

# Enjoying Fall Colors

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www.minnesotagrown.com

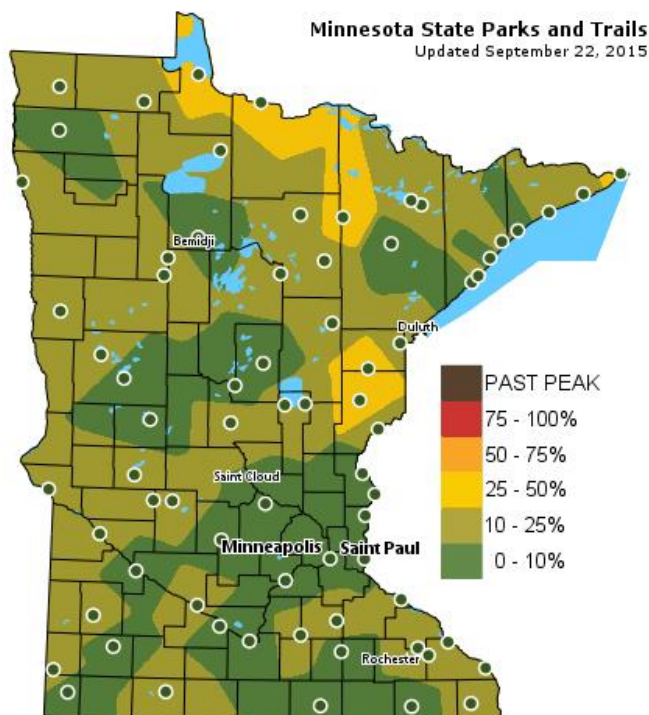
We have just passed the fall equinox and the leaves are beginning to change to red, orange and yellow! Celebrating a beautiful Minnesota fall with friends, family or loved ones is a great way to get out and go local!

There are so many ways to enjoy the many colors of fall. The [Minnesota DNR has a great website](#) that tracks the fall color forecast throughout the entire state! It shows color events, a map to show peak colors, and is updated each day. If you're interested in planning a fall color road trip, this is a great place to start! If you're out and about, try using their [mobile page](#) to find colors near you on your smartphone!



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If  
you

prefer to view fall colors on two wheels instead of four, Minnesota Bike Trail Navigator has created a list of some of the best fall color bike rides. [Read about it here!](#)



Many state and county parks have fall color hikes and other events. [Check out the events page on the DNR website](#) or visit your favorite park or outdoor area. From the leaves in your backyard to the Boundary Waters, appreciating the colors of fall can fit into your busy schedule!



Image from MN DNR

## “Why do the leaves change color in the fall?”

If you’re traveling with the kiddos and their inquiring minds ask about the color change, here’s your answer! Trees are hiding their pretty colors all summer while they are making energy from the sun. We see green leaves on trees for most of the year because chlorophyll is working hard making food for the tree. Chlorophyll is one of the key components in transforming sunlight into energy during photosynthesis. As the daylight gets shorter and days become colder, the leaves stop making energy with chlorophyll and it begins to break down. Underneath the chlorophyll the pretty colors are revealed (caused by carotenoids and anthocyanins) – these are the reds, oranges, and yellows we see!

## Leaf Prints: A Fall Family Activity

With the abundance of falling leaves, try this kid-friendly coloring activity!

Here's what you need:

Real fall leaves, white or construction paper, water-based paint/ paint brushes

[Optional Less-Mess Version: Use crayons instead of paints]

1. Collect a bundle of different types of leaves
2. Cover your work area with newspaper or a mat for easy clean up!
3. Paint the entire surface of one side of a leaf
4. Carefully press the painted leaf onto the paper
5. Remove the leaf to reveal your beautiful leaf print!
6. Repeat this process using different color paint and other leaf types and shapes.

[Less-Mess Version]

1. Complete steps 1 and 2 above
2. Place or tape leaf shapes on a flat table surface
3. Place the paper on top of the leaves
4. Rub a crayon on its side and color over the paper where the leaf lies underneath
5. The leaf shape and veins will appear on the paper above!



## A Fall Color Destination Trip:

Looking for a destination on your fall color drive? Minnesota Grown has your answer. Plan a visit to one of the Minnesota member farms who invite guests for farm tours or a farmstay! The Minnesota Grown Directory includes 58 farms offering these opportunities for guests- check them out [here!](#) Make sure to call ahead and speak with your chosen farm before arriving to set up details of your tour or stay!



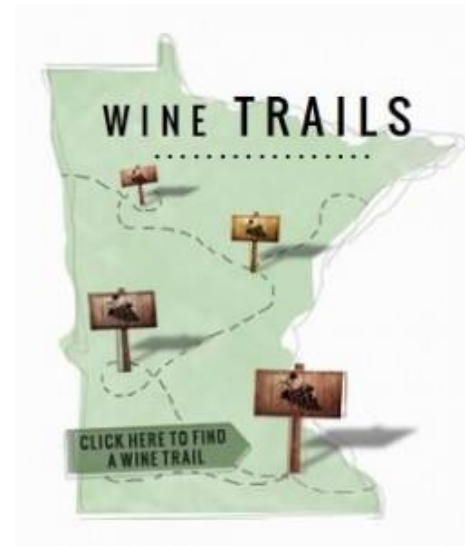


Another fun destination for a fall colors tour could be a Minnesota Grown winery! In fact, there are several farm winery “wine trails” to make it easy for visitors to explore wineries. These trails wind through areas of the state visiting beautiful farm wineries right here in Minnesota. In addition to the chance to taste and purchase their wines, most wineries offer more experiences, as well.

Check for tours, food and wine pairings, and other special events including live music, festivals and, during the fall harvest, grape stomps! For more information on Minnesota Wine Escapes please visit: [Explore Minnesota](#).

### Wine Trails

- [The Three Rivers Wine Trail](#) was the first wine trail including five of Minnesota’s oldest wineries in the Saint Croix, Mississippi, and Cannon River Valleys.
- The [Upper St. Croix Wine Trail](#) includes five family-owned wineries along the picturesque St. Croix National Scenic Riverway! This beautiful landscape and unique climate, geography, and environment contributes to the exceptional qualities of this region’s wine.
- Three of the oldest wineries in the state of Minnesota offering internationally award winning wines are settled along the **St. Croix Wine Trail**.
- [The Heartland Wine Trail](#) includes seven friendly wineries nestled amongst rolling river valleys in the glacial lakes region of western Minnesota.
- [The Great River Road Wine Trail](#) includes nine wineries from three states along the beautiful Mississippi River.
- The [Lake Pepin Wine Trail](#) lets you follow your taste buds around one lake visiting four wineries in two states!
- The [Minnesota River Wine, Beer, and History Trail](#) invites travelers to indulge in “Sips of History” as they explore Southern Minnesota River Communities.



For more information on Minnesota Wine Trails, [visit this page created by the Minnesota Farm Winery Association](#).