

# Camping & Caravanning

The  
Camping and  
Caravanning  
Club

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FRIENDLY CLUB, SEPTEMBER 2017, VOL 112 NO 9

## Golden wonder

...in the  
colours of  
autumn

Where  
to camp...

Inspiring  
ideas to  
extend your  
camping  
season



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**INSIDE:** Eating local in the Peak District, **PAGE 25**. TV star Andy Torbet introduces us to his 'office', **PAGE 29**. Exploring wild Teesdale on foot, **PAGE 39**. We celebrate the campsite's unsung hero - the awning, **PAGE 44**.



# Camp in colour

If there's one benefit of leaving summer behind, it's the thought of autumn's technicolour spectacle. **VICKY SARTAIN** visits some of the nation's most wooded regions where camping gets you closer to the colour



There's no end of places to see the leaves turning into autumn's predictable shades and there are several Club Sites as well as Camping in the Forest sites in which to enjoy the colours at your pitch. The New Forest in Hampshire, National Forest in the Midlands, and Delamere Forest in Cheshire are some popular spots.

With an unusually warm summer on the wane, there are hopes for a spectacular autumn. Here are some suggestions on where to pitch.

## RHANDIRMWYN CLUB SITE, CARMARTHENSHIRE

OPEN UNTIL 6 NOVEMBER 2017

Four miles from the mid Wales Club Site of Rhandirmwyn – following the course of the River Towy all the way – is Llyn Brianne reservoir (pictured left). In autumn this serene, unspoiled spot transforms as the woodland surrounding it changes colour. There's plenty of free parking at the reservoir dam for those wishing to explore the area at length.

Turn left out of the campsite for Cwm Rhaeadr or 'valley of the waterfall' where trails lead through the upper Towy Valley. At just three miles away, it's within easy reach for campers on both foot and wheels.

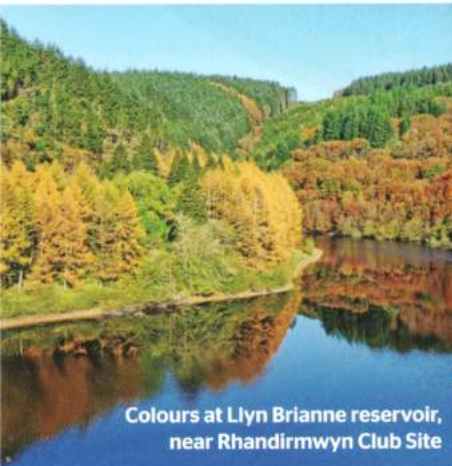
The campsite itself is surrounded by trees and there are great walks to access direct from the site. Hovering high above the foliage, red kites are a common sight, and at a nearby nature reserve visitors can make the most of the seasonal wildlife offering.

And with two cosy pubs, the Royal Oak and Towy Bridge, within walking distance, this might just be the perfect autumn break.

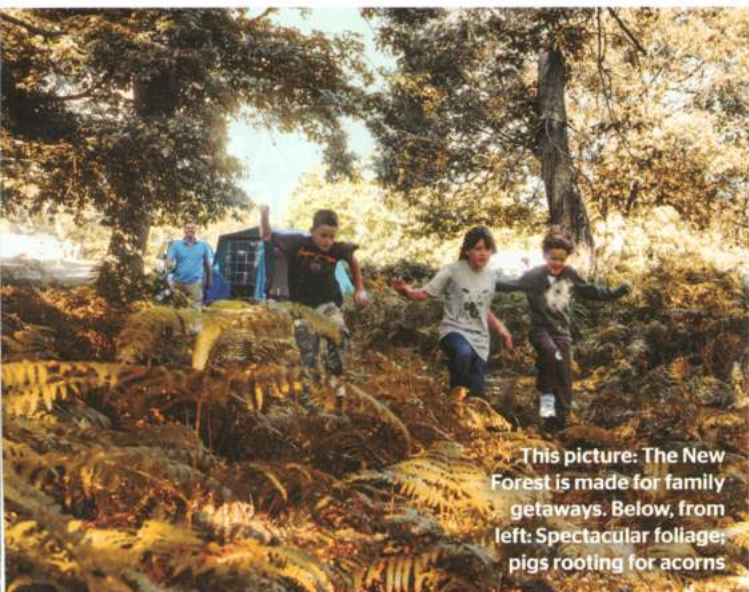
Rhandirmwyn Club Site



Colours at Llyn Brianne reservoir, near Rhandirmwyn Club Site







This picture: The New Forest is made for family getaways. Below, from left: Spectacular foliage; pigs rooting for acorns



## CAMPING IN THE FOREST SITES

### NEW FOREST, HAMPSHIRE

There are ten leafy Camping in the Forest sites to enjoy in the New Forest in Hampshire, one open all year. Sheltered by the canopy of this ancient woodland, campers can experience the magic of pitching beneath autumn's lovely shades. According to the tourist board, 2016's autumn saw one of the most impressive displays of colour in 80 years and expectations are high again this year for the vivid transformation of redwood, oak and beech.

Camping in the Forest sites around the country pride themselves on a barrier-free environment, meaning you might have a lake, river or woodland trail metres from your pitch. In the New Forest, you may even see the local wildlife roaming past your door. Wild ponies are frequently spotted, as are deer and cattle wandering freely in search of new grazing.

Forest camping provides a great way for the young to learn about nature. In the summer months (July to early September) children can join free group activities such as bug hunting, wildlife talks and walks with a New Forest National Park Ranger. The Camping in the Forest website ([www.campingintheforest.co.uk](http://www.campingintheforest.co.uk)) has details of all the current events - just search 'forest ranger activities'.

Autumn in the New Forest is about kicking through fallen leaves, the scent of woodsmoke in the air, and spotting domestic pigs rooting for acorns during their annual release - known as pannage - to supplement their diet.

Now is the time to make plans for the most colourful season of the year.



## Autumn touring

The Wye Valley and River Wye seen from the hillside above Redbrook

### BRACELANDS, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

#### CAMPING IN THE FOREST SITE, OPEN ALL YEAR

The beauty of Camping in the Forest sites (head online to [www.campingintheforest.co.uk](http://www.campingintheforest.co.uk)) is the sense of adventure instilled by time spent in ancient woodland. There are 16 such campsites in the UK ranging from Glenmore in Scotland to the New Forest in Hampshire.

The leaves tend to turn quite late in the season around Bracelands Camping in the Forest site in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire (our photos - below and on page 32 - were taken at the end of October 2016) but when they do there's a vivid glow all around the campsite.

Bracelands benefits from a position close to the Welsh border with direct access to the Forest's 27,000 acres, once a hunting ground for Norman royalty.

Bracelands is accessed down a narrow tree-lined lane, emerging in a secluded, gently sloping and wide field that's popular for caravanners and motorhomers, while tent campers seeking that closer-to-nature woodland experience will be in their element. And if you can't be bothered to bring your tent, camping pods are available.

The surrounding woodland offers great opportunities for mountain biking, canoeing on the Wye, and country walks. The Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail ([www.forestofdean-sculpture.org.uk](http://www.forestofdean-sculpture.org.uk)) has had a makeover in recent months with new permanent and temporary works to see.

Go Ape is less than ten miles away for those who love zip-wires and tree-top adventures, but it's far easier to watch the colourful scenery from a pitch-side seat. >>



Finding colour at Bracelands in Auto-Sleeper's Corinium RB motorhome



Head online to [www.myccc.co.uk/](http://www.myccc.co.uk/) features for the top overseas touring destinations for autumn colour

## Autumn touring

Views of the Tay Estuary from the top of Kinnoull Hill

### SCONE CLUB SITE, TAYSIDE

OPEN UNTIL 3 JANUARY 2018

Situated next to the historic Perth Racecourse, Scone Club Site lies in the grounds of Scone Palace, an ancient royal stronghold in Tayside. Housed within its vast estate, the palace is famous as the place of coronation of Macbeth, Robert the Bruce and Charles II.

In the gardens, there's a unique 'tartan' colour scheme of planting in the maze of 2,000 beech trees - half green, half copper - to admire. The Club Site, too, is dotted with trees and with Perthshire's glorious scenery on the doorstep, you can be sure of full technicolour. Walks can be taken direct from the Club Site along the River Tay, and don't miss Kinnoull Hill Woodland Park, four miles away on the outskirts of Perth. Scale its 222m-high peak for views along the Tay Estuary, Perth, and north to the foothills of the Grampians.

Perthshire is marketed as Big Tree Country and there are certainly some important trees around, from the Fortingall Yew in the churchyard of the eponymous village - thought to be Britain's oldest tree - to the creation of the so-called Enchanted Forest ([www.enchantedforest.org.uk](http://www.enchantedforest.org.uk)) of Faskally Wood, near Pitlochry, 30 miles north of the Club Site. If the local foliage wows you in daylight, you'll be thrilled by the scenery after-dark here, courtesy of the Forestry Commission's illuminations, from 28 September to 29 October 2017. Expect to be dazzled by a woodland transformed by sound and light. The event (pre-booking only) was named the UK's Best Cultural Event in 2016.

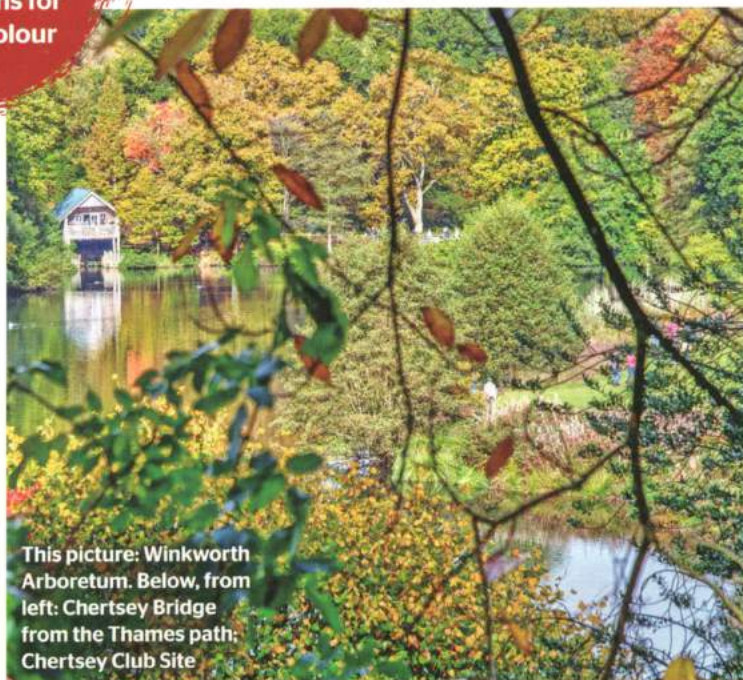


Scone Club Site

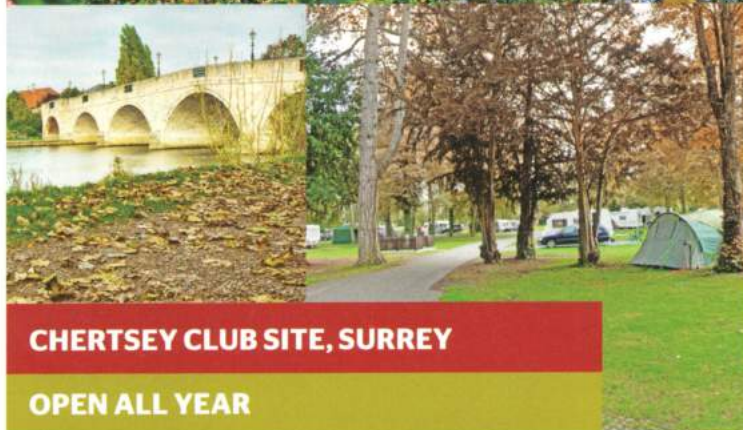
Enchanted Forest in Faskally Wood



© FORESTRY COMMISSION



This picture: Winkworth Arboretum. Below, from left: Chertsey Bridge from the Thames path; Chertsey Club Site



### CHERTSEY CLUB SITE, SURREY

OPEN ALL YEAR

As a largely wooded county, despite its proximity to London and network of transport routes, Surrey offers campers the best of both worlds: nature-filled relaxation beneath its woodland canopy and easy access to the many attractions of Greater London, including Kew Gardens, Hampton Court Palace and Legoland.

As well as camping beneath the trees, there are walks along the leafy Thames Path National Trail to Staines and beyond, and if you fancy seeing the views from the river, there's a canoe launch from the Club Site. Or expend even less effort and try to bag yourself a riverside pitch where you can see the action on the water.

Nearby Chertsey Meads is a 175-acre woodland garden that offers free parking and long walks by the river. You might be in for a surprise or two while admiring the colours of the season - parakeets can often be seen flitting through the trees, an exotic addition to the native birdlife.

You're spoilt for choice in terms of major gardens to visit. Within a half-hour drive of the Club Site is RHS Garden Wisley, The Savill Garden in Windsor Great Park, and historic Runnymede. The National Trust's Winkworth Arboretum is a 40-minute drive south where Japanese, American and Norwegian maples light up hazy autumn days. »



## Autumn touring



This picture:  
Blenheim Palace.  
Below, from left:  
Batsford Arboretum;  
Chipping Norton  
Club Site



### CHIPPING NORTON CLUB SITE, OXFORDSHIRE

OPEN UNTIL 6 NOVEMBER

At just 25-minutes' drive from Chipping Norton Club Site, Batsford Arboretum near Moreton-in-Marsh in the Cotswolds is an unmissable autumn attraction. Campers should be in time to see the peak of the colour before the Club Site closes for the season on 6 November, though Winchcombe Club Site (open until 8 January) is also close by.

Maples and cherry foliage are the most eye-catching, ranging from yellows and golds to pink and deep red. The garden usually promotes a special 'autumn colour' period from October through November to encourage visitors.

The Club Site itself is surrounded by trees and there are plenty of shady pitches, while in the field across the road, campers can follow a bridlepath to the village of Churchill.

It's also well worth heading to Blenheim Palace, a 20-minute drive south-east from the Club Site, and in turn not far from Oxford Club Site either. As one of the ten Treasure Houses of England, the property is in partnership with the Club until 2018. This means Club members are eligible for admission discounts and offers throughout the year. Check our website ([www.myccc.co.uk/treasurehouses](http://www.myccc.co.uk/treasurehouses)) for updates.

The Blenheim estate is a scene of bronze, russet and gold at this time of the year, with lakeside views framed by the season's colour palette. Trails stretch away through the Lancelot 'Capability' Brown-landscaped grounds, with much to admire at every turn.



RHS Rosemoor

### UMBERLEIGH CLUB SITE, DEVON

OPEN UNTIL 2 OCTOBER

Although Umberleigh Club Site closes relatively early, it's worth pitching up to catch the seasonal highlights in the Taw Valley. Nine miles west of the Club Site is RHS Garden Rosemoor near Torrington, where you can see orchards laden with ripening apples and vegetables ready for the pot, a Hot Garden ablaze with a rainbow palette and the trees of the Woodland Garden cloaked in russet and gold.

Halsdon Nature Reserve is just south of Rosemoor and incorporates miles of the River Torridge. This Wildlife Trust-managed site comprises ancient woodland where waymarked trails lead alongside the river. Follow the James Ravillious Trail, a route that takes in iconic scenes captured during the 1970s by the renowned photographer whose fascination lay in rural life in England and overseas. As you go, keep an eye out for otters playing along the riverbank.

Direct from the campsite is a woodland walk to enjoy, or if you like an incentive on your excursions, you can stroll a quarter of a mile to the village of Umberleigh where there's the (dog-friendly) Rising Sun pub. You can also catch the train from Umberleigh to nearby Eggesford to explore the extensive woodland of Eggesford Forest.

Several campers' reviews of Umberleigh Club Site mention an appreciation of the site's large dog-walking field, so even more reason for bringing your pet this autumn.



Umberleigh Club Site



Go to [www.myccc.co.uk/ukcampsites](http://www.myccc.co.uk/ukcampsites) to book your pitch at any of the Club Sites mentioned or call **024 7647 5426**. For Camping in the Forest sites go to [www.campingintheforest.co.uk](http://www.campingintheforest.co.uk) or call **024 7642 3008**. 