

These are a few of our favorite things!

Submitted by the Ozaukee County Tourism Council

What's there to do in January in Wisconsin...during a pandemic? We checked in with the board of Ozaukee County Tourism to see what tourism leaders in our communities are doing to get out and about this month!

■ Kathy Tank, executive director, Port Washington Tourism Council

"When I walk along the harbor in Port Washington in winter, I try to remember to bring my binoculars and camera. There are always unexpected dramatic photo opportunities, especially after it snows. And when it is really cold, the lake looks like it is smoking. There are always migrating birds in and around the harbor. We've spotted snowy owls, red-throated loons, and other waterfowl not normally seen in the harbor. When you are ready to warm up, stop at the Chocolate Chisel for a wonderful hot chocolate to go."

■ Pam King, executive director, Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce

"My husband and I love to spend a few hours on Sundays in January and February snowshoeing on the trails at Tendick Park in Saukville, Virmond Park in Mequon, Riveredge Nature Preserve or on the Interurban Trail in Grafton. I try to time it so that we end our adventure with lunch, so this winter, on our way home, we plan to pick up BBQ at Atlas BBQ or a pizza from John's Pizzeria, both in Grafton, and warm up while we eat and watch football."

■ Marjie Tomter, board president, Ozaukee Washington Land Trust



Photo courtesy of Howard Vrankin

Downtown Port Washington still provides photo-worthy views along the lake in the winter.



Submitted photo

Snowshoeing at Riveredge Nature Center is another good way to pass the time this winter.

"My need to meditate and just take in nature doesn't change when the temperatures drop. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and just plain walking in a natural area all work for me, but my favorite way to travel down the trails is on my

Hok skis.

"The wider design makes them great for light skiing on the trails, they are faster than snowshoes for walking in really deep snow, and their downhill speed can rival most cross-country skis.

"My favorite place to get out and be alone in nature is Forest Beach Migratory Preserve, an Ozaukee Washington Land Trust property. There are many walking trails through a variety of habitats and opportunities to spot wildlife along the

way. The scent of fresh pine and the silence are precious. Moving slowly through natural places is good exercise and a chance to leave the cares of the world behind. I recommend leaving your dogs behind — the wildlife is truly disturbed by our canine buddies and it defeats the meditative quality of the experience."

■ Cori Rice Kaminsky, owner, White Rice Advertising

"My husband and I are beer drinkers, so capacity restrictions on our favorite bars and breweries has sparked a new tradition for us. We love to visit the breweries around Ozaukee County and carry out cans at places like The Fermentorium and Sahale Ale Works, or growlers from favorite spots like Inventors Brewery and Rebellion Brewery. Sometimes we'll even mix and match, and create our own tasting flights! Yes...we have tasting glasses and flight paddles in our house...don't judge!"

■ Irene Buechler, owner, Buechler Farms

"One of my favorite things to do is right in my own backyard. Harrington Beach State Park is such a great place to hike, even in the winter. They have a great welcome center where people can park and pick up one of the multiple trails available. Walking around the quarry is one of my favorite trails. It's so pretty when the sun is out and the snow covers the trees. Most of the time you can get a glimpse of the wild life, including deer.

My husband and I own several draft horses. If the roads are not icy, we'll take the horses out for a leisure ride through the park to get them some exercise."

■ Tara Williams, executive director, Begium Area Chamber of Commerce

"When we're feeling cooped up during the coldest winter months, we love an evening out at the Chicken Comedy nights at Memories Dinner Theater. Their all-you-can-eat broasted chicken is awesome and it is so good for the soul to spend an evening belly laughing — especially these days. Memories does a wonderful job with their COVID-19 safety precautions. They now have smaller tables, social distancing, and take several new precautions while serving dinner to keep their guests safe. On the way home, we highly recommend the old fashioned at Kyotes Bar & Grill — they are stupendous."

■ Maggie Dobson, executive director, Cedarburg Chamber of Commerce

"It might be cold, but there is no better time to get in some shopping than during the winter months! I love to bundle up and spend time walking through downtown Cedarburg, checking out the beautiful stores and attractions.

There is nothing like ducking into a cozy shop to look at unique items, like at the Pagoda Fine Jewelry, located just next to the picturesque grist mill along Cedar Creek.

I also love stopping in at Cedar Creek Settlement and visiting the Cedar Creek Winery for a tasting or tour.

And, a day in Cedarburg isn't complete without a stop at The Gem Shop, a working lapidary, to check out their beautiful gems and agates plus an 8,000-pound petrified wood log from Arizona, collected in 1910. It's 6 feet tall — you won't find that kind of photo op at a big box store!"