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Get Ready for a Vibrant Fall Season: 2023 Michigan Peak Color Predictions Are In

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The 2023 peak color predictions are in, and the stage is set for stunning fall foliage across Michigan this October, according to the just-released fall foliage prediction map from SmokyMountains.com.

For the vast majority of Michigan residents, the highlight of the autumn season is when the leaves begin to change. Leaf peeping is a favorite fall activity in Michigan in the fall, motivating residents to seek out the peak colors throughout the state and encouraging out-of-state visitors to experience this annual natural transformation.

However, as any seasoned Michigander knows, the fall colors can be difficult to predict. Factors such as temperature, precipitation, and species influence when the leaves change each year, how long the colors remain, and the vibrancy of the colors.

The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts the Great Lakes region to have above-average temperatures and precipitation this fall, setting the stage for brilliant fall foliage across Michigan throughout October.

According to the 2023 SmokyMountains.com Fall Foliage Prediction Map, colors should start to pop in early to mid-September in the state's northernmost regions and last through early November in the southernmost areas. The flow of color moves from northwest to southeast as the season progresses.

David Angotti of Smoky Mountains.com says, "With our unique blend of historical and forecast data, we are able to make a highly accurate prediction by the end of August. The drastic year-to-year changes dictate that we create a new map from scratch with new data each year. Our end goal is to produce a map that's useful and fun."

Fall Colors in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

Predicted Peak Dates: September 28 – October 15  
Best Places to See Colors: Copper Peak, Lake of the Clouds, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Tahquamenon Falls, Kitch-iti-kipi, Mackinac Island. The fall colors in the Upper Peninsula typically peak between the last week of September and the first two weeks of October. The western Upper Peninsula peaks first, with the eastern region following shortly after. Peak colors can occur anytime between the last week of September and the second week of October.

According to Jesse Widerhold of Visit Keweenaw, "Fall colors in the Keweenaw normally peak between the last week of September and the first few weeks of October. Parts of the Keweenaw, like Isle Royale and Copper Harbor, will peak later than areas closer to the Portage Canal." He recommends exploring the Portage Canal (separating Houghton and Hancock), Brockway Mountain Drive, and Calumet Air Force Station for the best scenic fall views.

See The Colors in Northern Michigan

Predicted Peak Dates: October 5 – October 22 Best Places to See Colors: Tunnel of Trees, Ocqueoc Falls, Leelanau State Park, Cadillac, Hartwick Pines State Park, Au Sable River, Boyne Mountain, Northern Michigan is considered to be one of the best places in the state to see the fall colors and experience the beauty of this fleeting season. The fall colors are only beginning to pop, with very few leaves having turned their autumnal shades of sienna, gold, or burgundy. Peak colors are predicted to occur in the first few weeks of October.

#### Fall Colors in Central Michigan

Predicted Peak Dates: October 12 – October 29 Best Places to See Colors: Chippewa River, Port Austin, For-Mar Nature Preserve, Friends of Coopersville & Marne Railway, Frankenmuth, Muskegon, Grand Ledge, Encompassing West Michigan, Mid-Michigan, and East Michigan, the middle of the state boasts many destinations for fall foliage viewing. The leaves in the region's inland forests will change color about a week before those near the Great Lakes shorelines.

#### See Fall Colors in Southern Michigan

Predicted Peak Dates: October 19 – November 5 Best Places to See Colors: Kal-Haven Trail, Huron River, Port Huron, Waterloo State Recreation Area, Mount Baldhead, Coldwater These are the last leaves to change, and the fall foliage in the southern half of Michigan's Lower Peninsula allows leaf peepers to extend their enjoyment through the latter part of October. Hiking and biking trails are popular fall foliage destinations, and many people choose to enjoy the fall colors while sipping cider at their favorite orchard.

Katie Stepp, Marketing Manager at Blue Water Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, says the color change will start at the beginning of October and peak in mid-October for the 140-mile coastline around Michigan's Thumb. A road trip along Lake Huron on M-25 is one of the best ways to experience the beauty of fall in this region.

#### Tips for Michigan Fall Color Peeping

Trees along the lakeshore will be about a week behind inland trees in the same region. Many popular foliage viewing destinations will be packed with people on the weekends. Plan a mid-week trip to avoid crowds. Watch social media channels such as Instagram and TikTok for real-time glimpses of current color conditions. Join the Michigan Day Trips group on Facebook for fall destination and road trip itinerary ideas.

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