

IS AUTUMN THE BEST SEASON?

BY SHANNON COOK

NO ONE CAN DENY that Minnesotans are quite passionate about their favorite seasons of the year. Stuck in an elevator with a fellow Minnesotan? You can be sure of one thing: one of you will undoubtedly bring up the weather. As Midwesterners, it feels like it's encoded into our DNA sometimes—that borderline-compulsive inclination to constantly observe, consider, and live our lives according to the ever-changing weather. That same weather always seems to either plague or catalyze us. Naturally, this means we experience sometimes-euphoric levels of excitement and happiness in correlation to what our favorite season is and, more importantly, if we're lucky enough to be living in it at the current moment.

It feels almost blissful when we encounter our favorite season of the year each time around. A wave of gratitude encompasses and washes over us as we question what we possibly could have done to deserve such beauty. Sounds a little dramatic? It is, but that doesn't make it any less true. Each season has its downfalls, but each has something special and beautiful to offer as well. It is the contrast between the seasons that reminds us, more than anything, to be grateful for what we have. And being grateful means appreciating the place we call home every day of the year, rather than just a few months out of every year.

Most Minnesotans would probably agree that Fall is the best season in Minnesota. But why do most people feel this way? This is probably tied back to what it means to live in Minnesota—we've got about two seasons: winter and road construction. And in

between those two things, tucked away in a tiny little corner, existing as an almost unrecognizable sliver of light, is the season of Autumn. Ah, yes. Autumn. The season of Fall is a safe haven for many—the months of October and November specifically inciting a warm and fuzzy feeling inside. Picture cozy flannels, warm blankets, hot chocolate, and crunchy leaves. Maybe Fall is your favorite season to cozy up by the fireplace and read a book or a newspaper like this one. But what about the other seasons?

Summer: we love it for five minutes, then it's way too hot. At least we'll finally get some Vitamin D after months spent traipsing through the frozen tundra and complaining about the snow and terrible drivers. Spring: we are at last emerging from our long slumber, from the hibernation that the harsh Minnesotan winter had submitted us to. And last but not least, Winter: every Minnesotan has to face it, but is it really so bad? It brings us together. It brings us fun and cozy holidays and endless opportunities to reunite with our families and friends, to show gratitude for our lives and the ones we love most. After all, the transition from Winter to Spring is a sign of life. It feels as though our souls are being warmed again, readying us to face the outside world for another year of endless adventures.

So, which is the best season in Minnesota? The answer here is—all of the above. Because each person has something new and special to offer us: a reason to wake up every day and appreciate the lives we have and the natural world around us, those small things we may take for granted each and every day, without even realizing it.