

INSITES

Fall foliage fun

A great guide for playing in the Poconos

This week's column continues an unintentional trend I have going this month. My last two columns dealt with websites devoted to enjoying the great outdoors in our area—the Finger Lakes and the Susquehanna River. This week's column is about **pocono mountains.com**, a marketing site for the region's premier vacation destination.



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I was looking for a site that focused on fall foliage since this is the peak time for viewing seasonal color. The Pocono Mountains site covers activities and events over the entire year, but it has a lot of content dedicated to enjoying the fall season.

The home page features five specific entry points for autumn-themed activities. First is a blog entry on seven scenic drives through the mountains that

offer spectacular views of the leaves. There are brief descriptions of each drive and an interactive map that lets you select what types of attractions are displayed.

Just below the blog link is a Fall in the Pocono Mountains section. Clicking on this takes you to a page with lots of additional fall content. There's a foliage forecast that tells you when to see the best color in the Poconos' three color zones. You can also look at live camera views from various locations. You can book a trip to view the scenery while riding the rails on several train trips through the mountains. There are lists and calendars of festivals and events featuring pumpkins, music, pickles, craft beers and other seasonal themes. You can browse offers for discounted lodging and meals, from campsites to upscale hotels.

The different fall features on the site have a lot of overlap with each other. The other three fall links on the homepage all lead to content that is

also accessible from the Fall in the Pocono Mountains section. Each section contains multiple links to even more seasonal fare.

As I mentioned earlier, the site is not just for the fall. If you're planning a trip to the Poconos any time of the year, this is a good place to start. There's information on lodging, dining, parks, romantic getaways, casinos, amusement parks, family vacations, weddings and more. There are things to do for almost any interest and on any budget.

The site appears to have resources behind it, but it isn't particularly good-looking. There's visual unity across the site with the color palette and typography, and there are lots of good-quality images used. But it feels cluttered and busy with a weak visual hierarchy.

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