

# MAINE



T H E   S E A S O N S

T E R R E L L   S .   L E S T E R

WITH ESSAYS BY ANN BEATTIE, RICHARD FORD, RICHARD RUSSO, AND ELIZABETH STROUT

# M A I N E

THE SEASONS

T E R R E L L S. L E S T E R

With essays by

Ann Beattie, Richard Ford, Richard Russo, and Elizabeth Strout



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*Frontispiece:*  
*Sunset from Blue Hill Overlook, Cadillac Mountain,*  
*Acadia National Park*





# M A I N E





To my beautiful wife, Ginger, for sharing it all,  
and to my mother, Doris, for planting the seed of adventure  
that has led me down this road



*Apple tree in snow, Deer Isle. Apple trees growing along the coast are the result of a failed agricultural industry. The apples are a favorite food of deer, and some are pressed for cider.*



# I N T R O D U C T I O N

Maine is a land of diversity and extremes. It was not created entirely by gentle and subtle forces of erosion over countless millennia, though wind and rain did play a part in shaping the granite coastline and ancient mountains. It was also gouged and scraped, ripped and polished, to its present-day topography. Forty thousand years ago, an enormous sheet of slowly migrating ice nearly two miles thick covered the land. It carried such force that it cut, ground, and shaped most of the rugged features seen here today. The land continues to be sculpted and chiseled by the relentless forces of ice, wind, and water. The Maine landscape is an ongoing geologic work of art, forever in progress, forever changing.

The seasons of Maine are as diverse and extreme as its topography. I have experienced snow showers in June and have seen insects emerge from melting snow during a January thaw. The seasons rarely coincide with dates on a calendar. They are governed more by weather patterns that vary noticeably from region to region and from year to year. Spring always seems to arrive late, after a wet and muddy start. Summer days are long and filled with a warm light that starts to vanish in only a few weeks. Fall explodes in hues of red, yellow, and russet that paint every leaf, twig, forest, and field in color. Winter begins sullen and moody, with gray skies and stark landscapes. Some winter days are bright blue and

crisp, others gray and subdued. At times, invading arctic weather systems transform the land into an altogether inhospitable and alien environment. Winter is by far the most enduring season in Maine, but the memory of its long, forbidding grip is lessened by the intense, if all too short, beauty of the seasons that follow.

I was a gypsy artist when I moved to the midcoast of Maine. Lured by the magnificent landscape, I wanted to experience its power and beauty, to capture its spirit as it had captured mine. I brought with me the idea that photographing the land was not simply about recording the things seen through a lens, but was more about expressing how those things made me feel. The language of camera and film are technical and specific. It is essential to understand the language of photography before you can successfully communicate through it, but it is equally essential to gain an understanding of the subject and the light that falls upon it. There is an ambience to the light in Maine that I have experienced nowhere else. It can be soft and moody one minute, then strong and dramatic the next. The environment itself is a challenge to work in. Blackflies and mosquitoes present a relentless distraction during the warmer months. Winter temperatures drop below zero on the coast, and much lower inland. There is a painful price to pay when photographing in windchill temperatures of minus fifty

degrees. These elements, however, often create the most dramatic photographs. The freezing sea vapor—locals call it “sea smoke”—boils and swirls when warmer sea vapor collides with subzero air temperatures. Coastal fog masks distracting details in the background, emphasizing subjects closer at hand and turning ordinary objects into strong graphic designs. Wet, overcast autumn skies saturate colors and envelop the land with soft radiant light. I often work with a particular landscape for days or weeks to get just the right lighting conditions. I have waited years for the right conditions to photograph some subjects; still others elude me to this day.

I have heard it said that Maine is too big to explore in a lifetime, but is still small enough to try. This book is not about trying to capture all of the varied landscapes in this huge and magnificent state. Instead, I have tried to capture places that resonate with me deeply. It has not been an easy task. This is a land of tall tales and legends that are surpassed only by what you find here. It is a place to cherish, whether you spend a few days or a lifetime. It has been my privilege to work and live in such an inspirational land, and an even greater pleasure to share with you my photographic visions of this magnificent place.

TERRELL S. LESTER

*Lobster-pot buoy markers, Stonington*





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A dense field of purple lupine flowers, with some pinkish-purple blooms interspersed. The flowers are tall and spiky, growing in a field with green foliage at the base. The word "SPRING" is overlaid in a white, serif, all-caps font across the upper middle of the image.

SPRING

