

Seven Sensational Scenic Drives for Autumn

White Mountain Trail (New Hampshire)

Stop: Just off the national scenic byway, the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) leads easy hikes to incredible views of Crawford Notch. The hikes are free, and so are moose tours if you stay at AMC's Highland Lodge. For more great photo ops, climb aboard the Mount Washington Cog Railway or Cannon Mountain Aerial Tramway.

West Elk Loop (Colorado)

Stop: Explore the mountain wilderness on a trail ride near Crested Butte with Fantasy Ranch Horseback Adventures. In Gunnison, Scenic River Tours leads guided fly-fishing trips and whitewater rafting excursions. For \$60, you can join one of Colorado Backcountry's half-day mountain bike rides through aspen forests.

Blue Ridge Parkway (North Carolina And Virginia)

Stop: In early fall thousands of migrating monarch butterflies bound for Mexico pass through the mountains 35 minutes south of Asheville. Best view: the parkway's Wagon Road Gap overlook. Nearby, crunch into a fresh-picked apple at Orchard at Altapass or hit the corn maze at Hickory Nut Gap Farm. The Biltmore House Architect's Tour takes you to a 360-degree rooftop view of autumn colors.

Amish Country Byway (Ohio)

Stop: Take a horse-drawn wagon ride, tour Amish barns and houses, and feed the animals at the Farm at Walnut Creek. Many of Amish Country's cheesemakers, including Heini's Cheese Chalet, welcome visitors to watch the process and sample more than 50 fresh-made varieties. Find out the why behind the simple ways at Behalt Amish & Mennonite Heritage Center.

Napa Valley/Silverado Trail (California)

Stop: Buy a \$25 wine-tasting card in Napa to access 12 downtown tasting rooms for only 10 cents per taste. Pick up lunch at Napa's Oxbow Market for a roadside picnic en route to a winery. You can browse boutiques and hit the Culinary Institute's flavor bars (\$10 to \$15) in St. Helena. See a geyser and Petrified Forest near Calistoga.

North Shore Scenic Drive (Minnesota)

Stop: Ride a treetop roller coaster or zip-line for less than \$10 at Spirit Mountain in Duluth. Lake kayaking excursions, beach campfires, and naturalist-led hikes on the Superior Hiking Trail are free when you stay at Lutsen Resort. Nearby in Two Harbors, you can tour the 1896 Edna G. Tugboat or the still-operational Two Harbors Light Station for next to nothing.

Cascade Loop (Washington)

Stop: Raise a stein (Prost!) to Munich in the little Bavarian mountain town of Leavenworth. Huge Oktoberfest celebrations spill onto the streets during the first three weekends in October. In the cowboy town of Winthrop, browse Riverside Avenue's boutiques with Western facade storefronts. Stop for apple cider tastings and tours during harvest season in Washington Apple Country.