

Sunday Travel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

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The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



WALES



ICELAND



CHINA

THE TIP

Leaf peep in unexpected spots

Of course New England puts on a truly spectacular show for leaf peepers. But we're hardly the only option when it comes to fiery foliage. Here's a quick look at some unusual, and unexpected, places to see Mother Nature's most dazzling displays of so-called fall-on-the-planet's spiced leaf-strangeness, across the globe.

Qixia Mountain, Nanjing, China

Need a pure New England hit of fall foliage? The Tintinnulus tree season reaches its peak in late November and early December at Qixia Mountain, located 14 miles northwest of the city of Nanjing. (Nothing is one of China's ancient capitals, now a major metropolis.) A bullet-train ride (or short flight) from Shanghai transports you to this land of crystalline springs and lush forests of maple, alder, and visual hues of rose-red, scarlet, and magenta come fall. See the shimmering trees reflected in Mirou Lane, and visit local sites like Jigou Temple, Nancha Pagoda, and Thousand Buddhas Cliff. www.cityofnanjing.com.

Douro Wine Region Valley, Portugal

Vibrant red and tawny amber are colors typically associated with northern Portugal's favorite export, port wine. But savvy leaf-peepers know that these eye-popping hues color the landscape in autumn. A hot air balloon is the best way to see the kaleidoscope of fall colors here, where acres of pastured countryside are sheared from the harsh winds of the Atlantic. Tear coffee, shirts, and major hoses, and bank down for the night in at a winery hotel. www.visitportlandnorth.travel.

Hvannfossur Falls, Húsafell, Iceland

As if Iceland needed more in the way of natural beauty. At this enchanting spot in western Iceland, a series of small waterfalls tumble over ancient lava fields into an aqua vortex. The backdrop of this country's scenic splendor is divided in various shades of raven and amber. Húsafell, about an hour and 40 minutes from Reykjavik, is part of the Sagapark, one of Iceland's most geologically diverse areas. It's an Instagrammer's dream setting, a panorama of glaciers, fjords, craters, canyons, and volcanoes. www.visiticeland.is.

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Llanwrst, Wales

One look at the ethereal facade of the Tŷ Hwyl Ty Barn ("beyond the bridge") Bwthyn, and you'll understand why it is likely the most photographed building in North Wales. This c.1450 stone cottage is most fetching in fall, when it's almost completely enveloped in wine-red and ivy. But the glory views keep coming, best experienced on a half-day walk along the Conway River. Stop along the way at Gwynn's Cottage and the 6th-century Llanyreboyns Church, believed to be the oldest church in Wales, and stay overnight at the rustic-cute village of Bettws-y-Coed. Looking for a longer walk? The Wales Coast Path offers nearly 840 miles of color-drenched miles. www.visitwales.com.

Cashiers, North Carolina

They call it "the shadow of the bear." Off Highway 64 in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, a bear-shaped loam appears in the lush fall foliage every autumn. On sunny days at approximately 5:30 p.m., from mid-October through early November, the "bear" appears for 30 minutes, visible as the sun dips behind 4,350-foot Whiteside Mountain. This fanciful fall phenomenon begins with a small dark shadow at the bottom of the valley, and gradually morphs into a bear-like image. The best viewing spot is at Elkhorn Eye View Overlook, a pull-off on Highway 64. This would be a prime spot to view fall foliage anywhere, but the uniqueness of the bear puts it right over the top. If you see it, it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It's more likely than you think you'll see it in late winter (mid-February to early March). www.visitnc.com.

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