

Where to find aspens in Tahoe this fall

Spooner Lake

Spooner Lake State Park, at the junction of Highway 28 and Highway 50 on Tahoe's East Shore, is one of the region's most popular spots for viewing fall color. The 2.5-mile Spooner Lake Loop Trail never disappoints, and the new visitor center offers natural and cultural history programs and ranger-led hikes. The nearby Clear Creek Trail also offers views of fall color.

Taylor Creek

Taylor Creek on Tahoe's South Shore features easy trails meandering through aspen groves and maple trees that typically see peak color in mid to late-October. Another highlight are the kokanee salmon that swim upstream from Lake Tahoe to spawn, usually features excellent fall color. For an easy stroll, try the Fallen Leaf Lake Trail, which begins near the Fallen Leaf campground and stays close to the lake shore, where some of the best aspens are visible.

Fallen Leaf Lake

Fallen Leaf Lake, a glacial lake about 150 feet above Lake Tahoe, is the second largest lake in the Tahoe Basin and features excellent fall color. For an easy stroll, try the Fallen Leaf Lake Trail, which begins near the Fallen Leaf campground and stays close to the lake shore, where some of the best aspens are visible.

Zephyr Cove

Zephyr Cove along Highway 50 on Tahoe's East Shore offers a small but vibrant aspen grove that features yellow, red and orange leaves. This grove is one of the few places you can see fall color so close to the shore that you can see it reflected in the lake's waters.

Hope Valley

Hope Valley, just outside the Tahoe Basin, may have the best fall color in the region. Start at the junction of Highway 88 and Highway 89 and go in almost any direction for easy walks through thick stands of aspens. If you want to make a day (or a weekend) out of your visit, go to Carson Pass or continue toward Markleeville and Grover Hot Springs State Park.

Luther Pass

Luther Pass is perched on Highway 89 between Meyers and Hope Valley. Drive the highway over the pass and you'll see aspens on both sides, or park at the Big Meadow trailhead and hike a portion of the Tahoe Rim Trail.

Mount Rose

Mount Rose offers two great ways to see fall color, one at the base of the mountain and the other at the summit. A 1.3-mile loop just above Incline Village passes through Tahoe Meadows and along Ophir Creek. At the summit, follow the Tahoe Rim Trail from the Mount Rose trailhead on Highway 431 toward Galena Falls.

Webber Lake

Webber Lake and Lacey Meadows are not in the heart of the Tahoe Basin, but they offer an appealing option for those seeking a less crowded fall color experience. The 3.2-mile trail through the meadows starts at the Webber Lake campground off Jackson Meadows Road north of Truckee.

Paige Meadows

Paige Meadows near Tahoe City on the West Shore is well known for its abundant spring wildflowers. But its crisscross of trails is also ideal for repeated viewing of fall colors, as several stands of aspens change hues at different times during the fall season.

ABRIDGED PBS
KVIE

NOTES
