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Through the Woods By Sleigh



You know the old holiday jingle ... "dashing through the snow, in a one-horse open sleigh. O'r the fields we go, laughing all the way.

Many of us dream of traveling by horse drawn sleigh. Horse farms and select inns keep this festive and romantic tradition alive for you to enjoy on your next trip to Vermont's Northeast region.

Sleigh rides provide a memorable outing for groups in the box-sleigh and up to two couples in the bob-sleigh. Dress warmly and feel free to bring along an apple for your handsome chauffeurs.

Bruce Brink of *Green Bank Hollow Farm* in Danville has offered sleigh rides for 25 years. His team of black Percherons pull groups and couples on a magical half-hour journey through some of the Kingdom's most spectacular trails, a working maple sugar bush, and open fields with views of the Presidential Range.

The *Wildflower Inn* in Lyndon offers rides to couples in the one-horse open sleigh and groups in the box sleigh. Karen Kristiansen drives her Belgians on historic Darling Hill with views of Burke Mountain and Willoughby Gap.

The *Perry Horse Farm* in Brownington offers sleigh rides with their team of Morgan horses. Also in Brownington, Galluping Acres and their friendly Belgians whisk riders through snow-covered trails and woods. Afterwards, enjoy hot chocolate and homemade doughnuts in the farmhouse.

Hancock Farms in Coventry offers thrilling bobsled rides through the countryside with panoramic mountain views.



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Vermont's Northeast Kingdom: Where Maples Reign

It's official! The hills of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom are starting to glow like the jewels on a crown. The colors are slowly spreading down from the higher elevations and ripening into shades of red with undertones of yellow, burnt orange and splashes of pink.

Forecasters predict a stellar year. Thanks to a wet summer, the forest canopy is chock full with the kind of leaves that turn pretty colors including maple, ash and oak. Calculating exactly when and what colors Mother Nature will pull out of her hat, is a seasonal hobby for natives and newcomers alike.

If you're new to "leaf peeping" all you need is a decent road map, plenty of gas and a sense of adventure. You can see the leaves by foot, car, bus, bike or boat. It doesn't matter how you do it, because there's good foliage all around and it's accessible to everyone.

For those who want a bird's eye view without the effort of hiking to the top of a mountain, try the Burke Mountain Toll Road and enjoy a picnic lunch with views of Willoughby Gap. Jay Peak Ski Area offers scenic tram rides to the peak during foliage season, beginning September 18th. Don't miss their Fall Arts & Crafts Festival on Oct. 9 and 10.

According to the experts, colder temperatures and less sunlight kick foliage into gear. It's a complex chemical process that scientists like Paul Schaberg are still trying to figure out. Schaberg is a plant physiologist with the U.S. Forest Service in Burlington who studies maple trees. In 2003, he co-authored a paper called *Factors Influencing Red Expression in Autumn Foliage of Sugar*

