

The Boston Globe

FALL FOLIAGE

Where the color is — and the crowds aren't

We asked local tourism experts about unexpected leaf-peeping locales. Here's what they had to say.

By **Diane Bair and Pamela Wright** Globe Correspondent, Updated September 15, 2021, 2:00 p.m.



You don't have to head to Maine's mountains to see fall splendor. Travel along the Saco or Penobscot River to experience all the great views you can handle. VISIT MAINE

Look out, Vermont Route 100, the Mohawk Trail, and the Kancamagus: The leaf peepers are coming. Color-worshippers tend to choose the same routes year after year, in spite of the fact that New England is awash in color. Even traveling souls like us are guilty of taking the same photos of the same sugar maples every single year. Don't let this happen to you!

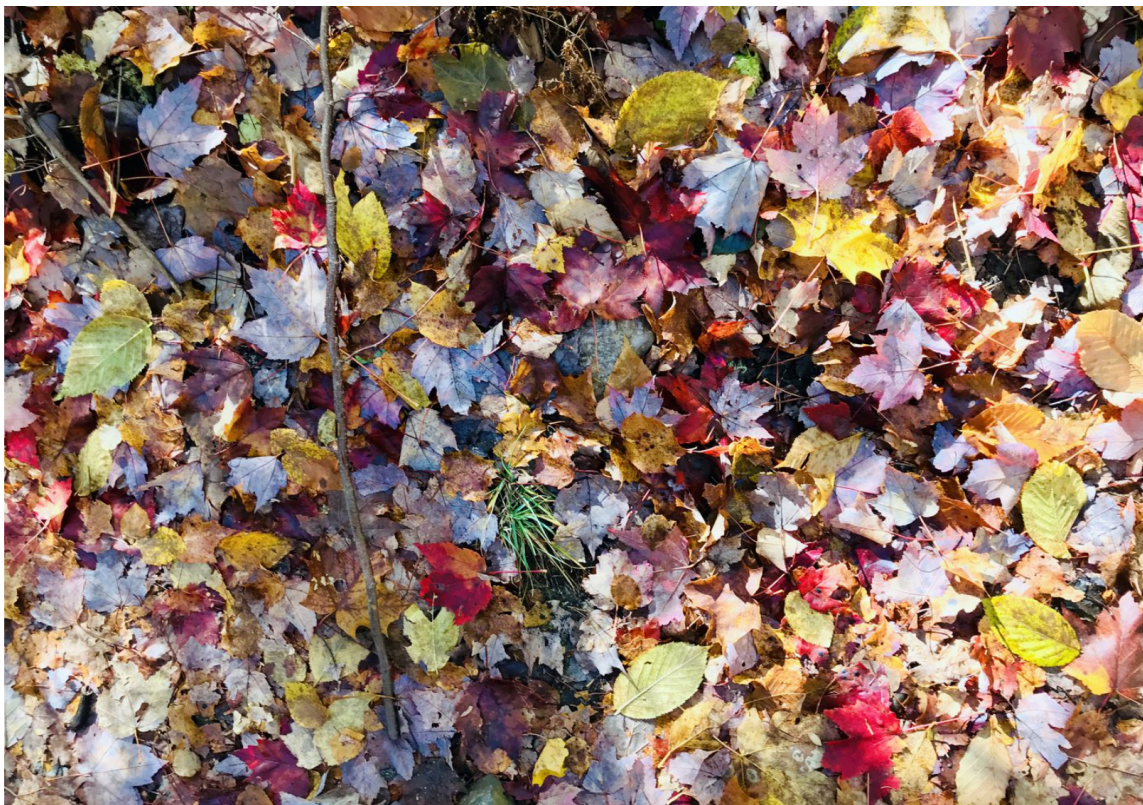
Here's a look at the places that the leaf peeping hordes haven't discovered yet, as shared by local tourism folks. Because, frankly, bumper-to-bumper traffic isn't exactly scenic. (Warning: You may have to hop into a gondola or a kayak to experience these off-the-beaten-path locales.)

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Experts say we're in for a longer than average foliage season. That's great news for leaf peepers. DIANE BAIR

Rhode Island

Looking for a jolt of leafy splendor in the Ocean State? The **Blackstone Valley** is the go-to zone. Visitors can expect to see maple, chestnut, red oak, white birch, and evergreen trees, says Dr. Bob Billington, president and CEO of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council. "The color palette is endless." Skip the car and experience it by cycling or walking along the 11-mile Blackstone River Bikeway (tourblackstone.com/blackstone-river-bikeway/); it skirts the river and the Blackstone Canal in Cumberland, Lincoln, and Woonsocket. Or get right onto the water in a kayak or canoe. Blackstone River Expeditions Kayak Rentals (www.rivertourblackstone.com) offers rentals on Sundays through October, so guests can enjoy DIY fall foliage paddling tours. www.blackstonevalleytourismcouncil.org