



PRESS RELEASE

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MANISTEE VISITORS BUREAU ENCOURAGES VISITORS TO TRY SOMETHING NEW THIS WINTER WITH HELP OF FREE WINTER GUIDE

2021 Winter Trails Guide with Pull-Out Map Offers Tips for Fat Tire Biking, Cross-Country Skiing, Snowmobiling, Snowshoeing and Other Activities

MANISTEE, Mich. – Dec. 21, 2020 – Now that it's officially winter and the first snowfall has arrived, the [Manistee County Visitors Bureau](#) (Visit Manistee County) wants to help visitors navigate a winter getaway by trying a new outdoor activity. And with 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 450 miles of snowmobile trails plus two neighboring downhill ski resorts, there is no shortage of winter things to do in Manistee County.

"With families seeking fun, safe outdoor winter activities (especially this year), we want to make it easy to see all the choices in Manistee County and book a trip," said Kathryn Kenny, executive director of Visit Manistee County. "We especially encourage people to try a new winter activity this year, and we'll even help you find the rental equipment – whether for snowmobiling, cross-country skiing or fat biking."

Winter Trails Guide

Visit Manistee County is offering a free, online 42-page [Winter Trails Guide](#) that includes a two-sided fold-out trail map with regional snowmobile trail network on one side and dining and lodging options on the other side. Visitors also can [request a printed guide](#) through the website or by calling the visitors bureau at 877.626.4783.

Components of the guide include:

- Top photo spots in winter, with user-generated photos tagging #MyManistee
- Winter activities to try, including equipment rental locations
- Six trail maps and one river map, with nearby amenities for each trail
- Lists of lodging, dining, shopping and entertainment options

Winter Activities

Following are winter activities outlined in the guide, including where to enjoy them and how to rent equipment:

- **[Snowmobiling](#)** – The region features 250 miles of groomed trails in Manistee County, plus access to 450-plus miles in a five-county [trail network](#) connecting all of the northwest corner of the Lower Peninsula.
Snowmobile rentals and tours: [Crystal Adventures](#), Thompsonville
- **[Winter fishing](#)** – Once ice forms, anglers flock to 80 inland lakes and four rivers of Manistee County, casting lines for pike, walleye, perch, smelt, bluegill and crappie.
Fishing equipment rental/purchase: [Osborn's Sport Shop](#), Bear Lake

- more -

- **[Winter paddling](#)** – Paddlers can enjoy the Big Manistee and Pine Rivers throughout winter and see scenery from a new perspective. *NOTE: Winter paddlers should take caution and dress appropriately. Paddling the river in the summer first is recommended for safety.*
Kayak or canoe rental: [Pine River Paddlesports Center](#), Wellston. See below for guided winter river paddles on the Pine River.
- **[Snowshoeing](#)** – Manistee County’s diverse hiking terrain becomes a snowshoer’s paradise when the snow flies. Hiking trails make perfect snowshoeing destinations, whether along Lake Michigan at Arcadia Dunes/Old Baldy Trailhead or Magoon Creek Nature Area, or inland on the North Country Trail and Manistee River Trail Loop.
Snowshoe rental: [Crystal Lake Adventure Sports](#), Beulah
- **[Fat tire biking](#)** – Manistee County offers two groomed fat bike trails: Big M Recreational Area (one of the state’s first groomed bike trail systems) with 25 miles of single-track trails at various levels of difficulty, and the Non-Motorized Park including the MTB Terrain Park boasting 5.4 miles of trails featuring boards, trails and obstacles for the beginner to intermediate biker.
Fat bike rental: [Crystal Mountain Resort](#), Thompsonville
- **[Cross-country skiing](#)** – Manistee County is home to more than 20 miles of groomed skiing trails in two major trail networks – Big-M Recreation Area with 18 miles of groomed classic skiing trails, and Manistee Non-Motorized Park with four miles of classic and skate-style skiing trails.
Cross-country ski rental: [Crystal Mountain Resort](#), Thompsonville
- **[Snowboarding/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. *Both rent equipment.*

Winter Events/Attractions *(located in the city of Manistee unless otherwise noted)*

Manistee County features some socially distant winter events catering to adults and families alike. *(Consult websites or call attractions in advance for information related to COVID-19 restrictions.)*

- **[Sparkle in the Park](#)**, *through Dec. 31, 5-10 p.m. nightly, Hopkins Park, Bear Lake.* In its 16th 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. visitmanisteecounty.com/event/sparkle-in-the-park.
- **[Manistee County Community Christmas](#)**, *through Jan. 1.* The Manistee Chamber is promoting local shopping and holiday spirit with the downtown decorated with a tree, garlands and other decorative items. Businesses and residents are spreading holiday cheer by decorating their business, windows, home, block, driveway or mailbox for a holiday display contest. A map of decoration locations and voting information is available at facebook.com/Manistee-County-Community-Christmas-108225881060946
- **[NEW – Guided Winter Raft Floats on the Pine River](#)**, *ongoing, Wellston.* New this year, [Pine River Paddlesports Center](#) is offering guided winter rafting trips along the Pine River. They also can outfit an individual paddling adventure along the Pine River. thepineriver.com

- **Outdoor Dining.** Various food and drink spots have prepared safe and socially distant outdoor dining options this winter:
 - [Base Camp Iron Fish](#), *Iron Fish Distillery, Thompsonville* – This outdoor “village” of heated, breathable canvas tents with lights overhead gives guests a safe outdoor space to enjoy spirits, cocktails, wood-fired pizza and snacks. Nine tents accommodate groups of 2-4 or 6-8. Available by [reservation](#) for 90 minutes, the tents are refreshed and sanitized between use. Iron Fish also offers seating at outdoor picnic tables with bonfire pits nearby. A heated outdoor spirit tasting and merchandise area also is available. Outdoor live music continues throughout the winter.
 - [St. Ambrose Cellars](#), *Beulah*. This meadery in neighboring Benzie County offers four heated igloos for up to six people of the same household that can be reserved for one-hour sittings at \$10 (covers cleaning and maintenance). Igloos are disinfected with an electrostatic fogger and cleaned between use. In addition to offering locally made mead, cider, and beer, St. Ambrose sells snack picnic baskets and features food trucks on select dates. Check [Facebook](#) for details.
 - [Stormcloud Brewing Company](#), *Frankfort*. This microbrewery in adjacent Benzie County features two heated geodesic domes on the patio available by reservation for a 75-minute session (each holds up to six people of the same household). Domes are sanitized between each seating, and the \$10 rental fee is applied to the bill. Seating also is available on the heated patio.

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 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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