



Wade's Walkabout

SOUTHWEST UTAH'S TOP THREE FALL FOLIAGE VIEWING DESTINATIONS

By Mark Wade

During autumn months, there is something irresistible about venturing into the mountains where foliage is bidding a colorful farewell to summer's green. This annual occurrence draws many of us to locations where we can view the iridescent kaleidoscope and feel the crunch of fallen leaves under our feet. Few things are more beautiful than viewing sunlit quaking aspen leaves as they shimmer in the mountain breeze.

Where and When to Start

The question of where and when to view the fall foliage is one of the first things to consider, and the answer depends on the date, elevation, and even the amount of water an area has received. The higher the elevation, the sooner the colors will be changing. Generally speaking, the window for optimal viewing runs from late September (higher elevations) through October (mid to lower elevations). Of course, in places as low in elevation as St. George, the colors are still changing well into November.





Locations

Cedar Mountain (The Markagunt Plateau)

This area to the east of Cedar City and Parowan rises from 6,000 to 11,000 feet above sea level and is accessible via Highway 14 and Scenic Byway 143. My favorite spot for great color is just east of the junction of Highway 148 and 143 near Cedar Breaks National Monument.

Tushar Mountains

East of Beaver, the Tushar Mountains rise to over 12,000 feet in elevation. Take highway 153 to the top of the range.

Zion National Park Area



Two areas in Zion that I like to visit are the Kolob Terrace (7,000 feet plus) and the Kolob Fingers, with access from I-15. A third much lesser known location is on the east side of Zion in a place called Brushy Cove that can only be accessed via a guided Jeep tour through a company called East Zion Adventures. This area has a good source of water, and there's a wide variety of deciduous trees that burst into a rainbow of colors each fall. If this interests you, give them a call, and ask when the leaves will be changing in Brushy Cove.



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About the Author

Mark Wade is active in hiking, writing, photography, and videography. He works as a tourism marketing consultant, for which he has won numerous awards. He is a weekly guest on the KSL Outdoors radio show. Mark is the former Director of Tourism for southwestern Utah and has served on the board of directors for various tourism associations.