

# Enjoy Long Island's beautiful fall foliage

**A**s the summer crowds recede, autumn is a perfect time to take a scenic trip to Long Island to explore the parkland, gardens, historic sites and downtown villages and to enjoy the vibrant colors of the season.

In fact the stunning fall foliage lasts here well into the end of October, usually way past peak leaf-peeping season north of the city due to the warmth of the ocean that surrounds Long Island. The

region is typically more temperate than upstate New York so now is one of the best times to visit.

Exploring Long Island by car is the most convenient way to get around so you can take the time to discover some of the hidden gems here. Renting a car is a good option, but there are several other ways to get to Long Island if you don't have a car. Check some of the MTA Long Island Rail Road getaway packages that include everything from winery



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tours and Brew Bus adventures to an exciting day of horse racing at historic Belmont Park. You can also take the train to Patchogue Village, a wonderful south-shore community featuring excellent local restaurants and shops, and located within walking

distance to the ferries leading to the Fire Island National Seashore. The peace and solitude of Fire Island after peak-season is re-invigorating.

There are also several tour companies offering escorted visits to Long Island ranging from

Coachman Transport, offering wine-country tours, to elegant limo companies that will take your small group on a private outing.

You can also take the Hampton

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Jitney from Midtown Manhattan to some of the most scenic locations in the Hamptons or North Fork wine country. There are several stops in some of the most scenic and walkable areas of the Island.

Some don't realize that just over the Queens border you can find amazing parks for hiking, biking, kayaking and other activities in Nassau County. Some of the treasures here include Old Bethpage Village Restoration, an historic living-history village and home of the Long Island Fair (through Oct. 2); Eisenhower Park, where you'll find golfing, mini golf, a two-mile fitness trail, ice skating and more; and Sand's Point Preserve, with three

magnificent Gold Coast mansions. While in Sand's Point be sure to plan some time in nearby Port Washington where you'll find amazing restaurants, waterfront activities and accommodations.

If you're staying in the Port Washington area and have children with you, or perhaps an aviation buff, be sure to also head over to nearby Museum Row in Garden City, where you'll find the Long Island Children's Museum filled with special exhibits and interactive halls for children to explore. Within the same complex is the world-class Cradle of Aviation Museum, which traces the history of flight and includes everything from one of Charles Lindbergh's planes to the test Lunar Excursion Module (actually built right here on Long Island).

You can also explore the mansions and park-like grounds of nearby Mutton-town Preserve, Old Westbury Mansion and Gardens and Planting Fields Arboretum/Coe Hall Mansion. Ever wanted to stay overnight in a castle mansion? You can actually book a stay at Oheka Castle on Long Island.

Other parks in the area include the Vanderbilt Mansion and Museum in Centerville, with stunning waterfront grounds and gardens, a natural history museum



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and the mansion of William K. Vanderbilt, heir to one of America's greatest railroad fortunes. At Caumsett State Park in Huntington, you'll find miles of trails for walking and biking (along with the mansion of department store scion Marshall Field).

If you're staying overnight in the Huntington area, which is an excellent central area, you'll also find plenty of other things to do. You can visit the beautifully retro rides and amusements of Adventureland (as depicted in the film bearing the same name); and find a squadron of operational WWII aircraft and other military displays at the American Airpower Museum. Be sure not to miss the very cool Vettes and Jets show at the museum on Oct. 1, or schedule a flight experience in one of the museum's historic planes.

If you're still feeling the need for speed after visiting the American Airpower Museum, you can visit Pole Position Race-track for some adrenaline-filled indoor go-karting. Formula EK20 adult go-karts produce an incredible 18 horsepower and have immediate throttle response. It's a thrill.

If you want to explore Long Island's gorgeous fall foliage at a more leisurely pace, you can find plenty of kayaking, canoeing and paddle boarding opportunities. You can get paddle boarding lessons well into October at Moku Loa in Oakdale and rent kayaks at Silly Lilly Fishing Station in East Moriches, Shelter Island Kayak Tours or Long Island Canoe Kayak Rentals in Riverhead.

Be sure to head to the eastern end of the island where you'll find the beautiful wine-country region. You can rent bikes or go on a classic wine-country tour through Long Island Bicycle Tours. This tour company provides an off-the-beaten-path look at the scenic North Fork. Join a group of guests led by knowledgeable, local tour guides on a casual bike tour. You'll pedal along scenic roads at a leisurely pace, stopping at boutique wine tasting rooms and farm stands along the way.

A good home base for an east-end getaway is Riverhead, where you'll find plenty of accommodations and restaurants, all at the gateway to wine country on the North Fork and the glamorous Hamptons region on the South Fork.

While in Riverhead, you'll also find the Long Island Aquarium and Tanger Outlet Centers, featuring some of the best deals on top-brand-name merchandise. Nearby is also the Long Island Game Farm, featuring a range of exotic animals all in an intimate setting.

Enjoy an opportunity for a secluded bluff-top hike overlooking the Long Island Sound at Wildwood State Park. If you're feeling adventurous, you can also enjoy camping here.

While on Long Island, don't forget to leave some time to enjoy the plethora of Fall Festival events that always define autumn here. You can find a full listing of things to do, where to stay and how to get here at [discoverlongisland.com](http://discoverlongisland.com).



WENDY ZUHOSKI

**~ NAUGHTY OR NICE ~**  
**COME CELEBRATE!**  
**PATCHOGUE**  
**~ VILLAGE ~**  
**Holiday**  
**~ EVENTS ~**

<b>PATCHOGUE CHILI &amp; CHOWDER FESTIVAL</b> SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15 • 11-5PM	<b>STARRY NIGHTS HOLIDAY SHOPPING</b> THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15 • 5-8PM
<b>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY BOAT PARADE</b> SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20 • 5-8PM	<b>STOCKING STUFFER</b> SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 • 11-5PM
<b>SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY &amp; HOLIDAY PARADE</b> SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26 SHOPPING 10-6PM PARADE STARTS AT 6PM	

 



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