

Fall Guide



WILD, WONDERFUL

WEST

VIRGINIA

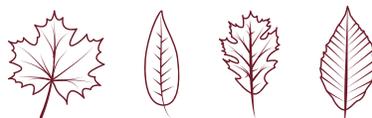
Real.

MOUNTAIN COLOR

The Mountain State is the perfect place to fall in love with fall. From mid-September to late October, our rolling hills come alive, and foliage bursts into shades of red, yellow and orange. The sights are so stunning, you have to see it to believe. But fall in West Virginia is more than just a celebration of our state's unmatched foliage. It's local autumn flavor, farmers' markets, hayrides, scenic train rides and festivals the whole family will enjoy. It's also full of adventure—zipline canopy tours, world-class whitewater rafting and BASE jumping from the iconic New River Gorge Bridge.

Whether you're looking to get away, plan an autumn escape for your family or go outside and explore West Virginia's great outdoors, fall in the Mountain State offers something for everyone. With insider tips on where to find the best leaves, trips, views and events, our pocket guide to fall in the almost heaven hills is here to help you plan your trip every step of the way.

Learn more about fall color and travel in West Virginia at [GoToWV.com/fall](https://www.gotowv.com/fall).



[GoToWV.com](https://www.gotowv.com) | [#AlmostHeaven](https://twitter.com/AlmostHeaven)

Babcock State Park



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LEAF IDENTIFICATION



WHITE ASH

Leaves: compound with 5-9 leaflets
Margins: entire
Branching: opposite
Bark: ashy gray, furrowed into close diamond-shaped areas separated by narrow interlacing ridges



BLACK CHERRY

Leaves: lanceolate or pear shaped
Margins: finely toothed
Bark: smooth and reddish brown with narrow horizontal lenticels on younger trees; bark has small, black, platy scales with upturned edges on older trees



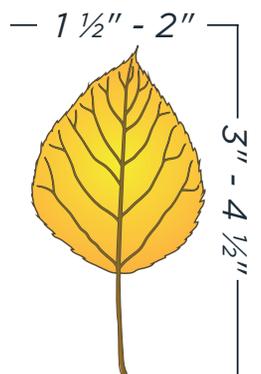
BEECH

Leaves: elliptical shape
Margins: remotely toothed with sharp, incurved teeth
Bark: thin, smooth and light blue-gray in color



ELM

Leaves: elliptical in shape
Margins: coarsely doubly serrated or toothed
Bark: corky texture that's gray to dark brown with flat-topped ridges separated by fissures



BIRCH

Leaves: egg-shaped with a wintergreen smell and fruit at base of twig
Margins: sharply toothed
Bark: reddish brown to nearly black on young trees, brownish black on older trees



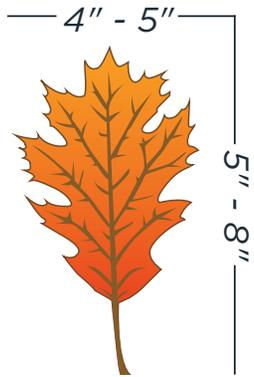
YELLOW POPLAR

Leaves: 4-lobed
Margins: smooth
Bark: dark green and smooth with white spots on young trees; older specimens have interlacing bark with rounded ridges and ashy fissures

4" - 6" diameter



LEAF IDENTIFICATION



RED OAK

Margins: 7 to 11 toothed, bristle-tipped lobes

Bark: brown to nearly black and broken up into wide, flat-topped ridges (gray in color), separated by shallow fissures



WHITE OAK

Margins: rounded with 7-9 lobes extending evenly toward the midrib

Bark: light ashy gray, variable in appearance, broken into small, vertically aligned blocks, scaly on the surface



SUGAR MAPLE, State Tree

Leaves: circular in outline with 5 palmate lobes

Margins: smooth between lobes

Bark: gray and deeply furrowed, with long, irregular plates

3" - 5" diameter



WHITE PINE

Leaves: in bundles of fives, each with whitish lines

Bark: dark green and furrowed on young stems, while older trees have deep, closely fissured, rectangular blocks; branches in a whorled arrangement



SYCAMORE

Leaves: 3 to 5 lobes with cupped petioles

Margins: toothed

Bark: brownish, soon mottled by the exfoliation of the outer bark exposing creamy-white inner layers

4" - 7" diameter



HICKORY

Leaves: compound with 3 to 9 leaflets, but normally 5 to 7, inversely egg shaped

Mockernut Bark: firm, shallow furrows

Shagbark Bark: gray, breaks into long, thin plates

Pignut Bark: scaly, ragged surface





Fall Color Stops

NEW RIVER- GREENBRIER VALLEY

1. Bramwell

Explore the homes of millionaire coal barons! The Victorian town is also famous for its ice cream parlor.

2. Beckley

No visit to this lively city should be without Tamarack, Beckley's enormous art center. Stop by for juried West Virginia arts, crafts and food.

Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine

Hop aboard a man-trip cart and explore a vintage mine! A veteran miner will guide you and share stories. Explore a coal camp, mine museum and youth museum while you're at it.

3. Fayetteville and Oak Hill

Raft the famous New River Gorge National River, visit the iconic New River Bridge, or explore scenic hiking and biking trails.

Adventures on the Gorge, ACE Adventure Resort, and River Expeditions

Take advantage of all that the New River Gorge has to offer. Ziplining, tree canopy tours, whitewater trips, and horseback riding are just some of the activities available.



4. Lewisburg

In historic Lewisburg, buildings date from the 18th century. Quaint storefronts, antique shops, and gas lamps enhance its character.

Lost World Caverns

Wander 120 feet below the ground and marvel at enormous chambers and odd geological formations. Explore solo or try the guided four-hour Wild Cave Tour.

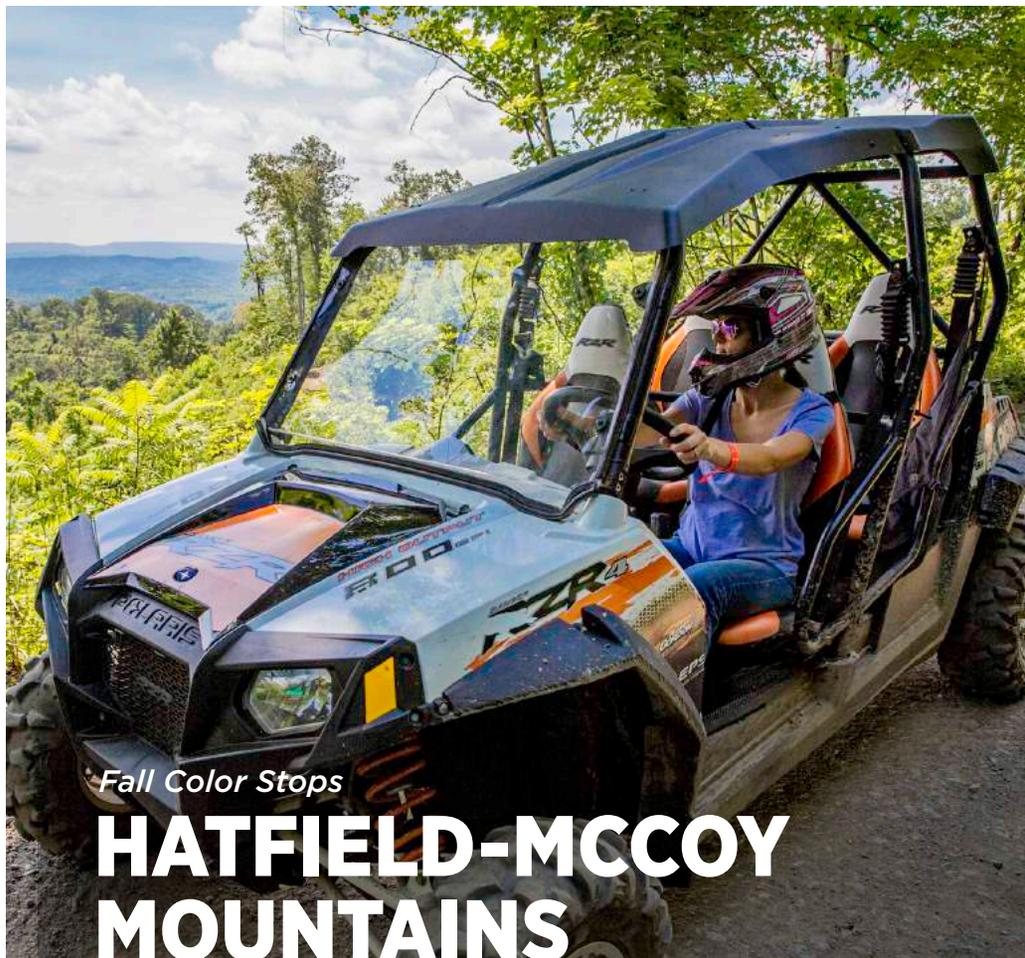
Carnegie Hall

Only four Carnegie Halls exist in the world. Built in 1902, this grand cultural center in Lewisburg hosts art exhibits, performances, workshops and classes all year.

5. White Sulphur Springs

The Greenbrier, the world-famous 5-diamond resort, offers luxury, exquisite cuisine, championship golf, spas, recreation and a tour of a formerly top-secret underground bunker.





Fall Color Stops

HATFIELD-MCCOY MOUNTAINS

1. Chief Logan State Park

Featuring a museum, wildlife center and outdoor amphitheater, this home of “The Aracoma Story” also boasts the Chief Logan Lodge nearby. One of the beautiful West Virginia state parks, Chief Logan is a great escape among the mountains.

2. Twisted Gun Golf Club

There’s no better place to practice your golf game! Tee up for 18 holes on this award-winning links-style course built on a former mine site.



3. Hatfield-McCoy Trail System

Find adventure on the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System! With over 600 miles of trails and ATV-friendly towns, there’s a lot to explore. Whether you’re looking for major thrills or family fun, you’ll find it all on the best trails in America – open 365 days a year.

4. Nu Era Bakery

After working up a sweat on nature trails trying to find the best red maple, you’ll need a sweet treat! Head over to Nu Era Bakery in Logan for an out-of-this-world dessert.





Fall Color Stops

METRO VALLEY

1. Charleston

West Virginia's capital city is known for its distinguished museums, boutiques, and restaurants. With local events all year long, it's a four-season destination you'll need several days to explore.

The Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences

Sleek and modern, this family favorite boasts a performance hall, art museum, science center, planetarium, and more.

Capitol Market

Shop indoors or out at this quaint Victorian marketplace. Key attractions include a chocolatier, coffee bar, artisan shops, restaurants, and seasonal farmers' markets.

State Capitol

Ever seen a golden roof? The Capitol's 23.5-karat dome is hard to miss. At 292 feet high, it's also taller than the U.S. Capitol.

The Culture Center

An easy walk from the Capitol is the state museum, archives and theater, all in one! It's also home to "Mountain Stage," a well-known and beloved live music show on NPR.



2. J.Q. Dickinson Salt Works

Take a quick detour from leaf peeping and stop by J.Q. Dickinson Salt Works! This family-run salt company in Malden produces gourmet salt that will take dinner to the next level.

3. Blenko Glass Factory

Tag along for a tour of West Virginia's Blenko Glass Factory in Milton! You can see how all the products are made by talented craftsmen and even get a head start on holiday shopping by picking up some gifts for your friends.





Heritage Farm Museum & Village



4. Huntington

Tour the railroad town of Huntington and hop aboard the New River Train to Hinton.

Heritage Farm Museum & Village

This Smithsonian affiliate brings Appalachian history to life. Log buildings, costumed reenactors, old-world crafts and an artisan center are just some of the attractions.

Huntington Museum of Art

From folk art to firearms and prayer rugs, this 52-acre museum collects lots of everything. It even has a plant conservatory, nature trails and art workshops.

Ritter Park

Explore the great outdoors—in the city! This award-winning park features a rose garden, playground, dog park, tennis courts and scenic walking path.

5. Point Pleasant

Visit the West Virginia State Farm Museum and Tu-Endie-Wei State Park. This town is famous for the legend of the Mothman, a mysterious winged creature that haunted the area.





Fall Color Stops

NORTHERN PANHANDLE

1. Sistersville

Stop in Sistersville to see the elegant Wells Inn or historic Sistersville Ferry.

2. Wheeling

This riverside city is steeped in 19th-century history. Visit the historic Independence Hall and shop in the restored Victorian Centre Market Square.

Oglebay Resort and Conference Center

This lovely park in Wheeling has been a popular recreation destination for more than a century. Highlights include fine lodging, dining, golf courses, stables, a children's zoo and more.

3. Grand Vue Park

Go ziplining, swing through an aerial rope course or plunge into a pool. Grand Vue has recreational adventures of all kinds. Finish your day with ice cream at Flurry's!

4. Palace of Gold

New Vrindaban's exotic palace glistens with mosaics, gilding and semiprecious stones. You can also tour lush gardens and meet peacocks and sacred cows.



5. Moundsville Penitentiary

Tour the foreboding former maximum-security Moundsville Penitentiary, and if you're adventurous enough, spend the night ghost hunting.

6. Newell

Want to see more amazing colors to match the leaves outside? Schedule a tour at the Homer Laughlin China Company, the 134-year-old home of Fiestaware, America's favorite collectible dinnerware. Pick up some great gifts for friends and relatives as the fall season rings in the holiday season.





1. Parkersburg

Parkersburg’s streets are lined with late 19th century architecture. Explore the art scene downtown, or take a sternwheeler cruise to Blennerhassett Island, where costumed interpreters recreate history.

Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park

Learn all about the mysterious Aaron Burr conspiracy. You can also spend the night at a primitive campsite from now until the last Saturday in October, but call and make a group reservation first.

2. Stone Road Vineyard

This vineyard in Elizabeth is family run, offering a dozen wines and a panoramic view. Enjoy the sight of leaves bursting with color while sipping on some of your favorite samples.

3. Holl’s Chocolates

Savor the Truffle of the Month from an authentic Swiss chocolatier! Holl’s Chocolates in Vienna is a state favorite and a great way to break from all the hiking or driving that you’ve done.



4. Chestnut Ridge Artist Colony

At Chestnut Ridge Artist Colony you can tour woodworking, jewelry and blacksmithing studios. This art co-op in Spencer is a great way to immerse yourself in Appalachian culture and learn more about our rich history and heritage.

5. Williamstown

Bike the pastoral North Bend Rail Trail. Atmospheric tunnels, historic buildings, and farms follow the path for 72 miles.





Fall Color Stops

MOUNTAINEER COUNTRY

1. Coopers Rock State Forest

The steep Cheat River Gorge and Coopers Rock State Forest in Bruceton Mills offer hunting, camping and hiking. Nearby is Lakeview Resort, with championship golf, fine dining and outdoor recreation.

2. Philippi

Visit the Philippi Covered Bridge, site of the first land battle of the Civil War. For something a bit out of the ordinary, check out Barbour County Historical Society Museum's 19th century mummies!

3. Morgantown

Tour the university city of Morgantown on the Personal Rapid Transit, the first transportation system of its kind. The Core Arboretum showcases 500 species of trees, wildflowers and plants.

West Virginia Botanic Gardens

Feel inspired and refreshed all year. This garden has 82 acres of tranquil forests, gardens and meadows for you to enjoy, plus regular workshops and activities.



4. Fairmont

Once famous for its glass, this city still crafts eye-catching attractions. Just check out the ice cream and desserts at The Poky Dot!

Country Club Bakery

It all began here: the pepperoni roll, West Virginia's state food. Slightly sweet and stuffed with pepperoni, these snacks have been a staple since 1927.

5. Clarksburg & Bridgeport

For great local shopping and unforgettable dining excursions, visit these neighboring cities for a break from your autumnal explorations.





Fall Color Stops

MOUNTAIN LAKES

1. Stonewall Resort and Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park

This luxurious retreat features an Arnold Palmer golf course, dinner cruises, spas, and fine dining. It's also part of the state park and lake.

2. WVU Jackson's Mill

Explore the childhood home of General "Stonewall" Jackson! This heritage site and event center offers walking tours of the farmstead.

3. Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum

For a spooky escape among the leaves, you've found the right place! Heritage and ghost tours are scheduled year 'round at Weston's former sanctuary for the mentally ill.

4. West Virginia State Wildlife Center

Watch animals interacting in native habitats at this unique French Creek Wildlife Center. The river otter exhibit is a must see!



5. Lascaux Micro-Theater

Relax with a movie and popcorn after your tour of the mountains! The Lascaux Micro-Theater in Buckhannon has foreign and independent films on Friday nights.

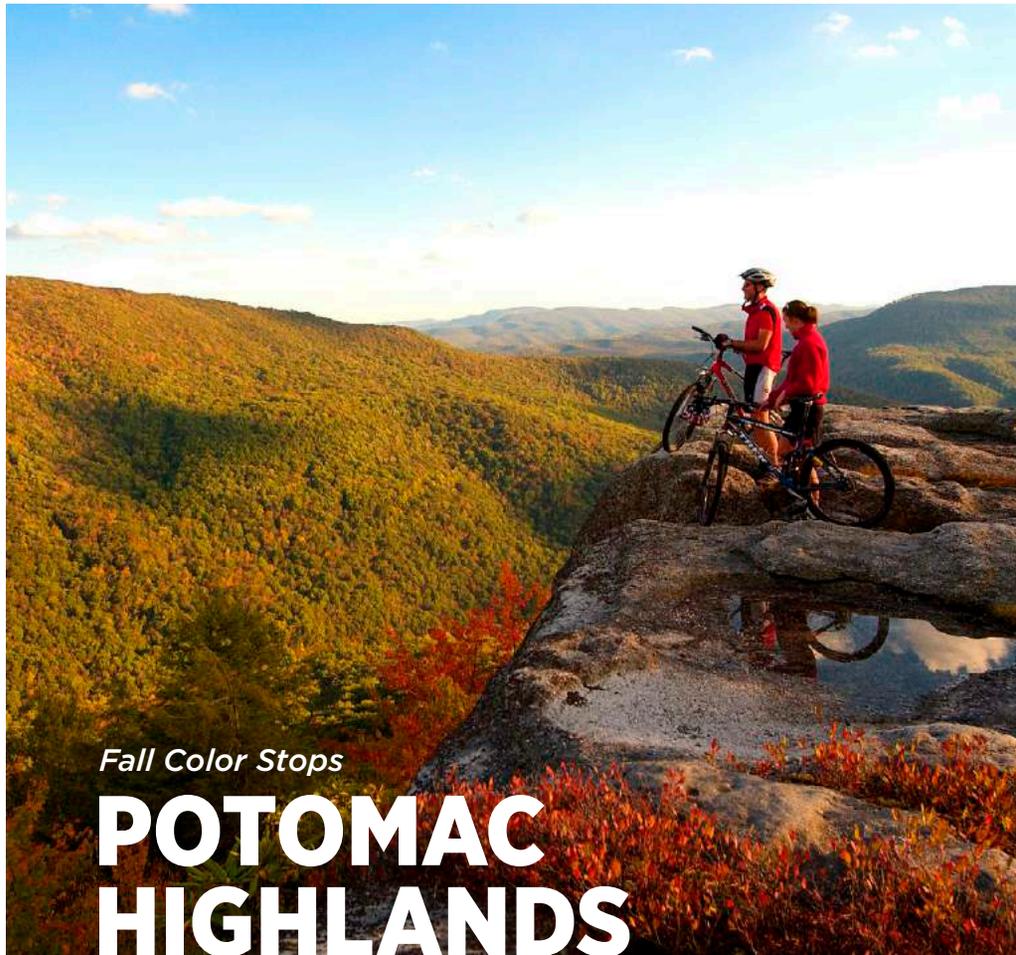
6. Cafe Cimino Country Inn

Relax at one of our state's most breathtaking B&Bs. Located on Sutton's historic Main Street, you'll be surrounded by small-town charm, warm hospitality, and fine dining.

7. Summersville Lake

A nice, cool boat ride in fall sounds just right! Set sail in the "Little Bahamas of the East," which has the clearest water east of the Mississippi. You won't regret a closer look at all the golden yellows, burnt oranges, and deep reds of Summersville.





Fall Color Stops

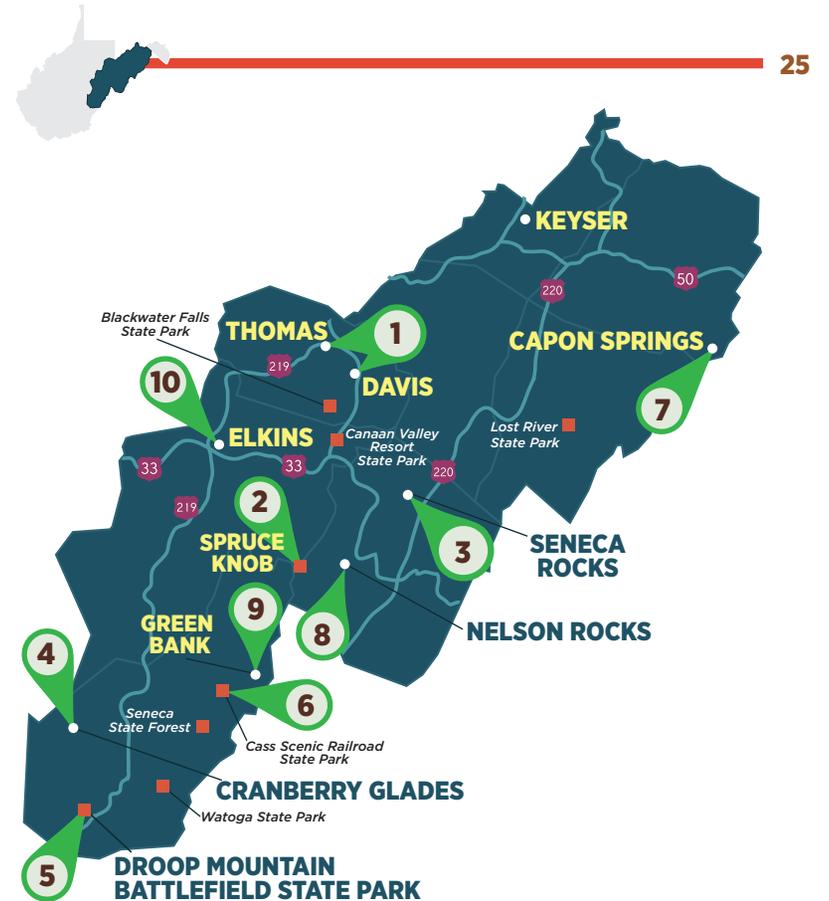
POTOMAC HIGHLANDS

1. Davis and Thomas

Small towns Davis and Thomas are hip with dining and nightlife. Nearby, Canaan Valley State Park is perfect for recreation, and Blackwater Falls State Park is renowned for its waterfalls and trails.

2. Spruce Knob

Meet the Mountain State's highest point! After driving through the Monongahela National Forest, you'll find an observation tower atop the 4,863-foot-peak.



3. Seneca Rocks

Head to Dolly Sods Wilderness Area or over the Allegheny Front for rock climbing and hiking. This region is also honeycombed with underground passages like Smoke Hole Caverns.

4. Cranberry Glades

Stroll through Cranberry Glades, a natural botanical garden of unique bog plant life. Settle into vacation cabins at Watoga State Park, the state's largest park.





Cass Scenic Railroad State Park



5. Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park

At West Virginia’s largest Civil War battle site, you can watch a major battle re-enactment every other October.

6. Scenic Train Excursions

Steam locomotives at Cass Scenic Railroad State Park haul passengers to the top of Bald Knob for stunning views. You can also ride trains through Romney, Elkins, Durbin, or Petersburg. Reserve early for fall foliage, holiday, dinner and mystery trains!

7. Capon Springs and Farms

This family retreat offers golf, spa services, made-from-scratch healthy meals, and “unplugged” play for all ages. It’s a perfect place to rest after a long day of leaf peeping.

8. Nelson Rocks

For lovers of heights, these Pendleton County ridges are an unparalleled thrill. Climb the Via Ferrata or ride the zipline canopy through the changing treetops.

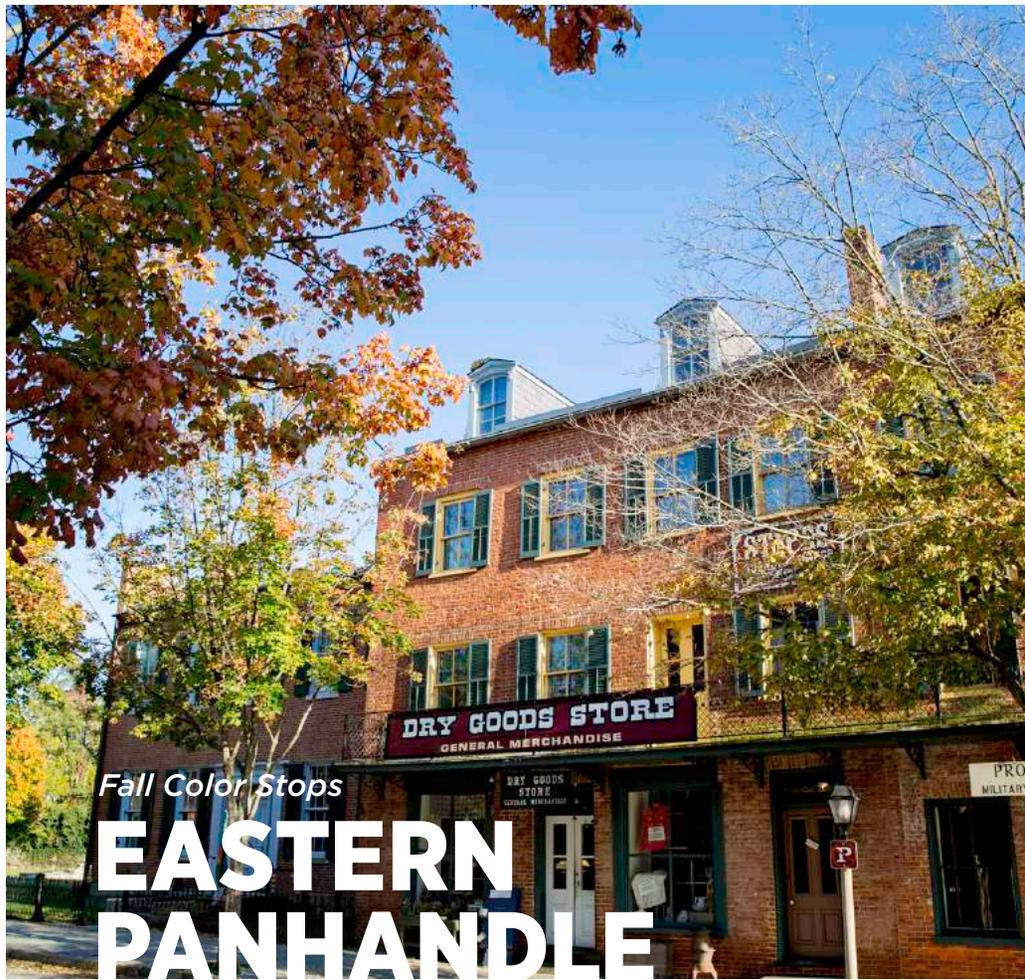
9. Green Bank

Shhh! Enter the National Radio Quiet Zone and visit Green Bank’s gigantic telescope (the largest steerable one in the world) and explore a lively hands-on museum. Stick around for a nocturnal lights show.

10. Augusta Heritage Center

In Elkins, the center’s renowned summer music, dance, and craft workshops culminate in an early fall festival. Come get a taste of authentic Appalachian culture!





Fall Color Stops

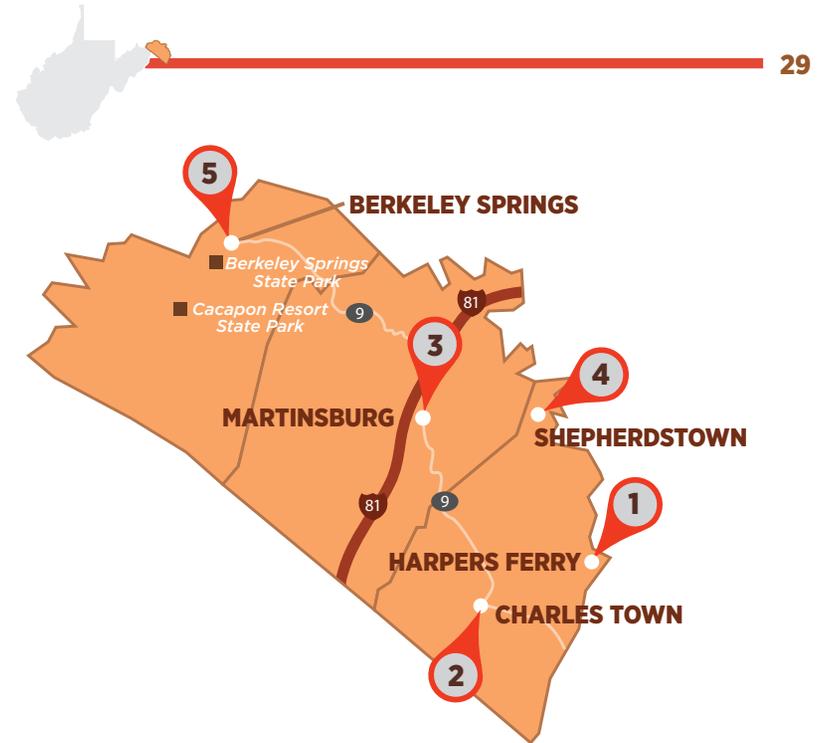
EASTERN PANHANDLE

1. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Harpers Ferry is one of the most scenic towns in the state. Enjoy world-class whitewater rafting and trails before exploring old-fashioned restaurants and boutiques at the living history village.

2. Charles Town

Antiquing, fall festivals, sweet moonshine, Thoroughbred horse racing—there is entertainment for everyone near Charles Town.



3. Martinsburg

The panhandle is dotted with colonial buildings that now serve as elegant inns and B&Bs. In Martinsburg, explore the home of a former Confederate spy or the restored railroad roundhouse.

4. Shepherdstown

Equally historic is nearby Shepherdstown, with its 18th century ambience, famous Bavarian Inn and spectacular locally owned restaurants.

5. Berkeley Springs

Immerse yourself in the mineral waters of Berkeley Springs State Park or relax with an expert massage. Then get away from it all at Cacapon Resort State Park.





Events

LATE SEPTEMBER

1. Cass Scenic Railroad State Park Harvest Day

Churn your own apple butter and paint pumpkins before gathering 'round the campfire and heading on a full-moon hike.

2. Hardy County Heritage Weekend

Gather stamps for prizes at different stops around West Virginia's only cross-county festival— historic home tours, train rides, cook-offs, reenactments, art, games and more.

3. Leaf Peepers Festival

Hikes, music, carriage rides, Oktoberfest, petting zoo, art, falconry, duck race — plus much more throughout Tucker County. (Bonus: it's also Astronomy Weekend at nearby Blackwater Falls State Park!)



Events

EARLY OCTOBER

1. Mountain State Forest Festival

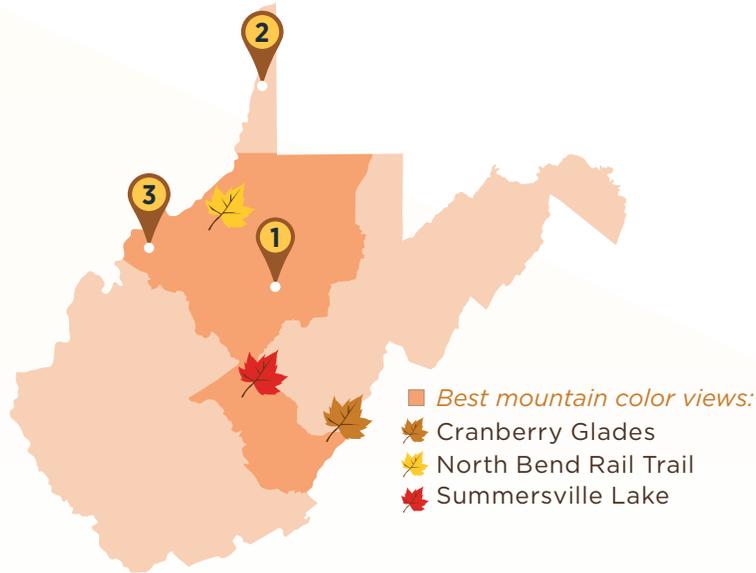
One of the state's grandest celebrations, the Forest Festival brings hundreds of activities to Elkins — concerts, parades, lumberjacking and more.

2. Oglebayfest

Enjoy a weekend of parades, fireworks, lavish dining and hiking. Browse the Ohio County Country Fair, unique gifts shops and artisan and gourmet markets.

3. Mountain Rail Adventures

Hop aboard these elegant vintage rail cars, which will sweep you through the Potomac Highlands scenery. You can even stay the night in the Castaway Caboose, surrounded by the blazing fall colors.



- *Best mountain color views:*
- Cranberry Glades
 - North Bend Rail Trail
 - Summersville Lake

Events

MID OCTOBER

1. Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum

Haunted tours of this ominous historic asylum run year-round. In the fall, enjoy less spooky attractions like a haunted house, Rocky Horror Picture Show, fall festival, Asylum Ball and more.

2. Boo at the Zoo

Halloween isn't too scary when you spend it with furry critters. Enjoy special train rides, treats, and spooky—but not too spooky—family fun at the Good Zoo in Wheeling.

3. Blennerhassett Island Mansion By Candlelight

Take a sternwheeler cruise to the historic Blennerhassett estate for a harvest dinner, horse-drawn wagon rides, games, music and dancing from the time period.



- *Best mountain color views:*
- Hatfield-McCoy Trails
 - Pinnacle Rock
 - Cacapon Resort State Park

Events

LATE OCTOBER

1. Bridge Day

Every third Saturday in October, watch BASE jumpers and rappellers soar 876 feet from the New River Gorge Bridge. Listen to music and browse craft and food vendors.

2. Harpers Ferry Ghost Tours

TripAdvisor's #1 ghost tour in America will guide you through the supernatural tales of the National Historic Park after the Civil War. Family and pet friendly.

3. Gritt's Farm

Corn mazes and hayrides are just the start. Pedal carts, apple cannons, Slide Mountain, a wagon train and more will work up your appetite for their weird but tasty ice cream flavors.



HUNTING & FISHING

With more than 20,000 miles of streams, 100 public fishing lakes and 1.5 million acres of public land open for hunting, West Virginia is a definite catch for fall outdoor enthusiasts. Whether you're looking to escape in the wilderness to hunt, fish, or go on a fall trip with your friends and family to a state park or forest, a quality hunting and angling experience awaits you in the Mountain State.



Fall Fish & Game

Try your luck at catching sport fish like muskie, bass, walleye and catfish or go trout fishing during fall stocking.

If small game is what you're after, plan a squirrel hunting trip between September and February. Seasons for rabbit, raccoon and others open and close at various times during fall.

West Virginia also has some of the best big game hunting in the country. Black bear gun season runs Sept. 2 through Dec. 31, with opening and closing dates varying by county. But it's the white-tail deer seasons that are most popular with hunters. This year, archery and crossbow seasons run Sept. 30 through Dec. 31. Traditional buck gun season begins the Monday of Thanksgiving week, Nov. 20, and runs through Dec. 2. Special days have been set aside for youth deer hunting on Oct. 21 and Dec. 26-27.

If you don't have a favorite hunting or fishing spot, interactive maps on the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources website, www.wvdnr.gov, can help you find one. And WVDNR's Electronic Licensing System makes it easy to purchase a license from any computer. Go to www.wvhunt.com or www.wvfish.com, fill out the forms and print out your license.

You're all set for a West Virginia hunting or fishing adventure!



A couple of hikers, a woman and a man, are seen from behind, standing on a large, flat, grey rock ledge. They are both wearing backpacks and shorts. The woman is on the left, and the man is on the right. They are looking out over a vast, rolling mountain range under a clear blue sky. The mountains in the distance are layered, creating a sense of depth. The foreground and middle ground are covered in dense, green and yellowish vegetation, suggesting a transition into autumn. The overall scene is bright and scenic.

Dolly Sods Wilderness

PLAN YOUR FALL GETAWAY TODAY

There's so much more to see and explore in the mountains of West Virginia. Whether you're looking for a weekend escape or a week-long autumn vacation, West Virginia has everything you love about the season of fall. Share your favorite fall photos and memories using #AlmostHeaven.

Plan your #AlmostHeaven fall getaway today at [GoToWV.com/fall](https://www.gotowv.com/fall).

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