*A weekly column written by the staff of* [*Discover Wisconsin*](http://discoverwisconsin.com/) *highlights things to do and see throughout the State of Wisconsin, and is made available for publication to members of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association. The column is accompanied by photos for use in print and online. The Discover Wisconsin logo can be* [*downloaded here*](https://www.wnanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/DiscoverWi-Logo_300dpi.jpg)*.*

## A Special Holiday Feature: Festive Celebrations & Memorable Getaways

The countdown to the most magical time of the year continues! As the holidays draw near, Wisconsin comes alive with festive celebrations and unforgettable getaways. This year, make new traditions by participating in thrilling events or traveling to dreamy destinations.

### Festive Celebrations

Let the fun begin at the many festive celebrations across Wisconsin!

Set sail on Geneva Lake for the Santa Cruise, one of Lake Geneva Cruise Line’s most festive cruises. Before you even depart, be sure to walk through the Santa Cause Charities of Christmas Tree Festival, an indoor idyllic winter wonderland. After you walk through the joyful atmosphere, embark on this remarkable cruise! From the ship, you will see dazzling lights ashore, Santa’s hideaway, and even Santa himself!

Pedal your way through the festivities at the Santa Cycle Rampage in the heart of Milwaukee! Put on your best Santa costume and be a part of the world’s largest holiday-themed costume group bicycle ride for charity! All the funds raised support programs throughout the state to make biking better for everyone. If you don’t want to bike, spectators are welcome to watch over 1,000 Santas pedal their way to the finish line!

Choo choo! Hop aboard The Polar Express Train Ride, put on by the National Railroad Museum! During your mystical experience, you will be immersed in the story of the Polar Express from beginning to end. Board the Polar Express train to the North Pole! Along the way, you will get to interact with characters from the story while traveling through mysterious forests. And of course, Santa will greet you when you arrive at the North Pole.

But Santa couldn’t deliver gifts without his reindeer! Stop by the special appearances of reindeer from the North Pole traveling all over the state throughout this special season! Santa’s Crew travels throughout Wisconsin and showcases a live reindeer display to meet the fury friends that pull the sleigh.

### Memorable Getaways

Whether you love city life, small-town charm, or wilderness adventure, Wisconsin is your dream holiday destination.

First, we’re hitting the city, where the holiday spirit is off the charts! With exciting and jolly attractions, Wisconsin’s bright and beaming cities intrigue visitors from all over. Stroll down the famous Candy Cane Lake in Milwaukee, where over 300 homes shine bright in the brisk night sky. In Madison, check out Holiday Fantasy in Lights in Olin Park–free to visitors!

On the outskirts of Milwaukee, the West Allis Christmas Parade puts on quite an impressive showcase, with live bands and performers, unique floats and vehicles, and of course, Santa Claus, and his elves. Head to Lake Geneva to explore the annual Electric Christmas Parade, where the community celebrates the joy of the holidays.

Second, we’re checking out Wisconsin’s small towns, home to charming activities you’re going to love during this merry season! Embark on an enchanting sleigh ride at Brantwood’s Palmquist Farm and Brandt’s Sleigh & Wagon Rides in Bryant. Tucked away in Western Wisconsin, Connorsville is another small town to visit, home to Reindeer Acres.

Third and finally, it’s time for us to embrace the cold weather and adventure into the vast Northwoods! Known for its abundant wilderness and waterways, the Northwoods is a notorious escape for many during the holidays. If you’re a snowmobile enthusiast, Eagle River just may be the perfect place for you, as the Snowmobile Capital of the World.

Only a half-an-hour drive from Eagle River lies St. Germain, another Northwoods oasis for this year’s holiday season. St. Germain is scattered with more trails ideal for silent sports, including snowshoeing, fat-tire biking, and ice fishing, if you’re feeling lucky!

Now, to the gateway of the Northwoods…Tomahawk, Wisconsin! Tomahawk has it all with a little taste of everything. Ride along hundreds of miles of snowmobile trails, which lead to warm and inviting restaurants in the area. Hit the ice for competitive or leisure ice fishing. Or, if you’re really feeling brave, take an icy plunge in Lake Mohawksin!

Start celebrating this joyous season today, joining in on the festive fun, or getting away to the big cities, small towns, and Wisconsin’s remote wilderness!

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*Hailey Rose, third-generation and granddaughter of Dick Rose, writes for the nation’s longest-running tourism TV show, Discover Wisconsin. Watch the show Saturdays at 10 a.m. on Bally Sports Wisconsin or online at DiscoverWisconsin.com. Follow Discover Wisconsin on Facebook (*[*facebook.com/discoverwisconsin*](http://facebook.com/discoverwisconsin)*), Instagram (*[*instagram.com/discoverwisconsin*](http://instagram.com/discoverwisconsin)*), and TikTok (*[*tiktok.com/discoverwisconsin*](http://tiktok.com/discoverwisconsin)*).*