



*Sumack leaves,  
Portsmouth, New  
Hampshire*

# *Fall Watercolors*



*Purple berries, Arnold's Arboretum, Boston, Massachusetts*

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Relying on postcard pictures, the wonders of fall foliage in the Northeastern United States can seem to be artificial with the rich yellow, orange and red trees seemingly the result of badly calibrated printing machines. But in reality, the fall in the New England area offers one of the best and most colorful changes in the whole world.

Only a couple of days following the first drop in the temperature below the freezing point, sugar accumulates in the leaves of the trees and transforms itself into purple anthocyanin, while chlorophyll degrades and reveals the masked orange carotene. These reactions lead to the sudden change in colors. The foliage in the Northeast is a wave that starts in Canada in early September, and ends in Pennsylvania in late November. Usually, the best color changes can be seen during the first



*A villa in the Northeastern corner of Connecticut*



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two weeks of October in the states of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and Connecticut. Each of these states has its own unique color combination: green and red for Vermont, red and orange for New Hampshire. The greens come from conifers and untransformed broad-leaved trees. The yellows are the result of birches, elms and black maples.

The reds are painted by purple and sugar maples. Foliage is one of the main tourist attractions in the Northeast. The peak season usually falls during the Columbus-day weekend (in New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont) or two weeks later in Connecticut, when the lodging prices reach maximum levels. The peak of the colors can

*Canada Geese, Maltby Lakes, Connecticut*



*Canoeing, Snake Lake, Conway, New Hampshire*



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be tracked on many Web sites, where volunteer contributors regularly fill in the progress of the regional leaf changes.

One can easily explore the beauty of New England by starting in New Hampshire and ending in Connecticut.

The town of Conway, which is nestled in the suburbs of New Hampshire's White Mountains, is probably the *camp* for launching foliage expeditions in the area. Although situated on the west side of the mountain range, Conway is surrounded by a great variety of short distance foliage photography destinations. Amongst those are the Kancamagus Highway and Diana's Baths.

The Kancamagus Highway can arguably be considered the most scenic road in the White

Mountains. Numerous trails, several lakes and waterfalls, a covered bridge, as well as a picturesque river running parallel to the road surround its 33-mile long body. All of these attractions can turn into photography points of interest. Thus, one can take slow motion shots of the waterfalls and the river during a cloudy day, or document the colorful reflections in the lakes when the air is calm.

Diana's Baths are an easily accessible cascade of small waterfalls, whose beauty is best seen through a low shutter speed during the fall. Situated next to North Conway, the waterfalls are within a short drive from the village of Conway. On a perfect cloudy day, one can spend a whole day photographing the numerous waterways of this nature phenomenon.

In comparison to New Hampshire, Connecticut is less mountainous. However, the small state does not give in to the beauties of the northern US territories. Good supporting examples are Kent Falls and Maltby Lakes.

Kent Falls are a set of water cascades in the northeastern corner of Connecticut. A few years ago there was no boardwalk path next to them, which was very beneficial to the photographers. Nowadays, due to the addition of the trail running close and parallel to the stream, one should plan for the presence of the spectators and the construction when composing a photograph.

Contrary to Kent Falls, Maltby Lakes are not freely accessible as they belong to a Regional Water Authority. Permission to enter the water supply area is granted after becoming a member

*A lake in the White Mountains, New Hampshire*





*Red Maple tree, Middletown, Connecticut*

of the authority. The minimal fee should not be a detriment compared to the great fall reflections a photographer could document at the lakes.

During the first foliage hunt this photographer's equipment was pretty simple – a remote release



*A lake in Northeastern Connecticut*



*Waterfalls in the Berkshires, New York*

control triggered Nikon FM2 body placed on a Manfrotto tripod equipped with a couple of fixed focus lenses (20mm and 60mm Micro Nikkors) with mounted polarizing filters. The films the author used were Velvia 50 and Kodachrome 25 or 50. Later, when switching to digital a Nikon D200 with the same lenses and a self-timer were utilized. During sunny days, focus attention on images that include the sky such as reflections and vistas. When cloudy, take pictures of waterfalls and rivers in slow motion as well as close-ups. This photographer who was mainly interested in the composition kept the shooting techniques pretty simple. ■

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