
2800 N. Ocoee Street
Cleveland, TN 37312
(423) 476-9700



Fall Color Viewing Routes
- 2007 -

News Contact: Sharon Moore – 423.467.9700
Terry McDonald

Fall Foliage Viewing Routes

CLEVELAND, TN – September 25, 2007 ...Each year during autumn hundreds of thousands of people from near and far visit the Cherokee National Forest to witness the blazes of red, gold, yellow, bronze and purple that signal the passing of summer and the coming of winter. Forest Service officials say the peak fall foliage-viewing period can vary from area to area, but usually takes place around the third week of October. A national fall foliage hotline at 1-800-354-4595 provides updated information about viewing conditions.

There are hundreds of miles of trails in the Cherokee National Forest that offer the opportunity to see nature up close and in relative solitude. Viewing the Forest from roads continues to be the most popular way to see fall colors. There are several recommended routes that offer maximum viewing opportunities in and adjacent to the Forest. Following are a few suggested fall foliage-viewing routes in East Tennessee:

Southeast Tennessee:

Ocoee Scenic Byway: The first National Forest Scenic Byway in the nation lives up to its name in the fall of the year. The Byway is located in Polk County, and consists of segments of two roads. Seven miles of the Byway travel up Forest Service Road 77 to Chilhowee Mountain. The remaining 19 miles of the Byway follow U.S. Highway 64 through the Ocoee River Gorge and past the site of the 1996 Olympic Canoe & Kayak events. Fall colors and views are especially nice on the Chilhowee Mountain portion of the Byway. The section along Hwy 64 is also worth seeing with close up views of the Ocoee River.

Cherohala Skyway: The Skyway travels along U.S. Highway 165 from Tellico Plains, TN to Robbinsville, NC. This route offers spectacular views all along the way. The elevation of the highway reaches 5,000 feet in several locations. It is becoming a very well known fall color viewing route and traffic can be heavy on weekends during this time of year.

Hiwassee River - Mecca Pike: From U.S. Highway 411 north of Benton take State Route 30 east to Reliance. This route follows the beautiful Hiwassee River. At Reliance take State Route 315 across the River and head north. At the intersection of Mecca Pike (State Route 310/39) near Jalapa you will

-more-

1st add --- **Fall Foliage Routes**

have two options. Turn west (left -Route 310) and head toward Etowah and Hwy 411. Or, turn east (right - Route 39) and go toward Tellico Plains. These routes offer great close up and background views of some lovely county.

Northeast Tennessee:

Greeneville - Newport: From Greeneville take State Route 70/107 southeast to where the road splits. Follow State Rt 107 south through Houston Valley and across Brush Creek Mountain to the French Broad River where Rt 107 ends at U.S. Highway 25/70. Turn west (right) and head toward Newport on Hwy 25/70 along the French Broad River. These routes offer many fall color viewing opportunities and travel through some beautiful country.

Elizabethton - Roan Mountain: From Elizabethton take U.S. Highway 19E/321 east toward Roan Mountain and the North Carolina border. When you get to Hampton you have the option of turning NE on 321 toward Watauga Lake and on to Mountain City via State Route 67; or travel east on Hwy 19E to Roan Mountain. (Hwy 19E is a popular route and traffic could be heavy on weekends during the fall.) Either route travels through splendid country with plenty of fall color viewing opportunities.

Bristol - Mountain City: From Bristol take U.S. Highway 421 east across South Holston Lake and through Shady Valley toward Mountain City. Apples should be in season and are usually available at roadside retail outlets. If you want to extend your trip when you arrive in Mountain City take State Route 67 through Pandora and across Watauga Lake to the intersection of U.S. Hwy 321. From there head west past Watauga Lake on Hwy 321 toward Hampton and on to Elizabethton.

#

<p>Contact: Cherokee NF 423-476-9700 National Fall Foliage Hotline: 1-800-354-4595</p>
--