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 12 °C

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Colours of fall

At various stages of transformation, Ontario's foliage is displaying benefits of a wet summer

Oct 11, 2008 04:30 AM

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SHABNAM JANET JANANI
 STAFF REPORTER

The summer's wet weather is finally paying off.

"The colours are very vibrant, the forests are very healthy as there is so much water in the ground," says Jack Lynch, travel promotion officer for Ontario tourism ministry.



KEITH BEATY/TORONTO STAR
 Lorraine Hicks of Keswick, with Mojo the poodle, enjoys the fall colour Oct. 9, 2008 in Forks of the Credit Provincial Park near Belfountain.

That makes it a particularly good year for driving through the countryside take in the colours, he says.

In autumn, the longer nights cause the leaves to change colours – from green to red, orange and yellow – as chlorophyll production slows down and eventually stops. That means other pigments in the leaves get the chance to show through.

The trees in Muskoka and Kawartha Lakes are at their peak, with local residents reporting beautiful burgundy and rust hues. Other areas, such as Collingwood and Prince Edward County, are catching up with 60 to 80 per cent of trees having changed colour.

For up-to-date reports on more than 34 regions in the province, the ministry of tourism publishes *The Great Fall Drives*. This report has been prepared since the mid-1960s and has proved popular – there were more than 34,000 downloads last October.

Call 1-800-ONTARIO or visit www.ontariotravel.net for a copy.

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80% COLLINGWOOD

Blue Mountain is not just for skiing. The Scenic Caves at the top provide a great view of the Georgian Bay area. The trail to the Suspension Bridge – the highest point on the Niagara Escarpment – is a 45-minute walk through the woods. More info at [\(705\) 446-0256](tel:7054460256)

The best route: Take 400 north to Highway 26.

Dominant colours: Red, orange, gold and brown.

"The approach to Glen Huron village (south of Collingwood) with the sun in the west is the most gorgeous view," says Al Truscott, a local bus driver.

60% BELLEVILLE

Lake on the Mountain, 61 metres feet above the Bay of Quinte, gives you a great view of the foliage, as do the Taste and Art trails. For more information call [1-888-852-9992](tel:18888529992)

The best route: Follow 401 east to Highway 33 (Loyalist Parkway)

Dominant colors: Yellow and orange.

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"The Lake on the Mountain near Picton gives you a beautiful view of the bay, too," says Dan Mayer, who has two maple trees that have turned red and orange in his backyard in Belleville.

80%

ELORA GORGE

A great area west of Toronto for a fall tour, particularly at Grand River Valley. On your way back, with less than 30 minutes to Caledon, you can visit an area with 70 per cent colour change.

Elora, a village with limestone architecture from the 19th century, is in the midst of its Sensational Elora festival, which runs to Oct. 13. For more information visit www.elora.info or call

 519-846-9742

The best routes: Drive 401 west to Highway 6 and drive north past Guelph, turning left on to County Road 7 to Elora.

Dominant colours: Red and yellow. "Along the Grand River, toward north is the best," says Jane Moore, who runs an Elora gift store.

100%

KAWARTHA LAKES REGION

Two hours northeast of Toronto, stop at Bobcaygeon's Lock 32 on the Trent-Severn Waterway for a bit of history.

For more information visit www.thekawarthas.net.

The best routes: Take Highway 401 east and 35 north to the area. Route 121 gets you to Fenelon Falls and Route 8 also offers some nice views up to Bobcaygeon.

Dominant colours: Vibrant red, rust, yellow and deep orange.

"I drove from Port Perry to Bobcaygeon through this week and the sightseeing is very lovely under the sunshine," says Barbara Carnegie, who moved to the area last July. "It is also a beautiful drive ... east of Bobcaygeon towards the north."

100%

MUSKOKA AREA

Various boat cruises in the area are a great way to enjoy the season. The best lookout spots are Dorset's fire tower and Lion's Lookout in Huntsville. Area resorts are available for overnight stays. For more information visit www.discovermuskoka.ca.

The best routes: Take Highway 400 and 11 to Huntsville and 117 to Dorset. Route 118 also offers outstanding fall colours to Bracebridge.

Dominant colours: Bright pockets of burgundy, red and orange.

"This morning I went out to run my dog and there was a heavy mist over the land," says Len Roff, a Huntsville local. "The sun was breaking through the mist while the trees around my house were glowing. It was totally beautiful."

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Nice & Peaceful

The North is one of the most beautiful places to experience Fall. Enjoy it will it lasts.

Submitted By breakfastclub at 9:10 PM Saturday, October 11 2008

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Muskoka fog

I don't think it gets any better than this. Warm temperatures, a view that is an incredible canvas. [/www.jilks.com/photos/Fall08/](http://www.jilks.com/photos/Fall08/) Rick Mercer will be here Sunday, Oct. 12, 08. Don't forget Cranfest in Muskoka next weekend!

Submitted By JennyJill at 3:31 PM Saturday, October 11 2008

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A MUST SEE ... the Fall Colours in Fenelon Falls

I have been visiting Fenelon Falls once a week for the past four weeks. The colours are amazing ! The country side roads dotted with farms and antique stores are a great drive. Don't forget to take your cameras with you !

Submitted By JD to Visit Fenelon Falls at 10:58 AM Saturday, October 11 2008

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