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**Fall Foliage Scenic Drive In Massachusetts**

**By Cliff Calderwood**

Spectacular fall foliage scenic drives are plentiful in Massachusetts from the south shore of Boston

down to Cape Cod, and the Quabbin Reservoir area of the central region. But perhaps the most dramatic lay out west in the Berkshires and Mount Greylock region. Here the mountains provide the perfect terrain and temperatures to showcase fall in its entire splendor.

And nowhere is this most evident than on one of my favorite Massachusetts scenic drives. Stretching for 63 miles from the Massachusetts–New York border to Millers Falls on the Connecticut River is a stretch of road known as The Mohawk Trail. It offers one of Massachusetts most beloved and popular fall foliage scenic drive areas.

Attractions in the region of the Mohawk Trail are Mount Greylock, The Bridge of Flowers, Glacial Potholes, a natural marble bridge formed by erosion, state forests, old Indian hiking trails, and a plethora of villages, country inns, gift shops, and arts and craft attractions.

The trail more or less follows the footpath trade and travel route used by the peoples in this part of the northeast since postglacial age. The path was well trodden and used to move between the Hudson and Connecticut River valleys.

Anytime of the year traveling this same path by road through the northern section of the Berkshire Hills is relaxing and inspiring... but especially during fall foliage season when everything is cloaked and carpeted in vibrant autumn colors.

This fall foliage scenic drive covers most of the major attractions and plenty of time for stopping and admiring the view or picking up an antique or two. The drive is approximately 65 miles but you should allow all day for viewing in an unhurried and gentle manner.

Start on Route 7 in Lanesborough, just south of Route 2. Follow Lanesborough one mile north to Rockwell Road on the right. This road leads to the summit of Mount Greylock – the highest peak in Massachusetts and one of the loftiest in the long Taconic Mountain range.

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The trip to the summit offers a splendid view of the valleys and other peaks in the area. A few miles on Rockwell Road is the Mount Greylock Visitor center. Here you can get trail maps and general information about the area. If you've got the time some easy walking trails lead down and around the summit.

At the summit is the War Memorial Tower. The climb to the top of the 92-foot-tall tower offers magnificent views of five states for your efforts. Once your summit viewing is complete take the Notch Road down to meet the Mohawk Trail on Route 2 in North Adams.

North Adams celebrates the autumn season with the North Adams Fall Foliage Festival and Parade. This is usually the last weekend of September or the first in October. In North Adams is the Western Gateway Heritage State Park, which features an exhibit on the building of the Hoosac Tunnel. Close by east of North Adams off Route 2 and 8 is Natural Bridge State Park – here the remains of rock fractures and erosion has built a natural bridge formation.

Follow Route 2 east out of North Adams ascending the Hoosac Mountain Range until Hairpin Turn and then onto the Western Summit. Here you can stop and admire the vistas of Mount Greylock, Vermont's Green Mountains, and the valley below.

How fast or slow you take the next part of the journey depends on time. Continuing on Route 2 east takes you though Charlemont where the famous "Hail to the Sunrise" statue stands in Memorial Park. The eastern end of this scenic drive on the Mohawk Trail on Route 2 takes you out to Shelburne Falls where you can view The Bridge of Flowers – a transformed trolley bridge – and the Glacial Potholes below Salmon Falls, where time has produced unusual geological pools.

Scattered throughout the region are state parks, hikes along ancient trails, scenic views, and of course specialty shopping and dining opportunities. So as you wind your way around on this tour take time to enjoy this area of a window into the area's heritage.

In summary, the Mohawk Trail is a not-to-be-missed fall foliage scenic trail in Massachusetts. Combine the drive with a getaway weekend in the Berkshires and many other attractions in the area, and you've a fall foliage destination package to create memories for many a fall to come.

For more details on these and other Massachusetts scenic drives and to pick up your free travel reports go to Cliff Calderwood's online vacation guide for New England at:

<http://www.new-england-vacations-guide.com/>

### **Fall Foliage Scenic Drives In New England – Six Of The Best**

**By Cliff Calderwood**

Fall foliage in New England provides a showcase for Mother Nature. Perhaps nowhere else in America, and maybe even the world, are the fall colors as stunning and spectacular as October in New

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England.

Fall foliage in New England really begins in August. The shortening daylight hours trigger the deciduous trees to begin the process of shedding their leaves. It happens all around North America, and all around the world. But in New England it results in a display of special landscapes painted with fiery autumn colors.

Why is fall foliage in New England so different and special?

It's a factor of many things but mostly an abundance of different types of deciduous trees, warm autumn days, and cool – but not freezing – nights. When these and a few other conditions are all mixed in the right proportions, then you get the world famous stunning shades of reds, yellows, oranges, and browns on the hills and mountain sides of New England.

Between mid–September to late–October, visitors flock to New England to see the fall foliage. Many take special bus tours or even train rides. But most take to the road and these six scenic drives offer some of the best autumn views available from anywhere on the planet.

### FALL FOLIAGE SCENIC DRIVE – MOHAWK TRAIL MASSACHUSETTS

In Massachusetts the most popular fall foliage scenic drives are along the famous Mohawk Trail, and the area known as The Berkshires. The Mohawk trail rolls out through the northwestern part of the state on route 2, and winds through the hills and mountains of the Berkshires, touching picturesque towns like Williamstown, Deerfield, Shelbourne, Colrain, Charlemont, and Shelburne Falls. The road follows an ancient foot path used to move between Massachusetts and New York by Native Americans.

Mount Greylock, the highest point in The Berkshires and Massachusetts, offers stunning views of the surrounding area and Mohawk Trail.

### FALL FOLIAGE SCENIC DRIVE – KANCAMAGUS HIGHWAY NEW HAMPSHIRE

The White Mountain National Forest is home to many wonderful scenic drives but the most popular – and rightly so – has to be the 34–mile Kancamagus Scenic Highway that runs along route 112 from Conway to White Mountains Visitor Center in Lincoln. This drive is considered by many to be the top fall foliage New England scenic drive. You'll see beautiful forests ablaze with autumn colors and plenty of photo opportunities with walks along gorges and streams, and with breathtaking views of the highest mountains in the Presidential Range.

### FALL FOLIAGE SCENIC DRIVE – CENTRAL VERMONT AREA

Vermont is a popular destination state in the fall. With many fall foliage scenic drives to choose from,

the Central Vermont area, around Killington, and the towns and highways of Woodstock, Rutland and Ludlow, offer up some of the most dazzling. This area is deep in The Green Mountain National Forest

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area, and not surprisingly offers dramatic fall foliage color and scenery.

### FALL FOLIAGE SCENIC DRIVE – LAKES AND LEAVES MAINE

Maine is a vast wilderness and given its proximity is the first New England state to display peak fall foliage color. Maine has many unparalleled scenic drives to choose from, and it's difficult to single out one. But the Lakes and Leaves drive that skirts the shores of Moosehead Lake on Route 15 and then heads south on route 201 provides an amazing view of this empty, but beautiful backcountry. You'll see incomparable fall foliage views of the tree-lined banks of the Kennebec River, and the surrounding mountains on this Maine Scenic Highway.

### FALL FOLIAGE SCENIC DRIVE – RHODE ISLAND COAST

Rhode Island provides open roads and coastal drives for fall vacationers and leaf peeping. The 61-mile Rhode Island Coast Scenic Drive follows the coastline east from Westerly towards Point Judith passing nature reserves and secluded beaches, until turning north along Narragansett Bay, and eventually over Newport Bridge on route 138. The drive finishes over the breathtaking Ocean Drive in historic Newport.

Always close to a picnic stop along this short drive it begs to be taken slowly and to stop occasionally and breathe in the crisp fall salt air.

### FALL FOLIAGE SCENIC DRIVE – CONNECTICUT ROUTE 169

Far from being the forgotten step child of the other fall foliage scenic drives in New England, Connecticut is full of its own collection of scenic drives. One noteworthy trip to take in autumn is Route 169 in the eastern "Quiet Corner" region. Here the backdrop is rolling farmland, stone walls, and picturesque towns and villages that line the route.

New England is littered with fall foliage scenic drives, and look at those mentioned here as springboards to visiting other country roads that lead to surprises and discovery at every turn. The backroads of New England are where the gems are located, so don't be afraid to explore.

For more details on these and other New England scenic drives and to pick up your free travel reports go to Cliff Calderwood's Vacations in New England travel site at:

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