

UNITED STATES > RHODE ISLAND [GUIDE](#)

# Rhode Island Fall Foliage: The Complete Guide

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Denis Tangney Jr. / Getty Images

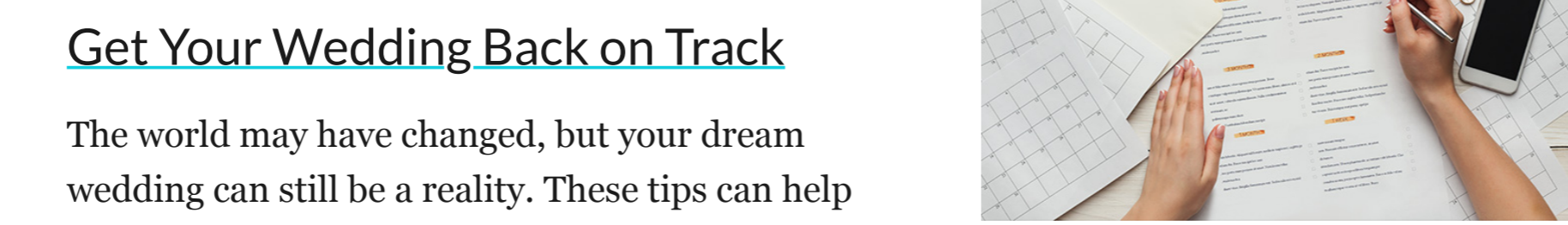


Best known for its ocean beaches, Rhode Island is commonly overlooked by leaf peepers who flock to New England's other states—particularly [Vermont](#) and [New Hampshire](#)—during fall foliage season. Here's a surprising fact, though: Rhode Island is 52 percent forest. Head inland, away from resort areas along the shore, and you'll find spectacular natural areas where autumn puts on a dazzling display. In capital city Providence, fall is also a vibrant time of year when college students reinvigorate the arts and dining scene and trees in riverside parks turn glittery shades of copper and gold.

If you want to be among the savvy foliage seekers who choose Rhode Island for a fall escape, this guide has everything you need to make the most of this colorful season.

## Chepachet: Rhode Island's Best Fall Foliage Destination

You've probably never heard of Chepachet, Rhode Island. It's a quiet, historic village in the northwest corner of the state that is the perfect destination for outdoorsy types who want to avoid the crowds and ocean of venturing to popular foliage spots further north. If you've only ever visited the [Ocean State's seashore](#), you'll be wowed that this, too, is Rhode Island.



### Get Your Wedding Back on Track

The world may have changed, but your dream wedding can still be a reality. These tips can help you plan your wedding and honeymoon with the 'new normal' in mind.

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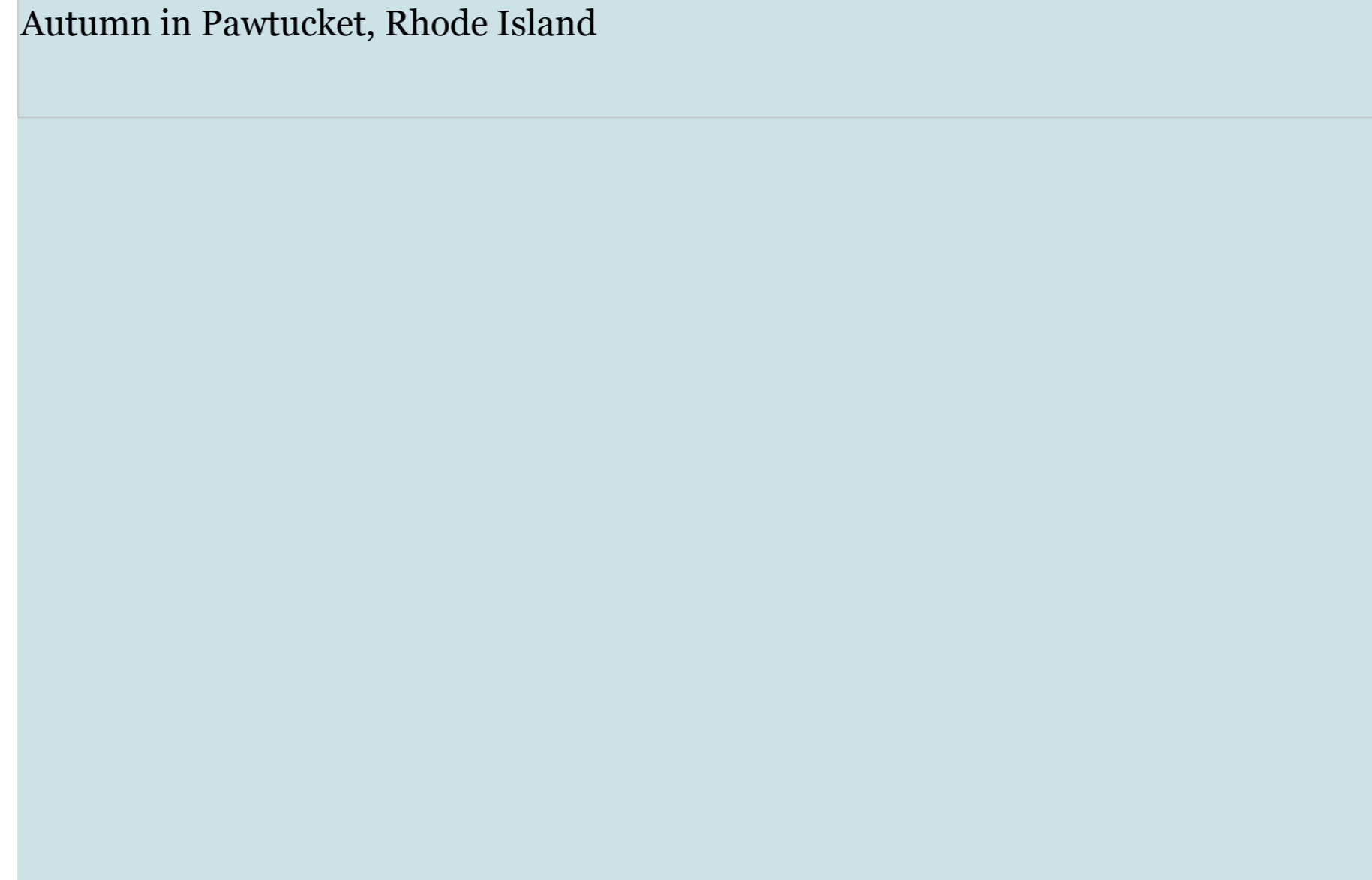
## Where to Stay

Leaf peepers on a budget can pitch a tent or park a RV at [George Washington State Campground](#) in Chepachet for just \$36 per night (\$18 for Rhode Island residents). The amenities are severely limited, but walks along Bowditch Reservoir are lovely in the fall. Don't care to rough it? [Aitchin](#) is your best alternative for overnight stays in this area.

## Things To Do

Rhode Island's best fall foliage drive, Route 102, runs right through Chepachet. So does a stunning segment of the North South Trail, a hiking path that runs the length of the state from the coast to the Massachusetts border. If you like to try new wines, be sure to visit [Mulberry Vineyards](#), which offers tastings on weekends. In the center of Chepachet, [Brown & Hopkins Country Store](#), one of the oldest general stores in the country, sells penny candy, apple butter, and myriad gifts.

## Autumn in Pawtucket, Rhode Island



Denis Tangney Jr. / Getty Images

## The Best Fall Drives in Rhode Island

The nation's smallest state has plenty of miles of scenic driving for fall foliage travelers. Here are two fall foliage driving tour ideas for Rhode Island.

### Autumn Vineyard-Hopping Drive

The fall harvest season is a lovely time to visit Rhode Island's vineyards, and if you plan a trip to these three stops in the western part of the state, you'll also enjoy splendid leaf peeping along your journey. Start your vineyard tour at [Tapped Apple Cider & Winery](#) in Westerly, where fruit grown at one of Rhode Island's oldest orchards is transformed into alcoholic beverages that taste like fall. From here, endeavor to follow Route 3 North to Route 102 North, even though your GPS will try to put you on I-95. Next up: [NickleCreek Vineyard](#) in Foster. Here, a winemaker Steve O'Connor's experimental grape and fruit wines have earned a devoted following, and you'll want to take home bottles of seasonal favorites like semi-sweet Autumn Cranberry, as well as the spicy yet versatile Shiraz. Finish your tour at [Verde Vineyards](#) in Johnston: a beautiful, solar-powered farm property where you can picnic and savor several wines including the St. Croix owner Jim Verde has cultivated with great love and care.

### Blackstone River Valley Drive

Set out from the Old Slater Mill National Historic Landmark, situated on the t, for a drive through the region that gave birth to America's Industrial Revolution. Follow Dexter Street (Route 122 North) out of town towards the romantic [Hearthside House Museum](#), and you'll skirt past marshlands and pretty ponds. The road navigates around the back side of [Lincoln Woods State Park](#) before connecting with Route 146 North toward the Massachusetts border.

## Best Rhode Island Inns for Leaf Peepers

These Rhode Island inns make autumn adventures easy.

- **Stagecoach House Inn:** The [Arcadia Management Area](#), Rhode Island's largest forest, is a scenic destination for a fall hike or drive—and this nearby inn overlooking the Wood River offers views of its own.
- **The Villa:** This Mediterranean-style, luxury B&B in Westerly is set on nearly two acres of colorful gardens and fruit trees surrounded by woodlands.
- **The Old Court Bed & Breakfast:** You'll love wandering down Providence's Benefit Street, dubbed "A Mile of History," and this 1863 rectory-turned-inn places you right on the cobblestoned thoroughfare. It's also a short walk from the storied Brown University campus.
- **Rose Farm Inn:** Plan a getaway to [Block Island](#), and stay in a tranquil, natural setting at this country farmhouse. Rent a bike from the inn's bicycle shop to explore the autumn scenery.

## Jaswell's Cider Mill Rhode Island Fall Fun



Kim Knox Beckius

## The Best Fall Activities in Rhode Island

From horseback riding through a 627-acre park to sipping the day away at New England's oldest winery, these are the best fall activities Rhode Island has to offer.

### Visit a Cider Mill

At [Jaswell's Farm](#) in Smithfield, Rhode Island, you can watch through observation windows as apples grown on-site or nearby are washed, chopped, and pressed to make sweet, refreshing cider. A jug isn't the only thing you'll want to take home. [Jaswell's](#) is known for its ginormous, two-pound candy apples, hand-dipped in melted hard cherry candy, caramel, or caramel and chocolate; you can get yours rolled in everything from chopped pecans to crushed peanut butter cups.

### Pedal the Rails

A Rail Explorers expedition is fun for every member of your family, and in the fall, pedaling a rail machine along old railroad tracks that trace Narragansett Bay is an exhilarating way to see colorful leaves. You'll have a tour leader, but you can go at your own pace. Tandem and quad rail cars can be booked, and you can even link several together for a larger group.

### Go Horseback Riding in Lincoln Woods

In northern Rhode Island, Lincoln Woods State Park offers 627 treed acres to explore, and nothing tops admiring fall's colors on a trail ride. [Sunsel Stables](#) offers guided horseback riding through the park daily, and your sure-footed companion will do the hard work of hill-climbing while you enjoy the views of glacial boulders and pond reflections.

### Treat Your Sweetheart to a Gondola Experience

It's the ultimate romantic date in Providence during the glorious autumn months. Book passage for two aboard one of La Gondola's authentic Venetian boats, and enjoy wine and nibbles as your gondolier steers you along the city's rivers. You can even arrange to be serenaded with the song of your choice.

### Find Your Way Out of a Corn Maze

At [Escohar's Highland Farm](#) in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, a new, challenging cornfield maze debuts each fall. Bring your leashed dog along to help you find your way through, and enjoy hay rides on fall weekends, too.

### Hike the Great Swamp

Maples that turn bright red in the fall make the Great Swamp Management Area in South Kingstown a picture-perfect hiking destination. Bring binoculars if you're a birdwatching enthusiast, and explore all or part of the 5-mile trail that probes the largest swamp in New England.

### Pick Apples and Pumpkins

Sweet Berry Farm in Middletown is one of the prettiest farms in the state, and in addition to offering pick-your-own apples and pumpkins in the fall, you can enjoy a fresh and delicious lunch here in the farm café.

### Unwind at New England's Oldest Winery

In the rural, often overlooked region of Rhode Island east of Newport, you can visit [Carolyn's Sakonet Vineyard](#) in Little Compton for a unique wine tasting experience. Founded in 1975, the oldest of New England's vineyards has enjoyed a period of rejuvenation since it was purchased by Rhode Islander and jewelry entrepreneur [Carolyn Rafaelian](#) of Alex + Ani fame. Visit when there's music on the lawn if you can.

## Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular in Providence RI



N. Millard/GoProvidence.com

## Best Annual Fall Events in Rhode Island

Whether you're into spooky season or you love all the flavors of fall, Rhode Island offers a host of autumnal events every September and October.

### Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular

Providence's annual Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular at Roger Williams Park Zoo is a dazzling display of pumpkin artistry that you really shouldn't miss if you're in Rhode Island in the fall. Talented carvers outdo themselves each year, and the glowing spectacle mesmerizes kids and grown-ups, too.

### Fortress of Nightmares

Historic Fort Adams in Newport becomes Rhode Island's best haunted attraction each Halloween season. You're in for a series of scares, and the highlight is navigating the underground Tunnels of Terror with only your senses and brave companions to help you escape.

### Newport Mansions Wine & Food Festival

Each September, [Rosecliff](#)—one of the most elegant of the Newport Mansions—plays host to a four-day culinary extravaganza. Choose from a variety of ticketed tasting experiences and educational events.

### Pumpkin Palooza

On September and October weekends, [Frichs Farm](#) in Warren, Rhode Island, entertains families with Pumpkin Coaches rides and hands-on activities like scarecrow-making. Be there [Columbus Day](#) weekend for the [Southern New England Giant Pumpkin Growers Annual Weigh-off](#), and witness some of the largest fruits in existence.

### Ocean State Oyster Festival

If you adore oysters, you'll love this annual celebration of these slurp-able gifts from the sea. Traditionally held in September in Providence, the event celebrates Rhode Island's oyster farmers and the state's aquaculture innovations.

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