



by Alexandra Edwards

Autumn is a sad time of year in some parts of the United States. Summer vacations become a memory, days get shorter and much cooler temperatures are in the forecast. Soon the lush green leaves that shimmered in the summer breeze begin to wither and fall to the ground.

On the contrary, Autumn in this part of the country is a joyous time of year. The climate is still very warm and sunny but without the humidity and best of all, nature puts on the most spectacular show in fall colors. Tourists travel for miles just to capture a glimpse of some of our most scenic views at their best.

Warm weather, sunny days and cool to cold nights are said to be the essence for making the more spectacular fall colors. According to the Farmer's Almanac, the best time to view the Smoky Mountain region is between October 19th and the 29th.

Whether you choose to drive the scenic highways, hike the mountain trails or take a boat along the river, the wonderful hues of fall will be absolutely breathtaking. Another popular alternative is to take one of the many great steam or vintage diesel train excursions scheduled for this fall.

Hiwassee River Rail Adventures now offer 50 mile round trip passenger excursions up the beautiful Hiwassee River gorge. "The Loop" fall train excursion takes 3 1/2 hours and travels through the scenic region of the Cherokee National Forest, along tracks that corkscrew over themselves as they climb to the top the famous

"Hiwassee Loop." Shuttle buses will depart at 1:30 from the Etowah L&N Depot. Ticket prices are \$36 for adults and \$26 for children. For tickets and more information call the Etowah Depot at (423) 263-7840 or the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum at 423-894-9028 or visit their website:

www.tvrail.com
The "Copperhill Special" is an extended excursion of the "Loop" ride plus a tour to the former mining town of Copperhill, TN. The day long 94 mile round trip includes a stopover in Copperhill where passengers can enjoy lunch, and browse antique shops. Snacks and soft



Rock Spring, Noble, LaFayette, and Trion, Georgia. A dining car lun-

children. For more information call 423-894-8028 or visit www.tvrail.com

ment and apple cider or apple juice. Guests will hear Charles M. Schulz's classic

the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad at 1-800-872-4681 or visit their website:

www.gsmr.com
The Three Rivers Rambler "Pumpkin Express" of Knoxville, TN will depart October 5,11,12,19, and 26 at 2 p.m and 5 p.m. This ninety minute, 11 mile trip departing from Volunteer Landing, downtown Knoxville, will take guests past historical sites and beautiful farmland to the "Three Rivers Trestle" where the French Broad and Holston Rivers join to form the Tennessee River. While riding the Rambler, guests on the Pumkin Ex-

All Aboard - The Fall Express

drinks are available for sale on the train. Tickets for this all day trip are \$75 for adults and \$40 for children. The shuttle will depart Etowah L&N Depot at 9:15a.m.

Chattanooga's Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum will host their 41st Annual "Autumn Leaf Special" on October 4,11,18 and 25 and November 1, 2 and 8. Powered by an authentic full sized steam locomotive

cheon complete with chinnaware is served inside the dining car. 'Travelers Fare.' Tickets range from \$80 to \$150. The train departs Grand Junction Station at 9 am. For more information call 423-894-8028 or go to:

www.tvrail.com/pages/schedule/autumnleafspecial.php

A much shorter 6 mile, 55 minute round trip fall excursion on Chattanooga's

The Great Smoky Mountain Railroad celebrates its 20th Anniversary this year with fall schedule leaf viewing trains and special event excursions.

Trains depart from the Bryson City Depot at 9:00 a.m and 2:00 p.m from October 4 - 31. The 44 mile 4 1/2 hour diesel train trip will travel across the Great Smoky Mountain region of Western North Carolina which

will be ablaze with brilliant fall foliage. Guests on board will be taken along Tuckaseegee River, cross over the Fontana Lake Trestle and into the Nantahala River Gorge for a one hour lay-over.

For those with children, another special Bryson City excursion you won't want to miss during the colorful month of October is Peanuts™ The Great Pumpkin Patch Express. Scheduled between October 10-26th passengers will meet Snoopy, Charlie Brown and Lucy, and select their own pumpkin. Kids are welcome to wear their Halloween costumes and enjoy trick or treating, hayrides, story telling, a hay bale maze, petting zoo, live entertain-

ment and apple cider or apple juice. Guests will hear Charles M. Schulz's classic story "Its The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" as the train travels to the pumpkin patch.

Ticket price for both fall

press can sit back and enjoy the beautiful fall colors, pick a pumpkin or go trick or treating on the train. Ticket prices are \$22 for adults and \$12 for children.

For more information call 865-524-9411 or visit:

www.threeriversrambler.com

Autumn in this part of God's country is just one of our many blessings.

Sometimes, it is good to escape from news of the failing economy and politics and dwell for a while among the peace and tranquility of nature's finest wonders.

excursions which also include admission to the Great Smoky Mountain Train Museum is \$53 for adults and \$31 for children. For more information call



#610 follows a 100 mile round trip giving passengers a chance to admire the wonderful fall colors of Lookout Mountain and the rural countryside toward Summerville, Georgia, passing through the towns of Rossville, Chickamauga,

"Missionary Ridge Local" will take passengers along one of the original rail lines and through the historical Missionary Ridge Tunnel. The Missionary Ridge Local departs from Grand Junction Station. Tickets are \$14 for adults and \$8 for



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