



## Visit the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley - the UK's Leaf Peeping Capital

[By Visit Dean Wye](#)

With the leaves beginning to start turning the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley is preparing for another colourful autumn season with the UK's first guide to leaf peeping including a 50 mile leaf peeping drive and top ten hotspots.

You don't need to get on a plane to enjoy some fabulous foliage displays, in fact the glorious Dean Wye even gives New England a run for its money. The area, which encompasses sections of the three counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Monmouthshire, is well known for its annual symphony of colour. Autumn sets the forest aglow, vibrant colours cover the land, it's a wonderful time for a woodland walk and you'll find the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley is one of the best places in the UK to go leaf peeping.

Leaf peeping is a term growing in popularity here in the UK. It has come from North America where people enjoy travelling to view and photograph the changing season, as the foliage turns from summer greens to the yellows, reds and golds of autumn.

With over 20 million trees spread across 200 square miles, the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley is a heaven for leaf peepers. Home to a wide variety of majestic oak, ash, birch, beech, larch, sweet chestnut and many more trees, the foliage lights up as the days start to draw in, creating an indulgent visual feast.



Visit Dean Wye created the first ever guide to leaf peeping and introduced the idea to the UK. You can download our leaf peeping guide [here](#) and use our interactive map to follow our special leaf peeping drive through sweeping countryside with river views across ancient woodland before delving deeper



into ten hotspots en route to enjoy breathtaking views, riverside walks, lakes and arboretums drenched in autumnal colour. It's doable in a day at 50 miles or stay over for a leaf peeping escape this autumn. Or, simply choose shorter sections to combine with other activities.

### **Leaf Peeping Drive**

The 50-mile leaf peeping drive is a circuit that can be picked up at any point which includes ten identified 'hotspots'. Starting from Symonds Yat Rock the route heads through dense deciduous woodland to reach The Kymin viewpoint. From here follow the road clinging to the Wye with its oak, beech and ash riverbanks to reach Tintern Abbey. The drive now heads deep into the Forest of Dean and takes in Puzzlewood's ancient woodland before reaching New Fancy's 360-degree forest views. Visitors will enjoy miles of unbroken woodland along forest roads before stopping at Cyril Hart Arboretum including 200 different tree species before calling in at Beechenhurst and then Cannop Ponds, to then re-join the Wye, crossing Kerne Bridge.

### **In-Depth Leaf Peeping Guide**

The in-depth guide is [on the Visit Dean Wye website here](#) and features a downloadable PDF of the leaf peeping drive and top ten hotspots, many accessible by car and some requiring more discovery on foot. The guide also includes Paul Rutter's specially created leaf peeping short walks, as well as a whole host of other ways to enjoy the autumn foliage including themed accommodation breaks, autumn feasts, numerous ways for autumn visitors to get creative and enjoy a leafy crafty experience. Advice is on hand on how to capture foliage with professional photographer David Broadbent's photography tips.

### **Highlights Include**

- The Eagle's Nest - climb 365 steps from the valley below looking out for beech, ash and oak which will turn the woodland into a rich palette of russets, golden yellows and copper browns. At the top, you'll be rewarded with views that span from the Wye out to the River Severn and the Cotswold Hills beyond.
- Cyril Hart Arboretum - next to the Speech House Hotel, this is home to over 200 tree species that create a rich palette of autumn colours, from the bright yellow of the tulip trees to the deep reds of the maples.
- Forest Bathe in autumnal Colours - qualified Forest Therapy Guide Carina Greenwood is taking groups into the forest during autumn to bathe their senses in the forest; looking, listening, smelling and tasting through a series of 'invitations' and activities proven to enhance wellbeing for mind, body and soul.
- Leaf Peeping on Two Wheels - explore many miles of traffic-free bike trails that run through the area. Bikes are easily hired and the 9-mile 'Family Trail' is a great starting point for youngsters, beginning at the Cannop Cycle Centre and cutting through the heart of the forest passing five leaf peeping hotspots: Cannop Ponds, Beechenhurst, Cyril Hart Arboretum, New Fancy View & Mallards Pike.
- Forage and Feast - Harts Barn Cookery School is hosting 'forage and feast' workshops, with participants taken out into the surrounding hedgerows, woods and fields to fill a basket with a bounty of nuts, berries and mushrooms before returning to the school to create a feast of infused tea, bread, savoury dishes and something sweet to finish off with.



- Get crafty with 'Take a Leaf' Clay Modelling - Eastnor Pottery will be hosting a selection of autumn themed clay modelling classes where participants will have the chance to create a clay leaf tile, paint it in a range of autumn colours and then fire and glaze it.
- Parva Farm Vineyard is matching wine to leaves on a vineyard walk and wine tasting with breathtaking views over Tintern and the River Wye below their ancient Welsh hillside vineyard.
- Boutique hotel, Tudor Farmhouse, has concocted a special Leaf Peepers Fizz cocktail to revive all those thirsty peepers after their foliage frenzy.
- The owner of Wharton Lodge Cottages has renamed her properties Leaf Peepers Cottages perfect for peepers looking for a base with 14 acres of private parkland home to a variety of mature and majestic trees, including Californian Redwoods, London Plane, Cedar of Lebanon and Wellingtonia.
- There are wildlife safaris and photography workshops aplenty all designed for leaf peepers looking to explore the region guided by its many local experts.

The Leaf Peeping Guide is available now at: [www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/inspiration/seasons/autumn-leaf-peeping](http://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/inspiration/seasons/autumn-leaf-peeping)

For more information on events, accommodation, places to eat and things to do across the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley, please visit: [www.visitdeanwye.co.uk](http://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk)

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### **About Visit Dean Wye:**

[Visit Dean Wye](http://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk) is the official Destination Management Organisation for the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley, covering Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire and Herefordshire.

The region covers over 1,000 square miles and includes the Forest of Dean, one of Britain's largest and most ancient forests and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Within this stunning landscape of forested hillsides, limestone gorge scenery, waterfalls, rocky outcrops and unspoilt villages, are some of Britain's best [walking routes](#), [cycling trails](#) and [watersports](#). It is a natural outdoor playground with plentiful [activities](#), miles of well laid paths and many hidden gems.

With over 20 million trees it's a place of timeless beauty and untamed nature with breathtaking [viewpoints](#), [iconic ruins](#), [more castles](#) than anywhere in the UK, unique [attractions](#), a wide range of [holiday accommodation](#) and bountiful [artisan produce](#).

The region regularly takes a starring role as the [filming location](#) for major blockbusters including [Star Wars](#), [Harry Potter](#) and [Sex Education](#).

Visit Dean Wye represents the interests of 300+ tourism businesses and is the only cross-border tourism association in the UK, spanning Wales and England.

Website: [www.visitdeanwye.co.uk](http://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk)

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Brand hashtag: #DeanWye

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For more information contact [marketing@visitdeanwye.co.uk](mailto:marketing@visitdeanwye.co.uk)

**Tourism statistics for the Forest of Dean & Wye Valley:**

Total staying and day trips: 7,105,400

Total visitor related spend: £372 million

Total day trips: 6.3 million

Total staying trips (UK and overseas): 805,400

Total overseas staying trips: 100,400