



Autumn Splendor

The colors, the weather, the outdoors—fall's best in the Berkshires

BY CAROL GOODMAN KAUFMAN



The open space of Tanglewood and Jacob's Pillow may be long abandoned as cool weather settles in, but the outdoors still dances with color as the drama of autumn unfolds across the county's hills and dales.

In this prelude to the white stuff, fall foliage makes its spectacular display. Just about every place you go in October rewards you with magnificent exhibitions of reds, golds, browns, and yellows. Simply pick a road, put your gearshift into drive, and meander. Backroads from Alford to Adams, Hancock to Housatonic, all offer crazy quilts of color.

The straightest itinerary to follow is between Pittsfield and Williamstown, along Route 7. Under a robin's-egg-blue sky, hills aflame with color surround the sapphire water of Pontoosuc Lake. From the top of Berkshire Mall Road—

only a slight detour—the view is even better. Back on Route 7, as you approach Williamstown and cross Route 43, you will suddenly find yourself atop a steep hill, facing a bucolic valley straight out of a picture postcard. Prepare to gasp.



PHOTOS BY MATT BALDELLI (ABOVE), JAY RHIND

Sitting in a car and viewing the colors is fine, but it is our mountains and state reservations that, in addition to beautiful foliage, have hiking trails to get a body moving. Mount Everett in Mount Washington State Forest, and Monument Mountain in Great Barrington, are good places to start in South County. Both provide expansive views of the surrounding countryside, as well as astounding colors on their own.

While Pittsfield State Forest in the central area is well known for its dazzling springtime azalea display, the 1,100-acre forest also has 30 miles of trails perfect for hiking, mountain biking, or horseback riding under riotously clad deciduous trees. Another attraction in the forest is the serene Berry Pond, one of the highest-altitude natural bodies of water in the state.

The tallest and most famous of our peaks is, of course, Mount Greylock, from whose scenic byway you will get breathtaking views as well as a choice of hiking trails for every skill level. If you're lucky, when the fog lifts you might imagine you're glimpsing the Ilvermorny School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, author J.K. Rowling's recent addition to the magical Potter world.

But for sheer, heart-stopping drama, this writer's pick for all-time-best foliage show is the Mohawk Trail, the section of Route 2 that snakes along the northwestern portion of the state. Its dramatic turns along lakes and rivers—sometimes covered in mist—combine to make this a spectacular drive. Be forewarned that the view is so ravishing that if the driver's eyes aren't on the road, you risk careening over the edge into a steep ravine.

If you prefer to have your journey mapped out for you, 1Berkshire offers a list of seven distinct foliage tours. Visit their website at berkshires.org.

Once you've had your fill of gorgeous—as if that is even possible—the county offers a variety of outdoor activities.

At the base of Mount Greylock on Sunday, October 1, North Adams will hold its 62nd Annual North Adams Fall Foliage Parade beginning at 1 p.m., themed “Magic in the Berkshires” (explorenorthadams.com).

(Photo: TAKE IT ALL IN—Fall foliage makes a stunning display here in the Berkshires. Go to berkshires.org for suggested tours.)

In south county on October 1 at 1:30 p.m., join Jan Chague from the Lenox Historical Society and learn the secrets of Kennedy Park at Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary in Lenox (massaudubon.org).



On October 7, 9, and 14, at 1 p.m., the Trustees of Reservations hosts a fall foliage walk around Field Farm in Williamstown, followed by a tour of The Folly building (thetrustees.org).

And on October 8, the Trustees will have Fall Foliage Wagon Rides from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Sheffield. Celebrate Columbus Day weekend with a horse-

drawn wagon ride around the big field; hear stories about the local American Indians and white settlers of the land as well as the natural history of the property. (Call 413-298- 3239 x 3013 for reservations.)

Also on October 8, from 9:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., the Hoosic River Watershed Association presents a fall-foliage recreational bicycle tour led by Lauren Stevens, beginning at the former Mack Molding parking lot off Route 346 in Pownal, Vermont. The ride almost 40 miles, with 2,000 feet elevation gain. Bring beverages and snacks (hoorwa.org).

October 21 at 9 a.m., hike across Notchview in Windsor to see the property and learn about its history and landscape. It's a little over a mile of fall adventure (thetrustees.org).

Or spend the morning visiting several Berkshire Lakes in search of migrating waterfowl from 7 to 11 on October 21. Birding the Berks—Fall Migrant Waterfowl includes stopping at Bartlett's Apple Orchard for hot cider and donuts (massaudubon.org).

The Hills are Alive

Housatonic Heritage Walks offer more than 80 strolls with experts (housatonicheritage.org). The last two days in this series are Sept 30 and Oct 1. Choose tours of birding trails, old mills, urban trails, cemeteries, and Shaker sites. Visit a sycamore field, the Housatonic River Walk in Great Barrington, Hilltop Orchards in Richmond, Mill River Farm, the Town



Forest on Golden Hill in Lee, Mount Greylock at Bascom Lodge, Stevens Glen in Lenox, Laurel Hill in Stockbridge, or hike in the footsteps of Thoreau, Melville, and Hawthorne at Bullard Woods, Gould Meadow, and the gardens of historic Shadowbrook Estate.

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3:00 PM	Holiday Jazz ▼					
3:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Cocoa & Crafts Family Event ▼					
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Seasons Readings at Pequot Library ▼					
4:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Robert Deyber Satirical Painter ▼					
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Percussion Concert in Litchfield ▼					
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Jason Griska Photographs ▼					
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Jessica Drenk Artist Reception ▼					
6:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Clay Art Center Presents Clay Holiday: Annual Sale and Studio Tour ▼					
Jivan Wolf MasterJewelry: In The Realm of Light ▼						
9:30 AM - 5:00 PM	Gunn Memorial Library Stairwell Gallery Art Exhibit ▼					
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Great Trains Holiday Exhibit ▼					

- 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM | **Fall 2017 Weekly Adult Classes at Clay Art Center** ▾
- 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM | **The Great War And The United States Home Front at Pequot Library** ▾
- 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM | **New Works by Erin Nazzaro** ▾
- 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM | **Miniature Masterpieces Holiday Art Exhibit** ▾
- 7:00 PM - 9:15 PM | **Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy – A Celtic Family Christmas** ▾
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