

Foliage

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Cooperstown, New York

Looking for the ideal view? The Otesaga Resort Hotel in Cooperstown, nicknamed “America’s Most Perfect Village,” features unmatched views of the water and surrounding hills. Leaf-peeping from the hotel’s famed Veranda is a must – if you’re lucky, you’ll catch the bright yellow leaves of the local Ash trees, the reds of the Red Maple’s (which transition from yellow to orange) and the bright crimson of the Pin Oak.

Guests can also enjoy other activities such as a round of golf on the award-winning Leatherstocking Golf Course or a photography tour of the property. Other must-see sights include The Farmers’ Museum, The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Fenimore Art Museum. This being a baseball town, it’s fun to know the area’s maple trees boast not only beautiful leaves but their wood is ideal for making baseball bats. More info at thisiscooperstown.com.

The Catskills, New York

This area, which encompasses a large swath of the Hudson Valley starting in Greene and Ulster Counties, features a wide array of options for prime-time viewing. The Catskill Mountain Railroad’s Fall Foliage Train Rides are just one place to start. Another: the Hunter Mountain Skyride, the longest and highest skyride in the region which takes you 3,200 feet above sea level.

Feeling adventurous? Mount Utsayantha, located just outside of the Catskill Forest Preserve, features two “hang glider” take off spots, one just below the summit and the other in front of the summit building, while the 26-mile-long Catskills Scenic Trail sports an array of color on a trail that’s mostly flat, wide, and easy.

As for where to stay, try Callicoon Hills, a former boarding house; INNESS, with 40 guest rooms and 28 cabins; Piaule, where you’re immersed in the depths of the forest; or an Airbnb like Killer Cat Mountain House, owned by a Scarsdale couple.

For a serene, nostalgic ambiance and luxury, also check out Wylder Windham which recently announced a partnership with Small Luxury Hotels of the



Better plan now if you want to catch Mother Nature’s colorful show. Some of the best fall foliage starts in mid-September to late October.

POUGHKEEPSIE JOURNAL FILE

World meaning Hilton members can now book with Hilton Honors points. The hotel, it should be noted, was named a “favorite New York State Resort” by Travel + Leisure in 2023. More info at iloveny.com/places-to-go/catskills.

Allegheny County, Maryland

Mother Nature is the star of the show in this part of Maryland with nearly 70,000 acres of public land. Located in the “ridge and valley” region of the oldest mountain range in the U.S. – the Appalachian Mountains – Allegheny County is also known for its hiking, biking and lush vistas.

Local outfitter WheezUp Adventures offers “The Big Deal” ride, which traverses the picturesque landscapes of the mountains on the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP). Other fall foliage views await on a self-guided driving tour of Green Ridge State Forest.

In addition to outdoor recreation opportunities, Rocky Gap State Park, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, offers plenty of options for overnight guests, including a stay at Rocky Gap Casino, Resort & Golf.

There are more than 100 common tree varieties and a rainbow of changing colors in the fall, including American/European Large (yellow), Sassafras (orange/yellow), Scarlet Oak (vibrant red), Speckled Alder (yellow/brown) and Yellow Birch (yellow). More info at mdmountainside.com.

Shenandoah County, Virginia

With more than 26% of the county covered in national and state forest and 178 miles of trails, you’re sure to find a

picturesque spot for fall foliage viewing. Among the standouts: Buzzard Rock and Big Schloss, the latter of which often tops the destination’s list of best hikes thanks to its unique vantage point of the Valley from rock outcrops along the Virginia/West Virginia border.

Prefer to see it on horseback? Book a guided ride through the George Washington National Forest. For lodging, try Bear Lodge in Basye or Bryce Resort. More info at visitshenandoahcounty.com.

Mohonk Mountain Preserve, New Paltz

If 85 miles of trails don’t entice you, there’s always paddleboarding, climbing or horseback riding. The Mohonk Preserve in Ulster County offers stunning vistas of the Shawangunk Mountains with lots of options for taking in Mother Nature’s glory. And when all that outdoor activity makes you hungry, a stay at the majestic Mohonk Mountain House will revive you thanks to its featuring farm to table cuisine and relaxing spa services.

Even more special: This iconic mountain resort, now in its fifth generation of family ownership, is celebrating its 155th anniversary this year, a feat accomplished by fewer than 3% of all family-owned businesses in the U.S.

Other close-to-home ideas

● **Hudson Valley Detours, Sauger-ties:** This touring company offers intertwining scenic biking excursions with upscale accommodations, gourmet dining and pampering spa treatments.

● **Fantasy Balloon Flights, Middletown:** Interested in soaring through the forests and seeing the incredible Fall Foliage from the sky? Fantasy offers rides over the scenic Lower Hudson Valley, the Lower Catskills and Orange County.

● **Storm King Adventure Tours, Cornwall-on-Hudson:** View autumn’s beauty via a kayak down the Hudson River or choose an option that features walks along Pollepel Island. Storm King offers visitors the opportunity to explore the many state parks and nature reserves in a way that suits your needs. Of course you also need to check out **Storm King Art Center in New Windsor**, the country’s largest outdoor sculpture park featuring a wide variety of trees producing a veritable rainbow of color.

● **Hudson River Cruises, Kingston:** Enjoy unobstructed views of historic Hudson River lighthouses, waterfront mansions, and other notable sites aboard the Rip Van Winkle II, just another way to experience the vibrant autumn colors and rich history of the area.

● **Walkway Over the Hudson, Poughkeepsie:** Three hundred and sixty-degree view await you from this bird’s eye perch of the Hudson River, the longest elevated pedestrian bridge in the world. The walkway is open seven days per week from 7 a.m. until sunset. Sunset closing times are found at walkway.org/visit.

● **Harriman State Park, Slootsburg:** Mother Nature’s bounty can be found among the 200 miles of trails, lakes, and reservoirs here. Stop at The Village Blend for coffee and a light bite or try Valley Rock Inn for lunch or dinner to fuel up before or after your hike.

● **Bear Mountain, Tomkins Cove:** This outdoor lover’s paradise features panoramic views of fall foliage from Perkins Memorial Tower. There are also plenty of trails to explore.

● **Croton Gorge Park, Cortlandt:** This 97-acre property, at the base of the Croton Dam with impressive views of the dam and spillway, is popular for fishing, picnicking and hiking, with direct trail access to New York State’s Old Croton Aqueduct.

● **Teatown Lake Reservation, Ossining:** Stunning fall foliage is just a short drive away at this 1,000-acre nonprofit nature preserve and environmental education center. Expect 15 miles of hiking trails, a two-acre island refuge for over 230 species of native wildflowers, year-round programming and wildlife exhibits.

● **Boscobel House & Gardens Garrison:** Enjoy unparalleled views of the Hudson River, Constitution Marsh, and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point from Boscobel’s Great Lawn. You can also explore the mile-long Frances Stevens Reese Woodland Trail of Discovery.

● **Putnam County Bike Path/Empire State Trail Travel:** Bicyclists and walkers of all abilities can enjoy these scenic trail which winds through wooded areas, scenic lakes, and small communities.

Jeanne Muchnick covers food and dining. Follow her latest dining adventures on Instagram @jeannemuchnick or via the lohudfood newsletter



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