

Bountiful

BUCKET LIST



PHOTOS (RIGHT) COURTESY OF
TRAVEL WI. (LEFT) GETTY IMAGES

By Katie Vaughn

Sweater weather.
Pumpkin spice
season. Harvest
time. Call it what
you want, but
when the air turns
crisp, the light
shines golden and
colorful leaves
start putting on a
show, we know
there's a bounty
of fun to be had
across southern
Wisconsin.





● Eugster's Farm Market

Fill Your Basket

Apple orchards dot the entire Dane County landscape. Find a spot to pluck Honeycrisp, Cortland, Jonagold, Red Delicious and more varieties fresh from the tree. Come for the U-pick fun, but stay for these other fruit-forward offerings.

Eplegaarden (Fitchburg): Try some fresh apple cider, apple cider doughnuts and caramel apples at the charming farm store.

Eugster's Farm Market (Stoughton): Grab apple pies, caramel apples and apple cider doughnuts from the farm market, then visit goats, sheep, kittens, pigs, a mini horse and other friendly animals at the petting farm.

Alpine Ridge Orchard (Brooklyn): Enjoy this orchard's fresh apple cider and apple cider doughnuts, plus decode the corn maze, pick out a pumpkin and feed the goats a treat.



● Appleberry Farm

Sutter's Ridge Farm (Mount Horeb):

This place packs in the fun with wagon rides, farm animals and treats ranging from apple cider doughnuts to apple cider slushies.

Appleberry Farm (Cross Plains):

In addition to apple cider doughnuts and apple hand pies, this small farm hosts a weekend brat stand serving apple cider brats topped with handmade apple relish.

Door Creek Orchard (Cottage Grove):

Look for grapes, pears and other perennial fruits alongside more than 90 varieties of modern and heirloom apples at this orchard's retail shed.



EXTRA SPIRIT:

For hard ciders made with local apples, pop over to **Brix Cider** in Mount Horeb or **Hidden Cave Cidery** in Middleton.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF EUGSTER'S FARM MARKET;
APPLEBERRY FARM; BRIX CIDER; HIDDEN CAVE CIDER



● Holy Hill

CHASE THE VIEW

Few fall activities top taking in a stunning autumn vista from a dramatic lookout point. We've rounded up eight beautiful views in a range of distances from Madison.

n At **Blue Mound State Park**, climb one of the two 40-foot-tall observation towers on the west and east ends of the park and be rewarded with panoramic views of the Baraboo bluffs.

Distance from Madison: 20 miles

n Near Lodi, **Gibraltar Rock State Natural Area** offers a 1 1/2-mile loop hike through the forest, ending at the top of a 200-foot sandstone butte overlooking the Wisconsin River Valley. Twisted eastern red cedar trees growing near the cliff frame the view.

Distance from Madison: 28 miles

n **Devil's Lake State Park** in Baraboo is Wisconsin's most popular state park for a reason. Hike the East Bluff or West Bluff trails (both are less than 2 miles long) for 500-foot-high views of the sparkling blue lake and red, orange and yellow tree-covered hills.

Distance from Madison: 39 miles

n In Hubertus, the **Holy Hill Basilica** sits atop one of the highest points in southern Wis-

consin. From the trail, admire views of the neo-Romanesque church surrounded by colorful trees, then climb the 192-foot-tall observation tower to enjoy a higher vantage point.

Distance from Madison: 80 miles

n Set at the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers, **Wyalusing State Park** offers stunning landscape views from 500-foot bluffs.

Distance from Madison: 87 miles

n **The Parnell Tower** in Plymouth looms 60 feet above the Kettle Moraine State Forest, revealing the woods, farmland and rolling hills unfurling below.

Distance from Madison: 106 miles

n At **Rib Mountain State Park**, walk out to an overlook, climb a 60-foot observation tower or ride a chairlift up the mountain for sweeping views of the colorful trees.

Distance from Madison: 156 miles

n Ascend the observation tower at **Timm's Hill County Park**, Wisconsin's highest point of elevation at 1,951 feet, and take in a seemingly endless expanse of trees, plus glimmering Bass Lake.

Distance from Madison: 217 miles



● Blue Mound State Park



● Enchanted Valley Acres

Frolic as a Family

These four fall experiences provide some festive fun for families with kids of any age.

FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS: Parents of littles will appreciate the scenic simplicity of **Appleberry Farm**. Let the kids toddle out to find a pumpkin, snap some pictures, have a snack at an outdoor picnic table—and still make it home before nap time. 8079 Maurer Road, Cross Plains

FOR ELEMENTARY-AGE KIDS: There's plenty to keep kids occupied at **Sutter's Ridge Farm**. Take a wagon ride, feed the goats, pedal a go-kart, slingshot an apple, stock up on pumpkins or chow down on some of the most delicious apple cider doughnuts around. 2074 Sutter Drive, Mount Horeb

FOR TWEENS: Let the older kiddos run wild at **Enchanted Valley Acres**, where there are two giant slides tucked into the hillside, plus a giant inflatable jump pad and lots of outdoor games. 5047 Enchanted Valley Road, Cross Plains

FOR TEENS: Got any thrill-seekers? Send them to **Eugster's Farm Market**, which unveils a nighttime haunted house experience every October. Screamin' Acres is staffed with characters who bring to life terrifying settings like a scrapyard for body parts and a torture facility masquerading as a prison. 3865 WI-138, Stoughton



PROST! at Oktoberfest

While many of Wisconsin's biggest Oktoberfest celebrations actually take place in September, don't pack away your lederhosen just yet. From Oct. 2-4, you can still enjoy a day of beer, brats and polka at **Milwaukee Oktoberfest**. Set on the Lake Michigan waterfront at Henry Maier Festival Park, this celebration boasts German bands, brews and cuisine. Feeling competitive? Sign up for the stein-hoisting contest, the Usinger's brat-eating contest or the weiner dog beauty pageant. Find more details at milwaukeeoktoberfest.com.

● Sutter's Ridge Farm



PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) COURTESY OF ENCHANTED VALLEY ACRES; VISIT MILWAUKEE; SUTTER'S RIDGE FARM





SIP IN THE SCENE

Pair gorgeous settings with pours at southern Wisconsin vineyards, wineries and distilleries.

At the picturesque **Wollersheim Winery & Distillery** in Prairie du Sac, sample flights, take a tour or nab tickets for Autumn Reds & Old Fashioneds — a seasonal wine and cocktail tasting experience on Oct. 10.

In the New Glarus countryside, visit **Bailey's Run Vineyard & Winery** for brick-oven pizzas and live music with a local bottle or the adjacent **Whiskey Run Distilling Co.** for spirit flights, signature cocktails and upscale pub food.

Sip some vino on the patio at **Jefferson's Stable Rock Winery & Distillery**, which provides a panoramic view of the Rock River.



SIP AND STROLL: Spend some time strolling and sampling at local businesses during an evening **Fall Wine Walk**: Head to Wisconsin Dells on Oct. 3, Stoughton on Oct. 8, New Glarus on Oct. 9, Beloit on Oct. 10, Racine on Oct. 10 and 17, or Pardeeville on Oct. 23.



Eat Pizza on the Farm

Spread out a blanket and settle in for an alfresco dinner at **Sprouting Acres' Pizza Nights on the Farm**. This special produce farm, pizza purveyor and events venue in Cambridge offers live music and hand-tossed pizzas cooked in their outdoor wood-fire ovens on select Sundays, May through October (*upcoming dates include Oct. 4 and 18*).

GO BACK IN TIME

New Glarus' annual **Swiss Historical Village Harvest Fest** is a window into the past. The Oct. 11 event features artisans and craftspeople demonstrating cheesemaking, basket-weaving, blacksmithing, yarn-spinning and more. Traditional foods and live music round out this outdoor festival that brings the 19th century to life.

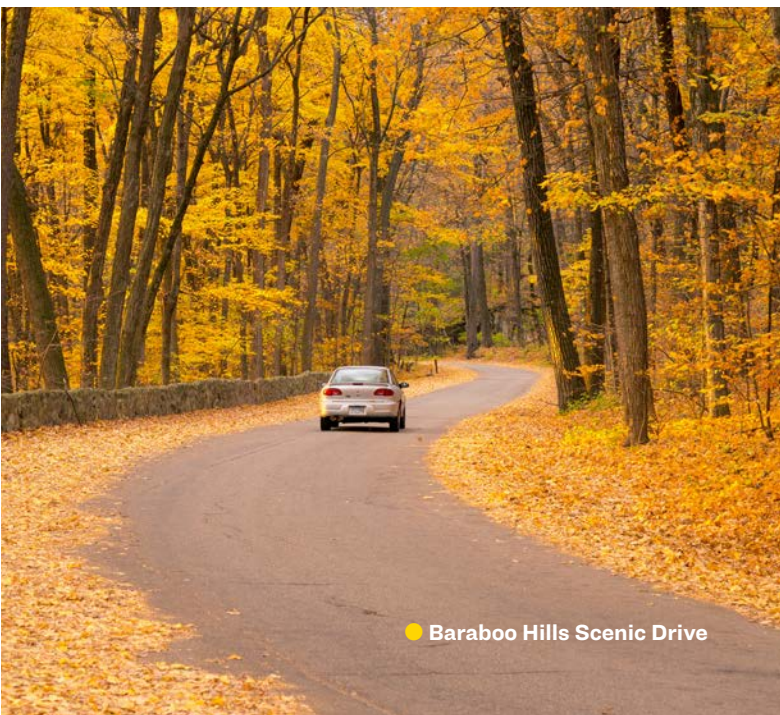




● Wisconsin Great River Road

CRUISE THE FALL COLOR

Choose a setting, set your GPS and enjoy one of these stunning fall routes.



● Baraboo Hills Scenic Drive

Setting: Hills

Drive: Spring Green Tour (*Highway 23*)

Drive: 18 miles

Views: Classic Driftless Area landscapes, plus Governor Dodge State Park, Tower Hill State Park and Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin.

Setting: Bluffs

Drive: Baraboo Hills Scenic Drive (*Highway 113*)

Drive: 30 miles

Views: From Lodi to Baraboo, you'll see Gibraltar Rock State Natural Area, the free Merrimac Ferry on the Wisconsin River and Devil's Lake State Park.

Setting: Woods

Drive: Kettle Moraine Scenic Drive (*various roads and highways*)

Length: 115 miles

Views: Dense hardwood forests and kettle lakes (formed by the last major glacier) across six counties, from just south of Whitewater up to Elkhart Lake.

Setting: River

Drive: Wisconsin Great River Road (*Highway 35*)

Length: 250 miles

Views: The mighty Mississippi River, plus 33 charming towns dotting the river from Kieler in the south to Prescott in the north.



● Treinen Farm

Navigate a Maze

Corn mazes in the area offer seemingly endless twists and turns.

In Lodi, **Treinen Farm's** must-visit maze (USA Today ranked it as one of the top 10 corn mazes in the country) spans 15 acres and features birds, bees and other flora and fauna in its design this year. Go even bigger at **Creek Bed Farmacy** in Poynette, where 6 miles of paths fan out over an 18-acre corn maze (this one's the largest in Wisconsin) and a 2-acre kiddie version makes the experience family-friendly. **Alpine Ridge Orchard** in Brooklyn, Wisconsin, has a more leisurely 9-acre maze, while mazes at **Schuster's Farm** in Deerfield (for something a little spookier, find your way through the maze using a flashlight on Friday and Saturday nights), **Enchanted Valley Acres** in Cross Plains (this year's theme is 'Wizard of Oz') and **Eugster's Farm Market** in Stoughton all clock in at around 8 acres. First-timers may want to start with something a bit smaller, like one of the 5-acre mazes at **Warm Belly Farm** in Cottage Grove or **Sutter's Ridge Farm** in Mount Horeb.



● Creek Bed Farmacy



ROLL ALONG

Take in the fall colors while cruising a state bike trail.

Military Ridge State Trail

Cycle west through farm fields, wetlands, prairies and woods over 40 miles from Fitchburg to Dodgeville.

TRAILHEAD: *Park at the Quarry Ridge Recreation Area on Fitchrona Road and bike to the trailhead at the southeast corner of County Highway PD and Highway 18*

Sugar River State Trail

Pedal southeast from New Glarus to Brodhead on this 24-mile trail that covers beautiful countryside and 14 trestle bridges over the Sugar River and its tributaries.

TRAILHEAD: *Milwaukee Road Depot, 418 Railroad St., New Glarus*

Glacial Drumlin State Trail

Enjoy the sights of forests, farmland and 10 small towns along the route from Cottage Grove to Waukesha on this 52-mile path.

TRAILHEAD: *At the intersection of Clark and South Main streets in Cottage Grove*

Elroy-Sparta State Trail

Prairies, woods and rolling hills line this 32.5-mile trail, but the main attractions are its three tunnels, each between 1/4 and 3/4 miles long. They can be dark, chilly and a little drippy, so be sure to bring flashlights and maybe a raincoat.

TRAILHEAD: *Near the historic train depot at 111 Milwaukee St. in Sparta (115 miles from Madison)*



● Biergarten at Olbrich Park

KICK BACK WITH A BREW

The Madison area might brim with breweries and pubs worth ducking into on a chilly day, but we'd rather sip outside when the fall sun is shining bright.



For a festive biergarten experience, find a seat at **Capital Brewery** in Middleton, where you can often catch a live band. Bring a blanket, order a pint and settle in to enjoy live music on the expansive lawn at the **Wisconsin Brewing Co.** in Verona or the tree-shaded grass on the banks of the Sugar River at **The Hop Garden** in Paoli. Of course, there's nothing like grabbing a brew and a starburst chair and spending a fall afternoon on Lake Mendota at the **Memorial Union Terrace**. Finally, don't miss your chance to drink in a beer and the downtown skyline across Lake Monona; the popular **Biergarten at Olbrich Park** typically closes for the season in mid-October.



STILL THIRSTY? Visit Wisconsin Dells for the **Dells on Tap Craft Beer Walk & Fall Tap Takeover** on Oct. 16 and 17, where you can sample from dozens of top-notch brewers.

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) COURTESY OF BIERGARTEN AT OLBRICH; COURTNEY TERRY; COURTESY OF VISIT MIDDLETON; GETTY

Road Trip for Cheese

Enjoy a fromage-inspired cruise through southwestern Wisconsin, aka Cheese Country.

2

Continue south for 60 miles to Shullsburg (or simply start your day here), where you can pop into the cheese shops at **Shullsburg Creamery** (try the cranberry chipotle cheddar) and **Roelli Cheese Haus** (known for its cheddar blue cheeses). Thirteen miles west in Cuba City, pull off at the **Gile Cheese Factory Outlet**, where you can browse more than 140 types of Wisconsin cheese, then drive 27 miles northeast to the **Hook's Cheese shop and factory** (aged cheddar, anyone?) in Mineral Point.



1

Begin in Sauk City with a stop at the **Carr Valley Cheese Store** for samples and a pack of cheese curds to take on the road. Continue north 40 miles to La Valle for a peek through the observation windows of **Carr Valley Cheese Co. Inc.'s** original factory, then 21 miles south to tour the factory at **Cedar Grove Cheese Inc.** in Plain (call ahead for days and times) to learn the art, history and economics of small-scale cheesemaking.

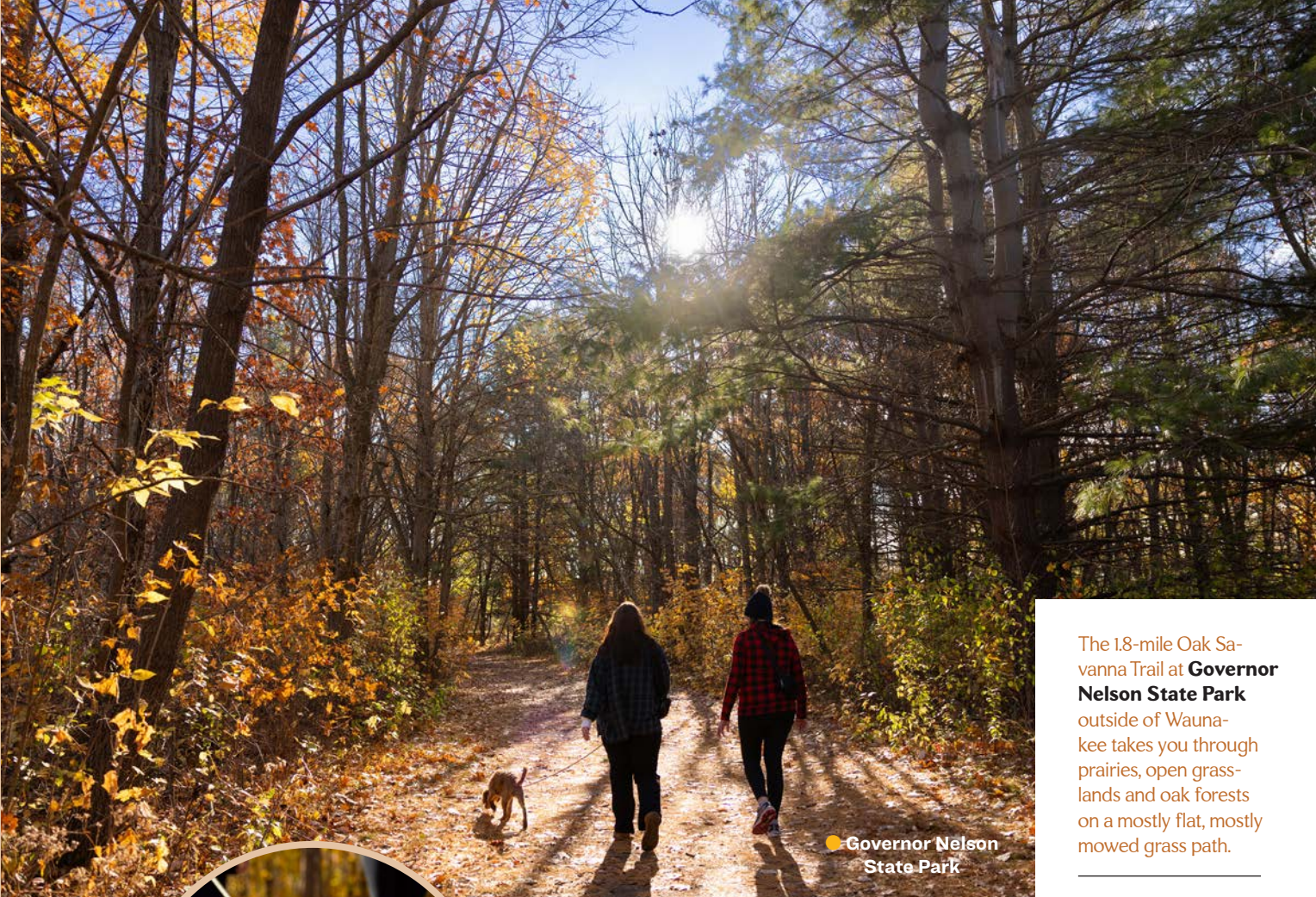


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Drive 40 miles southeast to Monroe to see how Roth Cheese is made at the **Alp & Dell Cheese Store**. Next, visit the state's oldest cheese shop, **Baumgartner's Cheese Store & Tavern**, which opened in 1931. (The Limburger sandwich is a must for adventurous diners.) Round out the day with a stop at the **National Historic Cheesemaking Center Museum** to glimpse what cheesemaking was like a century ago, or offset all that driving (and sampling) at the **Cheese Country Recreation Trail**, a 47-mile path running through farmland and small towns from Monroe to Mineral Point.



PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) COURTESY OF CARR VALLEY CHEESE; TIM BURTON; COURTESY OF SHULLSBURG CREAMERY; COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC CHEESEMAKING CENTER MUSEUM



● Governor Nelson State Park

The 1.8-mile Oak Savanna Trail at **Governor Nelson State Park** outside of Waunakee takes you through prairies, open grasslands and oak forests on a mostly flat, mostly mowed grass path.



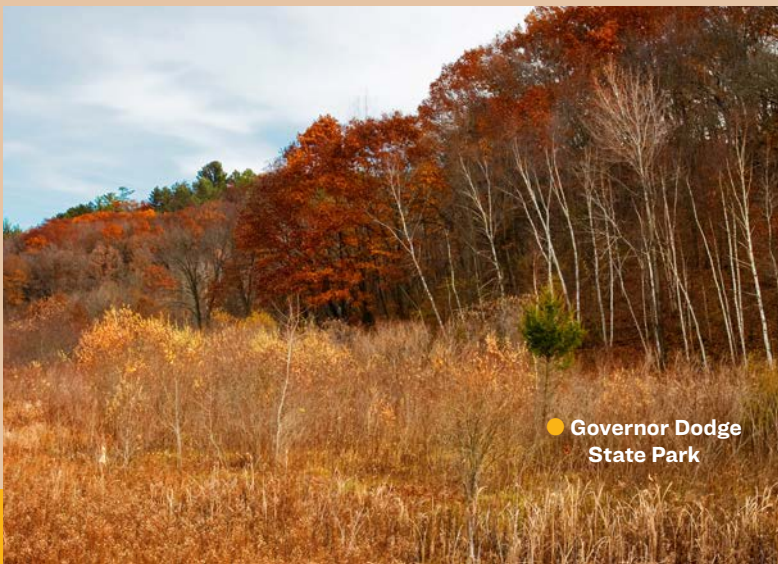
TAKE A HIKE

TREK ALONG FORESTS, PRAIRIES, CLIFFS AND STREAMS ON THESE FOUR NEARBY TRAILS. BONUS: THEY'RE EASY ENOUGH FOR MOST HIKERS.

In Stoughton's **Lake Kegonsa State Park**, the 1.2-mile White Oak Nature Trail is mildly sloped and winds through an oak forest.

At **Mirror Lake State Park** in Baraboo, the Echo Rock Trail is a paved 0.6-mile path that leads to overlooks of Mirror Lake and Echo Rock on the water's edge. Continue on the 2.2-mile Ishnala Trail to pass by woods, prairie, hills, cliffs and a stream.

A quick quarter-mile trek on the Stephens' Falls Trail deposits you at the namesake waterfall at **Governor Dodge State Park** in Dodgeville. If you're up for it, keep going on the 3-mile Lost Canyon Trail loop for scenic rocky and woody views.



● Governor Dodge State Park





● Horicon National Wildlife Refuge

LOOK TO THE SKY

Grab your binoculars and flock to one of these fall birding hot spots recommended by the Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance.



Horicon National Wildlife Refuge

Location: Dodge and Fond du Lac counties

Size: More than 33,000 acres

Sightings: Migrating Canada geese, ducks and sandhill cranes

Goose Pond Sanctuary

Location: Arlington

Size: 730 acres

Sightings: Tundra swans, ducks, geese and other migratory waterfowl and shorebirds

Pheasant Branch Conservancy

Location: Middleton

Size: 682 acres

Sightings: Cranes, ducks, geese and herons, plus warblers in early fall and sparrows in late fall

Lakeshore Nature Preserve

Location: University of Wisconsin—Madison

Size: 300 acres

Sightings: Songbirds, warblers and migrating waterfowl

OUR TIP:

Before embarking on fall fun, check out Travel Wisconsin's **Fall Color Report** (travelwisconsin.com/fall-color-report) to see where tree colors are peaking around the state and what the view is like where you're headed.

Katie Vaughn is a contributing writer to Madison Magazine.

PHOTOS: (TOP) GETTY IMAGES; (LEFT) ALAMY