

FOLLOWING THE LEAVES

FALL FOLIAGE COLOR IN NEW ENGLAND INTRODUCTION

Groups always ask when is the best time to visit New England for fall colors. The general answer is the last two weeks of September and the first week or so in October. That said, it's best to remember that leaves change at various times in various locations based primarily on elevation but also on weather conditions earlier in the year. Below are the most popular areas listed as the leaves change earliest to latest.

- New Hampshire, North Conway and Mount Washington
- Northern Vermont, Burlington and the ski areas of Killington
- South Western Vermont and Massachusetts, The Berkshires
- Western New York, Hyde Park and Houston River Valley

Because most groups plan 7 to 10 day tour programs, it's most practical for a fall foliage tour from Boston north to the White Mountains of New Hampshire, west to Vermont, south to Massachusetts, then back to Boston or south to New York using different arrival and departure cities. Also keep in mind days are shorter in the fall so when checking into or returning to a hotel, it will be dark

I feel that southern New England can be another tour that could include Hudson Valley, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Cape Cod. Other than Boston, two major attractions south of Boston are Plimoth Plantation and Sturbridge Village

Arrival and departure cities are many and can be selected based on the area to be toured. In general different arrival and departure cities will save at least one day from the program. Mid day arrivals and departures will do the same as it allows time to reach a first night hotel some distance from airport and an airport some distance from your last hotel.

Depending on the number of seats needed you may want to look at United with flights into and out of Albany, NY; Burlington, VT, and Portland, ME. Southwest now flies to Providence, RI, Manchester, VT, Boston, MA, New York City's LaGuardia and Islip, Long Island.

Hotels in New Hampshire and Vermont are varied. There are the chain hotels generally in the Hampton and Holiday Inn category with a few Sheratons and Hiltons. Otherwise we use hotel condos, lodges and even some very nice motels. Up market hotels such as the Mount Washington Hotel (including breakfast and dinner in room price) are generally out of the tour price range. Hotel availability, if booking a year out, would require a deposit when booking or by March prior to the tour. Availability opens up in the spring when groups fail to make their deposits. There is usually hotel space somewhere in each area, but having things in place by spring is best.