

# of the BEST



## ADVENTURES FOR AUTUMN/WINTER

Sell an all-American break in the great outdoors with **Laura French's** top picks

**1** Travel to the US may be off the cards for now, but with hopes of the country reopening to the UK in the coming months, clients might well be in search of some last-minute inspiration.

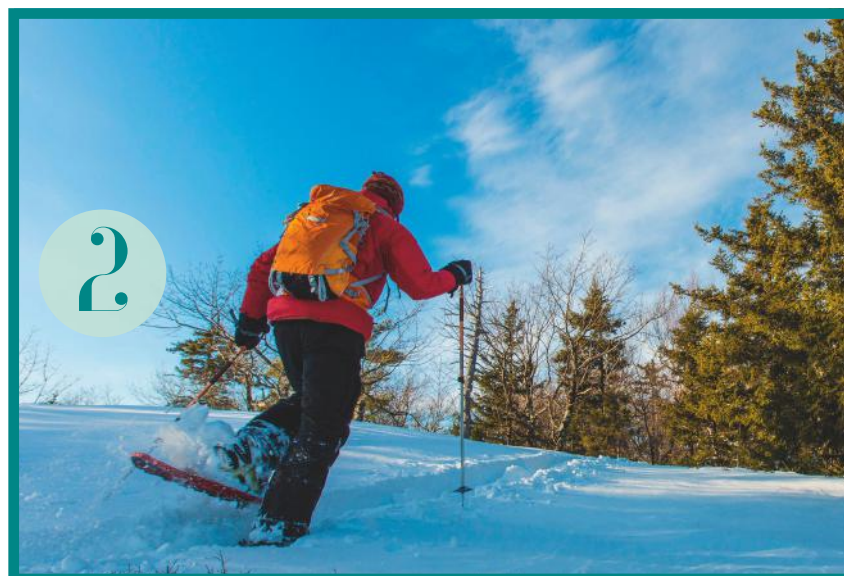
And while it might not be in time for the summer season, there's plenty to get excited about for autumn and winter – without the crowds you'd normally get in high season. Here we've rounded up some of the best activities for those in the mood for outdoorsy activities in the off-season – from grape-harvesting in Napa to snowshoeing around New Hampshire, skiing in Utah to wildlife-spotting in Yellowstone, and plenty in between.



### GLAMP YOUR WAY AROUND ARIZONA

From the Grand Canyon to Zion, Monument Valley to Capitol Reef, Arizona and Utah boast truly impressive scenery. Several operators offer tours in the off-season, including Gold Medal, whose three-day National Park Winter Tour combines nature-hewn highlights with the man-made delights of Las Vegas, adding in hiking, 4x4 tours and more. But for those after an alternative take, suggest America As You Like It's Quirky Stays and the Great Outdoors fly-drive, which pairs canyoning, hot-air balloon rides and ATV tours with stays in Airstream caravans, traditional wagons, glamping tents and other memorable accommodation.

**Book it:** The 14-night fly-drive from America As You Like It costs from £2,410, including flights and car hire.  
[americaasyoulikeit.com](http://americaasyoulikeit.com)



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#### SKI UTAH'S SLOPES

It's not only the east that satisfies on the ski front. For those looking to combine the majestic slopes of Utah with hiking among the other-worldly hoodoos of Bryce Canyon, Lee Rogers, product and commercial director at American Affair, recommends a 14-night self-drive combining Ski Park City with Bryce Canyon National Park. "Holidaymakers can spend 10 nights skiing and snowboarding in Park City and Deer Valley ski resorts, then head out on a ranger-led hiking tour of Bryce," she says. SUV hire is included for an added dose of adventure, along with a stay in Salt Lake City, Utah's vibrant capital.

**Book it:** From £2,244 including flights, car hire and accommodation, departing in November.  
[americanaffair.com](http://americanaffair.com)

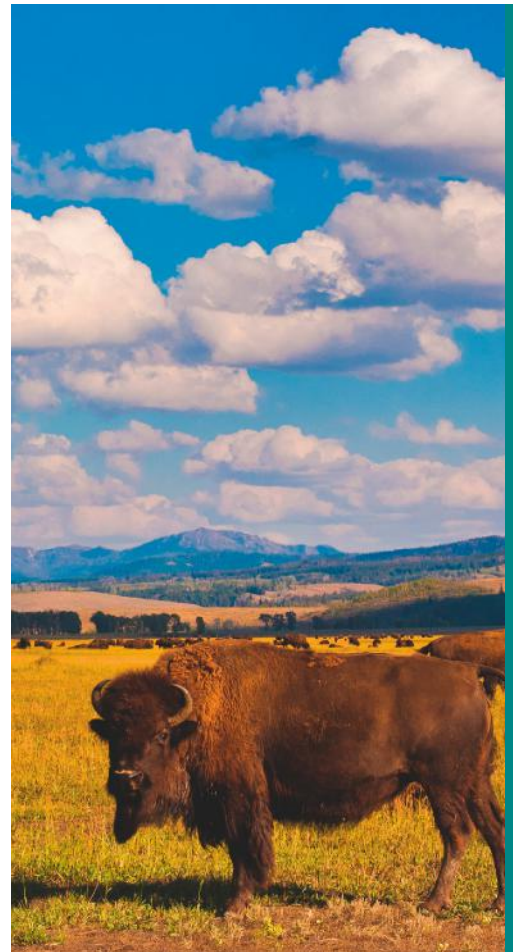


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#### SPOT WILDLIFE IN YELLOWSTONE

From goats to grizzly bears, bison to bighorn sheep and coyotes to Canada lynx, Yellowstone is a haven for wildlife lovers – and autumn is an excellent time to see its diverse ecosystem in all its glory thanks to cooler temperatures and fewer crowds, with a backdrop of brightly coloured foliage to top it all off. Exodus Travels has a 12-day Wildlife Trails tour taking in the best of it, with an autumn departure on September 24, including a wolf-tracking experience in this geyser-covered, geothermal hotspot, plus visits to Grand Teton and Glacier national parks.

**Book it:** From £4,399 including accommodation, some breakfasts, tour leader and transport. Flights are extra.  
[exodus.co.uk](http://exodus.co.uk)



#### GO SNOWSHOEING IN NEW ENGLAND

When it comes to winter sports, the US doesn't short-change its visitors – especially in New England, where big-hitters like Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire meet a network of smaller resorts tucked away in the snowy peaks. For adventurous types looking to get the best out of them, First Class Holidays has a 10-day New England Winter Wonderland self-drive offering the likes of fat-biking, snowshoeing, snowboarding and downhill and cross-country skiing. The trip is based in North Conway, in the White Mountains, after kicking off with a cultural stay in Boston.

**Book it:** From £1,319 including three nights' room-only in Boston, five nights' B&B in North Conway, car hire and flights.  
[fcholidays.com](http://fcholidays.com)







"Selling the off-season means suggesting something different – customers need to be shown what else the US offers beyond just sun and entertainment. Ask your customer what type of holiday appeals to them to tailor the product. Autumn offers a different perspective on this fantastic destination, with the northeastern, southern and Midwest states showcasing the fall colours the best. Winter, meanwhile, is an ideal time to fit in a short break to New York, Boston, Chicago or Washington DC, or to hit the slopes."

**Lee Rogers, product and commercial director, American Affair**



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### HARVEST GRAPES IN NAPA VALLEY

If your clients are keen on wine, there's no time like autumn to explore the Napa Valley, where grapes are harvested from August through to October, filling the air with tempting aromas. The valley is home to more than 400 wineries, many of which can be visited throughout the season. For an experience with an added helping of luxury, suggest a stay at the Four Seasons Resort and Residences Napa Valley, tucked away in the historic town of Calistoga and home to its own organic vineyard. Guests can take part in wine-tasting sessions or opt for a hands-on demonstration where they'll help harvest, sort and select the grapes while learning more about the winemaking process in the company of an expert vintner.

**Book it:** Nightly rates start at £1,600 including breakfast. Wine tasting costs from £72. [fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com)



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### EXPERIENCE FALL COLOURS

No list would be complete without an autumnal road trip taking in the fall colours, when the parks turn to fiery shades of orange and the skies are crisp and blue. For clients wanting to see some of the country's most impressive vistas, Prestige Holidays suggests a 10-night self-drive from Washington to Nashville, passing Shenandoah National Park, the Appalachian Mountains, the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Great Smoky Mountains and more. "The fall colours in these parks are stunning," says product manager Tim Greathead. "There is also hiking, biking, birdwatching and many other activities to enjoy along the way."

**Book it:** From £1,799 including car hire and Heathrow-Washington flights, departing September 25. A \$300 car drop-off fee is payable locally. [prestigeholidays.co.uk](http://prestigeholidays.co.uk)

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Danila Delimont, Loreel, CSNafziger; Mariana Jamodi