

Ideas for Outdoor Autumn Sessions

Orange and red leaves – pumpkins and corn stalks – crisp mornings and hoodies – these are just a few things I love about fall, but most of all, I love the amazing photography options we have throughout the mid-Atlantic during the season. Unfortunately, fall can be fleeting and is completely dependent on the weather each year, so planning ahead for your session is essential, and I recommend you visit <http://www.foliagenetwork.com/index.php/foilage-reports/foilage-reports-southeast-us/current-season-southeast-us> it's updated 2-3 times a week so keep checking.

Below is a “short list” of ideas for an autumn outdoor session (or year round too!):

Fort Washington National Park - 13551 Fort Washington Road, Fort Washington, Maryland. This 341-acre national park is located on the Potomac River contains a fort that was built in 1809, destroyed during the War of 1812 and rebuilt in 1824. Lots of views of the Potomac with dense forests, trails, and open areas around the historic fort. Ideal for a 30min to 1hr session (Mini Sessions may be available – just ask).

West Potomac Park & the Tidal Basin – The area stretching from the Jefferson Memorial to the Lincoln Memorial are among the best for fall photography with the cherry trees and Potomac River in the background, and include the FDR Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the MLK Jr Memorial, Constitution Gardens, the WWII Memorial, and the Vietnam Wall plus the Reflecting Pool and its environs. Ideal for a 30min session (immediately around either the Jefferson or the Lincoln), a 1hr session exploring either of the Parks, or a 1.5hr session walking from one end to the other.

C & O Canal National Historic Park - The park has beautiful views starting in Georgetown in Washington, DC and stretching for 184.5 miles to Cumberland, Maryland with multiple sites along the along the towpath that are great for photography, including the Georgetown Visitor Center (1057 Thomas Jefferson St., NW) and the canal around Georgetown, the Great Falls Tavern (11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac, MD), and Great Falls National Park (see below). There are many other areas along the Clara Barton Parkway and Canal Road that are also great for outdoor photos! Ideal for a 30min to 1hr session at one location.

Rock Creek Park - Washington, DC's largest park stretches 30 miles from Montgomery County, Maryland to downtown. Explore the Nature Center (5200 Glover Road, NW), the historic Pierce Mill, or Old Stone House (3051 M Street, NW) are all great spots for photography! There are multiple bridges over the creek, large rock formations, waterfalls, and dense forested land easily accessible by foot (much of it even ADA accessible). Of course, the National Zoo (3001 Connecticut Ave., NW) is also located along Rock Creek Park and gives many other options for family-friendly photography. Ideal for a 30min to 2hr session depending on your ideas and locations.

Great Falls National Park - Great Falls, Virginia and Potomac, Maryland. The park has some of the most spectacular views in the region, include the Great Falls of the Potomac. See vibrant colors among 50-foot cliffs overlooking the Potomac River with plenty of overlooks. Ideal for a 30min to 2hr session depending on your ideas and locations, however, only choose one side for a session, as it will take over 1hr to reach the other side.

Burke Lake Park - 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, Virginia. The large park has a 218-acre lake. There is a miniature train and a carousel great for kids! Ideal for a 30min to 2hr session depending on your ideas.

[Seneca Creek State Park & Black Hill Regional Park](#) - 11950 Clopper Road, Gaithersburg and Boyds, MD. The parks have a 90-acre lake, plus a beautiful restored 19th century cabin perfect for fall photos, spectacular views of Little Seneca Lake, and miles of trails. Ideal for a 30min to 2hr session depending on your ideas.

[Cunningham Falls State Park](#) - Thurmont, Maryland. The State Park in the Catoctin Mountains of Maryland has a 78-foot cascading waterfall and hiking trails with distances ranging from .5 mile to 7.5 miles. Ideal for a 1hr to 2hr session depending on your ideas.

[Harpers Ferry National Park](#) - Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. The historic Civil War site is about 1-1.5hrs drive from Washington, DC in the nearby mountains on the border of West Virginia. Visitors enjoy a variety of scenic hiking trails and exploring the historic town, with views of the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah River. Ideal for a 1hr to 2hr session depending on your ideas.

Pumpkin Patches and Outdoor Adventures (great for 30min – 1hr sessions)

Maryland - [Butler's Orchard](#), [Homestead Farm](#), [Larriland Farms](#), [Montpelier Farms](#), [Gaver Pumpkin Patch](#), Shlagel Farms, and Miller's Farms

Virginia - [Cox Farms](#), [Heather Hill Gardens](#), [Leesburg Animal Park](#), [Ticonderoga Farms](#), [Burke Nursery and Garden Center](#), [Great Country Farms](#), and [Hollins Farms Orchard](#)

Do you have some suggestions? I'd love to know your thoughts – please email monumentalarts@outlook.com!