paddlers can enjoy the Big Manistee River throughout winter and see scenery from a new perspective in the snow-covered landscape. Winter paddlers should take caution, however, and dress appropriately. Paddling the river in the summer first is recommended for safety.
- **[Downhill skiing](#)** – Manistee County has two popular downhill skiing options with nearly 100 ski runs within a 30-minute drive from Manistee County – [Crystal Mountain Ski Resort and Spa](#) in Thompsonville and [Caberfae Peaks](#) in Cadillac.

Winter Events and Attractions *(events are in the city of Manistee unless otherwise noted)*

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

- **[Sparkle in the Park](#)**, Nov. 30-Dec. 31, 5-10 p.m. nightly, Hopkins Park, Bear Lake. In its 15th year, Sparkle in the Park features more than 60,000 lights in 50 holiday displays, including angels, Christmas trees, Santa and reindeer, a salute to troops, snowmen, animals and Christmas scenes. Free, though donations are accepted to contribute toward supplies. facebook.com/sparkleinthepark
- **[Wintertime in the City](#)**, Dec. 1-31, Manistee County Historical Museum. In honor of the city's sesquicentennial celebration in 2019, this photography exhibit displays the winter season in Manistee over the last 150 years. Curated from the museum's archives, this exhibit features photos of buildings, people, fires and various events during the winter seasons of yesteryear. Museum admission fee: \$1 per student, \$3 per adult, \$8 per family (parents and minor children). manisteehistoricalmuseum.org/150-years
- **[Victorian Sleighbell Parade & Old Christmas Weekend](#)**, Dec. 5-8, downtown Manistee. Step back in time as you take part in one of Michigan's most unique holiday celebrations. This 31st annual tradition includes the Victorian Sleighbell Parade with draft horses pulling a 30-foot Christmas tree, followed by fireworks and caroling. Also enjoy festively decorated downtown shops, strolling carolers in Victorian attire, carriage rides, and chestnuts roasting. The Old Christmas Weekend includes other events like the Festival of Trees, Sleighbell Bazaar and Craft Show, and guided tours of the historic 1894 James Dempsey Lumber Baron Mansion (now the Dempsey Manor Bed and Breakfast Inn). manisteesleighbellparade.com
- **[SNO SNAKE SHO](#)**, Dec. 5-21, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts. Twelve years ago, Onekama artists created a summer weekend event to show art work in their homes and studios, mapping a route near Portage Lake for visitors to "snake around the lake" to see diverse works of painting, sculpture, printmaking and fabric arts. This event gathers 17 of those artists in a winter holiday show. Art is for sale, and 30 percent of proceeds will be donated to the Ramsdell. Opening reception Dec. 6, 6 - 8 pm. ramsdeltheatre.org/art-exhibits
- **[Festival of Trees](#)**, Dec. 6-8, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts. The Historic Ramsdell Theatre Ballroom features trees and wreaths beautifully decorated by talented designers, transforming the scenery into a magical blend of the holidays and trends in decor. manisteechamber.com/festoftrees
- **[Elf The Musical](#)**, Dec. 6-7 and 13-14 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 8 and 15 at 2 p.m.; Manistee High School. The Manistee Civic Players present this delightful musical version of the popular Christmas movie. Tickets can be purchased in advance by calling 231.723.7188. manisteecivicplayers.org

- [Laith Al-Saadi](#), Dec. 7, 8 p.m. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts. In 2016, Laith Al-Saadi won a spot in the finale of NBC's "The Voice." For more than 25 years, he's been a staple of the Michigan music scene. Now he's bringing his authentic blend of blues, soul and classic rock to audiences around the nation and the world, including Manistee. [Tickets \\$20-\\$35](#). ramsdeltheatre.org/programs
- [Blake Elliott and Elizabeth Landry Holiday Show](#), Dec. 15, 4-6 p.m., Iron Fish Distillery, Thompsonville. Blake Elliott's writing spans a range of genres, from jazz to folk to soul. Although Elizabeth Landry is well known in many parts of Michigan, her music is well traveled, touring nationally and playing many well-known theaters, festivals and venues. ironfishdistillery.com/events
- [Celtic Woman: The Best of Christmas](#), Dec. 20, 9 p.m., Little River Casino. In the fourteen years since its debut, global musical sensation Celtic Woman has emerged as an artistic phenomenon representing Irish music and culture all over the world. Its albums have been consistent multi-platinum best-sellers, and its concert tours attract a devoted global audience. [Tickets are \\$55 to \\$70](#). Ircr.com/event-calendar/concerts/celtic-woman-the-best-of-christmas
- ["Puttin' on the Ritz,"](#) Dec. 31, 8 p.m.-midnight, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts. Dance into the new year to the Jazz beat of "Dave Greer's Classic Jazz Stompers" while enjoying hors d'oeuvres and libations. Ticket entry includes party favors, noise makers and a champagne toast at midnight. Top hats and tiaras encouraged. [Tickets are \\$65 in advance](#) or \$75 at the door. ramsdeltheatre.org/programs
- [Big M Moonlight Skiing](#), Jan. 11 and Feb. 8, 7-9 p.m., Big M Lodge at Big M Cross Country Ski area, Udell Hills Road. Enjoy the quiet wonder of nature on a moonlight ski night on the Big M Trail, home to 18 miles of groomed, classic skiing trails. While the trail isn't lit, the group will follow the light of the moon (headlamps are recommended), followed by a bonfire. Fat bikers are welcome though will use a separate trail. skibigm.org

#MyManistee #LetsWinter

Visit Manistee County encourages visitors this winter to tag their photos and posts on social media with #MyManistee and #LetsWinter for a chance to be featured in Visit Manistee County's winter 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, facebook.com/ManisteePureMichigan, instagram.com/manisteepuremichigan and twitter.com/manisteePureMI.

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