

Finding Fall Color Gold in Southern Utah, Part Two

[In Part One](#), I described some of the prime sites in [Zion National Park](#). [Southern Utah](#)'s most visited outdoor attraction, a dramatic venue for viewing fall foliage and a national treasure.

Kolob Canyon, part of [Zion](#) Canyon, is less developed and that, for me, is what makes it so attractive. You can usually avoid the crowds here, even in peak season. Some say the canyon views in Kolob rival the Grand Canyon in terms of layers and colors. The canyon's rugged, red sandstone stems from its unique geologic history.



A rock-strewn trailside creek was our constant companion the particular fall day that friends and I hiked through the canyon. On our three-hour sojourn we saw only a handful of other hikers yet, each time we met up with others, there was a feeling of oneness, a shared sense of appreciation for the serenity of our environment. The hike culminated at a spectacular site when we reached Kolob's red rock double arch alcove, one of the most photogenic phenomena in the entire park.

[Cedar Breaks](#). Well worth exploring, Cedar Breaks resembles Bryce Canyon on a smaller scale. Called the "Circle of Painted Cliffs" by Native Americans, this huge amphitheater of pinnacles, arches, stone spires and columns radiates reflections, shadows and lights in shades of purple, yellow, coral and red. At 10,000 feet in elevation and shaped like a massive coliseum, the canyon drops 2,000 feet to its floor. The high point has to be the [Cedar Breaks National Monument](#). Be sure and take the scenic drive with its many observation points along the way. Point Supreme near the entrance affords a panoramic view of the amphitheater. Driving north along the 5-mile road through the Monument, you will gain a closer view at Sunset View. From each of these overlooks, you'll see across Cedar Valley, over Antelope and Black Mountains and into the Escalante Desert. Watch for swifts and swallows soaring overhead. Binoculars are, of course, handy to have along.

Cedar Breaks Hiking Trails, Both the Alpine Pond Trail and the Spectra Point Trail are accessible from the road and are easy walks, taking you through meadows, forested glens and wildflowers..

[Cedar City](#) provides an excellent base for exploration, especially because Cedar Breaks National Monument lacks lodging or dining facilities. Not only are you within easy driving distance to the area's highlights but the prices in this great little city tend to be more reasonable than higher-end resorts. Then too, in season, the [Shakespeare Festival](#) offers a refreshing counterpoint to a day spent outdoors in nature. Kolob Canyon lies about 20 to 25 miles south of Cedar City. Cedar Breaks National Monument lies about 23 miles to the east of the city.

Contact the [Cedar City-Brian Head Tourism & Convention Bureau](#), 581 N. Main St., Cedar City, UT 84720. Telephone (800) 354-4849 or (435) 586-5124.

From the San Francisco Bay Area, flights into Las Vegas Airport provide economical access to car rentals for the scenic drive to Southern Utah.

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