



Celebrate Leaf Peeping in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean this autumn with themed events, activities and breaks

Leaf Peeping drive as well as foraging, forest bathing and food festivals and wildlife safaris



The Forest of Dean and Wye Valley is one of the UK's best places to enjoy the autumn, and to celebrate the annual symphony of colour the UK's first **Leaf Peeping Drive** will launch later this month as part of an in-depth guide to the hotspots for foliage fans to visit in the area.

Produced by **Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism**, the guide will feature a downloadable Leaf Peeping Drive, a recommended route through the region to experience the very best of the autumn colour, as well as a series of Leaf Peeper walks, seasonal events and activities for visitors of all ages and interests, plus a selection of accommodation offering autumnal-themed breaks.

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

Other autumn highlights can be found below, with more details on activities, events and accommodation available here: www.wyedeantourism.co.uk. The Leaf Peeping Guide is available from late September at www.wyedeantourism.co.uk/leafpeeperswelcome.

Autumn Events

Ross Walking Festival Celebrating the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean

Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire: 27-29 September

During the Ross Walking Festival between 27-29 September experienced local guides will lead 16 group walks around the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley. The walks will a devise range of scenery everything from ancient mines and medieval castles to rare birds and the area's unique geology, all passing through stunning autumn scenery. Walks cost from £5 per person, apart from the final walk, which also includes a cream tea from £12 per person. Find out more at www.walkinginross.co.uk.

Forest Showcase Food Festival

The Speech House, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, 6 October 2019

The Speech House Hotel's grounds will be overrun with the best local and seasonal produce on Sunday, 6 October, with the annual Forest Showcase Food Festival. Foodies can taste a vast selection

of produce, watch local chefs rustle-up a feast of culinary delights while kids get creative recycling leaves and twigs into forest mobiles.

[ReWild Project](#) will run foraging sessions throughout the day, hunting edible plants and berries from the surrounding woodland.... in anticipation of their 'Wild Chef' combining the foraged produce to create an exclusive autumnal dish.

Tickets are available from £5 for adults and £2.50 for children. Find out more at forestshowcase.org.

Jump Season Oktoberfest Opener at Chepstow Racecourse

Chepstow, Monmouthshire: 11-12 October 2019

The eagerly anticipated winter jump racing season? begins on 11 October at Chepstow Racecourse with a bumper two-day line up. In between races punters can enjoy a glass of German beer while listening to live performances from an Oompah band in the Oktoberfest Marquee. Tickets are available in advance from £20 pp, or from £25 pp on the day. Other options include the Ultimate VIP Package, which includes a private box, glass of prosecco and a four-plate buffet from £100 pp. Find out more at www.chepstow-racecourse.co.uk.

Autumnal Activities

Pro Leaf Peeping Photography Workshops and Classes

Various locations, Forest of Dean

Internationally acclaimed photographer David Broadbent will host workshops for keen camera lovers looking to sharpen their skills and capture the best of autumn's changing colours. David will lead a small group through Puzzlewood on 20 October (from £65 pp) and run group or private Leaf Peeping workshops throughout the season. He will take people to his favourite locations and give one to one support on how to take stunning photos during this colourful season. Four-hour workshops or private sessions priced from £125 pp with a 20% discount for groups of two or three. For parties of four or more the charge is £65 pp, while two -hour mobile phone photography workshops are also available for £45 pp. To find out more visit davidbroadbent.zenfolio.com

Cider Making at Humble by Nature

Humble by Nature, Monmouthshire: 12-13 October

Kate Humble's working farm, [Humble by Nature](#), provides craft and rural skills workshops. Book on one of two Cider Making courses on 12 and 13 October to make good use of the apple harvest. James McCrindle, an award-winning local cider maker will run the course and lead participants to a local orchard to source the apples they will later press and juice. James will teach participants the basics of cider making, as well as give a tutored tasting session of McCrindle's cider and perry. The course is for £115 per person, including five litres of cider to take home. Find out more at www.humblebynature.com/events/cider-making/

Forest Bathe in Autumnal Colours

Various locations Forest of Dean

This October, qualified Forest Therapy Guide Carina Greenwood will treat groups to a truly relaxing experience where participants bathe their senses in the forest and look, listen, smell and taste it through a series of guided "invitations" proven to enhance wellbeing for the mind, body and soul. Courses run on 12, 16, 20, 26 October 2019, available from £26 pp for a three-hour session including a foraged tea ceremony. Find out more at www.forestbathe.co.uk.

Autumn Wildlife Safaris deep within the Forest of Dean

Various locations, Forest of Dean

Local naturalist and wildlife detective Ed Drewitt will take eager wildlife watchers into the heart of the forest to discover the area's abundance of nature, including wild boar and deer, and birdsong which intensifies during the autumn as birds feast on the harvest. Ed has partnered with boutique hotel, Tudor Farmhouse, to offer guided evening safaris (28 September and 19 October) as well as a morning "Dawn Chorus" session (10 October) available from £40 pp. Private group safaris can also be arranged for groups of up to six from £150. Find out more at tudorfarmhousehotel.co.uk/wildlife-safari.

Ed has also teamed-up with [The Speech House](http://thespeechhouse.co.uk) hotel, to offer owl and bat walks, where he guides visitors into the woods to spot these nocturnal creatures as they come alive at dusk. As the evening progresses, the focus turns to star gazing and listening to the sounds of night-time in the forest. Walks take place on 24 and 25 September and more details can be found at thespeechhouse.co.uk/2019/05/13/a-walk-on-the-wild-side/. To book a private safari, contact Ed directly at www.eddrewitt.co.uk.

Fly Through the Forest Canopy at Go Ape

Mallards Pike, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire

Combine Leaf Peeping with adrenaline-pumping thrills at Go Ape, Mallards Pike. This high-wire course takes place 15-metres above ground and offers 360-degree views of the forest canopy topped by an exhilarating 180-metre zipline. For those without a head for heights there are Segways to explore the woodland paths surrounding Mallards Pike. The Treetop Challenge costs £33 pp for adults and £25 pp for under 15s. Off-Road Segway Experience cost from £35 pp for all ages. Find out more at <https://goape.co.uk>.

Ride beneath the Forest Canopy with Pedalabikeaway

Cannop Valley, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire

The Forest of Dean offers over 25 miles of traffic-free trails for cyclists. The nine-mile Family Trail is a leisurely loop perfect for people to explore the autumnal scenery at their own pace. It begins at the Cannop Cycle Centre and cuts through the heart of the forest, passing iconic landmarks including Cannop Ponds, Beechenhurst Lodge and Mallards Pike. For the more adventurous, the blue graded Verderer's trail is full of thrills with its fast-downhill sections. If you don't have a bicycle, no problem, hire one from £15 per adult and £10 per child for a half a day. Find out more at www.pedalabikeaway.co.uk

Autumn Accommodation and Themed Breaks

Leaf Peeping on the Doorstep of the Brecons at The Angel

Abergavenny, Powys

This autumn, The Angel Hotel in Abergavenny offers a special Go Leaf Peeping break. Guests can enjoy a one-night stay with dinner and a copy of Rob Penn's book *Escape to the Woods* as well as information on Leaf Peeping trails easily accessible from the doorstep, which lead to the woods of St. Mary's Vale at the foot of The Sugarloaf. Go Leaf Peeping breaks start from £193 per night (for two people).

To book visit <https://www.angelabergavenny.com/special-offers/go-leaf-peeping/51-47/>

Autumn Leaves Explorer Break at The Speech House Hotel, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire
September- November 2019

This 17th century hunting-lodge-turned-hotel based in the heart of the forest offer a special Autumn Leaves Explorer break this season, combining cosy accommodation and a seasonal two-course dinner each night with a cream tea upon arrival and plenty of local activities to try out.

The Cyril Hart Arboretum is next door and home to over 200 species of trees, while plenty of nearby walking trails lead directly to forest highlights such as New Fancy, a viewpoint of unspoilt panoramic views, and the Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail, a 1.5-mile loop that takes in 17 sculptures hidden within the forest. The break is ideal for Leaf Peepers, walkers, bird watchers or people who simply want to experience the UK's best autumn colours.

The two-night Autumn Leaves Explorer is available from £278 per couple based on two sharing a Cottage or Courtyard Room, which includes breakfast, a nightly two-course dinner and either a cream tea upon arrival or one packed lunch. Courtyard Rooms are also dog friendly and cost an extra £10 per night. Find out more at thespeechhouse.co.uk.

Seasonal Guided Foraging Breaks at Tudor Farmhouse
Clearwell, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire - September to November 2019

This multi award-winning boutique hotel boasts a relaxed atmosphere where guests can lounge in front of the fire, enjoy in-room massages, meander to the countryside from its doorstep and indulge in cuisine with an authentic emphasis on local ingredients. During September, October and November the hotel offers guided group foraging courses with its expert forager, Raoul van Den Broucke, who takes guests off the beaten track to hunt for wild ingredients before all foodie finds are handed to the hotel's head chef, who will combine to create a gourmet lunch.

Group courses run on 21, 28 September; 12, 19, 26 October and 2, 9 November 2019 priced from £60 pp including lunch, whilst an overnight package including foraging, lunch and dinner costs from £350 per couple (when joining a group session), or from £400 per couple if private foraging is preferred. Find out more at tudorfarmhousehotel.co.uk/foraging-trips.

Leaf Peeping Savings at Tintern Abbey Cottage
Tintern, Monmouthshire: 22 September- 30 November

Based in Tintern, with panoramic views of Tintern Abbey, this 18th century cottage retains many of its original features but has been completely renovated for comfort. It now boasts a stylish kitchen, three comfy bedrooms and a cosy living room with a warming wood-burner perfect for chilly autumn evenings. It's just a short walk from village pubs, a vintage book shop and a craft centre, it also directly joins the Wye Valley Walk and the Monmouthshire Way, leading to breath-taking viewpoints over the river Wye.

Enjoy a special Leaf Peeping break between 22 September and 30 November and save 30% on a midweek stay. For example, a four-night stay from 7-11 October costs from £378 (was £539, saving £161) based on two sharing on an accommodation-only basis. Extra guests can be added at just £40 pp. Find out more at www.monmouthshirecottages.co.uk/cottage/tintern-abbey-cottage

For more information on events and accommodation across the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean, please visit: www.wyedeantourism.co.uk

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For more media information including images, contact Fiona Reece or Ryan Baker at Travel Tonic on fiona@traveltonic.co.uk / ryan@traveltonic.co.uk / 01452 346116

Notes to Editor

About Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism

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Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism (WVFDT) was formed in 2006 and is the official Destination Management Organisation representing the interests of almost 400 members.

The Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Tourism is the destination management organisation for the “Dean Wye”. The area covers three counties of Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire and Herefordshire and is the only cross-border tourism association in the UK working with both tourism businesses and stakeholders in Wales and England.