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ON THE COVER

Old State Capitol, Springfield
(Photo courtesy of Illinois Office of Tourism)

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**Cory M. Jobe, Director
Illinois Office of Tourism**

Greetings!

On behalf of the Illinois Office of Tourism, I invite you and your group tour to enjoy the many rewards to be found here in Illinois.

In a state that encompasses thriving urban centers like Chicago, as well as scenic natural vistas that will take your breath away, there is simply no end to the travel opportunities that await you in the Land of Lincoln.

Illinois offers something for everybody. Whether you prefer the world-class culture and dining of the big city, the friendly hospitality of small town America or the serene beauty of our natural wonders, you'll find what you're looking for in Illinois. From top-notch sporting events to world-class shopping, it's all here. Our theaters and museums represent thriving centers of culture, while lush forests and scenic parks set the stage for exciting outdoor adventures. You'll find an abundance of charming restaurants, not to mention our many fine breweries, distilleries and wineries. Of course, there's no shortage of historic sites, water parks, zoos, amusement parks, and kid-friendly activities for the whole family.

Illinois is a four season destination. Our winter eagle watching season offers unique views of one of the largest eagle migrations in the nation. Spring and summer are a prime opportunity for travelers to enjoy Illinois' scenic byways, beaches, and parks. Autumn brings with it the fall colors and provides some of the most beautiful hues and landscapes to be found anywhere in the country.

I'm proud of all that Illinois has to offer! I have no doubt that Illinois is your next group tour destination. At the Illinois Office of Tourism and Tour Illinois, we can help you build a memorable trip. We offer group tour planners many resources, so start your planning process with us.

For more information or for a look at everything the Land of Lincoln has to offer, be sure to go to our website at tourillinois.org.

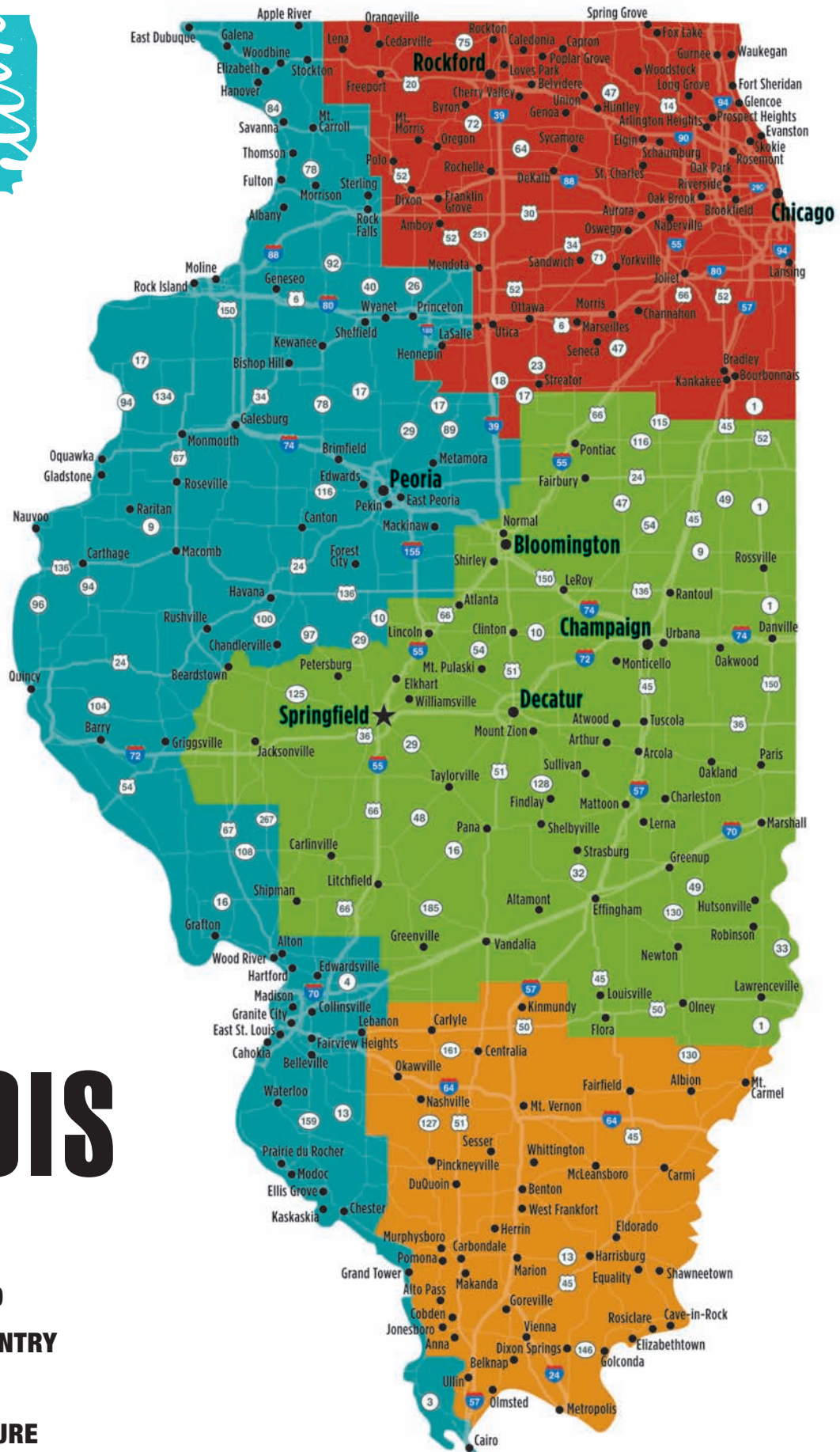
Your friend in Illinois Tourism,

Cory M. Jobe
Director
Illinois Office of Tourism



TOUR
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ILLINOIS STATE MAP

- CHICAGO & BEYOND
- GREAT RIVERS COUNTRY
- LAND OF LINCOLN
- TRAILS TO ADVENTURE

The Finest Products Are

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THE OLD BAKERY BEER CO.
OLD
Bakery
BEER
Craft Beer from Alton, Illinois
SINCE 2015



The Old Bakery Beer Company was started in 2015 and offers multiple year-round beers including Porter, an English black ale; and Golden Oat, a light-colored ale brewed with flaked oats.

A vintage car, possibly a 1930s model, is shown in a workshop or garage setting. The car is dark-colored with a prominent front grille and a round headlight. The background shows industrial elements like pipes and structural beams.

MADE

From **delectable food** to **exquisite art**, there's something for everyone in the **Land of Lincoln**

With its centralized location in the country and a wealth of appealing cities across the state, Illinois has established itself as a tourism hotbed.

A major reason the Prairie State attracts so many visitors is its abundance of talented artisans who create some of the finest foods, beverages and products in the Midwest.

To highlight some of these extraordinary professionals, the Illinois Office of Tourism formed a program called Illinois Made, featuring those who craft, design and invent. Illinois Made gives an intimate glimpse into the creation process of artisans across the state on the Enjoy Illinois website by providing a behind-the-scenes view on what makes each maker exceptional.

Here are a few of more than 100 Illinois Made businesses that can be found throughout the state.

ALTON

Old Bakery Beer Company, housed in the old Colonial Bread plant on downtown Alton's Mississippi riverfront, was started in 2015 by James Rogalsky and Lauren Pattan, a husband-and-wife team committed to sustainability. All beer ingredients are USDA-certified organic, the bars and restaurant tables made out of reclaimed wood. The 50-foot-long centerpiece bar (lined with 28 stools) was assembled from 100-year-old floor joists from a one-room schoolhouse in Collinsville, and the beer tappers are reconditioned rolling pins. Old Bakery's sprawling dining area has an industrial-chic vibe, with huge cement columns, exposed pipes and ducts, and cream-colored tile walls. Year-round beers include Porter, an English black ale; Citrus Wheat, brewed with lemon peel, orange peel and touches of chamomile and coriander; and Golden Oat, a light-colored ale brewed with flaked oats. Brewery tours with beer sampling can be arranged.

The showroom at **Mississippi Mud Pottery** abounds with one-of-a-kind stoneware items handcrafted by Chad Nelson and Felicia Breen, husband and wife, who earned degrees in fine arts from the Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. Tours feature a demonstration at the pottery wheel in front and a look in back at the kilns and glaze-applying process. Merchandise ranges from mugs, magnets and wind chimes to honey pots, garlic keepers and olive oil pourers.

Adam Alexander/Illinois Office of Tourism



Adam Alexander/Illinois Office of Tourism

Scratch Brewing Company serves tantalizing dishes along with its vast selection of quality beers.



Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery serves creative farm-to-table dinners in a genuine farm location.

AVA

Scratch Brewing Company, in the Southern Illinois town of Ava, is a microbrewery and farm that resides five miles from the Shawnee National Forest. This bucolic location has earned Scratch a reputation as one of the most idyllic sites to drink beer in the world. Scratch embraces its roots by creating beer from farmed and foraged ingredients directly from the land surrounding it, and offers a standout selection of beer tastes that include nettle, elderberry, ginger, dandelion, maple sap, hickory, lavender and juniper.

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery, in rural Champaign-Urbana, endeavors to educate about organic and sustainable agriculture and the connections between food production and consumption. Since 2008, Prairie Fruits Farm has been serving creative farm-to-table dinners: multi-course, slow-food meals that display the best of Midwest agriculture. These feasts typically take place outdoors, giving diners a pastoral experience, and the farm's long dining tables encourage conversation among dinner guests. Many of the meals' vegetables, herbs, fruits, eggs, cheeses and milk are grown or produced organically on the farm and the dinners often feature the farmers who grow or raise the food, enabling guests to learn about the farmer's practices. The farm offers a wine list featuring small, family-owned wineries and also features locally-made micro brews and typically provides a special cocktail to match the theme of the dinner.

Illinois Office of Tourism



Illinois Office of Tourism

Eshelman Pottery is where Paul and Laurel Eshelman create functional masterpieces which range from cups to plates to serving dishes.

CHICAGO

Consistently voted one of the best food cities in the country, Chicago has something for everyone. The city has earned a reputation as a great pizza town, and one of its finest establishments is **Piece Brewery and Pizzeria** in Wicker Park, which serves a thin-crust pizza featuring an ideal ratio of parmesan cheese, sweet-salty tomato crust and minced garlic. Opened in 2001, Piece has wowed visitors with its distinctive pies, including the famous white clam pie, and an impressive menu of award-winning hand-crafted beers made in-house.

Pizza and hot dogs aren't the only things that have earned the label "Chicago style" thanks to **Eli's Cheesecake**. In 1980, Eli Schulman debuted his soon-to-be famous cheesecake at the first Taste of Chicago, and Chicago-style cheesecake, known for its firm outside and creamy center, began to take the country by storm. Since those fledgling days, Eli's popularity has grown substantially, as it has created cheesecakes for four American presidential inaugurations and has been featured on numerous television shows. Located just 15 minutes from O'Hare Airport, Eli's Cheesecake World's Bakery Café and Retail Store offers visitors the chance to try one of Eli's 40 hand-crafted flavors. Eli's offers



a tasting and traditions tour for those looking to learn more about its enticing product.

Black Dog Gelato, on the city's North Side, is an authentic creamery that serves inimitable hand-crafted flavors such as goat cheese cashew caramel, olive oil almond, salted peanut and Nutella pretzel. Black Dog recipes combine respect of the artisanal gelato-making process with modern flavors, producing rich, creamy gelato that is difficult to replicate. The shop's milk is sourced locally and its nut spreads are homemade, which nicely accompanies the seasonal fruit and high-quality chocolate it utilizes to create its gelato.

DEKALB

Whiskey Acres Distilling Co. creates the only bourbon, whiskey and vodka made in the state from grain seeds sown, grown, harvested, distilled, barreled, bottled and sold on the same lot of Illinois farmland. Since the 1930s, the Walter family has tilled 2,000 acres surrounding the family farmhouse in Northern Illinois' DeKalb County. Whiskey Acres annually produces up to 70,000 bottles of bourbon, rye, corn whiskey, vodka and an artisan series of small-batch bourbons, and is the nation's second certified farm distillery, a distinction lavished upon facilities that produce spirits made from grains grown on the same farm where the distillery operates.

DU QUOIN

Since the 1800s, the St. Nicholas Hotel has been a landmark in Du Quoin. For 125 years, the hotel served as a longstanding refuge for travelers passing through the Southern Illinois town, but in 2005, the legendary building was shuttered. Identified as a historic site, the building was renovated and the **St. Nicholas Brewing Company** took over, opening its doors in 2014 as a microbrewery and restaurant. Pairing a passion for food, beer and bicycles, the brewpub is adorned with bikes, and its beer is brewed in-house and paired with artisanal pizza and sandwiches.

Obed and Isaac's Microbrewery offers one of Springfield's finest horseshoe meals.



Illinois Office of Tourism

EFFINGHAM

Celebrated chefs around the world use hardwood cutting boards and butcher blocks made by **John Boos & Co.**, the oldest business in Effingham, with a history going back to 1887. Its flagship product is the Boos Block (4 to 16 inches thick), which takes three days to individually craft from hard-rock maple. Group tours of the showroom include a short video and time to explore the gift shop, which has factory seconds. The Boos wood factory just opened in a new location next to its metal plant and will resume factory tours soon. The company also makes counter tops, work tables and islands, and rolling pins.

ELIZABETH

Located in the countryside of northwestern Illinois, **Eshelman Pottery** is where Paul and Laurel Eshelman create contemporary, red stoneware utilizing glazed and unglazed surfaces for a visual and tactile contrast. These functional masterpieces range from cups to plates to serving dishes, and are inspired by Paul's vision of bringing people together around a dinner table. Eshelman Pottery is featured in art shows across the country, and can also be found in top-rated restaurants including renowned chef Grant Achatz's Roister in Chicago.



Illinois Office of Tourism

Marcoot Jersey Creamery serves a variety of quality cheeses.

GENEVA

Forty-one miles west of Chicago resides Geneva, home to **All Chocolate Kitchen**. In this quaint shop, three-time Guinness World Record holder Alain Roby prepares striking desserts and truffles from the finest Belgian and Swiss chocolate. Roby holds records for the world's largest chocolate building, the world's tallest cooked sugar building and the world's longest candy cane, and brings international acclaim to Geneva with his unique sculptures made from blown sugar. Roby merges the worlds of fine art and sweets by creating edible masterpieces for all occasions with a menu that includes homemade gelato cakes, truffles and pralines, French crepes, waffles and chocolate fondue.

GREENVILLE

The cheese made at **Marcoot Jersey Creamery** is really creamy because milk from Jersey cows has a high cream content. "If you like whole milk, you'll like our cheese," says Laura Wall, tourism director at the artisan creamery that opened on a seventh-generation dairy farm in 2010. One-hour group tours are \$3 per person and include samples of five or six cheeses. Tour stops include the creamery itself, where visitors see workers stirring the tanks of whey through a large viewing window; the calf barn; and milking parlor, where cows are hooked up to a robotic milker. Among cheeses for sale at the creamery store are the popular cheese curds (plain cheddar or with garlic herb or sriracha flavoring).

MONTICELLO

The modest town of Monticello, in Central Illinois, is home to **Prairie Fire Glass**, one of the top glassblowing shops in the Midwest. Complete with roaring furnaces, Prairie Fire allows visitors to watch molten glass transformed into beautiful and practical works of art. Among the shop's many handmade creations are vases, bowls, jewelry and ornaments, and it also stocks mixed-media work from local artists, including greeting cards, paintings, sculpture and photography.

PEORIA

Three hours south of Chicago sits Peoria, where **thirty-thirty Coffee Co.**, an independent, locally-owned coffee shop, focuses on providing impeccably roasted and brewed coffee. Along with custom roasts in house, thirty-thirty Coffee Co. makes its syrups on the premises, offering a classic menu of pour-overs, French press brews and espresso drinks. Thirty-thirty's intimate setting enables its roasters to serve a high-quality coffee that honors its owners' artisan sensibilities.

SPRINGFIELD

The state capital of Illinois, Springfield is the epicenter of government activity. It is also the town that serves a dish rarely found anywhere else: The horseshoe. An open-faced sandwich that consists of thick-sliced toasted bread, a hamburger patty, copious amounts of French fries and is coated in a rich cheese sauce, the horseshoe is a delicacy that Springfield residents and visitors alike relish. While Springfield has a multitude of establishments that serve the horseshoe, one of its tastiest can be found at **Obed and Isaac's Microbrewery**. Stationed near the Lincoln Home National

Historic Site, Obed and Isaac's offers a wide range of meat options with its horseshoe, including ground sirloin, pulled pork and lamb, and complements that dish with an eclectic menu and locally crafted beer.

Down the road is **Incredibly Delicious**, an inviting French bakery and café that lives up to its lofty name. Located inside of the historic Weber House, a 19th-century mansion in downtown Springfield, this locally owned shop specializes in artisanal breads, traditional croissants, handmade pastries, specialty cakes and desserts. Lunch is served six days a week, and everything is made on-site, including the shop's signature flourless chocolate cake.

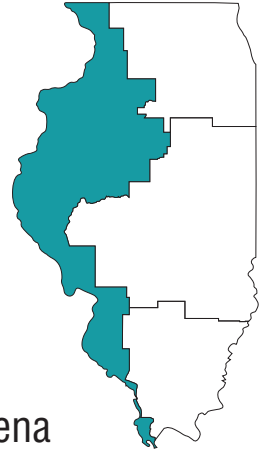
Established in 1884, **Maldaner's Restaurant and Catering** has been an institution in Springfield for generations. And while a visit to Maldaner's is akin to taking a trip back into time, the celebrated restaurant also serves the best of contemporary American fine dining. Maldaner's features seasonal local and regional ingredients influenced by Mediterranean composition and preparation, and heirloom vegetables, humanely raised meats and slow food are all artistically prepared and presented. **IL**



- ENJOY ILLINOIS
EnjoyIllinois.com/Illinois-Made
- ALL CHOCOLATE KITCHEN
630-232-2395, AllChocolateKitchen.com
- BLACK DOG GELATO
773-235-3116, BlackDogChicago.com
- ELI'S CHEESECAKE
800-354-2253, EliCheesecake.com
- ESHELMAN POTTERY
815-858-2327, EshelmanPottery.com
- INCREDIBLY DELICIOUS
217-528-8548, IncrediblyDelicious.com
- JOHN BOOS & CO
217-347-7790, JohnBoos.com
- MALDANER'S RESTAURANT AND CATERING
217-522-4313, Maldaners.com
- MARCOOT JERSEY CREAMERY
618-664-1110, MarcootJerseyCreamery.com
- OBED AND ISAAC'S MICROBREWERY
217-670-0627
Connshospitalitygroup.com/dine-drink/obed-isaac-s-microbrewery-eatery.aspx
- OLD BAKERY BEER COMPANY
618-463-1470, OldBakeryBeer.com
- PIECE BREWERY AND PIZZERIA
773-772-4422, PieceChicago.com
- PRAIRIE FIRE GLASS
217-762-3332, PrairieFireGlass.com
- PRAIRIE FRUITS FARM & CREAMERY
217-643-2314, PrairieFruits.com
- MISSISSIPPI MUD POTTERY
618-462-7573, MississippiMudPottery.com
- SCRATCH BREWING COMPANY
618-426-1415, ScratchBeer.com
- ST. NICHOLAS BREWING COMPANY
618-790-9212, StNicholasBrewCo.com
- THIRTY-THIRTY COFFEE CO.
309-713-2983, thirty-thirtyCoffee.com
- WHISKEY ACRES DISTILLING CO.
844-494-4753, WhiskeyAcres.com

Save room for a dessert at Incredibly Delicious, a French bakery and cafe in Springfield.

HISTORIC TOWNS ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER



Hartford, Edwardsville, Alton, Quincy, Nauvoo, Rock Island, Moline, Galena

The Celebration Belle's lunch and dinner cruises are popular options in the Quad Cities.



DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your adventure where Meriwether Lewis and William Clark did: at the convergence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. In Hartford, the 150-foot-tall **Lewis & Clark Confluence Tower** honors their Corps of Discovery Expedition as it traveled from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean. It provides stunning views of the St. Louis skyline.

AFTERNOON

Continue with a visit to **Edwardsville**, the third-oldest city in Illinois and home to the **St. Louis Street Historic District**. Here you can admire Italianate, Chateausque

and Classical Revival houses in addition to the **Madison County Historical Museum and Archival Library**. This Federal-style residence features period furnishings, pioneer artifacts and friendly guides eager to explain Southern Illinois history.

EVENING

Conclude your day in Alton, a charming riverfront town that features a thriving antique district and stops along the **Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway** such as **Lincoln-Douglas Square**. It was here that the final 1858 debate between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas drew 6,000 people, and visitors can view life-sized statues of the two famous statesmen.



Illinois Office of Tourism

Lewis & Clark Confluence Tower





DAY 2

MORNING

Continue your trip northward to Quincy—a 19th century riverboat port that features historic districts filled with a vibrant collection of architectural jewels. A self-guided tour passes 15 notable structures, including the Moorish Revival **Temple B'nai Sholom**, mid-century modern **St. Boniface Church** and Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced **Ernest Wood Studio**. The **All Wars Museum** contains over 5,000 military artifacts such as weapons, flags and uniforms dating back to the Revolutionary War on the grounds of the Illinois Veterans Home.

AFTERNOON

Nauvoo—a Mormon settlement abandoned after persecution forced the followers of Joseph Smith to Utah—retains many structures dating back to the 1830s. Buildings available for tour are the gun shop, schoolhouse and Brigham Young's house. Horse-drawn carriage rides are available during warm-weather months.

DAY 3

MORNING

The **Quad Cities** grew as steamboat traffic increased along the Mississippi River in the 1800s. The area's two Illinois cities (Rock Island and Moline) retain thriving entertainment districts and historic downtowns. Start your morning at the **Rock Island Arsenal**, the largest government-owned weapons manufacturing center in the nation and a Union prison camp during the Civil War. For lunch, board *Celebration Belle* for a narrated cruise. Your **Celebration River Cruises** captain will point out Quad Cities landmarks while your group enjoys a hearty meal.

AFTERNOON

Moline is known as the "Farm Implement Capital of the World" and serves as the headquarters for John Deere, so be sure to explore the **John Deere Pavilion**. This glass-enclosed museum showcases vintage equipment, cutting-edge tractor prototypes and an adjacent company store with gifts to bring back home.

EVENING

Enjoy dinner and a show at **Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse**, a grand movie house converted into a lively dinner theater. Your group will enjoy a tasty buffet in Las Vegas-style seating while applauding Broadway-caliber productions.

Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse



Illinois Office of Tourism

John Deere Pavilion



Adam Alexander Photography

DAY 4

MORNING

Once the largest Mississippi River trade port north of St. Louis, Galena fell on hard times at the advent of train travel before reinventing itself as a vacation destination that features historic homes, quaint cafes and specialty shops. Tour the **Ulysses S. Grant Home State Historic Site**, home to the famous general and U.S. president when he returned from the Civil War. Docents can lead a group tour while explaining the period furniture and 19th century history.

AFTERNOON

Galena's **Helluva Half Mile** contains over 125 restaurants and shops along Main and Commerce streets, most of them housed in original storefronts used by merchants in the 1800s and featuring the creations of local artisans and chefs. Interspersed with the shops are historical sites such as the **DeSoto House Hotel** (where Abraham Lincoln once spoke from the balcony) and the **Dowling House** (a limestone trading post built in 1826 and Galena's oldest surviving structure).



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SEEQUINCY

INTRIGUE&ARCHITECTURE

sample itinerary



9:30-10:30a

UNDERBRINK'S BAKERY

Behind-the-scenes tour of Quincy's authentic 1929 working German bakery + a sweet sampler tray.



10:45a-12:15p

OFF THE RECORD

Driving Tour showcasing 13 famous & infamous Quincy residents. Entertaining step-on guide accompanies this intriguing tour.



12:30-1:30p

LUNCH DOWNTOWN

Ideal for large groups, The Pier is cantilevered over the Mississippi ~ Midwestern cuisine with a twist.



1:45-2:45p

EELLS HOUSE

1835 home of prominent abolitionist, Dr. Eells, and a stop for fugitives on the Underground Railroad.



3-5p

PRIVATE HOME TOURS

Custom interior tours of 3 privately owned residences in Quincy's distinguished East End Historic District.



5:15p

DINNER AT A DINER

Home of the "loose meat" sandwich, Maid-Rite is a Quincy icon approved by Food Network's Alton Brown...no tipping allowed!

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Nauvoo Temple

Tom Simpson Photography

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FOLLOW THE LIGHT ON A SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY

Infuse your **Illinois itineraries** with spiritual enlightenment by including noteworthy **houses of worship**, **historical sites**, **inspirational landmarks**, and **religious shrines and museums**



*The Cross at the Crossroads
draws the attention of motorists
passing through Effingham.*

Effingham CVB

There it stands as a beacon of hope and assurance, soaring nearly 200 feet into the Midwestern sky at an unlikely location—the intersection of Interstates 57 and 70 in Effingham, Illinois. Welcoming thousands of passing motorists every day, America’s biggest cross is a sight to behold, especially when illuminated at night.

In southwestern Illinois, at the country’s largest Marian shrine, groups experience the meaning of the season on a drive through the largest faith-based outdoor Christmas display anywhere. Only a half-hour away awaits another enlightening sacred site, a collection of earthen mounds from an ancient sun-worshipping Indian community that’s been called the City of the Sun.

In suburban Chicago, in the dimly lit rotunda of a nationally known museum of Christian evangelism, a disc of light on the floor welcomes visitors with the message, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

Blessed with many places of religious interest and many points of light, Illinois makes a heavenly destination for faith groups or any group wishing to add a spiritual component to its travels.

Groups that get off the interstate at Exit 159 in Effingham will find **The Cross at the Crossroads**, a peaceful spot where those of all faiths and backgrounds can pause and reflect, even amid the roar of traffic. Travelers marvel at the sheer size of this engineering wonder, a 20-story structure of white steel whose arms span 113 feet. Surrounded by a grassy field, its base is ringed by polished granite tablets representing the Ten Commandments, with push-button audio messages at each station. The visitor center has a chapel and shows an eight-minute video on the Cross’s construction and dedication on September 16, 2001 (just five days after the September 11 terrorist attacks that shook the country). The non-denominational site is a project of The Cross Foundation, a local, not-for-profit organization.

Bald Knob Cross of Peace, another colossal white cross, crowns a mountaintop in Shawnee National Forest near the small town of Alto Pass in southern Illinois, southwest of Carbondale. Illuminated at night, the 111-foot landmark (with arms measuring 63 feet wide) is visible throughout an area covering 7,500

square miles. Completed in 1963, it was renovated from 2009-2011. Special events include an Easter sunrise service.

Teutopolis, a little town just minutes from Effingham, is home to the **Monastery Museum**, which tells the story of the Franciscan friars who came from Germany in 1858 to serve German-speaking immigrants. Attached to St. Francis of Assisi Church, the building was a novitiate, a place of housing for novices (men in training for the Catholic priesthood, prior to taking their vows). The one-person bedrooms (or cells) flanking the long corridors have exhibits on the life of the monastery and community. Of special note is the 62-spool machine that wove yarn into the cords worn around the friars’ waists. Other displays showcase costumes, beer steins and other items that reflect the pioneer past and German heritage of Teutopolis (“City of the Teutons”). Group tours include a video on church and town history, the mausoleum where 79 friars are buried and the grand finale, beautiful St. Francis of Assisi Church with its stained-glass windows depicting the life of St. Francis.

The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, another place special to Catholics, has four miles of roads threading 200 hilltop acres overlooking the Mississippi River Valley. Christmastime’s Way of Lights drive-through display attracts groups of all faiths from mid-November through December 31 with more than one million lights in scenes

that tell the story of Christ’s birth. Other highlights include camel, donkey and pony rides; carriage rides; and a life-size LEGO-brick Nativity scene.

The Main Shrine and its amphitheater accommodate big crowds for Easter Mass and special events; various images of Mary and stunning mosaics can be found in Christ the King Chapel at the Main Shrine. Among other points of interest on the grounds are the Church of Our Lady of the Snows, where Mass is celebrated twice daily; The Way of the Cross, with 14 stations depicting Christ’s journey to Calvary; the 85-foot stainless-steel Millennium Spire; a two-thirds-scale reproduction of the Lourdes Grotto in France; and several devotional gardens. The visitor/conference center, with a full-service restaurant and large gift shop, is across the parking lot from the 78-room Shrine Hotel. The shrine is owned and operated by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a Catholic order of priests and brothers serving the poor in nearly 60 countries.

Not far from Belleville is **Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site** in Collinsville. Sacred to American Indians, this UNESCO World Heritage Site preserves the remnants of a city of 20,000 people and more than 70 of the original 120+ mounds, some built for religious ceremonies, others for burials. Cahokia, inhabited from A.D. 700 to 1400, peaked from 1050 to 1200 and flourished as one of North America’s



Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site

Illinois Office of Tourism

most complex civilizations. It is the largest prehistoric Indian site north of Mexico.

Before visiting the mounds and plazas via the walking trails, groups can peruse the impressive dioramas and other exhibits in Cahokia Mounds' world-class interpretive center and see the 15-minute orientation film *City of the Sun*. Monks Mound, rising 100 feet, is the largest prehistoric earthen mound in the Americas and worth a hike to the top for views of the 2,200-acre archaeological site and fertile Mississippi River bottomlands that

were farmed by the residents, who have been classified as members of the Mississippian culture. The flat-top platforms of this and other pyramids, used for ceremonies and as elite dwellings, were built to raise the rulers "closer to their brothers in the sky;" in some Mississippian societies, the chieftain was believed to be related to the sun and this may have been true at Cahokia. Woodhenge, another key stop, is a reconstructed circular solar calendar with certain wooden posts aligning with the rising sun at the spring and

fall equinoxes and the winter and summer solstices. Equinox and solstice sunrise observances are held on the Sunday morning closest to the event.

Head north through the Mississippi Valley and discover loads of Mormon history in **Nauvoo**, a small river town that attracts travelers from around the world. A pilgrimage site for Mormons seeking connections to their roots and their faith, Nauvoo preserves the remnants of the original Mormon settlement established in 1839 by Prophet Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A living history complex called Historic Nauvoo is a collection of original and reconstructed homes and shops staffed by Mormon missionaries from various states; blacksmithing, baking, brick-making and other pioneer crafts are demonstrated. Narrated rides in a horse-drawn Conestoga wagon are available, as are ox wagon rides. The 20-minute film *Remembering Nauvoo* and other films are shown in the Historic Nauvoo Visitors' Center.

For outdoor entertainment in summer at Historic Nauvoo, there's the folksy variety show *Sunset on the Mississippi* and the *Nauvoo Pageant*, a tribute to Joseph Smith that alternates with the *British Pageant*, the story of Britons who converted to the LDS church and emigrated to America. The Young Performing Missionaries, a group of LDS church members from around the country, also do summer shows. All sites, tours and shows at Historic Nauvoo are free. In town, the imposing Nauvoo Temple, dedicated in 2002 on the site of the original Mormon temple burned by vandals in 1848, is not open to visitors, but the Temple Arrival Center across the street has a 14-minute movie explaining the purpose of temples and showing many of the beautiful rooms.

The **Bahá'í House of Worship**, better known as the Bahá'í Temple, is a landmark along the Lake Michigan shoreline in the northern Chicago suburb of Wilmette. A lacy, white, 135-foot-high dome enchants visitors to the first Bahá'í place of worship in the Western Hemisphere (completed in 1953) and one of only seven in the world. Like all Bahá'í temples, it is circular, has nine sides and is surrounded by fountains and gardens. The Bahá'í faith teaches tolerance, acceptance and peace, focusing on the oneness of God, oneness of humanity and oneness of religion. A movie in the welcome center tells the temple's history. Group tours are available.

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For more information on Chicago's North Shore, please contact:

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suburban Bartlett is the largest Hindu temple in North America. Built in 2004 with more than 7,000 tons of Turkish limestone and Italian Carrara marble, it dazzles visitors with its luminescent pinnacles, exotic domes, and photogenic fountains and gardens. Carved teak, shipped in whole pieces from India, decorate the temple (*mandir*) and adjacent Cultural Center, the starting point for tours. Inside the marble-and-granite place of worship are images of deities and intricately carved screens, pillars, ceilings and arches. The exhibition *Understanding Hinduism* sheds light on a religion practiced by one of every seven of the world's people.

The most prominent temple in downtown Chicago is the **Chicago Temple**, as the First United Methodist Church, the oldest congregation in the city, is called. Located in the heart of the bustling Loop, right across from Daley Plaza and the iconic Picasso sculpture, the tallest church building in the world houses the exquisite Sky Chapel, a lofty perch under the spire of the 568-foot-tall, Neo-Gothic skyscraper built in 1924; tours of the chapel, accessible via two elevators and a set of stairs, are available. The chapel is a gift from the Walgreen family in memory of Charles R. Walgreen. Floors 5 through 21 are rented as offices.

The temple to see in suburban Oak Park is Frank Lloyd Wright's **Unity Temple**, a masterpiece of 20th century architecture built in 1905 for a Universalist congregation (now Unitarian Universalist) that still occupies the building. Built of exposed concrete, the only surviving public structure from Wright's Prairie period was perhaps the first house of worship to be constructed of a material reserved for factories and warehouses. Unity Temple, a National Historic Landmark, is included on architectural tours of Wright-designed buildings in Oak Park, home of the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio.

The **Billy Graham Center Museum**, located on the campus of Wheaton College in the Chicago suburb of Wheaton, chronicles the history of Christian evangelism and spotlights the life and ministry of the Rev. Billy Graham, a 1943 graduate of the college. Displays trace the beginnings of evangelism in the New World, from the Spanish missionaries to the Pilgrims and Puritans from England. Vintage black-and-white newsreels depict Billy Sunday and other fiery speakers who drew crowds to specially constructed wooden tabernacles in the early 20th century. Asking

attendees to commit to Jesus Christ, repent and give up alcohol, Sunday proclaimed, "We don't need more grog, we need more God."

In the Billy Graham galleries, visitors can stand at the traveling pulpit the late evangelist used on his Gospel-spreading crusades. Exhibits explain how the mass meetings were organized and show media coverage of Graham, the confidant of U.S. presidents and a frequent guest on TV talk shows. Videos recall campaigns in Los Angeles, London, New York and elsewhere.

Rockefeller Memorial Chapel is the spiritual and ceremonial center of another college, the University of Chicago, located in the city's Hyde Park neighborhood. A gift from John D. Rockefeller, the 1928 Gothic church hosts carillon and organ recitals and also is known for its choral concerts. Tours of the carillon, accessible via 271 steps up a spiral stone staircase, afford fine views and the chance to see the bells played. The church's interior features exquisite oak wood carving and a soaring vaulted ceiling decorated with mosaic tiles.

A survey of religious sites in Illinois is not complete without a mention of the glorious Catholic churches in Chicago, many of them easily accessible to visitors staying downtown. Just blocks from smart Michigan Avenue shops stands **Holy Name Cathedral**, the seat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. Built in 1875, the grand limestone house of worship has a membership of 5,500 households and is the home parish of the archbishop, Cardinal Blase Cupich; tours are available. **St. Peter's in the Loop** commands a prime location in Chicago's central business district, while **Old St. Patrick's Church** in the West Loop, commonly known as Old St. Pat's, is the city's oldest public building, dating from 1856. **Holy Family Church**, close to downtown, has served many ethnic groups over the years, most recently Mexican-Americans and African-Americans. One of Chicago's most beautiful churches and its second oldest parish, the 1857 landmark, with its stained-glass windows, sculpted wood statues and elaborately carved main altar, is one of the best examples of Victorian Gothic architecture in the U.S.

The state of Illinois certainly offers many places that provide divine inspiration, places that will make soul-nourishing stops on any group trip. Representing a variety of faiths, these religious sites will light the way and make your itinerary shine. **IL**



Randy Mink

Billy Graham Center Museum

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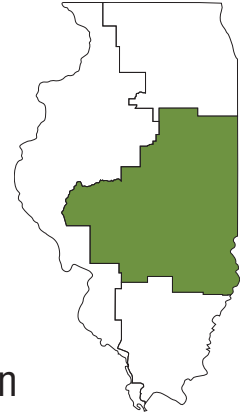
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COUNTRY LIFE AND LINCOLN LORE

Rantoul, Champaign, Monticello, Arthur, Effingham, Springfield, Lincoln



Making friends with the goats is a highlight for visitors at Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery in Champaign.

Adam Alexander/Illinois Office of Tourism

DAY 1

MORNING

Begin the day at **Hardy's Reindeer Ranch** in Rantoul, open August through Christmas. On the reindeer tour, your group members get a chance to feed and even kiss an Alaskan reindeer. Hayrides, a pumpkin patch and the 10-acre Cornfusion maze also will keep the gang entertained. Stay for lunch and enjoy a Wild West BBQ or outdoor weenie roast at the Western-style banquet facility.

AFTERNOON

Then it's off to Champaign's **Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery**, where visitors learn about goat cheese-making, pet the goats, and sample cheeses and goat-milk gelato. Next is **Allerton Park and Retreat Center**, a European-inspired estate built in 1900 and today owned by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Tour the Georgian manor house and wander the formal gardens adorned with more than 100 ornaments and sculptures. A group dinner can be arranged in the mansion.

DAY 2

MORNING

The simple charms of Illinois Amish Country await this morning in Arthur. With a step-on guide to explain the Amish lifestyle, you'll see horse-drawn buggies, one-room schools with pony carts in the driveway, Belgian horse-pulled farm equipment and roadside stands with fresh produce. The **Great Pumpkin Patch**, open in September and October, has farm animals to visit and creative displays of dozens of varieties of pumpkins, squash and gourds.

AFTERNOON

Lunch today is at an Amish home, where you'll get a tour of the house and farmyard.

Travel south to Effingham, where **MY Garage Museum** houses vintage Corvettes and Volkswagens, plus all kinds of automotive memorabilia, from neon signs to antique gas pumps. Continue to **Hodgson Mill Mercantile Store**, which sells the complete line of whole-grain products—bread, pancake and muffins mixes, flours, pastas—made at the company's Effingham plants. In the kitchen where cooking classes are held, sample treats made fresh for your group and learn the history of Hodgson Mill.

EVENING

Dinner tonight might be at **Niemerg's Steak House**, a local favorite, or **Firefly Grill**, a destination restaurant celebrated for its culinary innovations and foods from its own gardens and nearby farms.

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DAY 3

MORNING

In Springfield, the state capital, get in touch with Illinois' most famous son at the **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum**, where history comes to life through high-tech exhibits and theater shows. Then explore the **Lincoln Home National Historic Site**, which preserves the only home that Lincoln ever owned; it's part of a four-block historic district that has been returned to its 19th century appearance.

AFTERNOON

For lunch in Springfield, a good choice is **Cozy Dog Drive-In**, home to the original hot dog on a stick. Also enjoy hearty helpings of nostalgia at this shrine to Route 66, the iconic highway that passed through town. Next, visit Lincoln, a Route 66 town north of Springfield, and see rare presidential artifacts at Lincoln College's **Lincoln Heritage Museum**. Before leaving town for the drive back to Springfield, don't miss a great photo op at **Railsplitter Covered Wagon**, a roadside attraction near old Route 66 that features a studious Abe Lincoln reading a book in the seat of a 24-foot-high covered wagon, the world's largest.

EVENING

Dinner tonight might be at one of the many restaurants serving the horseshoe, a filling Springfield specialty consisting of a slice of bread, choice of meat, fries and cheese sauce. Then consider taking **Lincoln's Ghost Walk**, a spooky tour of haunted sites you didn't see during the day.

DAY 4

MORNING

In downtown Springfield, visit the **Old State Capitol**, the stage for Lincoln's "House Divided" speech; after the assassination, his body lay in state in the House chamber. It was at this capitol, which served as Illinois' fifth statehouse, where Barack Obama announced his run for the presidency in February 2007. At Oak Ridge Cemetery, pay respects at **Lincoln's Tomb**, an impressive monument in which the 16th president, his wife and three of their four children are buried. Then head northwest to **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site**, a reconstructed log village where Honest Abe spent his early adulthood. View an orientation film and poke into the gristmill, tavern, school and other buildings. Costumed characters demonstrate pioneer chores and crafts.



Illinois Office of Tourism

Lincoln's Tomb



Springfield CVB

Cozy Dog Drive-In

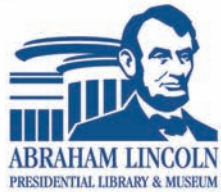


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ILLINOIS

SHOPPING CENTRAL

Discover hidden **antique treasures** and **luxury brands** in these Illinois **boutiques and malls**

Whether your group prefers bustling cityscapes or quaint town squares, some retail therapy is always a welcome itinerary addition. Illinois boasts over 100 million square feet of retail space, ranging from the chic fashion houses on Chicago's Michigan Avenue to the budget-friendly outlet stores found throughout the state. If your group prefers some local color to accompany the consumerism, numerous charming downtowns feature historic main streets and welcoming locals to give an authentic Land of Lincoln experience. So whether your group prefers boutiques, antiques or malls, Illinois is sure to accommodate.



Chicago Chicago

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Far from Chicago's nonstop bustle are the welcoming historic districts found in Illinois' smaller towns. These compact collections of family-owned businesses, boutiques and specialty stores are light years removed from the massive malls of Chicago and its suburbs, and they require no additional drop-offs for a day's worth of shopping and dining. The state's most iconic main street remains **Galena**, a preserved riverboat town that features 1840s storefronts and churches nestled upon the hillside. Blocks of red-brick buildings sell local wines, gourmet popcorn and fruit preserves, and groups can walk through the mansion and church of adopted hometown hero Ulysses S. Grant. Farther south along the Mississippi River lies **Nauvoo**, Joseph Smith's original western Mormon settlement. Though they were eventually driven out to Utah in the 1840s, the Mormons left homes that have been converted to charming stores and B&Bs for groups to enjoy. Stops along Mulholland Street include Country Cottage Antiques, Nauvoo Mercantile and the handcrafted designs of Art-Needlework Shop. Next are the Classical Revival streets of **Galesburg**, a charming city and important railroad hub during Illinois' 19th century development. A walk through the thriving Seminary Street Historic Commercial District features the expansive Galesburg Antiques Mall, handmade jewelry in Rivet Boutique and rare collectibles at Stray Cat Art.

Though considered Chicago suburbs, several towns on the outer rings of the Windy City metro area offer their own distinct charms. With its grand Victorian homes along the Fox River and over 100 specialty shops, **Geneva** has solidified itself as Kane County's premier shopping destination. One stop is all your group will need to admire the historic mansions along 3rd Street, enjoy a gourmet brew at Graham's 318 Coffeehouse and splurge on a dress at Mish Boutique or Jori & June. The far northwest town of **Woodstock** is most famous as the filming location for the 1993 comedy *Groundhog Day*, but its iconic town square is also host to fresh styles at Sunshine Girl, rare books at Read Between the Lynes and indulgent whiskey and chocolate pairings at Ethereal Confections. While here, be sure to visit the Woodstock Opera House, where Orson Welles, Paul Newman and Geraldine Page all graced the stage.

Chicago's Magnificent Mile is a 13-block retail district with luxury-brand stores and expansive malls.

STREETS OF CHICAGO

The Midwest's fashion capital and former home of iconic department stores like Marshall Fields and Carson Pirie Scott, Chicago encompasses countless shopping opportunities. Groups should begin on the **Magnificent Mile**, a 13-block retail strip that includes everything from vertical malls to standalone luxury boutiques. Burberry, Louis Vuitton and Armani outposts are housed in Art Deco facades from the 1920s, while eight-story **Water Tower Place** includes The LEGO Store, Coach and the official Cubs Clubhouse Shop. Be sure to walk the Mag Mile's entire length to admire architectural landmarks such as the Tribune Tower and watch street performers.

Farther south is State Street, the major

commercial artery for Chicago's Loop and home to one of the largest department stores in the world: **Macy's on State Street**. Originally the flagship location for Marshall Field and Company, the building retains many of its opulent Gilded Age touches and is worth a visit just to gawk. Highlights include the enormous green "Sentinels of State Street" clocks, the three-tiered fountain in the atrium and a Tiffany ceiling that contains 1.6 million pieces of glass. Of course, you can also browse the store's extensive selection of Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein and Michael Kors. Other State Street must-sees include the cosmopolitan **Block 37** retail mall, Marvel paraphernalia at the **Disney Store** and Air Jordans at **Footaction**.

MEGAMALLS AND FASHION OUTLETS

Group members who prefer discounts on their favorite brands or attractions that house shopping and dining under one roof should consider a visit to Illinois' numerous malls. The largest of these is **Woodfield Mall**, a sprawling Schaumburg complex that includes 300 stores and over two million square feet of retail space. Join the 27 million annual visitors and browse the nation's largest Sears store in addition to Nordstrom, Lord & Taylor and JCPenney. Just south of the mall is the Streets of Woodfield, an entire entertainment district that offers streetside shopping and numerous dining options without the hustle of urban parking or traffic. Attractions you won't find at an ordinary mall include the Laugh Out Loud Improv Theater, a LEGOLAND Discovery Center and Color Me Mine, a paint-your-own-ceramics chain that can host workshops for large parties. End your evening with authentic Thai and Chinese food at Big Bowl Schaumburg, the big game at the GameWorks sports bar or the latest blockbuster at the multistory **AMC Streets of Woodfield**.

If designer brands and deep discounts are your group's priority, beeline to the **Fashion Outlets of Chicago**. Located 15 miles from downtown Chicago and minutes away from O'Hare International Airport, this destination

mall features some of the world's most famous designers at discounted prices. Gucci, Prada, Armani are all represented—and that's just the Italians. Other notable brands for your browsing pleasure include Chico's, DKNY and Tommy Hilfiger, and budget-conscious travelers should prowl the racks of Barney's Warehouse and Neiman Marcus Last Call. Group members who can't keep pace with the shopaholics can seek alternatives at the nearby **Parkway Bank Park Entertainment District**, which features Zanies Comedy Club and iFLY (indoor skydiving). The complex includes restaurants such as Hofbrauhaus (an authentic Bavarian beer hall) and Sugar Factory (a candy-themed cocktail bar).

Walk the impeccably landscaped promenades of **Oakbrook Center** for an outdoor shopping experience that features anchor tenants like Macy's as well as outlets for popular brands like Lululemon, Vineyard Vines and J. Crew. Over 160 stores spread across two tiers of walkways make for a relaxing browsing experience distinct from indoor malls, and the attached District food court and AMC 12-screen theater ensure a complete evening without leaving the property. Another option for western suburb shoppers is **Chicago Premium Outlets** in Aurora, an outdoor complex showcasing over 140 retailers. Lacoste polos, Sperry shoes and Versace dresses are

all for sale in an open-air environment interspersed with numerous dining options. For a traditional megamall experience, visit **Gurnee Mills**, an enormous Z-shaped shopping complex 10 miles south of the Wisconsin border. Conveniently located near Six Flags Great America theme park and the new Great Wolf Lodge indoor water park resort, the mall features expansive Sears and Marshalls stores for bargain-hunters in addition to H&M, Forever 21 and Bass Pro Shop outlets.

Though the Chicago area features the most retail, the rest of the state features an equally diverse selection of malls both open-air and indoor. Peoria visitors should spend time at **Junction City Shopping Center**, whose facades resemble movie Westerns and expansive patios accommodate diners at nine restaurants. A smaller and charming alternative to other shopping centers, Junction City emphasizes local boutiques, and groups will enjoy the personal service from Belle Mie, Fashionably Late and Pink Sugar among others. Conveniently located less than 45 minutes from Champaign, Effingham and Decatur, the **Outlets of Tuscola** offers a big-city selection without the urban hassle. Brands represented include Coach, Under Armour and Chico's, and nearby are the charms of Illinois Amish Country.

Illinois shoppers can browse the quaint boutiques of Galena's Helluva Half Mile (left) or the 300 stores of Woodfield Mall in Schaumburg (right).





Looking for an unforgettable group getaway? Head to Lake County, Illinois! Let the beauty of the **Chicago Botanic Garden** take your breath away. Revel in the grandeur of the landmark **Cuneo Mansion and Gardens**. Try a local winery or enjoy a dining experience before taking in a 60th-anniversary performance of the magnificent **Tempel Lipizzans** stallions. Dine. Shop. Stay overnight. Let's go!

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ANTIQUES AND SECONDHAND STORES

For groups with a taste for hidden treasures, flea markets and antiques, Illinois features hundreds of stores filled with objects with stories to tell. While nearly every main street or downtown features secondhand stores worth your while, some Illinois cities have entire districts dedicated to antiquers and those with a taste for the retro.

The largest retail trade center in Southern Illinois, **Marion** is worth a visit even if your group doesn't prize antiques. A walk around the Old Town Square can include the Williamson County Historical Society and Clock Tower, but visitors will be impressed by the half-dozen antique outlets clustered in the historic shopping district. The Warehouse Antique Mall, Pickers Paradise and Court Street Antiques all feature rare finds and friendly service, while the Marion Antique Mall features 10,000 square feet of collectibles carefully arranged by new ownership.

In downtown **Alton**, located blocks from the Mississippi River, a cluster of antique and specialty shops lines a section of East Broadway known as Antique Row. At places like Steve's Antiques and J&P's Edelweiss, shoppers can have a field day rummaging

through the shelves to find everything from potato chip tins, cigar boxes and record albums to license plates, croquet balls and vintage furs. Find fine pewter ware, furniture and other pieces of early Americana (1780-1860) at the sedate Prairie Peddler Antiques.

The nearby Pink Elephant Antique Mall in Livingston is a Route 66 favorite that crams its space with ceramics, holiday gifts and light fixtures. The adjoining Twistee Treat Diner serves burgers and shakes in a 1950s malt shop atmosphere.

Described as an "antique theme park," **Volo Antique Malls** in McHenry County is a 35-acre complex that showcases 400 classic cars and rare items from over 300 dealers. Group members will find everything from *Star Wars* figurines to Beatlemania memorabilia to Bakelite jewelry, and the "mantiques" section sells taps, pennants and neon beer signs perfect for a man cave. Also worth a visit in the Chicago metro area is the **Kane County Flea Market** in St. Charles. Frequently cited as the "Best in the Midwest," this market hosts hundreds of stalls from May to December and features goods ranging from rare books to handcrafted jewelry. **IL**

Customers shopping for terrarium at Sprout Home in Chicago's West Town neighborhood.



Bob Steffo

attention

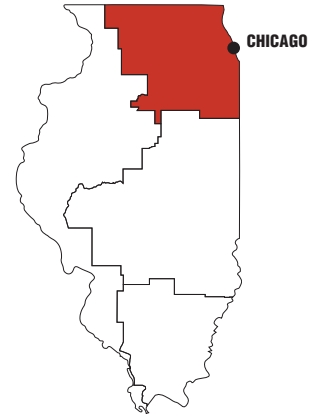
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CHICAGO'S ETHNIC NEIGHBORHOODS

Chinatown



DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your visit in the **Bronzeville** neighborhood, which flourished in the early 20th century after African-Americans from the South settled in the area and oversaw an arts boom to rival the Harlem Renaissance in New York. The neighborhood remains the heart of Chicago's black culture, evidenced by the numerous art galleries your group can visit in the morning. **Gallery Guichard**, **Little Black Pearl** and the **South Side Community Art Center** all showcase work by local and international artists that explore the African Diaspora. As you travel north towards downtown on Martin Luther King Drive, admire public sculptures such as **Monument to the Great Migration** and **Victory Monument** (which honors the black soldiers able to serve in WWI after a campaign led by the *Chicago Defender* newspaper).

AFTERNOON

Continue north to spend your afternoon in **Chinatown**, one of the densest Chinese-American population centers in North America. After enjoying a dim sum lunch at **Phoenix Restaurant**, wander through Wentworth Avenue—a charming mixture of East Asian and Western urban architecture. Pass by a replica of Beijing's famed **Nine Dragons Mural Wall** on your way to **Chinatown Square**, a two-story outdoor mall that features the **Pan Asian Cultural Center** and a collection of Chinese zodiac animal sculptures and tile mosaic that contains over 100,000 hand-painted glass shards.

DAY 2

MORNING

The next stop in your tour of Chicago is the **Pilsen** neighborhood—an area once dominated by German immigrants and now a flourishing hub of Hispanic Americans. Your group can spot numerous murals celebrating Latino culture along 18th Street and discover beautiful works in the **National Museum of Mexican Art**, which features folk art, paintings and sculptures.

AFTERNOON

Indulge in a hearty Sicilian lunch on **Taylor Street**, the main artery of Little Italy and the host to dozens of restaurants that serve authentic pizza and pasta. Stops along this famous thoroughfare include the flagship location of **Al's Beef**, creator of the famous Italian beef sandwich, and the **National Italian American Sports of Hall of Fame**, which honors famous athletes such as Joe DiMaggio and Rocky Marciano.

EVENING

After a short stop at the **National Hellenic Museum**, savor a Mediterranean meal in **Greektown**. **Greek Islands'** large dining space is ideal for groups and features fried zucchini chips, keftedakia meatballs and saganaki (fried cheese).

Pilsen Neighborhood





DAY 3

MORNING

Bolstered by thriving Catholic parishes, Chicago became a haven for Eastern European immigrants in the early 1900s. Today the Avondale and Bucktown neighborhoods retain that heritage, and the city is home to more Polish speakers than anywhere else in North America. Spend your morning walking along Milwaukee Avenue, the Northwest Side’s main commercial drag, and stop by the **Polish Museum of America**. The nation’s largest institute of Polish-American history houses galleries of Eastern European art and exhibits that feature Pope John Paul II and Revolutionary War hero Casimir Pulaski. Farther down the road are heralded eateries such as **Staropolska** and **Andy’s Deli** that serve seasoned sausages and smoked cheese.

AFTERNOON

Stop by **St. Hyacinth Basilica**, the heart of Chicago’s Polish-Catholic community. Your group will be stunned by the enormous mural dome and Baroque architectural touches of the 120-year-old church, and parishioners can tell the story of 13th-century Krakow priest St. Hyacinth.

EVENING

After dinner, enjoy a **Broadway in Chicago** performance in the Downtown Theater District. Historic venues such as the Oriental Theatre and Cadillac Palace Theatre stage lavish musicals and other productions; generous group packages are available. Conclude your trip with a fireworks display at **Navy Pier**, a lakefront visitor magnet brimming with shops, restaurants and attractions like the giant Centennial Wheel.

Polish Museum of America



Julia Sigafo/The Polish Museum of America

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12

MAGNIFICENT MUSEUMS

Dispersed throughout **Chicago's metropolitan area** are world-class collections of **science, art and history**, skillfully designed and **waiting to be discovered**

No group trip to the Chicago area is complete without a visit to some of its finest museums. Art aficionados, history lovers and nature fans alike will embrace exhibitions on all of their favorite topics and learn something along the way.

Many of these museums double the fun by offering private tours, live shows and evening events, which should be scheduled online or via phone well in advance. Enjoy a visit to some of the following museums during your next trip to the Chicago area.

ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

The Art Institute continues to be a Chicago favorite, attracting about 1.5 million visitors each year. Now, the Michigan Avenue museum boasts more art than ever before, as the addition of its Modern Wing brings it to a whopping 1 million square feet. Visitors will be entranced by 11 massive collections of 300,000 paintings, sculptures, statues, photos and print drawings produced by the greats, such as Salvador Dalí, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso. Marvel at the African sculptures, Asian pottery, medieval armor, classical European paintings and contemporary American drawings. Special exhibitions are scheduled throughout the year.

Follow up your grand tour with lunch at Terzo Piano, a restaurant featuring the signature cuisine of James Beard Award-winning chef Tony Mantuano. Visitors have the opportunity to purchase their own masterpieces at the museum's gift shop. Conveniently located next door to the Art Institute is lively Millennium Park, downtown Chicago's great gathering place.

The Art Institute of Chicago, one of the most prestigious art museums in America, is a cultural powerhouse looking out on Michigan Avenue in the heart of the Loop.

ADLER PLANETARIUM

Visit the Adler Planetarium to experience the wonders of the universe without ever leaving planet Earth. Part of downtown Chicago's Museum Campus, the Adler boasts 600,000 square feet of exhibitions featuring breathtaking models of planets, stars, moons and rockets. Tour the museum with your next group to see Captain James A. Lovell Jr.'s space adventure in *Mission Moon*, astronomers' massive telescopes in *Through the Looking Glass*, and the evolution of the solar system and surrounding constellations.

In addition to viewing exhibitions, groups can observe star formations and contemplate the universe's next addition with Adler's original showings of *Cosmic Wonders* and *Planet Nine* in two giant domed theaters. Other planetarium favorites include the Doane Observatory, where you can find the Midwest's largest telescope open to the public, and Community Design Lab, where you can develop engineering skills for new products. Finish the tour with tasty sandwiches and scenic views of Lake Michigan from Galileo's Cafe, a great space for special occasions.

THE FIELD MUSEUM

The Field Museum, located on the lakefront Museum Campus in downtown Chicago, offers a vast selection of natural history exhibits and noteworthy standalone attractions. Groups can discover a DNA lab, majestic wildlife dioramas, formidable dinosaur exhibitions and halls filled with colorful gems, not to mention the cultures of Africa, Asia, the South Pacific and other parts of the world. The Grainger Science Hub awaits all who wish to get their hands on different specimens and ancient artifacts. In spring 2019, visitors will be able to get up

close and personal with a newly enhanced SUE the *T. rex* in Stanley Field Hall. For now, you can observe the dinosaur's skeleton refurbishment through a viewing window and meet her replacement, a 122-foot-long *titanosaur*, the largest dinosaur known to humanity.

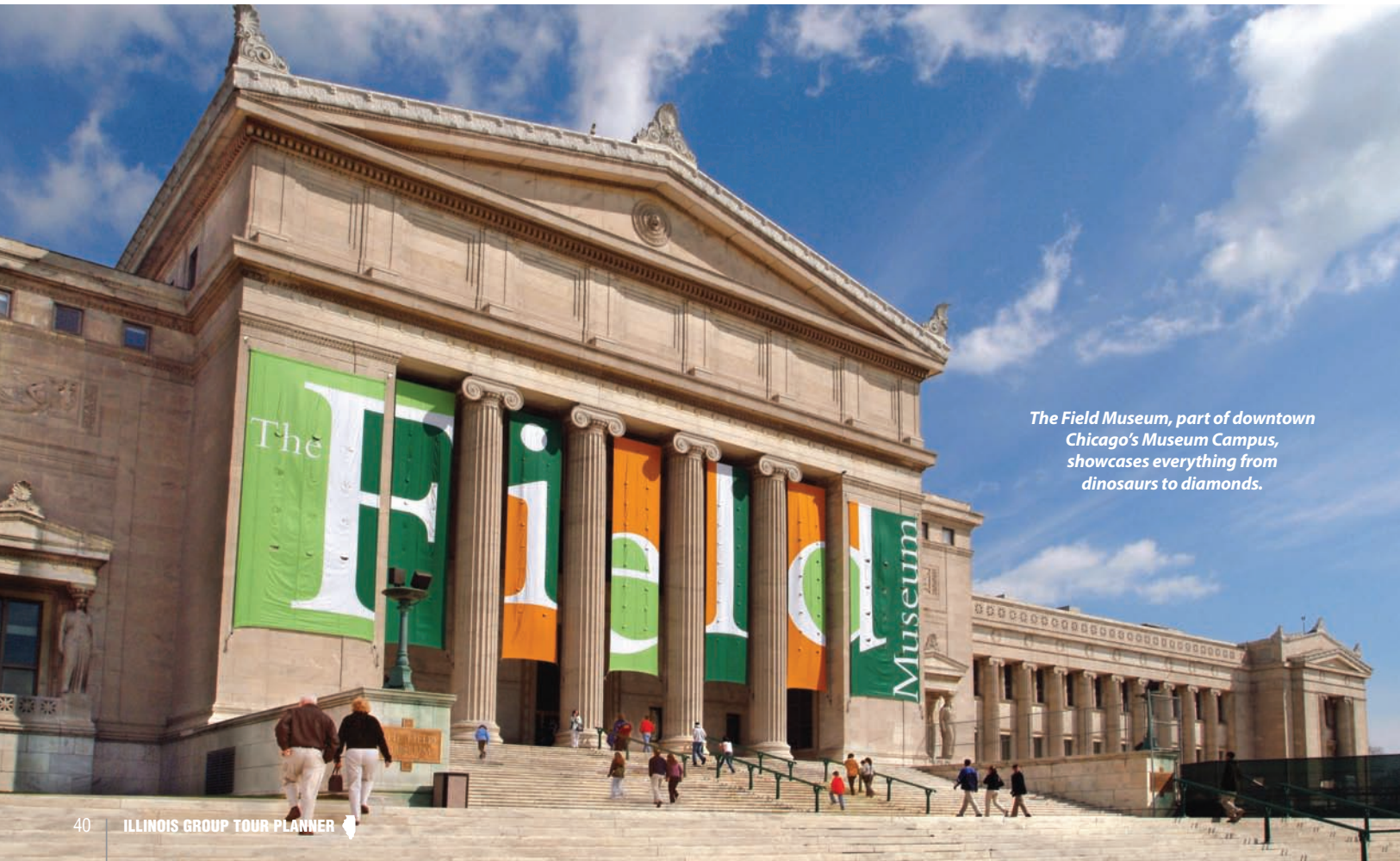
When scheduling your trip, book tickets to see one of the Field Museum's interactive 3D shows. The museum frequently shows the evolution of the *T. rex*, journeys through ancient Egypt and London's Natural History Museum after dark. Take advantage of the shopping and dining opportunities at the end of your trip.



Illinois Office of Tourism

DuSable Museum of African American History, named after Chicago's first permanent resident, is located in Hyde Park.

The Field Museum



The Field Museum, part of downtown Chicago's Museum Campus, showcases everything from dinosaurs to diamonds.

DUSABLE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

Located in Hyde Park on Chicago's South Side, the DuSable Museum of African American History is named in honor of Chicago's first permanent resident, Haitian immigrant John Baptiste Point DuSable. The museum also commemorates a range of revolutionary leaders, such as Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Langston Hughes, W.E.B. DuBois and Harold Washington, the first African American mayor of Chicago.

Besides learning about prominent figures, groups touring the DuSable will experience the Civil War era and African American soldiers' deployments to seven wars. Other exhibits will take them on a soulful journey through the creations of jazz, blues, funk and hip-hop in Chicago as well as the city's architectural and art movements.

Educational games and gifts are available for purchase at the museum's shop, and Hyde Park boasts countless dining options.

AMERICAN WRITERS MUSEUM

For a venue that just opened in 2017, the American Writers Museum is already racking up quite a reputation. Publications like *USA Today* and *Fodor's* recently ranked the museum as a top new attraction over the past year given its interactive galleries comprising modern exhibitions.

Located on Michigan Avenue in downtown Chicago, the American Writers Museum is the perfect place to learn about great writers, from Elizabeth Cady Stanton to Tupac Shakur. Among the museum's permanent exhibits

are the 80-foot-long *Nation of Writers* main gallery of over 100 American selections, the *Story of the Day* workshop equipped with typewriters and the *Children's Literature Gallery* for young readers. *The Readers Hall* event and exhibition space is filled with popular literary works, wall displays and digital kiosks. Visitors will also encounter the *Chicago Gallery*, which focuses on the Windy City's own literary geniuses – think author Lorraine Hansberry and newspapermen Roger Ebert and Mike Royko.

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Liz, Museum Visitor



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THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Another Chicago favorite is the Oriental Institute Museum, located on the University of Chicago's campus in Hyde Park. For almost 100 years, the museum has exhibited archaeological material from the ancient Middle East. The artifacts are featured across eight galleries according to place of origin. Included in the collections are Assyrian King Sargon II's *Lamassu*, a 40-ton human-headed winged bull; Egyptian mummies and statue of King Tut; Mesopotamian pottery; and monumental sculptures from Anatolia, just to name a few of the treasures on display. The Oriental Institute welcomes tour groups and holds public lectures and events.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), now in the midst of celebrating its 50th anniversary, provides a remarkable selection of more than 5,000 art objects in rotating displays. Tour the museum to see fascinating artworks, such as a twin DNA sample, paintings encapsulating life after World War II, half-human figures and installations engaging with pop culture references.

The MCA encourages audience participation by inviting them to discuss artists' unveilings in the Commons, an ornately designed room opened for the 50th anniversary. Complete the experience with a trip to Marisol, the art space's modern, street-level restaurant. Souvenirs and gifts are available at the MCA Store.

MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

Known as the largest science museum in the Western Hemisphere, Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry (MSI) invites groups to explore and ask questions. Enter this grand building and encounter endless possibilities, from immersing yourself in *Science Storm's* towering tornado to examining trains and planes in the transportation exhibit. You can also navigate modern farming methods and meet baby chicks, the museum's most adorable experience.

MSI makes visiting easier by offering group tours. With a guide, you can tour the U-505, the United States' only restored German submarine from World War II, or a replica coal mine. In addition to marveling at such iconic exhibits, see one of the museum's high-definition shows in its five-story Giant Dome Theater. The theater can take you on journeys through the Amazon Rainforest and advancements in technology. Afterward, shop and dine at any of MSI's stores and restaurants.



In the Museum of Science and Industry's Transportation Gallery, visitors can climb aboard a Boeing 727.

FIRST DIVISION MUSEUM

Pay tribute to our military at the First Division Museum in Wheaton's Cantigny Park, about an hour west of Chicago. The museum transports visitors to the frontlines of global wars through interactive exhibitions and walk-through dioramas. See the recently renovated *First in War* gallery, where you'll witness life as a 1st Infantry Division soldier in World War I trenches, along Normandy beaches and in the Vietnam jungles. The museum's second major exhibition is a new 2,500-square-foot gallery entitled *Duty First*, with missions extending from the 1970s onward and battles using state-of-the-art technology. Outside, young visitors are welcome to climb on the massive display of U.S. Army tanks.

Cantigny's 500 acres also include a visitor center, a 27-hole golf course, luscious gardens and McCormick House, a historic museum that was once home to Colonel Robert R. McCormick. Famed as the editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, McCormick served with the First Division during the Battle of Cantigny (France) in 1918. Start your day with a bite to eat, some shopping and a short introductory film at the visitor center.



Matt Kosterman/Cantigny Park

ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM AND EDUCATION CENTER

Learn about World War II horrors and global humanitarian crises at the world's third-largest Holocaust museum. Located in Skokie, the 65,000-square-foot building designed by Chicago-acclaimed architect Stanley Tigerman is the site of the *Karkomi Holocaust Exhibition*. In this gallery alone, visitors will find over 500 artifacts (one of which is an authentic German railcar), photos and video testimonials from local Holocaust survivors.

Groups visiting the museum will also find *The Make a Difference! Harvey L. Miller Family Youth Exhibition*, where families with children ages 8-12 can develop lifelong skills together. You can also participate in an interactive conversation with holographic Holocaust survivors and get inspired to combat social injustice at the *Take a Stand Center* on the lower level. Continue conversations on global issues such as race, immigration and ethics at the *Take a Stand Lab* and *Act of Art Gallery*. **IL**



Illinois Office of Tourism

SHEDD AQUARIUM

If you are fascinated by all that lies under the sea, then this fish-friendly attraction neighboring the Adler Planetarium and Field Museum on the Museum Campus is the place for you. Start with the main floor's *Amazon Rising*, *Wild Reef*, *Caribbean Reef* and *Waters of the World* to see seahorses, crabs, stingrays, lamprey, sharks and Nickel, a rescued endangered sea turtle. Throughout the aquarium, you will encounter the Shedd's pledge to protect animals and ecosystems with its commitment to reducing plastic pollution. Sprinkled among the exhibits is a collection of sea life constructed from trash deposited on seashores.

On the lower level, visitors can observe penguins in the *Polar Play Zone*. See baby sea otters frolicking underwater as well as the Abbott Oceanarium's dolphins, beluga whales and sea lions interacting with their trainers during feeding sessions and live shows. Find souvenirs at the gift shop and grab a bite to eat at the deli or cafeteria on the lower level.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICAN ART

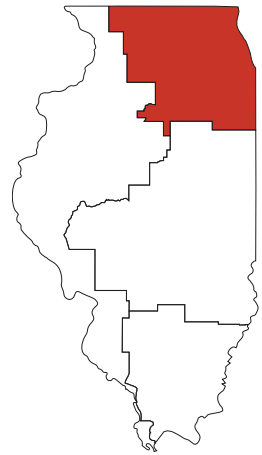
Step into rooms filled with vibrant artwork spanning 3,000 years at the world's largest Mexican art museum. Located in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, the free-admission National Museum of Mexican Art has around 10,000 artifacts on permanent display, including folk art, sculptures, documents, clothes and photos. Each exhibition tells a different story of the city's Mexican population, from struggles to immigrate to discussions of identity and inclusion.

Groups can book docent-led tours for an in-depth look at the museum's offerings. Complete the immersive experience with memorabilia at the museum's popular gift shop, Tienda Tzintzuntzán (Place of the Hummingbird), which has been referred to as "an exhibition unto itself." Keep an eye out for special celebrations, such as art and folk music festivals, and Navidad (Christmas) and Día de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) parties.

- ADLER PLANETARIUM
312-922-7827, AdlerPlanetarium.org
- AMERICAN WRITERS MUSEUM
312-374-8790, AmericanWritersMuseum.org
- ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
312-443-3600, ARTIC.edu
- DUSABLE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
773-947-0600, DuSableMuseum.org
- THE FIELD MUSEUM
312-922-9410, FieldMuseum.org
- FIRST DIVISION MUSEUM
630-668-5161, FDMuseum.org
- ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM AND EDUCATION CENTER
847-967-4800, ILHolocaustMuseum.org
- MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
312-280-2660, MCAChicago.org
- MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY
773-684-1414, MSIChicago.org
- NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICAN ART
312-738-1503, NationalMuseumofMexicanArt.org
- THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
773-702-9520, OI.UChicago.edu
- SHEDD AQUARIUM
312-939-2438, SheddAquarium.org

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DAY 1

MORNING

Start your day at the **National Museum of the American Sailor** with a peek into the everyday life of a sailor at the U.S. Navy's newest museum. Next, visit the **Tempel Lipizzans** to get up-close and personal with these brilliant horses. See the stables where individual care of the stallions is a high priority. Pet some noses and learn about the history of this rare breed.

AFTERNOON

Visit Gurnee Mills, home to over 200 stores, including name-brand, discount and anchor retailers. Have lunch in one of the two food courts or the Rainforest Cafe. Later, visit the beautiful **Chicago Botanic Garden**. Situated on 385 acres and around nine islands, it consists of 27 unique gardens that will stimulate your senses. Don't miss the renowned bonsai collection.

EVENING

Enjoy dining at one of the area's farm-to-table restaurants followed by a performance at a playhouse, such as **Northlight Theatre**, **Writers Theatre** or **Piven Theater**.



John Borys

Tempel Lipizzans



The Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe abounds with horticultural splendor.



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DAY 2

MORNING

Start the day off right with a private tour of the magnificent **Sanfilippo Estate's "Place de la Musique."** Known for its collection of unique music machines, phonographs, and arcade and gambling machines, plus the world's largest restored theater pipe organ and other functional mechanical antiques, Place de la Musique resides within a breathtaking French Second Empire setting. The next stop is the **Illinois Railway Museum.** Originally formed to preserve one important piece of rolling stock, the museum has evolved into an educational and historic preservation organization that created the largest railroad showcase on the North American continent.

AFTERNOON

For lunch, kick around downtown **Woodstock**, site of the 1993 comedy *Groundhog Day*, starring funnyman Bill Murray. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the town square is rich with Victorian architecture. Then it's off to **Arlington Park Race Track.** Coined "the most beautiful track in America," Arlington began Thoroughbred racing in 1927 and as part of the Churchill Downs family, that tradition remains strong today.

EVENING

Try the **Arlington Heights Entertainment District.** With restaurants, theaters, lounges, live entertainment and events, this vibrant downtown district is a popular nightlife destination for visitors and locals.

DAY 3

MORNING

Travel to **Oak Park**, the west suburban community made famous by Frank Lloyd Wright and Ernest Hemingway. Marvel at Wright's architectural prowess on a tour of his home and studio and see samples of his genius in the surrounding neighborhood. Tour Hemingway's birthplace and explore Wright's magnificent **Unity Temple**, a National Historic Landmark built in 1905.

AFTERNOON

For offbeat fun, take the group to nearby **Brookfield Zoo**, a 216-acre oasis with more than 450 species of animals. The hop-on, hop-off open-air Motor Safari trams are a great way to take it all in and include live narration. Don't miss the dolphin show.

EVENING

Take in a Broadway-style musical and enjoy a scrumptious dinner at the legendary **Drury Lane Theatre** and adjoining **Lucille Restaurant.**

DAY 4

MORNING

Watch three generations of glass blowers at **Lotton Art Glass** in Crete. Lotton is one of the very few studios in the world to start with elements of the earth like sand, soda ash, lime, borax, zinc and metals, resulting in some of the most breathtaking colors that you will ever see. Charles Lotton (83), his sons and grandson give demonstrations of glass blowing techniques. Afterwards, browse the fully furnished gallery and pick up one-of-a-kind mementos.

AFTERNOON

Next, it's on to downtown **Frankfort**, a welcoming place since 1855. From award-winning restaurants to upscale, eclectic specialty boutiques, enjoy a relaxing shopping experience in this charming, historic downtown.

End your tour at **Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park**, a collection of 29 masterworks of large-scale sculpture. Situated on 100 acres of prairie landscape at Governors State University, this "museum-in-the-prairie" highlights important landscape-based sculptures by distinguished artists at the height of their creative powers.



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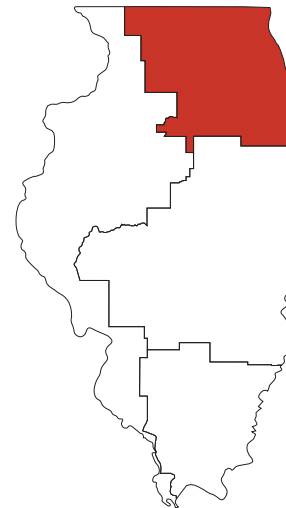


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Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford is one of America's top Japanese gardens.

DAY 1

MORNING

Start your day in Rockford, located on the Rock River. Visit the historic **Coronado Performing Arts Center** to enjoy a backstage tour. The Coronado opened in 1927 as a theater and movie palace, complete with Spanish castles, Italian villas, oriental dragons, starlit skies and a Grande Barton Pipe Organ. Next, tour **Klehm Arboretum & Botanical Gardens**. Your group will see hundreds of different species of trees and plants, along with many demonstration gardens.

AFTERNOON

Visit **Anderson Japanese Gardens**, rated as one of the most authentic Japanese gardens outside of Japan. This 12-acre oasis includes two gardens, a pond strolling garden and a contemporary Garden of Reflection. Waterfalls, ponds, stone lanterns, coin basins and examples of Japanese carpentry are some of the many treasures awaiting. Have lunch at the Fresco at the Gardens.



Adam Alexander/Illinois Office of Tourism

Farnsworth House

After lunch, stop at **Nicholas Conservatory & Gardens**, which brings the tropics to the Midwest. The facility offers an 11,000-square-foot exhibition area with water features, seating areas and sculptures, all in a tropical plant setting.

Next, travel to nearby Rochelle. **Railroad Park** is a hot spot for train watching with over 80 locomotives passing through daily. A photo stop at the **Lincoln Highway Interpretive Mural** depicts the time when Emily Post traveled through Rochelle in 1915.

EVENING

Enjoy shopping in many interesting local Rochelle shops and check out a variety of restaurants before turning in for the night.





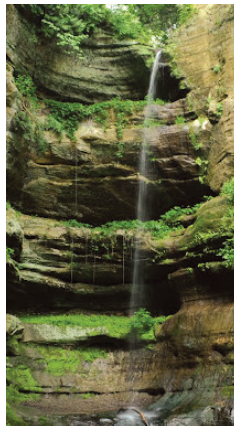
DAY 2

MORNING

Travel to Franklin Grove and visit the historic **Lincoln Highway Association National Headquarters**. Visitors from around the world come here to research information on the first coast-to-coast highway in the USA. The site is a restored 1860 dry goods store built by Abe Lincoln's cousin. The Lincoln Highway Museum and Store is housed inside. Next, on to the **Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home**, where you'll be transported back in time to where the 40th president and his family lived in the early 1920s. The home has been fully restored with furnishings of the period, and knowledgeable tour guides share stories about the house and the family. Stop for photo-ops at the 19-foot Lincoln statue that depicts Abraham Lincoln as a young soldier and the Reagan equestrian statue located along the Rock riverfront.

AFTERNOON

Travel to Aurora, Illinois' second-largest city. Enjoy lunch at **Two Brothers Roundhouse**. Built in 1856, this 70,000-square-foot limestone structure is the oldest roundhouse in the U.S. It's now been converted into an upscale brewery and restaurant but railroad history abounds. Later, visit **Chicago Premium Outlets** in Aurora and find hundreds of brands available at outlet prices.



Starved Rock State Park



EVENING

Take in a Broadway musical performance at the historic **Paramount Theatre**. This playhouse, dating back to 1931, has been restored to its former glory, with rich Art Deco architecture and seating for nearly 1,900 patrons. After the show, stroll along the banks of the Fox River, which runs through downtown Aurora.

DAY 3

MORNING

Depart Aurora for the **Farnsworth House**, one of the most significant of Mies van der Rohe's works. Built in 1951, this property in Plano is a fine example of modernist architecture and is considered by architects as one of the crystallizing and pivotal moments of van der Rohe's long artistic career.

AFTERNOON

Visit Starved Rock State Park in Utica, considered the top outdoor attraction in Illinois. Waterfalls are active in the spring and after heavy rain, plus 13 miles of trails are waiting to be explored along the Illinois River. Enjoy lunch at Starved Rock Lodge, accompanied by a matinee performance at the Tribute to the Stars Theater.

EVENING

Travel on to **Joliet**, where two riverfront casinos will tempt your group. Harrah's has added over 100 of the newest games to its casino floor, while Hollywood features over 1,100 slots and 25 table games.

DAY 4

MORNING

Over 50 decorative barn quilts welcome visitors to explore Kankakee County's scenic countryside. These 8 x 8-foot quilt patterns share a unique story of both celebration and tradition. Explore them on the guided tour of the area.

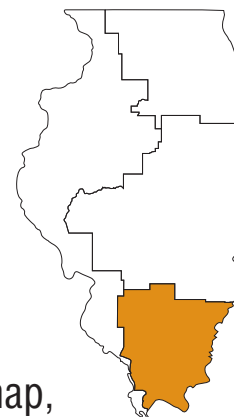
Later, enjoy trains and the good old days at the **Kankakee Railroad Museum**. See large operating model train displays and railroad memorabilia housed in a restored train depot.

AFTERNOON

The area's history is directly tied to the many church congregations that began here in the 1800s. Most of these houses of worship are located in downtown Kankakee and represent the spirit of commitment early settlers had in establishing the community. Six of these historic churches are featured on an afternoon walking tour.

Before heading home, stop at the **Bradley House**. This is the first house designed by famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright in his infamous Prairie Style. Following an extensive renovation, the riverfront house is now adored by architecture fans from around the world.

NATURAL BEAUTY ABOUNDS IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS



Carbondale, Harrisburg, Vienna, Murphysboro, Marion, Goreville, Belknap, Metropolis, Ava, Makanda, Alto Pass, Pinckneyville, Du Quoin

Garden of the Gods, located in Shawnee National Forest, features sandstone rock formations that provide panoramic views of the surrounding area.





DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your Southern Illinois excursion on a full stomach with a visit to **Mary Lou's Grill** in Carbondale. Since 1962, Mary Lou's has satisfied its patrons with classic diner fare for breakfast and lunch, with its signature dish being a heaping plate of biscuits and gravy. Once your hunger is satiated, you can work off the calories at **Shawnee National Forest**. Shawnee is one of most diverse forests in the country and consists of approximately 280,000 acres of federally managed lands across the Ozark and Shawnee Hills. Groups can have fun high above the trees thanks to **Shawnee Bluffs Canopy Tour**, which consists of eight zip lines, the longest stretching more than 1,100 feet, that zig-zag across the forest's bluffs and valleys. Shawnee is also home to geological wonders including **Garden of the Gods Recreation Area**, a 3,318-acre parcel of land that features dramatic rock formations perched above rolling hills that provide spectacular views.

AFTERNOON

For lunch, numerous establishments reside near Garden of the Gods, including **Dream Baskets** in Harrisburg, a 3,000-square-foot specialty store and café that sells an abundance of food and desserts. Next, travel to Vienna, where you will find one of the best antique stores in the state, **Max Creek Antiques**. This shop in Vienna's historic square sells a slew of vintage items.

EVENING

After regaining your appetite, pay a visit to **17th Street Barbecue** in Murphysboro. Pitmaster Mike Mills has been branded "The Legend" on the barbecue circuit, thus it's no surprise his establishment has also received numerous accolades from publications across the country for its baby back ribs, which have been dubbed "the filet mignon of barbecue."

Blue Sky Vineyard



DAY 2

MORNING

Start your day at **The Vault Café** in Marion, a historic former bank that is renowned for its breakfast plates and sandwiches. Just south of Marion sits the village of Goreville, where visitors will find the **Wolf Creek Antiques/Craft Mall**. This shop has a wide array of antiques and collectibles in a quaint small-town setting. From there, take a trip to the **Cache River State Natural Area** in Belknap, home to a wealth of natural features including massive cypress trees, many of which are more than 1,000 years old. The area offers a variety of recreational activities from hiking and biking to fishing and canoeing.

AFTERNOON

Superman fans can travel south to Metropolis, a town DC Comics crowned "The Hometown of Superman." Before exploring, groups can head to **Bridges Dining Company** inside of Harrah's hotel and casino, where they can pick from a variety of menu items like savory steaks and distinctive Southern dishes. In addition to displaying a 15-foot-tall, two-ton bronze statue of Superman, Metropolis is home to the **Super Museum**, which features more than 20,000 items, one of the greatest collections of Superman memorabilia in the world.

EVENING

When you've had your fill of Earth's strongest hero, head north and unwind at **Scratch Brewing Company** in Ava. Scratch, a farmhouse brewery located five miles from the Shawnee National Forest, has earned a reputation as one of the most idyllic locales to eat and drink in the country. Scratch focuses on farmhouse beers that are brewed with homegrown and locally farmed and foraged ingredients.

DAY 3

MORNING

Harbaugh's Café in Carbondale is a local landmark that serves hearty plates of classic breakfast and lunch fare, and does so amid an eclectic décor. After filling up, pay a visit to Makanda, a town that offers a wealth of quality shopping options on its historic boardwalk. Among the many shops you can peruse are the **Makanda Country Store**, featuring gourmet coffee, sandwiches and hand-dipped ice cream; the **Rainmaker Studio**, displaying impressive metal work from jewelry, sculptures and fountains; and the **Makanda Trading Company**, which sells a variety of art and gifts from around the world.

AFTERNOON

Southern Illinois is home to a host of wineries and vineyards, and the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail features 11 superb wineries groups can visit while enjoying the wonders of the Shawnee Hills. Among them are **Von Jakob Winery & Brewery** in Alto Pass, an alluring winery that features panoramic views of the Southern Illinois landscape and serves a variety of award-winning wines, craft beer and hard apple cider; **Blue Sky Vineyard** in Makanda, which offers award-winning wines and breathtaking views of the Shawnee National Forest; and **Alto Vineyards** in Alto Pass, a family-owned vineyard and winery that offers the best of Southern Illinois wine in a picturesque setting. Those itching to get some shopping in can head north to Pinckneyville, home of the **Pinckneyville Antique Mall**.

EVENING

For dinner, head to Du Quoin, where **Alongi's Italian Restaurant** has been feeding hungry guests since 1933. Three generations have enjoyed Alongi's full menu of pasta, pizza and salads coated with Alongi's famous Italian salad dressing.



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