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Fall/Winter 2019-20

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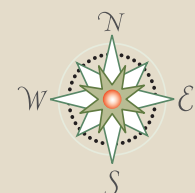
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TODAY!





The Charmant hotel

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

ROCK THE BURBS

SAT. SEP 1-10 PM **14**

BADGER TAILGATE  
+ VIEWING PARTY

TOWN  
TRUCK DAY

SAT. SEP 11 AM **21**

TRICK OR TREAT  
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SAT. OCT 3-5 PM **26**

LIGHTING OF  
THE CORNERS

SAT. NOV 3-6 PM **23**

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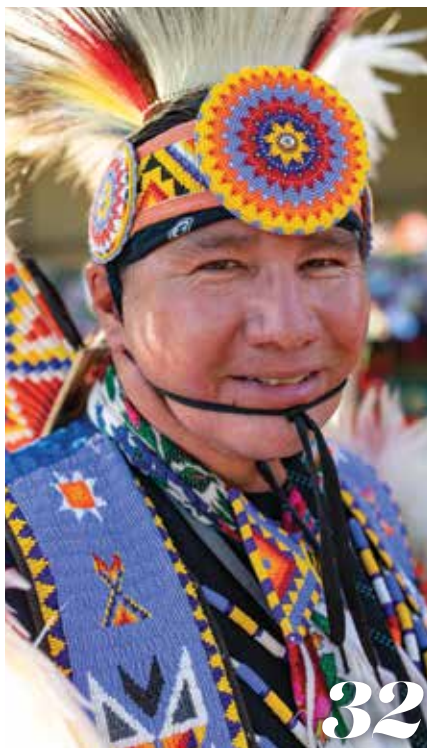
SAT. DEC **14**

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**ON THE COVER:**

The Great River Road boasts picturesque views like this one in Pepin, overlooking Lake Pepin, which is a part of the Mississippi River.  
©Nick Collura for TravelWisconsin.com



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## Falling for Fall

When the temperatures start to cool, the tailgates begin and beautiful fall foliage emerges during sun-dappled sunsets, that's when I know it's time to start thinking about what fall and winter activities my family and I will partake in. A Packers game at Lambeau? Check. A pumpkin patch visit (or two)? Definitely. Sampling tasty fall and winter dishes at any number of restaurants? Sign me up.

When the leaves fall or the snow flies, we've figured out all of the coolest things to do. Take our Perspective piece on page 32 that tours you through regions and attractions throughout the state that are chock-full of interesting ways to experience Native American culture. Visit a museum, walk through the state's first tribal national park or view authentic log homes. Outdoor sports buffs and newbies will appreciate Field Guide on page 30, where we give you the lowdown on easy ways (yes, really!) to partake in Wisconsin winter sports—like skiing, snowmobiling, sledding and snowshoeing.

And you can't get through fall and winter without some good eats! Our The Dish section digs into cheese shops (page 26), artisan meat shops and butchers (page 29), and we talk to a pair of Milwaukee culinary dynamos that are opening their fourth restaurant concept this fall (page 28).

Also in this issue are some exciting features that our team has been planning for a while. Writer Kevin Revolinski shares the glory that's the Great River Road and how to drive most of the Wisconsin portion of it in five days. His five-day itinerary begins on page 42 and shares what to see, where to eat and stay. And if the kids have cabin fever, you'll want to read about eight educational and fun children's museums in every corner of the state, starting on page 39.

Finally, we're excited to announce our inaugural Best Of Experience Wisconsin reader's survey results starting on page 34! You voted and we listened—and 19 clear winners emerged in our first-ever feature on the state's top attraction, golf course, cheese producer and more.

As always, thank you for reading! Do you have a story idea you'd like to share with us, or want to send us a note? Please drop me a line at [Shayna@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:Shayna@ntmediagroup.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

Shayna Mace, Editorial Director

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

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### WORLD-CLASS IN SPRING GREEN

The name Frank Lloyd Wright is well-known in Wisconsin and beyond. Now, Wright's star shines even brighter with the induction of **Taliesin**, his estate in Spring Green, to UNESCO's World Heritage list. UNESCO "recognizes landmarks or sites for having cultural, historical or scientific relevance throughout the world," according to [taliesinpreservation.org](http://taliesinpreservation.org). What's even more special about Taliesin is that it's the only UNESCO World Heritage site open to the public in Wisconsin. In addition to Taliesin, seven of Wright's other works throughout several other states were also included in the UNESCO list for "prominently shaping architecture in the 20th century, spanning 50 years of Frank Lloyd Wright's career." [taliesinpreservation.org](http://taliesinpreservation.org)



**PUBLISHER**

**PUBLISHER**

Barb Krause  
bak@ntmediagroup.com

**VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLICATIONS**

Becky Peck  
bpeck@ntmediagroup.com

**EDITORIAL**

**EDITORIAL DIRECTOR**

Shayna Mace  
shayna@ntmediagroup.com

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**

Kayla Ermer  
kerm@ntmediagroup.com

**SALES**

**ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER**

Louise Andraski  
louisea@ntmediagroup.com

**ADVERTISING COORDINATOR**

Jerriann Mullen  
jem@ntmediagroup.com

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**COMMENTS?** We welcome your inquiries. Call us at 262-729-4471, or email shayna@ntmediagroup.com.

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## State of the Arts

By Katie Vaughn

What's happening in Wisconsin arts? What issues are artists grappling with, and which media and approaches are rising to the forefront?

These questions are explored, answered and celebrated in the "Wisconsin Triennial" exhibition at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.

Every three years, MMoCA's curatorial staff spend weeks visiting artists in their studios across the state, ultimately choosing more than 30 to represent the current status of contemporary Wisconsin art. Photographs, prints, paintings, installations, sculpture, video and more comeingle in this multimedia exhibition held throughout the museum from October 19 to February 16.

"The 'Triennial' presents the whole spectrum of really established and emerging artists," says curator Leah Kolb. "To get that variety is wonderful."

One newcomer of note is Madison artist Pranav Sood (above left and right), who depicts the quest for love through a series of five vivid, graphic and pattern-filled op-art paintings that nod to his upbringing in India. Another is Della Wells (above middle), a Milwaukee artist who uses collage to create symbolic, empowering narrative worlds that blend history and fiction.

"I see the lineage of collage dating back to the African American female practice of Quilting," Wells states. "It is also deeply rooted in the notion of 'making do' or creating one's own private paradise out of what is found, sourced and gathered through community."

Like Sood and Wells, many artists in this year's "Triennial" create work that's deeply personal while resonating with broader society.

"There's this jolt of narrative energy," Kolb says. "Artists are taking personal symbolism and mixing it with recognizable forms."

And showcased together, artists in the "Triennial" not only offer a fascinating survey of Wisconsin art today, but also a preview of what will be highlighted in exhibitions in the years to come.

*The "Wisconsin Triennial" runs October 19–February 16 at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, 227 State St. [mmoca.org](http://mmoca.org)*

## Shoppist | Small Delights

Eau Claire's **Red's Mercantile** is the modern-day version of the old-timey general store concept, with a bit of everything: clothes, shoes, household décor items and bath and body products—all with a clean, Scandinavian bent. Owner Becca Cooke only carries items that are made in America and pieces are beautifully crafted, minimal in design and well-made. Cooke's other mission (besides retail) was to "create a gathering place for women in the Chippewa Valley," so the shop hosts workshops, concerts, rallies and more. The shop's celebration of small makers means it's certainly worth a stop if you're in the area. [redsmmercantile.com](http://redsmmercantile.com) **ew**



## Lovely Lodging

Those looking for a more creative place to rest their head need look no further than two Wisconsin boutique hotels that opened recently.

**Hotel Indigo** on Madison's near east side opened last spring and is ideally located close to downtown, Breese Stevens Field (an outdoor venue that hosts sporting events, markets and concerts), The Sylvee theater and restaurants. The building formerly held the Mautz Paint Co., which now plays host to guest rooms—and a sleek new addition ties in nicely that has more guest rooms and the aptly-named Palette Bar & Grill. The property pays homage to the building's past, with paint-themed décor and art installations as well as nods to Madison history—like in a quote in neon tubing by Sun Prairie native Georgia O'Keeffe.

Milwaukee's **Saint Kate Arts Hotel** (open since last June, seen below) is surely one of the most unique lodging properties to hit the state. Named after Saint Catherine, the patron saint of the arts, the hotel not only has art installations throughout (like a Deborah Butterfield horse sculpture out of driftwood in the lobby) but even boasts an actual pop-up art museum in the hotel. This satellite location for the Museum of Wisconsin Art (located in West Bend) hosts regular exhibitions, and tours are regularly given of the property's art collection. Be sure to eat at the on-site restaurants Aria and Proof Pizza and sip a glass of bubbly at Giggly.

[hotelindigo.com](http://hotelindigo.com), [saintkatearts.com](http://saintkatearts.com)





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## **OCTOBER 4-6 Apple Festival, Bayfield**

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## **FEBRUARY 7-9, 2020 Hudson Hot Air Affair**

Celebrate hot air balloons with a Friday night balloon and fire show as well as a parade and fireworks. On Saturday and Sunday, more than 30 balloons launch at sunrise and in the evening, they inflate once more, lighting up the dark with glowing colors. Also partake in bingo, a pancake breakfast, kite-flying and ice-carving shows, fun run and an ice-fishing derby. [hudsonhotairaffair.com](http://hudsonhotairaffair.com)



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**Opens October 12th!** The Menominee Clans Story displays wood figures carved by the Menominee traditional artist, James F. Frechette, Jr. Known by the Menominee as The Little Menominee, the intricately carved and painted figures stand between twelve and twenty inches high. Through an indigenous art form of the tribe, Mr. Frechette faithfully captured the cultural dimensions of the ancient clan system depicting dress, symbols, tools, colors, traditions, and many details of the now fast fading way of life.



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**Sept. 6-Dec. 22  
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This regional exhibition at the Grohmann Museum at the Milwaukee School of Engineering is a destination for all Wisconsinites. It focuses on Midwestern industrial innovation and Milwaukee-made machinery, as well as the engineers who invented them. [msoe.edu/grohmann-museum/exhibitions](http://msoe.edu/grohmann-museum/exhibitions)

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### September 6-7 Falcon Frontier Days Rodeo, River Falls

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### 7 Wheels and Wings, Osceola

Wheels and Wings started in Osceola 39 years ago, offering a full day of fun for car and aviation enthusiasts. Visit the Kid Zone, Radar Run and food and beer garden. [wheelswings.com](http://wheelswings.com)

### 8 Ironman, Madison

This iron-willed event features a 2.4-mile swim race, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile marathon. The Madison course is often pegged as a competitor favorite, and spectators can watch and cheer on the participants all day along the race route. [ironman.com](http://ironman.com)

### 14 Great Lakes Brew Fest, Racine

This brew festival offers unlimited sampling of over 450 craft beers from distilleries along the coast of Lake Michigan. Also try ciders, hard sodas and food and listen to live music. [greatlakesbrewfest.com](http://greatlakesbrewfest.com)

### 14-15 Bacon Bash, River Falls

Indulge in all things bacon at the nation's biggest free bacon festival! This outdoor fest includes food booths, cook-offs, live music, local artists, craft brews and pig-themed contests for all ages. [riverfallsbaconbash.com](http://riverfallsbaconbash.com)

### 26-29 Oktoberfest, La Crosse

Come out to the longest-running Oktoberfest in the Midwest for four days of fun. Celebrate this German tradition with beer, food and camaraderie. [oktoberfestusa.com](http://oktoberfestusa.com)

### 27-29 Warrens Cranberry Festival, Warrens

Get ready for a celebration of the state's fruit at this fun fest. Experience three miles of shopping, a huge Sunday parade and cranberry marsh tours. Also nibble on Cranberries Jubilee, pancakes with cranberry syrup, cranberry cream puffs and even deep-fried cranberries on a stick. [cranfest.com](http://cranfest.com)

### 28 Beef-A-Rama, Minocqua

Join the crowd of over 12,000 that pack in Torpy Park for signature beef sandwiches. There's also a 5K and 10K Rump Roast Run. [minocqua.org/things-to-do/events/annual-events/beef-a-rama](http://minocqua.org/things-to-do/events/annual-events/beef-a-rama)

### October 1-5 World Dairy Expo, Madison

The World Dairy Expo serves as a forum for dairy producers, companies, organizations and other dairy enthusiasts to come together to show animals, exchange ideas, knowledge, technology and commerce. Watch animal competitions, sample dairy delights and meet animals in person. [worlddairyexpo.com](http://worlddairyexpo.com)



#### 4-6 Apple Festival, Bayfield

A celebration of Bayfield's agricultural heritage and autumn harvest! Test out over 60 local food booths, tour the wineries, attend the Saturday fish fry and do arts and crafts. For kids there's carnival festivities, a parade and plenty of apples to eat. [bayfield.org/festivals-events/bayfield-apple-festival](http://bayfield.org/festivals-events/bayfield-apple-festival)

#### 4-5, 11-12, 18-20, 24-26 Feargrounds, Waukesha

Rated #1 in America for haunted houses, the Wisconsin Feargrounds has terror at every turn. It features three haunted houses as well as a new escape room. [wisconsinfeargrounds.com](http://wisconsinfeargrounds.com)

#### 5 Cranberry Festival, Stone Lake

During the first week of October, thousands of people gather to celebrate the cranberry harvest with parades, games, food and drinks. Also go on a cranberry marsh tour, watch the crate derby, do arts and crafts, and shop the flea market. [stonelakecranberryfestival.com/index.html](http://stonelakecranberryfestival.com/index.html)

#### 12-13 Oktoberfest, Lake Geneva

Enjoy bounce houses, pony rides, arts and crafts, live music and food in the heart of downtown Lake Geneva. New this year is a tent featuring Hofbräuhaus brews. [visitlakegeneva.com](http://visitlakegeneva.com)

#### 17-20 Wisconsin Book Festival, Madison

Every fall, thousands of people gather for this celebrated literary event that connects the active Midwest literary community with the great authors of today. Check out discussions, readings and activities based on the books themselves. [wisconsinbookfestival.org](http://wisconsinbookfestival.org)

#### 17-20 Kohler Food & Wine Experience, Kohler

One of the state's most indulgent food celebrations, this extravaganza features celebrity chefs, cocktails, tastings, culinary seminars and parties, all held at the American Club in the idyllic town of Kohler. Learn about food and spirits pairings, matching up cheeses and chocolates, watch an "America's Test Kitchen" 20th anniversary presentation and more. [americanclubresort.com/calendar/2019/10/kohler-food-wine-experience](http://americanclubresort.com/calendar/2019/10/kohler-food-wine-experience)

#### 19-Feb. 16 The "Wisconsin Triennial," Madison

An every-three-year tradition that celebrates the current status state of Wisconsin art. See photographs, paintings, sculpture, video and more. [mmoca.org](http://mmoca.org)

#### 27 Madison Freakfest, Madison

This party on the street event is the region's largest annual Halloween party and music festival. Featuring popular artists on three different stages, Freakfest has been a spooktacular event for over 10 years. [madfreakfest.com](http://madfreakfest.com)

#### November

##### 9-10 Trainfest, West Allis

Visit America's largest operating model train show, with over 20,000 attendees. Train enthusiasts and families can spend hours looking at 70 carefully-designed running model railroads. Younger kids also have a designated area they can play in, too. [trainfest.com](http://trainfest.com)

##### 10 Wisconsin Dog Fair, Madison

Come see over 100 breeds of dogs and attend classes on puppies, obedience, agility and more. This event is perfect for dog lovers who want to learn everything there is to know about man's best friend. [badgerkennelclub.com/wi-dog-fair](http://badgerkennelclub.com/wi-dog-fair)

##### 16 Beer & Spirits, Lake Geneva

Thirty-five Midwest craft brewers and distillers will be on hand at this fest, featuring brewers such as Amherst-based Central Waters Brewing Co., Verona-located Wisconsin Brewing Company and New Glarus Brewing Company. [lakegenevabeerandspirits.com](http://lakegenevabeerandspirits.com)

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### 29-30 Christkindlmarkt, Monroe

Designed after traditional German Christmas markets, the Christkindlmarkt offers hand-selected items from vendors for the holidays. Also nibble on tasty Swiss baked goods.

[turnerhallofmonroe.org/shs.html](http://turnerhallofmonroe.org/shs.html)

### Nov. 29-Dec. 31 Rotary Light Show, La Crosse

Celebrating their 25th year, this holiday tradition in La Crosse is a kickoff for the Christmas season. Gaze upon a 140-foot Christmas tree and tons of light displays (made up of more than two million lights) and enjoy a live nativity presentation, featured every weekend from the event's kickoff until Christmas. [rotarylights.org](http://rotarylights.org)

### December 6 Holidazzle, Beloit

Downtown Beloit businesses glow with holiday lights and music, so you can purchase fine arts and crafts for holiday gift giving. Refreshments are offered by many businesses, clubs and restaurants. Enjoy the free trolley as you travel around this free event with 40-plus locations. Also hear live music, visit with Santa, do kids' activities and nibble on holiday treats.

[downtownbeloit.com](http://downtownbeloit.com)

### 7 43rd Annual Electric Christmas Parade, Lake Geneva

A lighted parade fills the streets of downtown Lake Geneva with holiday cheer. Be sure to visit the shops and restaurants afterward for specials and holiday happenings. [visitalakegeneva.com](http://visitalakegeneva.com)

### 7 Christmas in the Air, Oshkosh

Join the EAA's annual free community holiday event. Listen to Christmas stories, watch a holiday movie in the theater and listen to more than 20 local choral, musical and dance groups perform on various stages. [eaa.org](http://eaa.org)

### January 2020 11 Kickapoo Valley Reserve Winterfest, La Farge

The celebration of winter includes sledding, skiing, archery, snow-sculpting, ice cave hikes, chainsaw carving, face-painting, horse-drawn bobsled rides, the Tri-state Malamute Club Sled Dog Race and weight pull, snow mountain and snow tunnel, fat tire bike demonstrations and more. [kvr.state.wi.us/events/annual-events/winterfest](http://kvr.state.wi.us/events/annual-events/winterfest)

### 17-19 World Championship Snowmobile Derby, Eagle River

Eagle River hosts the biggest and most prestigious snowmobile race in the entire sport—over 40,000 people attend annually to watch more than 500 international drivers compete. [derbycomplex.com/portfolio-item/derby](http://derbycomplex.com/portfolio-item/derby)

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### 18 Hot ChocolateFest, Burlington

Come out to sample hot chocolates from restaurants in downtown Burlington to discover which one is the best! There's also a 5K run and pancake breakfast at Veteran's Terrace. [burlingtonchamber.org](http://burlingtonchamber.org)

### 23-26 WBAY RV & Camping Show, Green Bay

Shop for everything you need to get ready for camping season from the region's best dealers. [reschcenter.com/events/detail/rv-camping-expo-1](http://reschcenter.com/events/detail/rv-camping-expo-1)

### 29-Feb. 2 Winterfest, Lake Geneva

Lake Geneva hosts the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Competition during this festival that celebrates all things winter. Fifteen teams travel from all over the country to Flatiron Park, and with great skill and detail, fashion snow into amazing sculptures over nine feet tall. Also make snowmen at a bonfire; go skiing, snowboarding and tobogganing; and take the whole family on a Cocoa Crawl to a gaggle of participating establishments. [winterfestlg.com](http://winterfestlg.com)

### 31-Feb. 2 Fish Creek Winter Festival

Check out candlelight skiing, a chili cook-off, ice carving, ice bowling, a costumed Fruit Loop Fun Run, an entertaining Stumpf Fiddle Contest and an awesome fireworks show. Quirky games are abundant, as is delicious food and live music. [visitfishcreek.com/events/winter-festival](http://visitfishcreek.com/events/winter-festival)

## February

### 17 Book Across the Bay, Ashland

Join thousands of cross-country skiers and snowshoers in this starlit 10K over a frozen Lake Superior that spans from Ashland to Washburn, with up to 1,000 luminarias lighting the way along the route. [batb.org](http://batb.org)

### 21-March 1 Beloit International Film Festival

This annual 10-day film festival celebrates the power of independent films from around the globe for the 15th year in a row this winter. Local residents and visitors from across the nation fill venues ranging in size from 40 to 400 seats to view more than 100 films and meet scores of filmmakers who come from throughout the U.S. and around the world. [beloitfilmfest.org](http://beloitfilmfest.org)

## March

### 6 Big Band Gala, Elkhart Lake

Start spring off right by dancing the night away at The Osthoff Resort's Big Band Gala. The gala recaptures the essence of the Big Band Jazz Era with decadent food, ballroom dancing and a luxurious atmosphere. [osthoff.com/resort-events](http://osthoff.com/resort-events)



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### 6-7 45NRTH Fat Bike Birkie, Cable

As the U.S.'s premier snow bike event, riders will test their skill on the professionally-groomed American Birkebeiner Ski Trail. Distances include 10K, 21K and 47K. [birkie.com](http://birkie.com)

### 6-8 Bayfield Winter Festival, Bayfield

Embrace chilly temps during this fun winter fest with a Polar Plunge, skiing, shopping in downtown Bayfield and a fat-tire bike tour across the lake ice. [recreationandfitnessresources.org/bayfield-winter-festival.html](http://recreationandfitnessresources.org/bayfield-winter-festival.html)

### 7 Bald Eagle Watching Day, Ferryville

This fascinating day of programs features educational talks on raptors, falcons and owls, plus a chance to meet birds in person. Children's activities and refreshments will round out the day. [travelwisconsin.com/events/birding/bald-eagle-watching-day-40787](http://travelwisconsin.com/events/birding/bald-eagle-watching-day-40787)

### 14 St. Patrick's Day Parade, Fond du Lac

Celebrate the luck of the Irish and cheer on the St. Patty's Day Parade. With over 50 floats, there's plenty to see. [fdl.com](http://fdl.com)

### April 17-19 Roots and Bluegrass Music Festival, River Falls

This free three-day indoor music festival features both regional and local bands. There's a variety of free workshops to partake in as well as open jam sessions, food and beer tastings, and much more. [riverfallsbluegrass.com](http://riverfallsbluegrass.com)

### 25 Wisconsin Grilled Cheese Championship, Dodgeville

This fun and family-friendly event highlights the cheese industry of Wisconsin. Watch the competition, get free cheese samples, see vendors and exhibitors, listen to live music, check out the children's activities and eat at the food trucks. [grilledcheesewisconsin.com](http://grilledcheesewisconsin.com) *ew*

*These listings were written and compiled by Baye Johnson, an editorial intern with Experience Wisconsin.*

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# THE JEWEL BOXES of Rural Wisconsin

By Lisa M. Schmelz

Long before television, radio or movies, community “opera houses” were the center of arts, culture and entertainment throughout rural America. They are still treasured performance spaces for people like Wisconsin’s own Michael Perry.

“Whenever I’m part of a performance in one of these venues, I love the idea of how every preceding gathering still echoes, and how—no matter the century—our better natures are nourished when we join each other in a common space for common purpose and communication,” says Perry, a New York Times best-selling author and front man for “The Long Beds.” “On a more fundamental level, I find myself deeply grateful to the volunteers and people of vision who preserve these places.” In Wisconsin, a number of such venues have been preserved and are ripe for discovery.

The Grand Oshkosh



## Capitol Civic Centre

With its start in 1921 as a vaudeville house, the Capitol Civic Centre is another splendid example of the power of preservation. Today, it is seven distinct buildings topped by 14 roofs. Located in Manitowoc, it now hosts nationally-touring shows along with regional orchestras and musical acts. Add even more culture to your trip with a visit to the Rahr-West Art Museum.

## The Grand Opera House

Opened in August 1883 in Oshkosh, this lavish Victorian building could seat over 1,200 theatergoers, with jump seats folding out from the wall when the crowds got really big. Reflecting the opulence of the era, its stage curtains were hand-painted. Today it seats 550 and is used for local, regional and some nationally touring acts. The Grand Lounge on the second floor is open one hour before the curtain rises, and offers an extensive selection of spirits, wine and beer.

## The Grand Theater

The Grand Theater in Wausau is a winning combination of preservation and new construction. Efforts to save and enhance it have not diminished the history of this fabled venue. The original opera house was razed in 1927. Seven months later, a new 1,470-seat theater opened. Restoration and expansions in 1987 and again in 2002 have made this a cultural hub of Central Wisconsin. The rural Willow Springs Garden is also worth a visit if you're in Wausau. It features an old town hall, from the rural hamlet of nearby Maine, an 1895 round barn, cheese tours, corn mazes and winter sleigh rides.

## The Mabel Tainter

Built as a tribute to Mabel Tainter in 1889, a 19-year-old woman who died in 1886, this glorious Victorian-era masterpiece spared no expense. Located in Menomonie, this 261-seat crown jewel theater boasts marble staircases and walls and an original Steere & Turner tracker pipe organ. The nearby Cottage Winery is another way to enhance your visit to this spectacular area.

## Mineral Point Opera House

Since 1915, the Mineral Point Opera House has billed itself as "a theatre for all the people." Taking to the maple-slat stage here were the likes of George Burns and Gracie Allen. Presidential hopeful John F. Kennedy walked across this stage as well. Today, the stage is still in active use much of the year for book readings, plays and live music. Located in the Driftless hills of Southwest Wisconsin, there's plenty to do nearby. Round out your trip with a tour of Orchard Lawn, a historic 19th-century Italianate mansion with opulent grounds.

## Stoughton Opera House

Originally dubbed the City Auditorium, this theater first opened in 1901. Roof leaks and ice damage forced its closure in the 1950s. Locals rallied in the 1980s to bring the storied building back to life. Now, it serves as a venue for a number of annual festivals and nationally touring artists. Learn more about the settlement of the Stoughton area and the Norwegian pioneer experience at the highly interactive Livreise, a Norwegian cultural center.

## Thrasher Opera House

Charlie Thrasher built the Thrasher Opera House in 1910 in Green Lake. Originally, its seating was comprised of wooden kitchen chairs, clustered in fives. Jimmy Webb, dubbed America's songwriter and best-known for hits like "Wichita Lineman," "Galveston" and "MacArthur Park," calls the Thrasher Opera House "such a genuine music hall, a real antique, a real vintage gem." Live like a local after a show by spending time on the historic Green Lake town square, and take a yoga, cooking or art class. [ew](#)

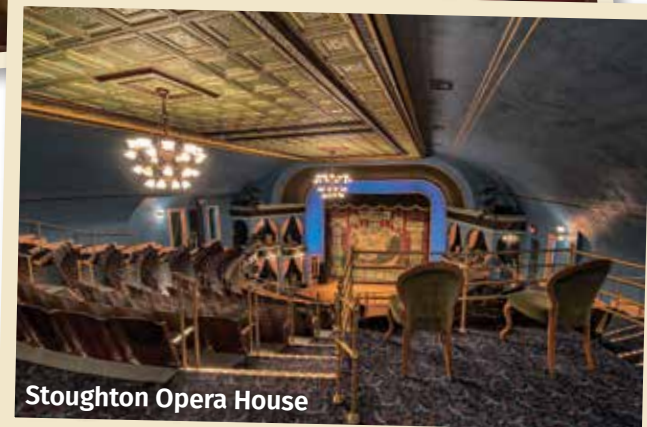
*Lisa M. Schmeltz is a high school special education teacher and freelance writer from Delavan. Her award-winning work has appeared in books, magazines and major daily newspapers.*



Capitol Civic Centre



The Grand Theater



Stoughton Opera House

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MINERAL POINT OPERA HOUSE

**Oct. 31-Nov. 3** | 10th Annual Driftless Film Festival

### STOUGHTON OPERA HOUSE

**Nov. 1** | Suzy Bogguss

### THRASHER OPERA HOUSE

**Dec. 6** | The Barefoot Movement "Holiday"

### THE MABEL TAINTER

**Dec. 16** | "Christmas on the Prairie" by  
"A Prairie Home Companion" performers

### THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE

**Jan. 28-29** | ABBA Mania

### THE GRAND THEATER

**Feb. 11** | The Russian National Ballet  
Presents "The Sleeping Beauty"

### THE STOUGHTON OPERA HOUSE

**Feb. 27** | "Michael Perry Presents: Half a Star"

### CAPITOL CIVIC CENTRE

**April 18** | Manitowoc Symphony  
Orchestra's "Gershwin in Paris"



# Say Cheese!

Wisconsinites are called cheeseheads for a reason—so embrace the state's cheesiest destinations (in a good way) in these high-quality cheese shops.

By Kristine Hansen

You may already know about the Mars Cheese Castle (just over the state line along I-94 in Kenosha County) and the Dane County Farmers' Market (the U.S.'s largest producers-only market), where vendors include cheesemakers. But what about boutique-y cheese markets where locals shop? From a French-inspired boutique on Madison's Capitol Square to a tightly curated shop in Door County's Egg Harbor, here are six of the state's best cheese stops. Also, don't be shy about ducking into a gas station or quick mart along your travels; you'll be surprised at the quality of Wisconsin cheese in these (seemingly) utilitarian establishments. But for a more upscale experience, these shops have you covered.

## **Baumgartner's Cheese Store and Tavern, Monroe**

As the state's oldest cheese store, this super-cute store/tavern on the square quickly dials it back to the early 1930s—appropriate since that's when it opened. From cheddar to Havarti, plus blue varieties, this is a quick way to sample Wisconsin's cheese in this quaint Swiss-founded community. Don't leave without trying the best cheese sandwich you'll ever eat (made with Limburger, among other choices) at the tavern.

[baumgartnercheese.com](http://baumgartnercheese.com)

## **Fromagination, Madison**

Walk into this cozy cheese shop across from the state Capitol building and you'll swear you're in Paris. Samples of Wisconsin cheeses are in abundance—along with killer sandwiches folding in cheese, naturally, but also meats and farm-fresh veggies (like Roth's Swiss with granny-smith apples on the Pasture Harvest Sandwich). If you like to throw parties, you'll also find tea towels, cheese knives and other accoutrements. [fromagination.com](http://fromagination.com)



Wisconsin Cheese Masters



### The Cheese Board, Minocqua

Tucked into one of Wisconsin's most popular outdoor-adventure regions, and conveniently along Highway 51, The Cheese Board is stocked with classic Wisconsin cheeses—such as Swiss, Havarti, Colby and Cheddar—but also imports to further expand your palate. Need a gift for the house- or pet-sitter? The shop will gladly assemble a gift box with cheese and also snacks and candy (such as triple-dipped dark-chocolate malt balls—to pair with a Wisconsin blue, perhaps?). [thecheeseboard.com](http://thecheeseboard.com)

### Village Cheese Shop, Wauwatosa

Light and bright, this intimate shop in Tosa's downtown village area often hosts tutorials in cheese (such as cheeses for the season, paired with wines). You can also sit down at the bar to enjoy a DIY cheese and charcuterie plate with wine. Salads and sandwiches are more hearty fare, demonstrating the bounty of Wisconsin's artisan culinary folks, like the Classic Grilled Cheese with Widmer's Cheddar, Cowgirl Creamery (California) Challerhocker and Fontina on Rocket Baby sourdough. [villagecheesetosa.com](http://villagecheesetosa.com)

### Wisconsin Cheese Mart, Milwaukee

Old World Third Street—with its cobblestone streets and historic culinary shops like Usinger's—means Wisconsin Cheese Mart (open since 1938) fits right in. An entire wall is stocked with cheesy finds, from Marieke Gouda's gouda to Uplands Cheese Company's coveted Rush Creek Reserve (only available in autumn). Of course, curds are in abundance, from plain old cheddar to flavored (dill, anyone?). Sip Wisconsin craft beers next door in the taproom, too. [wisconsincheesemart.com](http://wisconsincheesemart.com)

### Wisconsin Cheese Masters, Egg Harbor

Owner Jim Pionkoski is on a mission to introduce cheese fans to the state's award-winners, from Hook's classic 15-year aged cheddar to Carr Valley's smoked sheep's-milk blue cheese called Smoked Ba Ba Blue, plus hot-on-the-tongue Rattlesnake (with habaneros) from Deer Creek in Sheboygan County. Drop by Harbor Ridge Winery next door for a bottle of Wisconsin wine (try Cherry Crush to What the Heck? Malbec) for a decadent picnic. [wisconsincheesemasters.com](http://wisconsincheesemasters.com) *ew*

*Kristine Hansen is a freelance writer who calls Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood home.*



The Cheese Board

### FOR FROMAGE-LOVERS

Love cooking with cheese? Kristine Hansen is also the author of the "Wisconsin Cheese Cookbook: Creamy, Cheesy, Sweet, and Savory Recipes From the State's Best Creameries" (March 2019, Globe Pequot Press) where she writes about pizza, mac 'n cheese and breakfast staples—all made with artisan cheese from Wisconsin's best cheesemakers.



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## THE DISH FLAVOR HUNTER



### Around the World— Milwaukee-Style

By Kristine Hansen

“The two-chef dynamic doesn’t work all the time, but me and Dan, we found the sweet spot,” says Dan Jacobs, co-owner with Dan Van Rite of DanDan, EsterEv (an intimate dining experience located inside of DanDan with a guest-chef series) and Fauntleroy, all located in Milwaukee’s Third Ward. The duo’s JVR Group are also the consultants creating the forthcoming Ash inside The

Iron Horse Hotel. “We’re better together than we are apart,” says Jacobs.

DanDan—what they describe as farm-to-table Chinese—was the first to open, in 2016. French-infused Fauntleroy opened last year. “[Ash’s] menu centers around the hearth, a return to real primal cooking,” says Jacobs.

Both Jacobs and Van Rite were semi-finalists for James Beard Award Best Chef Midwest (2018 and 2019) and Van Rite was nominated three times while at the since-shuttered Hinterland in Milwaukee (2010, 2011 and 2012).

The duo met when Jacobs (new in town from Chicago) interviewed with Van Rite (a Green Bay native who dropped out of UW-Milwaukee’s architecture school for culinary school in Oregon) at Hinterland. Jacobs took a job at Roots, another Milwaukee restaurant (which has since closed), but the two connected.

“We both got tired of working for other people,” says Van Rite, whose girlfriend Sara

Nardi creates DanDan’s wine list. Jacobs’ wife—ceramics artist Kate Riley—creates their dishes and platters. They remain proud of their staff’s longevity, thanks to competitive salaries and paid time off.

“Neither of us has ever worked in a Chinese restaurant,” says Jacobs. Yet they knew they needed to taste as much Chinese food as possible before opening DanDan. “We had an option to spend three to four weeks in China or travel around America. We opted to travel to five different cities in America.” This includes Flushing, in Queens, N.Y., as well as Ha Long Bay in Madison.

Similarly, to prepare for opening Fauntleroy, the duo spent four days eating their way around Paris with culinary director Matt Haase. “It’s French, but it’s not your parents’ French,” says Jacobs about Fauntleroy’s menu. “It’s not crazy-expensive to open a restaurant here, unlike Chicago or Los Angeles. What we’re doing at the Fauntleroy, there’s no way we could do this in Chicago. It would be so expensive at this price point.” *ew*

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# MAKING THE CUT

By Mary Bergin

**W**alk into Sailer's Food Market & Meat Processing in Elmwood (pop. 800), and one of the first things you'll notice are the awards—they fill two walls. Blue ribbons are also affixed to the meat case, near their prize-winning products. On top of the meat counter are trophies. One of the newest ones commemorates the induction of Jake Sailer into the American Association of Meat Processors (AAMP) Cured Meats Hall of Fame in 2018.

Wisconsin is best known nationally for cheese quality, but meat matters here too. Sailer, the fifth-generation owner of this meat market in Pierce County, was the 14th Wisconsin butcher added to the hall of fame.

"We take a lot of pride in what we make," he says. "Wisconsin, by far, does the best of any meat association in the country." He says the expectation of quality is especially high for sausage, ham and bacon products.

At least 240 licensed meat establishments do business in Wisconsin, and the state's annual meat products competition is the largest in the nation. Just about one-fourth of the AAMP hall of fame inductees are in Wisconsin.

Top performers tend to do business in small towns. Consider Louie's Finer Meats in Cumberland, located in Barron County. This meat shop has won over 550 state, national and international awards. That includes the grand prize for sausage during this year's International Meat Trade Fair in Germany. The Muench family, whose products include 100 kinds of bratwurst, hosts a one-day Wurstfest—food, beer and games—every September (this year it's on Sept. 14).

International honors this year for Lake Geneva Country Meats, near the Wisconsin-Illinois border, included a trophy for overall product excellence. Founders John and Rita Leahy even got credit during a 2003 Wisconsin Meat Industry Hall of Fame induction for helping to make family-run markets like theirs "the envy of those in other states."

Now a younger generation runs the show at Lake Geneva Country Meats, and best-sellers are a mix of the traditional and unexpected. In the latter category: cherry bratwurst, which contains a beef-pork mix with a seasoning that is a family secret. [ew](#)

*Mary Bergin of Madison (roadstraveled.com) loves finding excellent reasons to travel to rural America, especially the Midwest and her home state of Wisconsin.*

## THE DISH WORD OF MOUTH



Bavette



Louie's Finer Meats



Lake Geneva Country Meats

### A NEW WAVE OF ARTISAN BUTCHERS

Consider this trio of nuevo butcher shops that are making a tasty mark on the world of charcuterie. Each works with small farms where animals are raised responsibly. Environmentally sustainable farming practices are a priority, too.

**Bavette La Boucherie, Milwaukee:** Karen Bell learned the trade through 20 years of work in cities from Chicago to Caracas. In 2013, she opened this restaurant with a "whole carcass" approach. She was a James Beard Best Chef: Midwest semifinalist in 2018. [bavettelaboucherie.com](#)

**The Conscious Carnivore, Madison:** Consumer education is a part of business as usual. Choices include heritage pork, grass-fed beef, soy-free chicken and no artificial hormones or antibiotics in meats. Save by buying in bulk; meat cutting advice is available. [conscious-carnivore.com](#)

**Underground Butcher, Madison:** Jonny Hunter, nicknamed "culinary warrior" by the University of Wisconsin-Madison's *On Wisconsin* magazine, is a self-taught butcher. The biz is part of Underground Collective, whose Forequarter restaurant made Bon Appetit's cut of the nation's 50 best. [undergroundbutcher.com](#)

### ...AND AN OLD-WORLD FAVORITE

Shop the three-block, cobblestone Old World Third Street in Milwaukee for a taste of German fare. That includes Usinger's, whose sausage-making began in 1880. More than 70 varieties are produced today. In the factory shop are daily specials, limited-stock items and multi-product gift boxes. [usingers.com](#)





# WISCONSIN WINTER SPORTS 101

Your primer on the state's best outdoor endeavors.

By Kevin Revolinski

*Wisconsin in winter has a "flurry" of activity. Welcome the snow and head out to enjoy some of the best outdoor experiences the state has to offer.*

## CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Host of the American Birkebeiner, the continent's largest ski race, The Birkie Trail in the Hayward area features over 60 miles of trails. Minocqua Winter Park is equally worthy: about 50 miles of groomed trails through 6,500 acres of winter wonderland. In southeastern Wisconsin, the Lapham Peak Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest offers 17 miles of easy to difficult Nordic trails, including a 2.5-mile loop lit for night skiing. Mirror Lake, near Wisconsin Dells, has groomed trails through the woods and around the lake.

## DOWNHILL SKIING

In the Midwest? You'd better believe it. Granite Peak in Wausau offers 68 runs, divided in thirds as beginner, moderate and difficult. The 18 slopes and trails at Mt. La Crosse range from beginner to "Damnation." The hill also has the second longest vertical drop in the state at 516 feet.

Just off Interstate 90/94, Cascade Mountain makes its own snow for its 47 trails and has an 900-foot tubing run as well. Tyrol Basin near Mount Horeb makes snow for 17 runs from beginner to expert, and offers lessons, night skiing and snowboarding.

## SLEDDING

Right next to Lambeau Field in Green Bay is Ariens Hill, where snowmakers take green weather out of the equation. The 46-foot-high tubing hill has two lanes and heated stairs to climb back to the top. Iverson Park Winter Sports Area in Stevens Point has rentals for its two 300-foot toboggan slides, plus areas for sleds and saucers, and other activities. Elver Park in Madison is the city's best sledding run.

## SNOWMOBILING

Far north in the so-called "snow belt" lies Vilas County and over 700 miles of groomed snowmobile trails, with great places to stop





The American Birkebeiner



Snowmobiling in Vilas County



Granite Peak Ski Area



High Cliff State Park

and eat or warm up along the way. Download a county-produced app with a map of the entire trail system to track yourself through it. You can crisscross the county from Eagle River to Manitowish Waters, and rentals are available in several towns, including Eagle River, St. Germain, and Land O' Lakes. Good to know: Anyone age 12 or older needs a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources snowmobile safety certificate before getting on a snowmobile. So, pick one up before you go!

## SNOWSHOEING

If there's snow, strap on the snowshoes; if not, you're good to go with hiking boots. Door County's Peninsula State Park has six trails from 0.5 to 2.2 miles, all of them rated easy.

Woodland Dunes Nature Center & Preserve in Two Rivers is a good option and hosts occasional candlelight hikes. High

Cliff State Park, 20 miles south of Appleton overlooking Lake Winnebago, has several trails, one maintained for snowshoes. Rocky Arbor State Park closes its park office in winter, but hiker entry to this wooded, former river gorge is still allowed.

## ICE SKATING

Madison has several rinks: the Edgewater Hotel, Elver Park and the lakeside lagoon at Tenney Park, known by many as the "ice-skating park." The 400 Block in downtown Wausau hosts a nice skating rink with plenty of places to warm up with food and drink right across the street. For a Rockefeller Center-style experience, go to Slice of Ice in Red Arrow Park in downtown Milwaukee. [ew](#)

*Kevin Revolinski is a Wisconsin outdoors writer and author of FalconGuides' "Paddling Wisconsin," a guidebook to the best paddling throughout the Badger State.*

## LUXE LIBATIONS

Warm yourself up from the inside with a few Wisconsin hot drinks. Made with whiskey, honey, lemon juice and hot water, the Hot Toddy sounds like remedy for a cold. **Hinterland Brewery** next to Ariens Hill in Green Bay offers variations on it. **The Coopers Tavern** in Madison is a snowball's throw from the Edgewater Hotel's skating rink. In downtown Wausau, you've got a hat-trick in **Mint Cafe**, **Malarkey's Pub** and **Daly's**.

A hot, frothy eggnog cousin with rum and brandy, the Tom and Jerry may be hard to come by outside of Wisconsin. **Mark's East Side** in Appleton still makes them, as does German-themed **Von Trier** in Milwaukee.

'Tis the season for hot chocolate. Check out **White Gull Inn** in Fish Creek near Peninsula State Park (and pair it with the cherry stuffed French toast). **Great Northern Coffee Traders** in Minocqua also serves a good mug. Hayward has so many options they host a Hot Chocolate Crawl during their A "Lure" of Lights holiday celebration (Nov. 29-Dec. 21). And snowmobilers—hit **Wolf Pack Cafe** in St Germain.





# EXPLORING NATIVE WISCONSIN

Check out these unique ways to experience the Native American cultural imprint throughout the state.

By Cindy Crain Newman

Wisconsin is home to the largest concentration of Native American tribes in any state east of the Mississippi—so wherever you wander in Wisconsin, you can find tribes' cultural museums, powwows, casinos and even the first tribal national park. Their culture is rich and their stories are fascinating—in fact, each of the state's 11 nations has its own government, language, traditions, customs and history. To learn more about them, visit these cultural hotbeds below.

**BAYFIELD:** The Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa played a critical role in creating our nation's first tribal national park (see sidebar). They hold an annual powwow in July and Cultural Days in September. They also operate the Legendary Waters Resort & Casino, which has gorgeous Lake Superior and Apostle Islands views. The casino has a tribe history wall, and the tribe manages a fish hatchery which is open for public tours. [redcliff-nsn.gov](http://redcliff-nsn.gov), [legendarywaters.com](http://legendarywaters.com)

**BLACK RIVER FALLS:** The Ho-Chunk Nation annually sponsors powwows during Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends at the Andrew Blackhawk Memorial Pow Wow Grounds. They also operate six well-known gaming complexes throughout the state. [ho-chunknation.com](http://ho-chunknation.com), [ho-chunkgaming.com](http://ho-chunkgaming.com)

**CRANDON:** The Forest County Potawatomi Cultural Center, Library and Museum houses 4,000 library books on the history

and culture of the Great Lakes Indians. It also hosts language and cultural classes and ceremonies. [fcpotawatomi.com/culture-and-history](http://fcpotawatomi.com/culture-and-history)

**DE PERE:** Say “Sakoli” (sa-go-lee, which is Oneida for “hello”) to the Oneida Nation Cultural Tour, which celebrates these people that came to the Green Bay area in 1823. Visitors see a traditional longhouse and 100-plus-year-old log homes originally inhabited on the reservation. More than 100 buffalo can be seen at the Buffalo Overlook. An amphitheater is the setting for musical acts, storytellers, and colorful smoke dancers. Also check out the Oneida Museum, the nation's apple orchard and the Oneida Market, that sells essential oils, teas and local meats. [exploreoneida.com](http://exploreoneida.com)

**DANBURY:** At Forts Folle Avoine Historical Park, costumed interpreters describe daily life of 1800's-era Ojibwe at two reconstructed fur trading posts and Woodland Indian Village. The trading post was only rediscovered by archeologists in 1969, along with trade beads, axes, gun parts, clay smoking pipes and other artifacts. Competitions and demonstrations are also held year-round, and wild rice pancake breakfasts are hosted on selected Sundays in the summer. [theforts.org](http://theforts.org)

**KESHENA:** The Menominee Logging Camp Museum is one of the largest and most complete logging museums in the United States, bringing to life the history of Wisconsin's first industry. The nearby Menominee Cultural Museum is the focal point of the Menominee



tribe's culture, history and language. Try gaming or see headliner acts at the Menominee Casino Resort, or explore the Northwoods by rafting through the reservation's sustainable forests along the Wolf River. [menominee-nsn.gov](http://menominee-nsn.gov), [menomineecasinoresort.com](http://menomineecasinoresort.com)

**LAC DU FLAMBEAU:** The Ojibwe are one of three nations of the Anishinaabe, along with the Potawatomi and the Ottawa. The George W. Brown, Jr. Ojibwe Museum & Cultural Center's exhibits celebrate their culture with arts and crafts, year-round programs and classes, and a gift shop. The nearby Waaswaaganing Indian Bowl Living Arts & Culture Center has been holding powwows in the summers since the 1950s along the shores of Long Interlaken Lake, as well as hosting a Wild Rice Festival powwow in September. The Lake of the Torches Resort Casino (operated by the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa) is nearby. [ldfmuseum.com](http://ldfmuseum.com), [indianbowlproject.org](http://indianbowlproject.org), [lakeofthetorches.com](http://lakeofthetorches.com)

**MADISON, BLACK RIVER FALLS, NEKOOSA, TOMAH, WISCONSIN DELLS AND WITTENBERG:** Ho-Chunk Gaming Madison is the only Wisconsin casino dedicated to Class II gaming (where players win against other players rather than against the casino). An expansion is being planned. There are five other Ho-Chunk Gaming casinos around the state. [ho-chunkgaming.com](http://ho-chunkgaming.com)

**MILWAUKEE/WEST ALLIS:** The state's largest Native American cultural event is the Indian Summer Festival in Milwaukee, held at the Summerfest grounds. The annual Winter Powwow is held at Wisconsin State Fair Park in West Allis in March. Also, the ever-popular Potawatomi Hotel & Casino (operated by the Forest County Potawatomi) is right next to downtown Milwaukee and attracts more than six million visitors annually. [indiansummer.org/winter-powwow](http://indiansummer.org/winter-powwow), [paysbig.com](http://paysbig.com) ew

*Cindy Crain Newman is a Racine County-based freelance writer who has covered agriculture, the arts, and travel for Midwestern newspapers and magazines.*

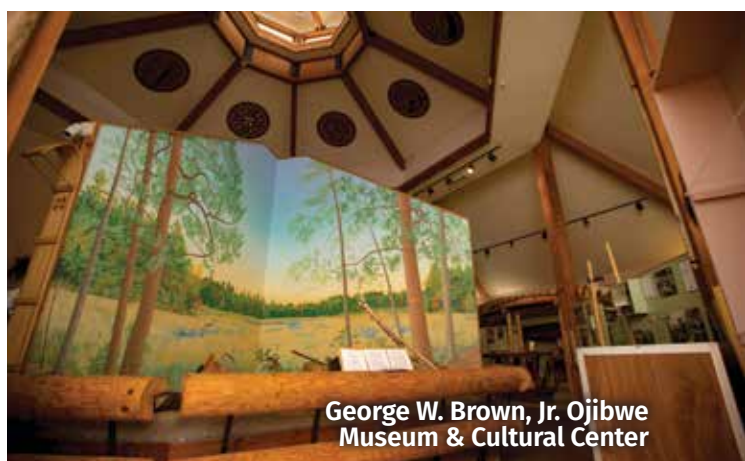
## OUR NATION'S FIRST TRIBAL NATIONAL PARK

The first tribal national park in the United States was formed from an original parcel of reservation land of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Today, almost 300 acres around Frog Bay near Bayfield are protected from development as the Frog Bay Tribal National Park. The natural features of this park include a boreal forest, coastal estuary and a three-quarter-mile stretch of secluded Lake Superior shoreline. Online maps show rustic mainland hiking trails which give rare glimpses of five of the islands of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. The Apostle Islands themselves are rich in history, as the Ojibwe were the original inhabitants, according to their written and oral history. [redcliff-nsn.gov/divisions/tndr/fbtpnp.htm](http://redcliff-nsn.gov/divisions/tndr/fbtpnp.htm)

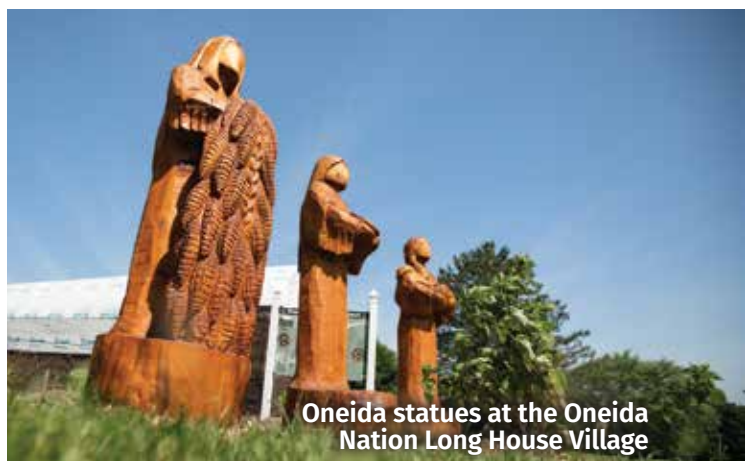


Interested in Wisconsin's 11 Native American tribes? Find out more about them at the Native American Tourism of Wisconsin's website at [natow.org](http://natow.org).

Oneida Powwow



George W. Brown, Jr. Ojibwe Museum & Cultural Center



Oneida statues at the Oneida Nation Long House Village



Indian Summer Festival





# THE 2019 Best of *experience* = WISCONSIN = READER'S SURVEY

These 19 all-stars  
were voted the winners  
in food and drink, what to  
see and do, and where to  
rest your head.

By Shayna Mace





Everyone has their favorite eatery, activity, beverage—even cheese. And you, our Experience Wisconsin readers, have shared your top picks in our first annual reader's choice survey. Congratulations to Experience Wisconsin's Best Of 2019!

## FOOD AND DRINK

### ► It's Fishy

Although they're known foremost for their Milwaukee-brewed beers, **Lakefront Brewery's** Friday night fish fry is clearly a crowd favorite. With live polka music, family-style seating and (of course)—Lakefront brews—what more could you want? Housed in the historic Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company building, the industrial vibe with Milwaukee River views equal a cool way to spend a Friday night. [lakefrontbrewery.com](http://lakefrontbrewery.com)



### ▲ It's Not Old Fashioned

You'd think a place that's named **The Old Fashioned** would make a mean Old Fashioned—and you'd be right. This homage to the classic Wisconsin supper club located on the Capitol Square in Madison is a bustling eatery and a must-visit when you're in the capital city. But with eight Old Fashioneds to choose from (The Applejack, Orange Rum and the rye bourbon among them)—how will you pick? [theoldfashioned.com](http://theoldfashioned.com)

### Cheers for Cheese

**Renard's Cheese** has a hearty operation with two stores, a factory tour (at their Algoma location) and a deli (at the Sturgeon Bay location). The shops have specialty cheeses, homemade sausages and other specialty food products. The deli's menu is stuffed full of cheesy dishes like sandwiches, wraps, pizza and of course—mac 'n cheese. Cheese and wine tastings are also held daily. [renardscheese.com](http://renardscheese.com)

### Best Brews

One of the state's premier craft brewers, **New Glarus Brewing Company** celebrates its 26th anniversary this year. Stop by their New Glarus brewery year-round to do a tasting, sip a pint, pick up some memorabilia or take a self-guided brewery tour. Amazingly, New Glarus brews are still only distributed in Wisconsin, so we get to keep this brewery all to ourselves. [newglarusbrewing.com](http://newglarusbrewing.com)

### Super Supper Club

The supper club is in Wisconsin's DNA. It's an excellent way to while away a Friday or Saturday night, enjoying a fish fry or prime rib special and your favorite craft beer or cocktail. And Milwaukee's **Five O'Clock Steakhouse** is where it's at. In operation and family-owned since 1946, expect hearty cuts of meat, personalized service and a cozy wood-paneled bar—a perfect spot for catching up with friends. [fiveoclocksteakhouse.com](http://fiveoclocksteakhouse.com)

### Fetching Restaurant

The clubby, comfortable atmosphere at **Geneva ChopHouse** at Lake Geneva's Grand Geneva Resort & Spa only adds to the deliciousness of your experience that's sure to include salad, seafood, steak or a sumptuous dessert. Pair your dinner with a Grandhatten or a Rambler cocktail, that's made with their limited-edition Grand Geneva Select 25 Bourbon. [grandgeneva.com/restaurants/geneva-chophouse](http://grandgeneva.com/restaurants/geneva-chophouse)



### ► Winning Wines

The rolling, Sonoma County-esque views at **Wollersheim Winery & Distillery** in Prairie du Sac are only part of the reason you should venture out to this Wisconsin winery, in operation since 1972. Tastings and tours are held year-round, and their events calendar stays full in the fall and winter with their Ice Wine Release and Ruby Nouveau Release events and their Vintage Christmas. [wollersheim.com](http://wollersheim.com)



## THINGS TO DO



### ◄ Perfect Park

Considered the state's "most complete park" by the Wisconsin DNR, **Peninsula State Park's** 3,775 acres in Fish Creek offer camping, hiking, biking, sandy beaches, a summer theater (the Northern Sky Theater), golf course, lighthouse, observation tower and eight miles of shoreline. Anyone up for a hike? [dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/peninsula](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/peninsula)

### ► Hit the Links

As the host of the forthcoming 2020 Ryder Cup, it's no surprise Kohler's **Whistling Straits** is tops for Wisconsin golf. (It's also hosted three PGA Championships and the U.S. Senior Open). The Straits and The Irish courses are both well-known for their challenging play and breathtaking, scenic views, borrowing from Irish links courses. [americanclubresort.com/golf/whistling-straits](http://americanclubresort.com/golf/whistling-straits)







### ◀ We Like to Hike and Bike

Considered the first rail-to-trail in the U.S., the **Elroy-Sparta State Trail's** 32.5-mile route is perennially popular. The trail has three rock railroad tunnels (which are each over 140 years old) and passes through five small towns. The La Crosse River State Trail and the 400 State Trail connect at either end in Sparta and Elroy, respectively. [dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/elroysparta](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/elroysparta)

### ▼ Much-Loved Museum

The **EAA Aviation Museum** in Oshkosh is a favorite destination for aircraft enthusiasts and families alike. More than 200 historic aircraft are on display, and interactive exhibits (some with flight simulators) entertain everyone. The EAA's annual AirVenture show in the summer is another way to view historic planes, watch air shows and even take short leisure flights. [eaa.org](http://eaa.org)



### ▲ Fresh Festival

It's hard to think of Milwaukee without conjuring up images of **Summerfest**, the city's signature 11-day music festival, held annually the last week of June into early July, right on the shores of Lake Michigan. One ticket gets you admission to eight stages chock-full of music acts of all genres, plus food galore and shopping areas. The American Family Insurance Amphitheater hosts big-name headliners (for an additional ticket fee) like Jennifer Lopez, Lionel Richie and The Killers. [summerfest.com](http://summerfest.com)

### ▶ City to Visit

**Lake Geneva**, a dazzling resort town known for its idyllic Shore Path, quaint downtown and of course, the 5,400-acre Geneva Lake, is an ideal getaway any time of year. The aforementioned nearly 26-mile-long Shore Path weaves in and out of lakefront properties (some of which are historic Gilded Age mansions built by wealthy Chicagoans) and is unique because every lake home owner has to preserve and maintain their portion of the path—and keep it open to the public. [visitolakegeneva.com](http://visitolakegeneva.com)



### ◀ Amazing Attraction

Packers fans are known as some of the most loyal in the NFL, and **Lambeau Field** celebrates the Green and Gold. It's even a destination on non-game days, with a restaurant, pro shop, Packers Hall of Fame and stadium tours offered year-round. Be sure to visit the adjacent Titletown District that has year-round events as well as dining, shopping and lodging options. [packers.com/lambeau-field](http://packers.com/lambeau-field)



## WHERE TO STAY

### Refreshing Resort

Awarded a Condé Nast Traveler Reader's Choice Award in 2018, **The Osthoff Resort** is set on 500 feet of picturesque Elkhart Lake shoreline. Visit the Aspira Spa, frolic on the sandy beach or rent a kayak or paddleboard in the summer, or hone your cooking skills during a class at their on-site L'ecole de la Maison Cooking School. [osthoff.com](http://osthoff.com)

### ► Beautiful Boutique Hotels

It's fun to stay at a property with a story, and La Crosse's **The Charmant** (top) and Milwaukee's **The Iron Horse Hotel** (bottom) both had previous lives as a candy factory and warehouse, respectively. The two properties tied for readers' favorite boutique properties and with cool historic details, delicious dining and bar/lounge options, plus the city at your feet—it's worth a stay at one (or both). [thecharmanthotel.com](http://thecharmanthotel.com), [theironhorsehotel.com](http://theironhorsehotel.com)



### ◀ Super Spas

Set in a tranquil 80-acre pine forest in Wisconsin Dells, **Sundara Inn & Spa** offers a much-needed retreat from the daily grind (they're also tech-free in common areas, too!). Find innovative spa services, a new salt treatment therapy room and an indoor/outdoor pool with swim-up bar. Readers also loved **Kohler Waters Spa** (with two locations, next to the American Club in Kohler and at Green Bay's Lodge Kohler), that have signature water-inspired treatment rooms and services (outfitted with KOHLER fixtures, of course), soothing common areas and beautiful relaxation pools. [sundaraspa.com](http://sundaraspa.com), [lodgekohler.com](http://lodgekohler.com), [americanclubresort.com/spa/kohler-waters-spa](http://americanclubresort.com/spa/kohler-waters-spa) **ew**

SUNDARA SPA: ELIASSEN PHOTOGRAPHS THE CHARMANT: THE CHARMANT THE IRON HORSE HOTEL: VISIT MILWAUKEE

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Children's Museum of La Crosse

# Playing All Day

◎ AT THE STATE'S ◎

## Children's Museums

Eight spots for discovery-based adventures.

By Jessica Steinhoff

Museums aren't just for grown-ups. These Wisconsin-based children's museums provide numerous ways for families to laugh, learn and play together.

### BARABOO CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

What began as a pop-up museum debuted in a permanent space in Baraboo Aug. 3. The exhibit lineup includes a STEM lab, an art station and a room all about trains—including a giant wooden model kids and adults can ride.

A circus exhibit honors Baraboo's history, including the Ringling Brothers' legacy, with carnival mirrors, costumes and interactive displays. The area's agricultural history is woven into a farm-themed exhibit that includes a garden to harvest, play food to sell and tractors kids can pedal from place to place.

*1212 8th St., Baraboo, [baraboochildrensmuseum.com](http://baraboochildrensmuseum.com)*

### BLACK EARTH CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Located in sleepy Black Earth, about 25 minutes west of Madison, this interactive kid's play place is housed in a historic building that was once home to The Patrons' Mercantile Co-Op, the first cooperative in the U.S.

The wide-open museum is easily navigable with separate rooms and areas arranged into themes—all directly related to Wisconsin. Toddlers will enjoy





Baraboo Children's Museum



Black Earth Children's Museum



Building for Kids Children's Museum

the Bambino Barn filled with soft blocks and stuffed animals, the Native American habitat with instruments and baby dolls, dramatic play area and mini mart grocery store. Slightly older kids can get their energy out in the elevated tree house with slide and cargo-net bridge, climbing wall, a simulated two-story marsh lookout and fishing pond. There's even a block of science exhibits that appeals to older kids about gravity and mass, constellations, Wisconsin caves and more.

*1131 Mills St., Black Earth, [blackearthchildrensmuseum.org](http://blackearthchildrensmuseum.org)*

## BUILDING FOR KIDS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Located in downtown Appleton, the BFK makes learning a blast with games, activities and pets such as a bearded dragon. These are just a few of the reasons it attracted 116,000 visitors in 2018, says marketing director Katy Compton.

"Our fire truck is an all-time favorite for a lot of families," she says. "It's a real fire truck that was modified to include two steering wheels and a ramp so kids with disabilities can come up and steer, too."

The Innovation Lab—a hub for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)—offers different programs each week, all of which encourage kids to discover how things work. Outsmarting a dragon is the quest at Castle Adventure, a game featuring mini golf, and helping toys feel better is the doll hospital's mission. The littlest visitors flock to Babies & Toddlers Around the World, which has rain sticks, a mountain slide and a wavy walkway that's oh-so-fun to crawl on.

*100 W. College Ave., Appleton, [buildingforkids.org](http://buildingforkids.org)*

## CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF FOND DU LAC

Creativity abounds at this sprawling collection of exhibits and hands-on activities. In addition to serving a wide range of ages, the museum offers noise-reducing headphones and other tools to create a sensory-friendly experience for kids who need it.

The Great Toddler Reef captivates the youngest visitors with suspended jellyfish, a seashell island and bubble mirrors, while older kids become innovators at Wagener's Workshop, a makerspace filled with Imagination Blocks, LEGOs, Strawbees and other building materials, plus two friendly robots. Elsewhere in the museum, children can produce a radio broadcast or a Broadway show starring puppets.

Need some fresh air? The 10,000-square-foot WinnePLAYgo space offers opportunities to race around a Trike Track, customize a scarecrow and enjoy a picnic lunch.

*75 W. Scott St., Fond du Lac, [cmfdl.org](http://cmfdl.org)*

## CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF GREEN BAY

Just three children's museums in the United States have exhibits outside, and this is one of them, according to event specialist Heather Heil.

"We do some really fun activities in our outdoor space, which we call the Discovery Center," she says. "Jaire Alexander of the Green Bay Packers did goat yoga there with us, and we've also used it for flying kites and a touch-a-truck event."





Children's Museum of Fond du Lac



Madison Children's Museum

The Discovery Center is also home to a sensory trail families can explore with their eyes, noses and ears.

“One feature of that is a sensory wall where kids play music and make noise with pots, pans and tubes,” Heil says. “In addition to learning about sounds, it’s a chance for them to work on their fine motor skills.”

Inside the museum, kids can explore the digestive system in an exhibit with a giant tongue that doubles as a slide. There’s also a 1950’s-inspired diner complete with jukebox and hula hoops, a vet clinic featuring medical instruments and a microscope, and a garage filled with car parts, tools and opportunities to play mechanic.  
*1230 Bay Beach Rd., Green Bay, [gbchildrensmuseum.org](http://gbchildrensmuseum.org)*

## CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF LA CROSSE

Children's Museum of La Crosse has not one but three floors of interactive exhibits, including a dinosaur maze, a construction crane and an Imagination Playground stocked with giant blocks.

Be sure to visit the Luckey Climber, a work of art featuring close-up pictures of 60 different animals’ eyes. Custom-designed by architect Spencer Luckey, it’s made for kids to clamber up as they learn about nature. Another highlight is a Mississippi River exhibit where children can drive trains, float boats and direct the flow of water with dams and locks.

This museum is also a good choice for children with disabilities. Most exhibits are wheelchair accessible, and guests can request backpacks filled with timers, ear muffs, fidgets and other supplies for kids on the autism spectrum.  
*207 5th Ave. South, La Crosse, [funmuseum.org](http://funmuseum.org)*

## MADISON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

This colorful building on Madison’s Capitol Square is a beloved gathering place for both kids and adults. With a rooftop featuring

a garden, a windmill, a fossil dig and some very friendly chickens, it’s a must-visit if you’re downtown for the Dane County Farmers Market or a performance at Overture Center.

Inside, Possibleopolis teams science and technology with collaborative problem-solving in a “city” of puzzles and games. Kids can sprint in a human-sized gerbil wheel, move a cow with pulleys and scramble up a two-story climbing structure, among other adventures. From Coops to Cathedrals invites children to explore the farm Frank Lloyd Wright called home as a child. Activities include making an architectural blueprint, assembling a stained-glass window and racing iceboats across a lake.

Don’t miss the Wilderdest, an exploration space where tiny tots scamper across a bone bridge, curl up in a reading nest and visit activity huts where they can play music and rock baby dolls. There’s even a water dome where toddlers can dump, pour and splash like it’s going out of style.  
*100 N. Hamilton St., Madison, [madisonchildrensmuseum.org](http://madisonchildrensmuseum.org)*

## NORTHWOODS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

A popular destination for lake-bound families, this Eagle River attraction is a fun place to learn about colors, numbers and, of course, fishing.

The fishing pond is a big draw, but visitors are just skimming the surface if that’s all they explore in this 24-exhibit playland. A grocery store gives pint-sized shoppers a chance to push carts and make nice with vegetables, while an oversized Lite-Brite wall, a bike-powered turbine and a wind maze teach kids about energy. Kids can practice eagle calls or build a nest in a bird-themed exhibit. There are also spots for the littles to play dress-up, play with shadows and surround themselves with giant bubbles.  
*346 W. Division St., Eagle River, [northwoodschildrensmuseum.com](http://northwoodschildrensmuseum.com) ew*

*Jessica Steinhoff is a former Chicagoan who lives in Wisconsin, where she writes about travel, parenting and the arts. Learn more at [jessicasteinhoff.com](http://jessicasteinhoff.com).*





# *Rolling Along the River*

The Great River Road is an American treasure, and lucky us—a portion of it winds along the Mississippi River on the state's western border. Here's your five-day itinerary for what not to miss.

By Kevin Revolinski



The Mississippi is a grand river, and along its length is a truly American road trip: the Great River Road. Wisconsin's portion of this scenic byway covers 250 miles and passes through 33 towns along the way. From where the Mississippi exits Minnesota and meets the St. Croix to become the state border, the driving route continues south, primarily on State Highway 35 until a turn on WI-133 in the final stretch. Natural beauty abounds with scenic overlooks, parks and preserves spread throughout, and there's no shortage of good eats, local crafts and cozy accommodations. And to top it all off, September is Drive the Great River Road Month. So, what are you waiting for?





## Day 1: Prescott to Pepin (44 miles)

Perk up for the journey in Prescott at **The Twisted Oak Coffee House** and gather intel about the trip ahead at the **Great River Road Visitor & Learning Center**. Get views of Lake Pepin, a dammed portion of the river, as you pass Bay City.

Whether you prefer custard pies, lavender ginger sugar cookies or just a loaf of sourdough bread, **Smiling Pelican Bakeshop** is worth a visit in Maiden Rock. For breakfast or bar food, **Ole's Bar & Grill** will fill you up. The 400-foot-high **Maiden Rock Bluff** offers a one-mile out-and-back trail amid 250-year-old cedars and nesting eagles. Near Stockton stop at the hilltop orchard of **Maiden Rock Winery & Cidery** for apples, cider and wine tastings. Stay the night in Pepin at **Harbor Hill Inn** or various vacation rentals.





## Day 2: Pepin to Fountain City (33 miles)

Pepin is home to the **Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum**; learn about that life on the prairie. Taste more wine or an Italian meal at the lovely **Villa Belleza**.

Next stop: Nelson. Hit up **Nelson Cheese Factory** for ice cream, soups and salads, and a selection of Wisconsin cheeses, or for a fuller menu, go to **Beth's Twin Bluff Café**. Next up is Alma where you can see barges passing through Lock and Dam #4, and view trains from a bridge over the tracks. Drive or hike up to **Buena Vista Park** for the best view of the day. The unexpected **Castlerock Museum** displays antique armor and weaponry. Nature lovers should check out **Wings Over Alma**, for both art and nature viewing. Hiking at nearby **Merrick State Park** offers two miles of trails with river views. Stay the night in cottages overlooking Fountain City at **Hawk's View**, or at their lodges outside town near the affiliated **Seven Hawks Vineyards**.



## Day 3: Fountain City to La Crosse (41 miles)

For an odd roadside attraction, visit **The Rock in the House** or **Elmer's Auto & Toy Museum**. For a meal and a craft beer, visit **The Monarch Public House**, the oldest operating tavern in Wisconsin.

Down the river lies **The Trempealeau Hotel**, which offers a place to eat, drink and stay the night. Their meatless Walnut Burger is legendary. But campers should consider riverside **Perrot State Park** and its trails and scenic overlooks.

For stylish digs in La Crosse, check into **The Charmant** hotel, an 1898 candy factory turned boutique hotel in one of the largest historic downtowns in the state. Walk to shops and browse for a good read at **Pearl Street Books**. Craft beer lovers have three breweries to visit—**Turtle Stack**, **Pearl Street** and **608 Brewing**; and the giant six-pack at **City Brewery** is a typical photo stop. Find a fish fry or weekend brunch on the river at **The Waterfront Restaurant and Tavern**. A cruise on the **La Crosse Queen** is an excellent option for getting on the water (until late October). Classic cars await at the **Dahl Auto Museum**, and sunset and city views from 590-foot **Grandad Bluff** are a must.







## Day 4: La Crosse to Prairie du Chien (59 miles)

Just south of La Crosse up in the bluffs is the **Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe**, a stately neoclassical church and pilgrimage site. South of Genoa, pass Lock #8 on the river. Keep your eyes open for eagles. **Ferryville Cheese** is a good place to stop and fill up—both your gas tank and your cooler. Watch for **Spring Lake Inn**, as you are approaching Prairie du Chien; an unassuming roadhouse with great food and a good crowd.

In Prairie du Chien, on St. Feriole Island, visit **Villa Louis**, the 19th-century estate of a successful frontier entrepreneur. For more history, there's the **Fort Crawford Museum**. Foodies should stop at **Valley Fish & Cheese** for excellent smoked fish (or salmon jerky!) and more. Dinner is recommended at **The Barn**; watch for weekly fish fry and prime rib specials. Stay the night in any of number of properties, including **River District Hotel** and several chain hotels.

## Great River Road Annual Fall & Winter Festivals & Events

Villa Louis Carriage Classic, Prairie du Chien, Sept. 6-8

Prescott Daze & Classic Car Show, Prescott, Sept. 6-8

Art on the Kinni, River Falls, Sept. 7

Bacon Bash, River Falls, Sept. 14-15

Laura Ingalls Wilder Days, Pepin, Sept. 14-16

Fall Fest, Ferryville, Sept. 21

Great River Road Fall Fest, Stonefield at Cassville, Sept. 21

Driftless Area Art Festival, Soldiers Grove, Sept. 21-22

Oktoberfest, La Crosse, Sept. 26-29

Apple Festival, Gays Mills, Sept. 27-29

Fall Fresh Art Tour, Pepin & Pierce Counties, Oct. 4-6

Flyway Film Festival, Stockholm, Oct. 10-13

Oktoberfest, Prairie du Chien, Oct. 19

Driftless Area Film Festival, Vernon County, Oct. 31-Nov. 3

River Dazzle, River Falls, Nov. 29

Rotary Lights, La Crosse, Nov. 29-Dec. 31

Carp Fest, Prairie du Chien, Dec. 26-31

Kickapoo Valley Reserve Winterfest, La Farge, Jan. 11, 2020

Bald Eagle Appreciation Days, Prairie du Chien, Feb. 22-23, 2020

Bald Eagle Day, Ferryville, Mar. 7, 2020

Roots and Bluegrass Festival, River Falls, Apr. 17-19, 2020



## Day 5: Prairie du Chien to Potosi (39 miles)

Just south of Prairie du Chien, **Wyalusing State Park** lies where the Wisconsin River meets the Mississippi. Camping and hiking are great options here, but at the very least stop for the perfect scenic overlook from atop the park's western bluffs.

Just before Bloomington, the Great River Road turns west on WI-133, but it's worth your time to continue into town to **Ma's Bakery** for fresh bread and donuts, and their breakfast and lunch menu. **Nelson Dewey State Park** borders the river and offers views from its 500-foot bluff. The house of the governor for which the park is named is here, as is **Stonefield**, a re-creation of a 19th-century village. (The latter, however, closes for the season at the end of September.) The state park has no river access, but **Riverside Park** in Cassville does. Also in town is **J&J Sandbar**, a good bar and grill stop.

Potosi is home to the **National Brewery Museum**, a fantastic collection of classic brewery items from across the country. The museum shares the building with craft-beer **Potosi Brewery** and its excellent restaurant, plus a **Great River Road Interpretive Center**. Drive out on the point at **Potosi Recreational Area** south of town for one last close-up look at the river and a bit of wildlife viewing. The **Potosi Inn** offers a nice stop for the night. The last stop on this tour, before connecting into US-151, is Dickeyville and its quirky **1930 grotto** fashioned with an assortment of buttons, stones, bottlecaps and more. Consider **Katina's Kitchen** for breakfast and a stop at **Hauber Brand Meats** to stock up on meats and cheeses. [ew](#)








# WINE(D)ING

## *Around Wisconsin*

Fall and winter is the perfect time to visit a new winery to expand your tasting palate—and savor Wisconsin's scenery.

By Kristine Hansen & Shayna Mace



**W**hether you're gazing at the icy blue waters off the coastline of Lake Michigan, taking in breathtaking cliffs along the Mississippi River or driving through flat farmlands bursting with fall colors, there's always a winery nearby. In fact, the state has over 100 for you to sample.

And Wisconsin wines needn't have the reputation of sweet fruit wines; in fact, winemakers are crafting exciting blends that marry together grapes grown in-state with varietals from far-flung regions that put a sophisticated spin on your tasting experience. Here's a quick taste of 11 wineries from different regions that are worth sampling.





Door Peninsula Winery



Elmaro Vineyard

## DOOR COUNTY

### Door Peninsula Winery

As one of Door County's oldest wineries, Door Peninsula Winery in Sturgeon Bay was founded in 1974. Today's visitors are treated to a tasting experience inside a renovated two-room schoolhouse dating back to 1868. Moving beyond traditional wine grapes, many of the wines are crafted from locally grown fruit (like the county's signature cherries). Still others feature Wisconsin-grown grapes, such as St. Pepin and Marechal Foch. In 2011, Door County Distillery launched under the same roof, which also offers tastings. [dcwine.com](http://dcwine.com)

### Stone's Throw Winery

Since 1997, Stone's Throw Winery in Egg Harbor has been a favorite attraction of many Door County vacationers, thanks to its relaxing gardens with art sculptures and a bocce-ball court. Winery tours—in addition to tastings—are offered at the winery. You can easily spend half a day here, starting with lunch in the tapas bar, or pizza baked in an oak-barrel oven and topped with ingredients grown in the winery's gardens. [stonestrowwinery.com](http://stonestrowwinery.com)

## EASTERN

### The Chiselled Grape Winery

The Chiselled Grape Winery, open since 2011, is far from a one-hit wonder: it produces 32 wines. Taste many of them at the tasting room, tucked into a home along Washington Avenue in downtown Cedarburg, with an outdoor patio. A repeat award-winner for its wines, the line-up includes The Little Red Dress (a red-wine blend) as well as more familiar varietals (Riesling, Malbec and Pinot Noir, etc.) and cold-weather grapes like Marechal Foch and Frontenac. [chiselledgrape.com](http://chiselledgrape.com)

## FOX VALLEY

### Vines & Rushes Winery

Yoga in the vineyard June through August, wood-fired pizzas hot out of the oven, cooking classes, five-course pairing dinners, craft fairs and live-music concerts are among the events hosted at Vines & Rushes Winery in Ripon, open since 2012. The tasting room is adjacent to the winery's four-acre estate vineyard. Grapes grown there—cultivated just for the cooler climate, such as St. Pepin, LaCrescent, Frontenac Gris, LaCrosse, Marquette and Petite Pearl—are used to make a portfolio of red and white wines. Some are an homage to Wisconsin history, like the 2018 Little White Red, in honor of the country's Republican Party's founding in a Ripon schoolhouse in 1854. [vinesandrushes.com](http://vinesandrushes.com)

## NORTHWEST

### Elmaro Vineyard

With the tagline "Your Napa, close to home," Elmaro Vineyard's apt description of its Trempealeau digs welcomes visitors with open arms. View the stunning vineyard for acres around you, take a seat on the spacious stone patio to enjoy a bottle (their Red Tail Reserve or La Crescent, perhaps?) or book an individual tasting, group tasting with light food pairings, two-hour educational class or picnic package to immerse yourself in Wisconsin's friendly wine culture. As with many of the state's vineyards, this one's a family affair too, with two generations running the business—which was named after a 300-year-old Elmaro lone white pine tree on the family's homestead. [elmarovineyard.com](http://elmarovineyard.com)





**Dancing Dragonfly Winery**



**Wollersheim Winery & Distillery**

### Dancing Dragonfly Winery

Not only is St. Croix Falls' Dancing Dragonfly Winery a superb spot to taste wines, but their events calendar is chock-full of events year-round—special dinners, live music, art experiences and even comedy acts can all be experienced—while sipping on your favorite grape-crafted libation. The dance-themed wines (Polka, Jeté, Cancan, Waltz and Foxtrot, among many others) offer something for any oenophile, and tours can be paired up with wine tastings with or without food—as the on-site café also whips up paninis, pizzas, wraps, cheeses and desserts. And with many awards under their belt, the winery's sphere of influence stretches beyond just the Dairy State's borders. [dancingdragonflywinery.com](http://dancingdragonflywinery.com)

## SOUTH CENTRAL

### Wollersheim Winery & Distillery

For the closest thing to Sonoma located here in the Midwest, head to Wollersheim, where you'll take in gently sloping hills covered in grapevines, lush trees and flowers, and a California-inspired tasting room and outdoor seating area. As one of Wisconsin's most well-known wineries, its history stretches back to the 1840s, when Hungarian immigrant

Agoston Haraszthy discovered the land the winery sits on today and planted it with grapevines. He eventually headed to California in 1849 where he also had a hand in developing their winemaking industry. Wollersheim's tour celebrates its storied past and also delves into when the current owners, the Wollersheim family, took it over in 1972 and have slowly built up the winery to win countless awards and even opened a distillery on-property, too. Their signature Prairie Fumé, a light, fruity semi-dry white wine, just celebrated its 30th anniversary this past June. [wollersheim.com](http://wollersheim.com)

### Drumlin Ridge Winery

Set in the tranquil countryside of Waunakee, a suburb of Madison, Drumlin Ridge offers a comfortable tasting experience in a stylish tasting room—all while enjoying views of the surrounding vineyard. Wines are made with grapes grown on-site (like Marquette, Osceola Muscat, Frontenac Gris and more) and other varietals are made with California grapes during their harvest season. Wines can be paired with small bites—like cheese boards, flatbreads, a hummus plate and cheese curds—for an enjoyable way to while away a weekend afternoon. [drumlinridgewinery.com](http://drumlinridgewinery.com)

## SOUTHEAST

### AepelTreow Winery & Distillery

Snug in Racine County, AepelTreow Winery & Distillery is an offshoot of Brightonwoods, an apple orchard home to 200-some antique and heirloom varietals. Charles and Milissa McGonegal debuted the winery in 2002, inside a vintage barn that serves as the tasting room, and is on the same property as the orchard. Drop by the tasting room—weekends only—to sample a flight of six ciders, sparkling apple wine or still apple wines. [aepeltreow.com](http://aepeltreow.com)

### Pieper Porch Winery & Vineyard

Located in the town of Mukwonago, which is in Waukesha County 30 miles from downtown Milwaukee, the visitor experience at Pieper Porch Winery & Vineyard is designed to be relaxing. It starts with a glass of wine—maybe the signature Lemon Wine or a pour of the River Road Red?—on the tasting room's namesake porch. Then it might evolve into a hike on the 11-acre wooded property bordering Vernon Marsh. Cold-weather grape varietals like Marquette and La Crosse are grown in the estate vineyard. [pieperporchwinery.com](http://pieperporchwinery.com)

### Studio Winery

The couple who owns Studio Winery are passionate about art and music—which shows in the visitor experience. Live music as well as art classes are just two activities that go beyond tasting wine. An extensive collection of locally made art is also retailed in the tasting room. Wines are actually made on-site, in the heart of downtown Lake Geneva. Although the first vintage was released in 2007, Studio Winery didn't move into its current tasting room (a former machine shop) until 2012. [studiowinery.com](http://studiowinery.com) **ew**

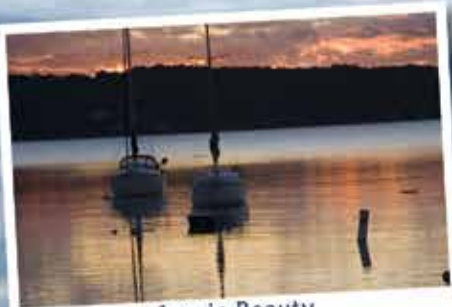


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[www.visitportwashington.com](http://www.visitportwashington.com)



On the Frank Lloyd Wright Trail

## Racine

Take the Frank Lloyd Wright Trail through Racine County to experience three of the legendary architect's most celebrated works: SC Johnson Administration Building, SC Johnson Research Tower and the Wingspread home.

1.800.C-RACINE (272-2463)

[AboutRacine.com](http://AboutRacine.com)







## ***Curvalicious:***

This drone shot of Highway 42 in Door County shows the road with a ribbon-like effect as it weaves through fall foliage.

**[@jschrophoto]**

## ***Sun-Dappled Surrealism:***

The Bay Creek neighborhood in Madison bursts with icy color—even during a winter thaw.

**[@fowlerkenton]**

## ***Painted Clouds:***

North Twin Lake in Phelps is gently illuminated by the sunset in early fall.

**[@kaylaeart]**

## ***City in Repose:***

Milwaukee's lakefront, shot by drone, shows the city covered in snow last February.

**[@ryanyatso]**



A man in a dark suit jacket over a white t-shirt is celebrating with his right fist raised in the air, shouting with a wide smile. He is surrounded by friends who are also smiling and looking at him. They are at a casino table with blue felt, where some cards and chips are visible. In the background, there are slot machines and the vibrant, colorful lights of a casino floor.

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