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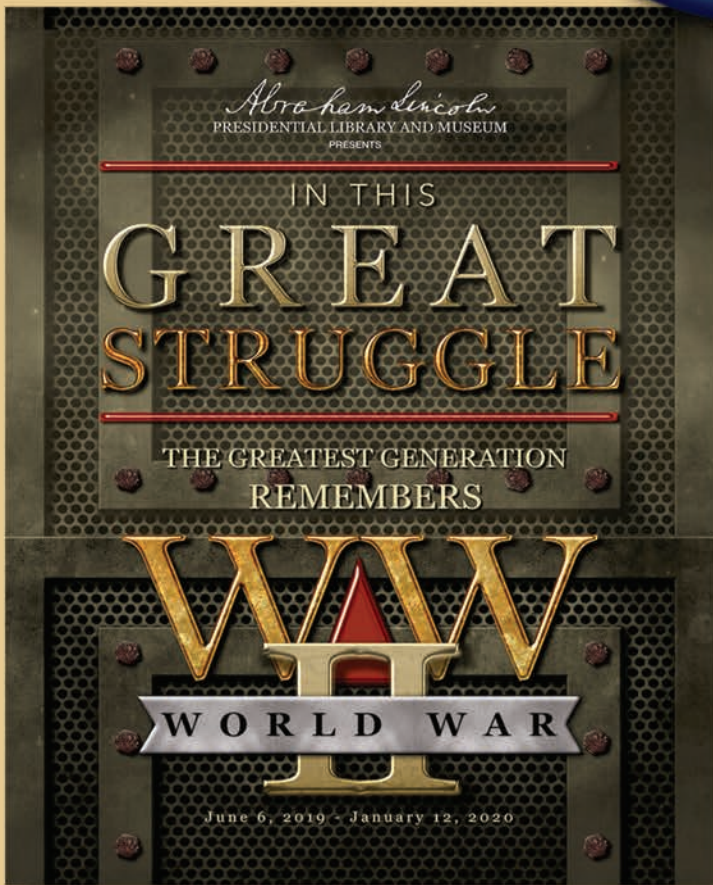
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ON THE COVER
Illinois Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum in Pontiac

(Photo courtesy of Illinois Office of Tourism)

CHICAGO'S NORTH SHORE

Bahá'í House of
Worship



Illinois Holocaust
Museum



Chicago Botanic Garden



Halim Time and Glass Museum



Bordering Chicago along Lake Michigan, Chicago's North Shore is the most scenic area in metropolitan Chicago. Close to Downtown Chicago and O'Hare Airport, Chicago's North Shore features [Chicago Botanic Garden](#), [Halim Time and Glass Museum](#), [Illinois Holocaust Museum](#), [Ravinia Music Festival](#), [Northwestern University](#), the only [Bahá'í House of Worship](#) in the U.S., the [Charles Dawes Gates House](#) and its [Architectural Walking Tours](#), and three world-class shopping centers.



John Groh, Chair
Illinois Council of
Convention and Visitor Bureaus

Welcome!

On behalf of the Illinois Office of Tourism and Tour Illinois, I invite you and your group to enjoy the amazing state of Illinois.

A state immersed in cultural and natural richness, Illinois is an ideal destination for groups of all shapes and sizes. Whether you prefer the world-class culture and the variety of dining options in Chicago, the friendly hospitality of small towns and farm-to-table dining, following in Lincoln's footsteps, or the serene beauty of our natural wonders, you'll find what you're looking for in Illinois. From top-notch sporting events to endless shopping, it's all here.

Take in Chicago's finest with visits to the Magnificent Mile, Millennium Park, Broadway in Chicago and the Museum Campus. Relive the adventure of the open road along historic Route 66. Delight in historic towns and striking views along the Great River Road. Make a splash at a water park resort. Take a legendary look at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and historic sites. Get lost in our architectural wonders along the Illinois Frank Lloyd Wright Trail. And make sure to stop at one of our many group-friendly breweries, distilleries and wineries.

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 offer travelers the opportunity to enjoy Illinois' scenic byways, sandy beaches and state parks. Beautiful fall colors are on display each autumn with some of the most spectacular landscapes anywhere in the country and unique events to match.

We are proud to call Illinois home, and look forward to the opportunity to have you as our guest. The Illinois Office of Tourism and Tour Illinois are here to help you plan a memorable trip.

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

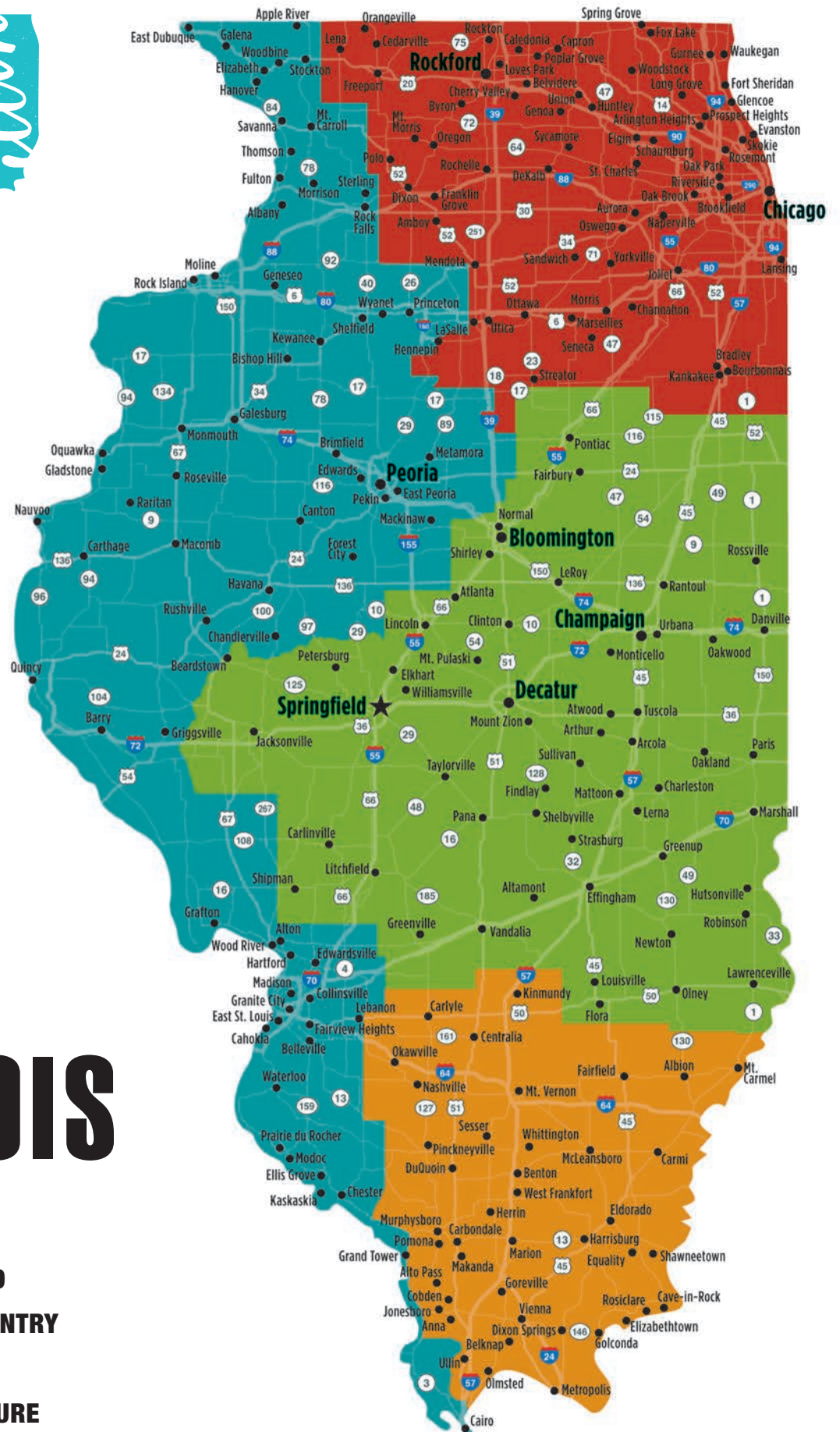
Sincerely,

John Groh
Chair
Illinois Council of Convention and Visitor Bureaus



TOUR
ILLINOIS





ILLINOIS

STATE MAP

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



Route 66 Welcome Center

Heritage Corridor CVB



Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket

ROUTE 66

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Illinois attractions recall the glory days of an iconic road steeped in lore and tradition

Illinois Office of Tourism

Railsplitter Covered Wagon



Ambler's Texaco Gas Station in Dwight





Heritage Corridor CVB



Pontiac-Oakland Automobile Museum

Illinois Office of Tourism

For true slices of Americana, few journeys in the Midwest can rival a road trip that retraces the path of our nation's most storied highway. From the Lake Michigan shoreline of Chicago to the Mississippi River in Southern Illinois, museums, retro diners, doses of kitsch and other nods to yesteryear drive tourism on Route 66, fueling nostalgia for the heyday of automobile travel and a yearning for simpler times. It's all about the romance of the open road.

Nicknamed the "Mother Road" in John Steinbeck's classic 1939 novel



Gemini Giant
Illinois Office of Tourism

The *Grapes of Wrath*, U.S. Route 66 was the magic carpet to dreams in the mid-20th century. Symbolizing freedom and mobility, it attracted vacationers, adventurers, hippies and those searching for a better life. Forming a linear community that spanned more than 2,000 miles through eight states, from Illinois to California, the concrete corridor became enshrined in popular culture—in music, art, films and television shows as well as literature—during its lifetime (1926-1977). Everyone knows the song refrain **"Get Your Kicks on Route 66."**

Illinois Office of Tourism



White Fence Farm

Heritage Corridor CVB

The fabled artery became known as the “Main Street of America.” Cozy motels, mom-and-pop cafes, filling stations, neon signs and roadside oddities were all part of its mystique.

Reminders of Route 66 can be found in a number of Illinois communities, thanks to tourism offices and dedicated individuals who have put time, money and passion into preserving the highway’s heritage and keeping its spirit alive. As many original landmarks have vanished over the years, surviving treasures loom all the more special.

Stops at these attractions can complement any group tour, whether the itinerary theme is Route 66 or not. Parts of the original Mother Road are marked with “Historic Route 66” signs sporting the familiar shield logo. Most of Illinois 66, a 300-mile swath traversing the state’s agricultural heartland from Chicago to St. Louis, had been replaced by a super-highway, Interstate 55, by 1977.

Many travelers got their first kicks on 66 at **Lou Mitchell’s Restaurant**, a diner on Chicago’s Jackson Boulevard, just west of the famed road’s starting point. “Serving the world’s

finest coffee,” as its sign proclaims, the breakfast/lunch favorite has been dishing up comfort food since 1923. Lou’s continues the tradition of offering free homemade donut holes to those waiting in line and handing out boxes of Milk Duds to women and children who enter the restaurant.

On the frontage road bordering I-55 in west suburban Willowbrook, another Route 66 dining icon survives—**Dell Rhea’s Chicken Basket**. Filled with Mother Road memorabilia, it has welcomed travelers since the 1940s and serves the best fried chicken anywhere. You can pile your plate with chicken, mashed potatoes, hushpuppies, pizza and more at the weekday lunch buffet. Others would argue that **White Fence Farm**, a Route 66 favorite still flourishing a few miles away in suburban Romeoville, has the finest fried chicken around.

The city of Joliet, about an hour from Chicago, also trades on its Route 66 heritage. Start your exploration at **Route 66 Park** on Broadway, once a leg of the famed roadway. Browse the park’s informational kiosks and enjoy a cold treat at **Rich & Creamy**. Atop the

store are statues of Jake and Elwood Blues, characters in *The Blues Brothers* movie, which included scenes filmed at the **Old Joliet Prison**, visible from the hilltop park. Tours of the creepy, castle-like former penitentiary, a relic dating from 1858, are available. Downtown Joliet is home to the **Route 66 Welcome Center**, located within the **Joliet Area Historical Museum** (which arranges prison tours).

In Pontiac, Mother Road enthusiasts flock to the free-admission **Illinois Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum**, a repository of memorabilia celebrating the people and businesses that served motorists on the historic highway. Its largest item of interest is the Volkswagen minivan used by itinerant hippie-era artist Bob Waldmire (1945-2009) for traveling up and down 66. His 1972 VW was the model for the character Fillmore in the Pixar/Disney film *Cars*. Outdoors, museum visitors pose for photos in front of the giant Route 66 shield mural emblazoning the back wall of the 1900 building, once Pontiac’s city hall and fire department. The setting is landscaped with bricks from the original Route 66

Tour groups traveling Route 66 will see sights like the Illinois Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum in Pontiac and Atlanta’s Bunyon Giant.



and a wishing well that stood at the Wishing Well Motel in Countryside, Illinois. Also on display is the converted 1966 school bus that Waldmire used as a mobile home/studio in Springfield.

Buildings in downtown Pontiac are decorated with 23 other artist-designed murals, including four that recall Route 66, one a sunset scene showing a bright yellow late '50s Chevy. Classic car buffs will find much to their liking at the **Pontiac-Oakland Automobile Museum**, a shiny showroom displaying vintage Pontiac-brand cars and some of the Pontiac Buggy Company's high-end Oakland models produced in the late 1920s and early '30s. Exhibits include a big oil can collection, old gas pumps, model car kits and promotional items mirroring the brand's namesake, Chief Pontiac, a fabled warrior who fought the British in the Great Lakes region.

The place of pilgrimage for Route 66 fans in Bloomington-Normal is **Ryburn Place**. Formerly Sprague's Super Service, the 1931 Tudor-Revival landmark survives as the largest of the few remaining two-story gas stations

left on the old thoroughfare; the owner's family and an attendant lived upstairs. Happily for Route 66 diehards and casual tourists from around the world, the aging structure was rescued by Normal resident Terri Ryburn, who poured her heart and cash into restoring the Mother Road landmark. Her shop/travel information center, called Ryburn Place Gifts and Gab, opened for business in 2017, and the building is now owned by the City of Normal. She sells locally made arts and crafts as well as Route 66 items, old license plates and antique road signs. The word "Gab" comes in because Ryburn loves chatting with travelers who drop in to browse and pose for pictures by the replica Cities Service (later called Citgo) gas pumps. The last working pumps were removed in 1979, after which the location hosted other businesses.

More Route 66-themed souvenirs, from earrings to bars of soap, are for sale at Bloomington's **Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66 Visitors Center**, which has attractive exhibit panels and videos promoting Bloomington-Normal's connections to Abraham Lincoln and the

Mother Road. Sharing downtown Bloomington's old courthouse with the **McLean County Museum of History**, the center offers back-lit, billboard-style displays chronicling hotels, motor courts, tourist camps, gas stations and eateries that served Route 66 travelers. One panel tells how the Steak 'n Shake chain got its start in Normal in 1931.

For a taste of the good old days just southwest of Bloomington-Normal on I-55, visit **Dixie Truck Stop**, which opened in 1928 and sold sandwiches to Route 66 travelers. Today it's a full-fledged restaurant with plenty of seating for groups and a decor evoking early car culture. Nearby, the I-55 exit for Shirley, at the mid-point of Illinois Route 66, takes you to **Funks Grove Maple Sirup**. The family business dating back to 1824 sells its pure maple sirup (that's how they spell it) and offers guided tours of the grounds during sirup-making season.

Groups getting off I-55 in Atlanta, about 15 minutes from Shirley, can satisfy their hunger with comfort food and revisit yesteryear at the **Palms Grill Cafe**, a cheery restaurant that

Ryburn Place, a renovated gas station building from the early days of Route 66, brings back the good old days in Normal, Illinois.



- **ARISTON CAFE**
217-324-2023, Ariston-Cafe.com
- **BUNYON GIANT**
Atlantallinois.org
- **CARLINVILLE HISTORIC SQUARE**
217-854-2141, Carlinville.com
- **CRUISIN' WITH LINCOLN ON 66 VISITORS CENTER**
309-827-0428, MCHistory.org
- **DELL RHEA'S CHICKEN BASKET**
630-325-0780, ChickenBasket.com
- **DIXIE TRUCK STOP**
309-874-2323
- **DOC'S SODA FOUNTAIN/ DECK'S PHARMACY MUSEUM**
217-627-3491
- **HENRY'S RABBIT RANCH**
618-635-5655, HenrysRoute66.com
- **ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM**
815-844-4566, IL66Assoc.org
- **JOLIET AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND ROUTE 66 WELCOME CENTER**
815-723-5201, JolietMuseum.org
- **JUBELT'S BAKERY**
217-324-5314, Jubelts.com
- **LITCHFIELD MUSEUM & ROUTE 66 WELCOME CENTER**
217-324-3510, LitchfieldMuseum.org
- **LOU MITCHELL'S RESTAURANT**
312-939-3111, LouMitchellsRestaurant.com
- **THE MILL ON 66**
217-671-3790, Mill66.com
- **MOTORHEADS BAR & GRILL**
217-679-7323, 66Motorheads.com
- **PALMS GRILL CAFE**
217-648-2233, ThePalmsGrillCafe.com
- **PINK ELEPHANT ANTIQUE MALL**
618-637-2366
- **PONTIAC-OAKLAND AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM**
815-842-2345, PontiacOaklandMuseum.org
- **RAILSPLITTER COVERED WAGON**
217-732-8687, DestinationLoganCountyIL.com
- **RICH & CREAMY**
815-740-2899
- **RYBURN PLACE AT SPRAGUE'S SUPER SERVICE**
309-585-4103, RyburnPlace.com
- **SOULSBY'S SERVICE STATION**
217-999-4261
- **WEEZY'S ROUTE 66 BAR & GRILL**
618-633-2228

Old Joliet Prison Watch Tower



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was restored in 2009 to its 1930s appearance. Each table has a small plastic palm tree, a motif chosen by the original owner, who wanted to evoke memories of sunny California. Fried chicken, meatloaf and homemade pies are menu favorites. A room in back is perfect for group meals.

Across the street looms the towering **Bunyon Giant**, a 19-foot-tall statue of a Paul Bunyan-type guy holding a hot dog. Another Mother Road attention-getter, it once stood in front of Bunyon's restaurant on Route 66 in Cicero, Illinois. Such fiberglass creations, known as Muffler Men, were familiar props at automotive shops and other businesses on the roadway. (Another good example is the green Gemini Giant space man at the Launching Pad, a restaurant/attraction in Wilmington, a bit south of Joliet.)

The town of Lincoln lays claim to **The Mill on 66**, a barn-red building that resembles a Dutch windmill. Opened in 2017 as a museum and gift shop after a decade of renovation, it first saw life in 1929 as the Blue Mill restaurant, a white building trimmed in blue and with a blue interior. New owners in the 1940s changed the Dutch motifs, painted the exterior red, and added a bar and dance hall. Known for its fried schnitzel, or pork tenderloin, The Mill closed its doors in 1996 and languished for years, a forgotten piece of history.

In the spirit of quirky attractions, **Railsplitter Covered Wagon** in Lincoln, recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's largest covered wagon, sits on Old Route 66 in front of the Best Western Lincoln Inn. Measuring 40 feet long, 12 feet wide and 25 feet tall and surrounded by a split-rail fence, it features a seated Abraham Lincoln fiberglass figure reading a law book.

Route 66 in Springfield has several sites that recall the highway's golden era. The newest magnet delivering kicks on 66 is **Motorheads Bar & Grill**, a retro-style restaurant that opened in summer of 2018. A shrine to all things automotive, the cavernous space is festooned with old grilles, license plates, vintage advertising signs and lots of Route 66 shields. There are even whole cars and motorcycles on display under the soaring ceiling, which once sheltered a Stuckey's, one in the chain of roadside stores famous for their pecan log rolls and teal blue roofs. A separate museum building has a party room ideal for groups and brims with Route 66 artifacts, many from the collection of the late Bill Shea, a Springfield icon who operated a gas station-museum. Motorheads serves up hearty fare like patty melts, pizza and

horseshoes, the latter a Springfield specialty of Texas toast and choice of meat smothered in French fries and cheese sauce.

Springfield's best-known Route 66 standby is **Cozy Dog Drive In**, a fast-food joint packed with mementos, clippings and old signs. It was founded in the late 1940s by Ed Waldmire Jr. (father of traveling artist Bob Waldmire), who introduced the Cozy Dog, the name he gave his deep-fried corn dog on a stick. Large enough for bus groups, the eatery has an extensive menu that includes everything from breakfast items to BBQ sandwiches and pork tenderloin—in addition to those dogs bathed in Ed's original special-recipe cornmeal batter.

Many towns south of Springfield also have crowd-pleasers that pay homage to Route 66. Litchfield takes pride in the **Ariston Cafe**, a fine restaurant going back to 1924. Or grab a bite at nearby **Jubelt's Bakery**, a homey cafe on Old Route 66. The neighboring **Litchfield Museum and Route 66 Welcome Center**, marked by the Vic Suhling Gas for Less Sign on its original site, salutes local businesses that flourished along the roadway.

In Mount Olive, the sunshine-yellow gas pumps of the restored **Soulsby's Service Station** make a great selfie backdrop. The



Illinois Office of Tourism

Palms Grill Cafe in Atlanta, Illinois
is a cute diner with a room perfect for groups.

oldest original filling station on Illinois Route 66 that has not been completely rebuilt, it dates back to 1926, the year the road opened.

Henry's Rabbit Ranch in Staunton, though it didn't exist before the mid-1990s, maintains the traditions of the Mother Road with a curious mix that includes live rabbits in pens, Volkswagen Rabbits, and other car and truck memorabilia. In Livingston, a pink elephant visible from I-55, plus an ice cream cone-shaped building and other larger-than-

life sculptures, beckon wayfarers to explore **Pink Elephant Antique Mall**, housed in a former high school.

For good eats with a side of nostalgia, stop for lunch at **Doc's Soda Fountain/Deck's Pharmacy Museum** in Girard or **Weezy's Route 66 Bar & Grill** in Hamel, a memento-filled roadhouse that has been around under various names since the 1930s. History and architecture buffs will go crazy in Carlinville, notable for **Carlinville Historic Square** with its collection of specialty shops in painstakingly restored 19th century buildings.

At the Mississippi River in Madison, the **Chain of Rocks Bridge** was built in 1929 as part of Route 66. Today it is one of the world's longest bicycle and pedestrian bridges and is open for vehicular traffic during special events.

From Illinois, Route 66 continued west across Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona before reaching Southern California and the Pacific shores of Santa Monica. Encompassing the road's easternmost leg and some of its most colorful sights, Illinois is truly the place for kicks on 66.

For more information, visit enjoyillinois.com. **IL**



Springfield, Illinois provides a unique experience for each travel group. Award-winning historic sites and hotel accommodations, hundreds of special events, food & drink trails, historic Route 66, and the "History Comes Alive" summer program, just to name a few.

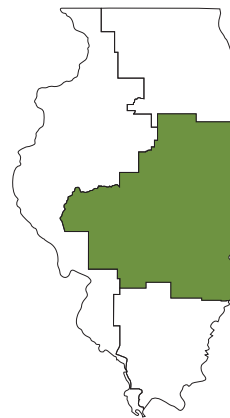
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LOOKING FOR LINCOLN IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Decatur, Springfield, Petersburg, Lincoln, Bloomington, Pontiac





Lincoln's Tomb

Abraham Lincoln was a frequent visitor to the Old State Capitol in Springfield.



DAY 1

MORNING

Begin the day at the **Macon County History Museum** in Decatur. *The Lincoln Connection* exhibit tells the story of Abraham Lincoln's connection to Decatur and Macon County, and displays one of only two matching chairs that Lincoln used in his Springfield law office. The Prairie Village on the museum grounds has a replica of the courthouse where Lincoln practiced in the 1830s, an 1850s log house and other historical buildings. The Looking for Lincoln Heritage Trail in Decatur also can include the sites of the Lincoln family's first Illinois home and the young lawyer's first political speech.

AFTERNOON

It's off to Springfield, where Lincoln spent nearly half his life. First stop: **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum**, renowned for its rare artifacts, interactive exhibits and theater shows with special effects. At the nearby **Old State Capitol**, see where Lincoln delivered his famous House Divided speech and where his body lay in state after his assassination. As an attorney, he tried several hundred cases before the Illinois Supreme Court housed here. A Springfield trip is not complete without a visit to Oak Ridge Cemetery to rub the shiny nose (for luck) of the bronze bust outside of **Lincoln's Tomb** and pay respects inside the burial chamber.

EVENING

At **Motorheads Bar & Grill**, one of Springfield's newest restaurants, dine amid Route 66 memorabilia in the private room, a museum-like space that preserves yesteryear's car culture.

DAY 2

MORNING

Take a 20-mile drive out to **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site**, near Petersburg, a reconstructed 1830s village where Lincoln lived as a young adult. Costumed interpreters bring pioneer times to life.

Back in Springfield, head to the **Lincoln Home National Historic Site**, a four-block historic district, for a ranger-led tour of the only home Lincoln ever owned; more than 50 original pieces are on display. The visitor center shows a dramatic movie about his life in Springfield.

AFTERNOON

Discover a hidden gem in Lincoln, Illinois, a half hour's drive northeast of Springfield, right off Interstate 55. The **Lincoln Heritage Museum** at Lincoln College offers groups a guided tour that includes stories and artifacts related to the 16th president's Illinois days. Smaller groups can take an immersive, high-tech, 75-minute tour through a series of audio-visual displays equipped with captivating graphics. The best photo op in town is the **Railsplitter Covered Wagon**, a roadside attraction with a giant Abe Lincoln statue seated on the world's largest covered wagon.

Dinner and overnight is in Bloomington-Normal, where group-friendly restaurants include **Destihl Brewery**, farm-to-table **Epiphany Farms** and historic **Lucca Grill**, which has been serving Italian-American food since 1936.



DAY 3

MORNING

Learn about Abraham Lincoln's connections to the Bloomington-Normal area through attractive exhibit panels and a short video at **Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66 Visitor Center** on the ground floor of downtown Bloomington's beautiful old courthouse, which houses the **McLean County Museum of History**. Greeting visitors by the center's entrance is a sculpture of Lincoln sitting on a bench. Then hop over to the **Beer Nuts** plant, nine blocks away. Take a virtual factory tour, sample the product and perhaps buy a jar or bag of the delectable glazed peanuts, sold across the country and made only in Bloomington.

AFTERNOON

See how a wealthy Victorian family lived during a tour of Bloomington's **David Davis Mansion**. An influential lawyer, U. S. senator and Supreme Court justice, Davis was a friend and mentor of Lincoln, helping him secure the 1860 Republican presidential nomination in Chicago. Lincoln visited Davis' home, Clover Lawn, many times before it was rebuilt on the same site in 1872. Groups can arrange to have a costumed guide and a meal or afternoon tea in the stately 36-room home.

Continue northeast on I-55 to Pontiac, where your group (up to 30 people) can board the **Jolly Trolley** for a tour that points out sites visited by Lincoln and the town's dazzling collection of outdoor murals.

EVENING

Enjoy a buffet dinner and performance (perhaps a 1950s and '60s music show) at downtown Pontiac's **Eagle Theater**, a former movie house dating back to 1939.

DAY 4

MORNING

Revel in nostalgia at Pontiac's free-admission **Illinois Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum**, and don't leave without getting a group picture in front of the building's giant Route 66 shield mural. Next, enjoy time browsing the downtown shops surrounding the majestic Livingston County Courthouse or poke into the free **Pontiac-Oakland Automobile Museum** and **The Museum of the Gilding Arts**. On the courthouse grounds, pose with a life-size statue of Lincoln leaning against a split-rail fence, his stovepipe hat perched on the post. The bronze figure memorializes the Springfield lawyer's many visits to Pontiac, where he tried cases in circuit court.

AFTERNOON

Lunch is comfort food at **Edinger's Filling Station**, a bright new restaurant themed around Pontiac's Route 66 heritage. Or take the group to the **Old Log Cabin**, an eatery dating back to the early days of Route 66.

Looking for more signs of Lincoln in Pontiac? Schedule a tour of the recently restored **Jason W. Strevell House**, where Lincoln spent considerable time discussing politics with politician/lawyer Strevell, a good friend.



Jolly Trolley



Eagle Theater



Jason W. Strevell House

Pontiac Tourism Photos



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ARCHITECTURAL WONDERS

Whether there was a place to indulge in the marvels of architectural design, Illinois is it. Downtown Chicago is world-renowned for its skyscrapers, while suburban Oak Park boasts the largest concentration of structures designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, one of America's most famous architects. But wherever groups travel throughout the state, exquisite examples of architectural splendor—from private residences to houses of worship—can make impressive additions to any itinerary.

ILLINOIS BRIMS WITH EYE-PLEASING MASTERPIECES

Downtown Chicago, as seen from high above Lake Michigan, is a treasure chest of architecture.



Chicago's newest must-see cultural attraction is the **Chicago Architecture Center** (CAC), which in 2018 relocated to dazzling quarters with a 40-foot-tall window overlooking the Chicago River, Michigan Avenue Bridge and white terra cotta Wrigley Building. Conveniently, the dock for the popular Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) river cruise lies just below. Permanent exhibits, including a gallery filled with supersized scale models of famous skyscrapers in Chicago and around the world, occupy two levels of a steel-and-glass tower designed by the studio of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the master of mid-century modernism. The first-floor Chicago Gallery tells how the city became the epicenter of modern architecture; its 4,000-building Chicago Model Gallery has a film and light show depicting the city's early growth and rebirth after the Great Chicago Fire. Using interactive touch screens, visitors can orient themselves to Chicago and search buildings by architect or style.

The CAC, with one of the best gift shops for Chicago books and souvenirs, is the starting point for a variety of downtown walking tours that spotlight both historic and modern structures. On 90-minute CAF whirls aboard Chicago's First Lady Cruises, which operates from late March to late November, docents interpret more than 50 buildings along the river as you lift your eyes skyward.

To admire the cityscape from on high, take a speedy elevator ride to **Skydeck Chicago**, the 103rd-floor observation deck of 110-story Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower), North America's second-tallest building. If you dare, step onto The Ledge, where, from a thick-glass cube extending four feet from the building, you can look 1,353 feet straight down. The brave also can tackle Tilt, the hydraulically tilted bay window at **360 CHICAGO**, the 94th-floor lookout of the iconic skyscraper at 875 North Michigan Avenue, formerly the John Hancock Center. Plans have been submitted to create an



Skydeck Chicago

Ranvestal Photographic/Choose Chicago



Choose Chicago



Abel Arciniegas/Chouse Chicago

The Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University is one of Chicago's grandest public spaces. The city's 1926 Cadillac Palace Theatre mirrors the best in movie palace architecture.



Broadway in Chicago

observatory atop the **Aon Center**, currently Chicago's third-tallest building. The observatory overlooking Millennium Park would include a glass elevator and a thrill ride.

In Hollywood's heyday during the 1920s and '30s, theater architects reveled in the artistic freedom they were allowed in designing movie palaces, adorning them with opulent chandeliers, majestic staircases, murals, statuary and acres of gold-leafed plasterwork. Several such theaters in Chicago's Loop have been restored to their former glory and function as performing arts centers. The "Historic Theatre Tour" offered by Broadway in Chicago showcases the splendor of yesteryear in the **Cadillac Palace Theatre** and newly renamed **James M. Nederlander Theatre** (formerly known as the Oriental), both built in 1926 on West Randolph Street; sometimes the 1906 **CIBC Theatre**, once a vaudeville venue and currently host of the blockbuster musical *Hamilton*, is paired with one of them.

Tours of the grand **Chicago Theatre**, a 1921 jewel with French Baroque interiors and an oft-photographed vertical sign that boldly declares "Chicago," let visitors stand on the stage and view the backstage wall autographed by famous entertainers who performed in the seven-story-high space. Another treat: the 4,200-seat **Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University**, an 1889 landmark with a rare combination of staggering size and unparalleled acoustics. Its intricate stencil patterns, exquisite murals, floor and wall mosaics, and radiant, gold-leafed ceiling arches are sights to behold. A young Frank Lloyd Wright, who worked as a draftsman on the project with architects Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan, called it "the greatest room for music and opera in the world, bar none."

Travelers from across the globe flock to Oak Park, Chicago's neighbor to the west, to visit the **Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio**, where, from 1889 to 1909, Wright developed a new American architecture—the Prairie style, with its horizontal lines, low-pitched roofs and use of natural materials like brick and wood. The Frank Lloyd Wright Trust conducts tours of the home and surrounding neighborhood, which boasts 25 Wright-designed buildings within walking distance.

Also included on Oak Park tours is Wright's 1905 **Unity Temple**. Built of exposed concrete for a Unitarian congregation after its church had burned to the ground, the cubist masterpiece, now a National Historic Landmark, defied almost every convention of religious architecture. The only surviving public structure

from Wright's Prairie period, recently restored Unity Temple has two skylighted spaces—one for worship and one for the congregation's social gatherings—connected by a central entry foyer. The harmony of architectural and decorative elements exemplifies his philosophy of organic design. As a lifelong member of the church, it was deeply personal project for Wright. Late in his career, he said of Unity Temple: "That is my contribution to modern architecture."

These Oak Park gems and other examples of the genius's work make up the **Illinois Frank Lloyd Wright Trail**, an ambitious project unveiled in 2018 by the Illinois Office of Tourism. The sign-posted architectural trail features 13 Wright-designed buildings open to the public in nine cities. On the South Side of Chicago, the **Frederick C. Robie House** re-emerges this year after a \$3 million restoration that reveals Wright's original 1910 vision of a dwelling place as a work of art, where exterior and interior, furniture and ornament, come together to form an integral whole. It is the consummate expression of Wright's Prairie style. A showcase of Wright's work in downtown Chicago is his 1905-1907 remodeling of the light-filled lobbies and central court of the 11-story **Rookery Building**, the tallest building in the world at the time it was completed in 1888.

On the Wright Trail in west suburban Geneva, a town nestled in the Fox River Valley, the **Colonel George Fabyan Villa** is a Prairie-style residence with a Japanese garden and



Rookery Building

Frank Lloyd Wright Trust

Dutch windmill. On the banks of the Fox in Plano stands another country retreat, Mies van der Rohe's 1951 **Farnsworth House**. Owned and managed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, this glass-box residence, with its uninterrupted views of the landscape, ranks as one of the world's most significant examples of modernist domestic architecture.

Fronting the Kankakee River in Kankakee, the **B. Harley Bradley House** (1900-1901) was likely the first home Wright designed in the Prairie style. From this location you can embark on a half-hour boat cruise to see

other homes along the shore.

Muirhead Farmhouse in Hampshire and **Laurent House** in Rockford represent Wright's Usonian style, a term he coined to describe his pastoral vision of a more modest approach to architecture adopted toward the end of his career. The functional, single-story Laurent House (1949) was custom-designed for a paraplegic U.S. Navy veteran confined to a wheelchair, decades ahead of ADA accessibility requirements.

At the southern end of the Wright Trail, Springfield's lavish 1904 **Dana-Thomas House** was commissioned by a wealthy socialite for



The Frederick C. Robie House is a U.S. National Historic Landmark on the campus of the University of Chicago.

- 360 CHICAGO
312-751-3681, 360Chicago.com
- AUDITORIUM THEATRE OF ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY
312-341-2300, AuditoriumTheatre.org
- B. HARLEY BRADLEY HOUSE
815-936-9630, WrightInKankakee.org
- BAHAI HOUSE OF WORSHIP
847-853-2300, Bahai.us/Bahai-Temple
- BAPS SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR
630-213-2277, BAPS.org/Chicago
- BROADWAY IN CHICAGO
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- COLONEL GEORGE FABYAN VILLA
630-377-6424
KaneForest.com/HistoricSites/FabyanVilla.aspx
- DANA-THOMAS HOUSE
217-782-6776, IllinoisHistory.gov
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847-475-3410, EvanstonHistoryCenter.org
- EDWARDS PLACE
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630-552-0052, FarnsworthHouse.org
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whom money was no object. The Illinois State Historic Site has 35 rooms spanning 16 varying levels and encompassing 12,000 square feet of living space. Never significantly altered, the maze-like home contains the largest collection of site-specific art and oak furniture designed by Wright himself, including art-glass windows, doors and light fixtures. The barrel-vaulted dining room and gallery/ballroom have musician balconies where string quartets would entertain guests. Connecting the main living quarters to the gallery and library is a 60-foot-long pergola hallway beneath which are a bowling lane, billiard room and walk-in vault.

Another fine Springfield home open for tours, the red-brick **Illinois Governor's Mansion**, sparkles after a privately funded, recently completed three-year restoration that included redecorating the interior with antique period pieces and an orientation room with exhibits and a short video. As the nation's third oldest continuously occupied governor's mansion, it has been home to Illinois chief executives since 1856.

Also worth a look is Edwards Place, the oldest house in Springfield on its original foundation. Interpreted to 1857, when it was remodeled in the Italianate style, the recently restored

house reflects the comforts enjoyed by well-to-do lawyer Benjamin Edwards, who entertained guests such as Abraham Lincoln, a relative through marriage. **Edwards Place** shares the site with the Springfield Art Association, which can cater meals or arrange art projects for groups.

A Springfield visit is not complete without a tour of the massive **Illinois State Capitol**, which extends three blocks along Second Street. Built from 1868-1888 and magnificently restored several years ago, the limestone showplace, a combination of Renaissance Revival and Second Empire styles, sports a zinc-coated copper dome and stands 74 feet taller than the U.S. Capitol. Visitors marvel at the grand staircase, elaborate paintings depicting chapters in Illinois history and statues of prominent legislators, including Lincoln and Stephen Douglas. The imposing edifice is a symphony of stained glass and gold leaf, crystal chandeliers and ornamental plasterwork. It's possible to catch a legislative session from the balcony-level seating area. From the Senate gallery, tour guides will point out the desk of Barack Obama when he was a state senator (1997-2004).

A more delicate-looking dome, one with



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 **Frank Lloyd Wright Trust**



white, lace-like ornamentation graces the **Baha'i House of Worship**, better known as the Baha'i Temple, a landmark in Wilmette, north of Chicago. Built along the Lake Michigan shoreline in 1953 as the first Baha'i place of worship in the Western Hemisphere, it is one of only seven in the world. Surrounded by fountains and gardens, the nine-sided building is a blend of Eastern and Western influences. A movie in the temple's welcome center tells its history.

West suburban Bartlett claims a stunning temple of its own, though it's not as well-known as the Baha'i shrine. **BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir**, the largest Hindu temple in North America, awes visitors with its pinnacles, domes, fountains, gorgeous gardens and teak interiors. Made of hand-carved Turkish limestone and Italian Carrara marble, the \$30 million beauty was shipped piece by piece from India and assembled in 2003/2004—without steel or iron.

Illinois' historic home attractions, scattered throughout the state and each with a style of its own, not only intrigue history buffs but architecture fans as well. **Villa Kathrine** in Quincy, for example, would look at home in Morocco or Tunisia. Built in 1900 for the

wealthy, eccentric George Metz in 1900 and named after his mother, it is based on his sketches of villas in North Africa. Features include a replica of a mosque minaret and courtyard with a marble mosaic reflecting pool. Set on a bluff above the Mississippi River, Villa Kathrine serves as Quincy's visitor information center and offers guided tours.

Along Lake Michigan in Evanston, just north of Chicago, the 1894 **Dawes House** was the French chateau-style mansion of lawyer/financier Charles Gates Dawes, who served as U.S. vice president under Calvin

Coolidge. Round, two-story towers form the front corners of the 25-room, tan-brick house, which now is home to the Evanston History Center. Tours show off the oak-paneled walls, musicians' gallery in the dining room and great hall's baluster oak stairway.

From commercial towers and palatial theaters to houses of worship and remarkable private homes, Illinois, with its rich architectural heritage, has a building or three that will make your group itinerary rise above the rest.

For more tour information visit enjoyillinois.com. **IL**



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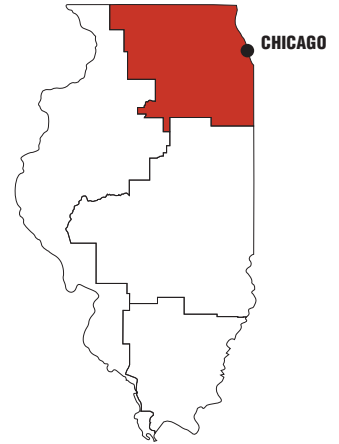
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Chinatown, South Lawndale, Bronzeville, Little Italy, River West



DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your Chicago culinary tour in the charming **Andersonville** neighborhood, on the north side of the city, with a trip to **Taste of Lebanon**. This restaurant serves renowned Middle Eastern fare including falafel, hummus, grape leaf and chicken and beef shawarma. Perhaps this establishment's most popular dish is its lentil soup, which is served piping hot and will wow your group's taste buds.

Piccolo Sogno, in River West, is a classic Italian restaurant with a beautiful outdoor patio.

AFTERNOON

Staying on the north side, head to the **Uptown** neighborhood, and specifically, **Demera Restaurant**, which serves high-quality Ethiopian food. Demera prides itself on making its dishes from scratch, including roasting its own Ethiopian coffee beans. Among Demera's most lauded meals are its vegetarian Gomen (collard greens slow-cooked with onions, garlic and ginger) and sambusas (fried dumplings served with a sweet and spicy honey sauce). Demera also offers family-style combination platters that include beef, chicken, lamb, seafood and vegetarian portions.

EVENING

Cap off your day on the north side with a visit to **Fat Rice**, a lauded establishment in **Logan Square** that serves a creative, globally inspired Macanese (Chinese-Portuguese fusion) menu along with cocktails and wines in a chic setting. Fat Rice's signature dish is the arroz gordo, which translates into "fat rice" and is an incredible offering that is made up of curried chicken, char siu, linguica, wood-roasted beef and chili prawns. Fat Rice also offers a tasty Chicago/Macanese pork chop sandwich, Piri-Piri chicken and salt meadow lamb.





DAY 2

MORNING

Groups seeking to enjoy a hearty breakfast, brunch or lunch should head to **Manny's Cafeteria and Delicatessen**, a storied institution in the South Loop that has served classic deli fare for more than 75 years. This iconic eatery is known for its famous corned beef and pastrami, but also serves a renowned assortment of breakfast options, from traditional buttermilk pancakes, bacon and eggs to fried matzo with onion, salami and corned beef. Visitors will also appreciate Manny's rich history, as the dining room walls are decorated with news clippings, reviews, snapshots and memorabilia demonstrating how deeply Chicagoans treasure this historic restaurant.

AFTERNOON

In Chicago's **West Loop**, visitors can make a pit stop in **Greektown**, where you will find a myriad of top-notch restaurants. One such establishment is **Athena Restaurant**, which combines fine Greek architecture and art with comfortable seating, warm fireplaces and an outdoor patio with an award-winning view of the Chicago skyline. It offers special group lunch, dinner and beverage menus that serve appetizers like octapodi skaras, Greek salad, chicken kabob, gyros, and for dessert, baklava.

EVENING

Ever since it opened in 1998 in **Chinatown**, **Lao Sze Chuan** has become one of the country's most beloved Chinese restaurants, having been voted the No. 1 Chinese restaurant in the U.S. by multiple publications and being named to the Michelin Bib Gourmand list numerous times. Lao Sze Chuan prides itself on providing traditional Sichuan cuisine with high-quality ingredients and serves an array of spicy dishes including handmade dim sum, salt and pepper squid and oven roasted Peking duck.



Photo courtesy of EnjoyIllinois.com

Manny's Cafeteria and Delicatessen

DAY 3

MORNING

If you get a later start to your day and are more in the mood for lunch, a must-visit on the South Side is **Taqueria Los Gallos** in **South Lawndale**. This Mexican spot, with plenty of seating for large groups, serves more than just tacos and burritos. In fact, its most popular offering is carne en su jugo — a soup from the city of Guadalajara. This fabulous soup is a beef broth filled with grilled steak, avocado, bacon and pinto beans and boasts a hearty flavor most soups can't match.

AFTERNOON

Next stop is the legendary **Chicago's Home of Chicken and Waffles** in **Bronzeville**. This esteemed restaurant serves crispy fried chicken and thick waffles **creating a delicious sweet and savory combination**. Another popular menu item is the fried chicken gizzard, livers and giblets served with waffles or French fries.

EVENING

For dinner, travel to **Little Italy** where you'll find **Tuscany on Taylor**, which serves the authentic, fresh cuisine of a small Italian village with some of Italy's finest wines. **Tuscany's** engaging décor, hearty menu and sizable dining area are perfect for hungry groups looking to share some laughs. From pizza cooked in a wood-burning oven to pasta dishes served with tomato or Bolognese sauce, Tuscany on Taylor's menu will delight your crowd. Another spectacular dining option is **Piccolo Sogno** in River West, a classic Italian restaurant with a beautiful outdoor patio that enables patrons to enjoy an al fresco dining experience in an alluring setting.



Jason Paha

Tuscany on Taylor

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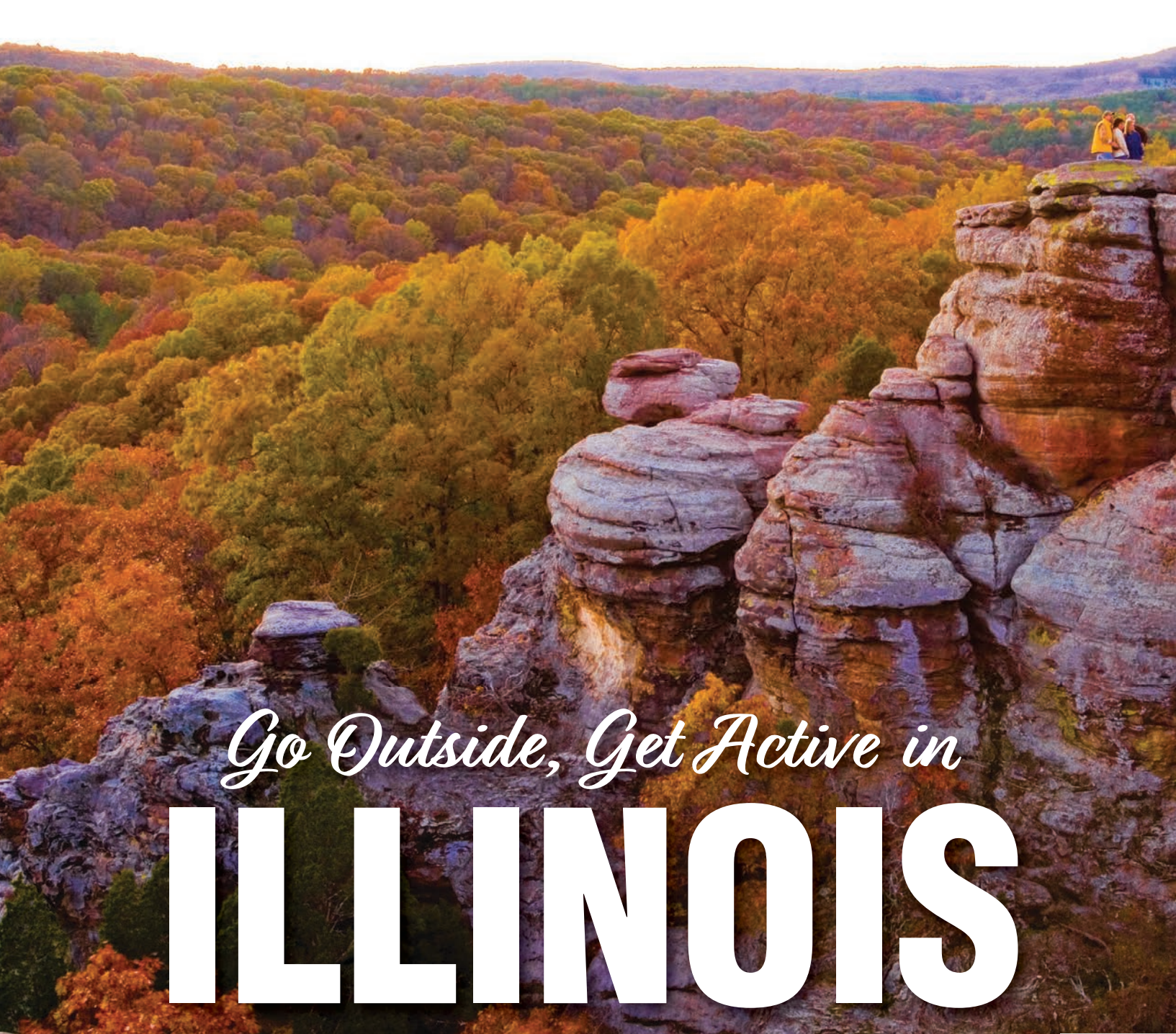
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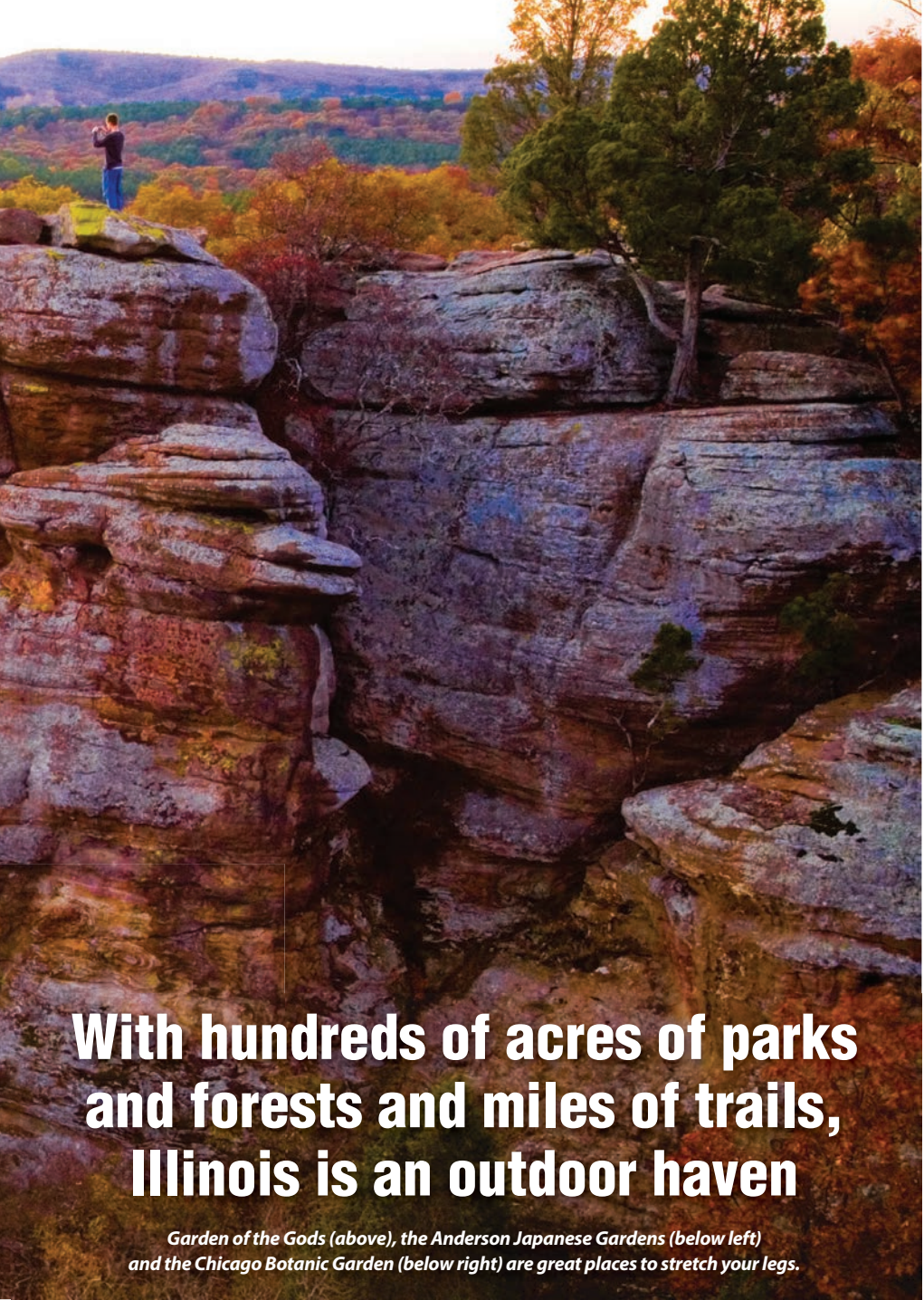
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Go Outside, Get Active in
ILLINOIS





With hundreds of acres of parks and forests and miles of trails, Illinois is an outdoor haven

Garden of the Gods (above), the Anderson Japanese Gardens (below left) and the Chicago Botanic Garden (below right) are great places to stretch your legs.

Illinois' *nickname may be the Prairie State, but its landscape is considerably more diverse than that moniker indicates. With 70 state parks, six state forests and a national forest residing within its borders, Illinois has an abundance of natural offerings that will appeal to anyone seeking an invigorating adventure. Here are a few locales outdoors-loving groups can enjoy.*

ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS

Inspired by the famous Portland Japanese Garden, Anderson Japanese Gardens was established in 1978 by John R. Anderson on the site of Anderson's home in Rockford, 88 miles northwest of Chicago. This 12-acre attraction exists as a not-for-profit entity and features several waterfalls and ponds, streams, rock formations, winding paths and a tea house and guest house. The gardens are also home to numerous species of colorful fish and ducks.

CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

With 27 stunning gardens residing on 385 acres, this botanic garden 24 miles north of Chicago has matured into one of the world's great living museums and conservation science centers. Groups can explore the wonders of the garden by walking or taking a tram and tram tours include a panoramic overview of the gardens of the main island. Among the many gardens residing in this museum include the Aquatic Garden (visitors can stroll down a winding boardwalk to view waterlilies and lotuses in various stages of bloom); the English Walled Garden (featuring six garden rooms containing elements of English garden design through the centuries) and the Waterfall Garden (displaying a 45-foot waterfall cascading down a hillside into a series of small landscaped pools).

LINCOLN MEMORIAL GARDEN

This 100-acre woodland and prairie garden in Springfield, 200 miles southwest of Chicago, features six miles of interconnected trails that wind through its restored prairies, woodlands and wetlands. Fabled architect Jens Jensen designed the garden as a living memorial to Abraham Lincoln, and it is home to 12 foot-bridges, a pond and eight stone council rings, most of which contain views of a lake. Plantings within the gardens include white oaks, sugar maple, dogwood and redbud trees as well as bur oak trees and big bluestem prairie grasses.

LINCOLN PARK ZOO

A world of wildlife comes to life in the shadow of Chicago's amazing skyscrapers. Located a few minutes north of Chicago, the 35-acre zoo has been a free oasis for generations of animal lovers. Founded in 1868, making it one of the oldest zoos in North America, Lincoln Park Zoo is home to more than 1,100 animals from some 200 species. Visitors can cast their gaze upon big cats, polar bears, gorillas, reptiles and monkeys along with a snowy owl chick, baby Diana monkey and leaf-tailed geckos.

EnjoyIllinois.com Photos

- **ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS**
815-229-9390, AndersonGardens.org
- **CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN**
847-835-5440, ChicagoBotanic.org
- **LINCOLN MEMORIAL GARDEN**
217-529-1111, LincolnMemorialGarden.org
- **LINCOLN PARK ZOO**
312-742-2000, LPZoo.org
- **MAGGIE DALEY PARK**
312-552-3000, MaggieDaleyPark.com
- **MORTON ARBORETUM**
630-968-0074, MortonArb.org
- **SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST**
800-832-1355, fs.usda.gov/Shawnee
- **STARVED ROCK STATE PARK**
815-667-4726, StarvedRockStatePark.org
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MAGGIE DALEY PARK

A 20-acre public park residing in downtown Chicago's Loop, Maggie Daley Park opened in 2014 and is named for Maggie Daley, the former first lady of Chicago who died of cancer in 2011. The park contains a host of features including a new fieldhouse and a one-quarter-mile-long ice skating ribbon. The park also features three open lawn areas, a café space and picnic groves.

MORTON ARBORETUM

Home to one of the most comprehensive collections of woody plants in North America, this public garden in Lisle, 25 miles west of Chicago, is an internationally recognized nonprofit organization dedicated to the planting and conservation of trees. Its 1,700 acres hold more than 222,000 live plants representing nearly 4,300 taxa from around the world. The collections are displayed in picturesque landscape settings and are designed for both enjoyment and educational purposes. Established in 1922, the arboretum's living collections inspire visitors to learn about, plant and protect trees. Visitors can experience the venue's beauty on a guided tram tour, a one-hour ride that winds through its woodlands, wetlands and prairie while listening to narration. The arboretum is also home to a four-acre interactive children's garden, a natural playground for children of all ages, and a one-acre maze. The arboretum is open every day, so visitors can experience nature's ever-changing seasons 365 days a year.

SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST

Located in the Ozark and Shawnee Hills region of Southern Illinois, Shawnee National Forest spans approximately 280,000 acres. With a diverse geography consisting of barrens, prairies, streams, lakes, ponds, waterfalls and rocky outcrops, Shawnee invites adventurers to participate in whatever outdoor activity they crave. One hidden hiking treasure residing in the forest is the Pomona Natural Bridge Trail, a 0.3-mile loop trail near Pomona that features a waterfall and is good for all ages. Shawnee is home to seven officially designated wilderness areas: Bald Knob, Bay Creek, Burden Falls, Clear Springs, Garden of the Gods, Lusk Creek and Panther Den.

Illinois has an abundance of locales for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy.

STARVED ROCK STATE PARK

Located near Utica, 92 miles southwest of Chicago, Starved Rock hosts more than two million visitors annually, the most of any Illinois state park. Inside the park resides 18 canyons with vertical walls of moss-covered stone and more than 13 miles of trails that allow access to waterfalls, natural springs, sandstone overhangs and spectacular overlooks. One such trail is Ottawa Canyon, a 0.9-mile trail that features gorgeous wildflowers and incredible rock formations.

TERRAPIN ORCHARDS

This orchard resides close to Galena and features 5,500 dwarf apple trees in six different varieties (Zestar, Premier Honeycrisp, Gala, Honeycrisp, Fuji and Evercrisp) and four acres of strawberries in four different varieties. Terrapin's strawberry season starts in early June and runs through the beginning of July. It offers both pick your own and pre-picked berries as well as agritourism tours. Not surprisingly, apples are king at Terrapin and are anticipated to be ready by September. Terrapin also sports a few varieties of pears and other top secret fruit crops.

For more information about these and other great outdoor locales, visit enjoyillinois.com. **IL**

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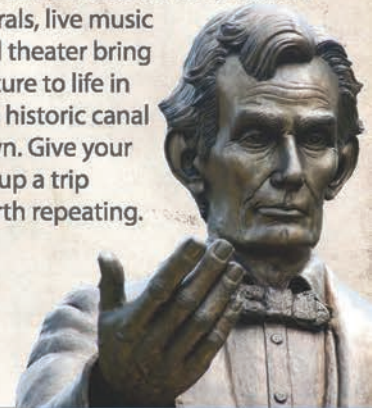


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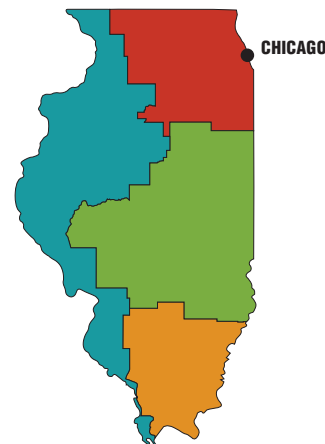
Just minutes from Starved Rock State Park, nestled along the Illinois and Fox River, lies the best kept secret of the Midwest. Lush plantings and butterfly gardens line the streets filled with boutique shops and modern eateries. Stand in the shadows of Honest Abe and the Little Giant then learn the fine art of blown glass and craft brewing. Renowned architecture, massive murals, live music and theater bring culture to life in this historic canal town. Give your group a trip worth repeating.



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DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your journey in Carbondale, home of **Southern Illinois University**. A breakfast stop at Carbondale's **Village Smithy Restaurant** will get you off on the right foot as it serves delicious options from savory huevos rancheros to sweet Belgian waffles. Those looking to stretch their legs have plenty of outdoor choices including **Giant City State Park** in Makanda, less than seven miles from SIU's campus. The park is filled with breathtaking natural beauty and offers a slew of hiking trails, including the Giant City Nature Trail, home of huge bluffs of sandstone formed 12,000 years ago.

AFTERNOON

SIU's campus is bustling with student activity and lovely architecture. Guests can walk around the campus grounds and observe venerable architecture like the **Shryock Auditorium**, one of SIU's original buildings that houses the two-ton **Marianne Webb Reuter pipe organ**. Shopping enthusiasts will appreciate Carbondale's wide variety of stores, including **TJ's Fine Jewelry**, **710 Bookstore**, **Plaza Records** and **Tickled Pink Boutique and Gift**. After scoring some deals, satiate your hunger with a visit to **17th Street Barbecue** in Murphysboro, which serves some of the most renowned barbecue in the state.

EVENING

To prepare yourself for the second leg of your adventure, it's recommended you begin your 200-mile drive to **Champaign-Urbana**, home of the **University of Illinois**. Should you stop in Champaign-Urbana during traditional business hours, you can grab dinner at **Maize Mexican Grill**, which serves authentic dishes made with traditional Mexican ingredients.

Illinois is home to a myriad of bustling college campuses, including Illinois State University.





DAY 2

MORNING

For breakfast, visit **Cracked the Egg Came First**, an establishment concocted by a University of Illinois graduate that serves a variety of small bites and breakfast sandwiches. Next, walk around the charming U of I campus, where you will encounter such landmarks as **Altgeld Hall**, a building considered one of the finest representations of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture in the state, and the **Natural History Building**, an example of High Victorian Gothic style that was constructed in 1892.

AFTERNOON

Before you head to your next stop, a lunch at **Black Dog Smoke and Ale House** in Champaign is recommended. Black Dog serves a variety of ribs, brisket and burgers in a restored train depot, and its burnt ends are acclaimed. The ensuing portion of your excursion takes you 54 miles northwest to Bloomington-Normal, home of **Illinois State University**. Illinois State's campus is easily walkable and features a scenic tree-lined Quad and numerous gorgeous buildings. The cities of Bloomington and Normal have plenty of top-notch shopping options, including **316 Antique Mall** in Normal and **Alley Kats Arts and Antiques** in Bloomington. Another attraction is the **David Davis Mansion** in Bloomington, a Victorian home that was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

EVENING

For dinner, **Lucca Grill** has been serving pizza and Italian dishes to Bloomington since 1936. This charming eatery will whisk your group back in time as its interior boasts an antique mahogany bar and historic tin ceiling. After dinner, it's recommended you get some shut-eye as a 102-mile trip to Macomb awaits you.

DAY 3

MORNING

The Old Dairy in Macomb has a slogan "Enjoy life, eat dessert first." With a delectable variety of ice cream and desserts on its menu, this is a sensible line of thought. Those seeking a traditional breakfast though, will find it at The Old Dairy, which complements its sweets with a slew of omelets and breakfast options. After eating, take a stroll around **Western Illinois University's** beautifully landscaped campus, which contains more than 60 buildings on more than 1,000 acres, including nine residence halls, a 300-acre farm and an 18-hole golf course.

AFTERNOON

Enjoy Macomb's Midwestern charm as you walk around its downtown square, visit shops and boutiques (like **All In Vinyl and Boutique** and **No Place Like Home**, a gift and boutique shop) and even take in a Farmer's Market on Thursdays and Saturdays for fresh produce and homemade desserts.

EVENING

With 185 miles of driving ahead of you (**DeKalb** is next on the list), it's best to hit the road or hit the sheets for a good night's sleep. Fuel up for either choice with a visit to **Chick's on the Square**, a no-frills bar and grill known for its hearty American fare including pizza, burgers and fruity cocktails.



David Davis Mansion



Western Illinois University

DAY 4

MORNING

After arriving in DeKalb, home of **Northern Illinois University**, grab some breakfast from the venerable **Lincoln Inn**, which has been serving hearty breakfasts and baked goods since 1969. Next, saunter around the NIU campus, which features such highlights as **Altgeld Hall** (also known as the Castle on the Hill), which was built between 1895 and 1899, and the **Holmes Student Center**, an expansive 16-story structure that holds the university bookstore, various dining facilities and **Ellington's**, a student-run restaurant experience.

AFTERNOON

Spend your afternoon perusing DeKalb's many boutiques and stores, including **Cracker Jax**, a shop that sells vintage jewelry, eclectic clothing, incense, gemstones, books, chic furniture and one-of-a-kind treasures. Another fun shop is **Herbal Embers**, which offers a variety of spiritual healing herbs, crystals, jewelry and locally crafted artwork.

University of Illinois






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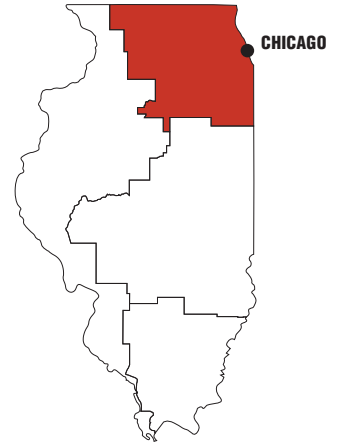
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DAY 1

MORNING

Start the day at the **Museum of Science & Industry**, one of the largest science museums in the world. The museum features interactive exhibits that connect science, technology, engineering and math to our daily lives. In addition to touring the museum, students have a 30-minute session that mirrors real-world experience in a STEM career. It's an exciting opportunity to hear personal stories from a scientist or engineer and dive deeper into the possibility of pursuing a pathway to STEM.

AFTERNOON

Visit the **Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center** in Olympia Fields for an all-hands-on-deck team-building opportunity. Choose activities such as the High Ropes Course, Climbing Tower, Power Pole and Crate Climbing in a thrilling, yet safe and productive environment.

EVENING

Enjoy a pizza party and high-speed go-kart adventure at **Accelerate Indoor Speedway** in Mokena. Starting with a 30-minute instructor-led class, students will learn about the science behind speed, acceleration and friction, Newton's laws of motion and apply mathematics by calculating degrees, angles and turns before taking on the thrills of indoor go-karting on F1-inspired karts that can reach 50 mph.



Accelerate Indoor Speedway





DAY 2

MORNING

After breakfast at the hotel, head to the U.S. Department of Energy's **Argonne National Laboratory** in Lemont. Argonne traces its birth from Enrico Fermi's secret charge — the Manhattan Project — to create the world's first self-sustaining nuclear reaction. Today's lab is hosted in Argonne's Learning Center, a unique space comprising student labs, classrooms and a computer lab that sits inside the control room of one of the first high-energy particle accelerators in the world. Each learning lab is shaped not just by the areas of research Argonne pursues, but also by the way researchers go about their work in those areas.

AFTERNOON

Explore environmental science at the 1,700-acre **Morton Arboretum** in Lisle. With over 220,000 live plants, the options are endless! A variety of instructor-led courses include Plant Structural Adaptations where students use scientific instruments to examine how abiotic factors influence the life cycles and characteristics of plants. Woodland Ecosystem Study explores the layers of the forest and interdependence of the plants and animals that live there. In Restoration Stewards education guides lead your group in a restoration service project.

EVENING

Tonight, choose from high-energy activities such as **Brunswick Bowl**, **Dave & Buster's** or **American Ninja Warrior Park**.



Argonne National Laboratory

DAY 3

MORNING

Start the day at the new **Paramount School of the Arts** in Aurora. Learn what it takes to make a new musical come to fruition in a two-hour master class. Learn from artists from the Paramount Theatre's current show what it takes to create a new piece of theater. Students will also learn a song from the show and get a chance to receive feedback from master teachers.

AFTERNOON

Catch a matinee at the legendary **Paramount Theatre**, which features Broadway-style musicals and plays in a beautifully restored, historic, 1,885-seat playhouse.

EVENING

Visit **Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament** in Schaumburg. With tailor-made educational presentations for all age groups and a 90-minute show and dinner, the whole group will be entertained and educated.



Paramount School of the Arts



Great Wolf Lodge

DAY 4

MORNING

Travel to **Six Flags Great America** in Gurnee for a day of thrill-ride fun and exploration. This amusement park doubles as an interactive classroom. The park offers real-life examples of physics, math, science, engineering, technology and business management. Amplify key themes and concepts from your classroom in a safe, stimulating environment. Those looking to shop when not at the park can visit **Gurnee Mills**, the largest outlet and value shopping destination in Illinois. Gurnee Mills features more than 200 stores including Macy's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Forever 21 and Bass Pro Shops. You can also spend a day and stay overnight at **Great Wolf Lodge** in Gurnee, which is home to a completely renovated indoor water park that includes a family raft ride, a tandem tube ride and an outdoor activity pool with fountains.



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EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

in *Illinois*

Groups looking to please their palates have plenty of delectable options in the Land of Lincoln

Virtually any list chronicling the finest food cities on the planet will invariably include Chicago. With its incredible variety of choices, from an assortment of ethnic food establishments to a multitude of James Beard Award-winning restaurants, the Windy City is a world-class destination for cuisine lovers. What is less evident though is the myriad of smaller cities outside of Chicago and across Illinois that also offer fabulous dishes, making the Land of Lincoln a road trip destination for all sorts of cuisine lovers. Here are some enticing locales worth hopping in a car for.





The Berghoff Restaurant in downtown Chicago is a legendary establishment.

Choose Chicago

CHICAGO

Chicago is renowned for numerous culinary creations, from its excellent array of Italian Beef shops to its world-class steakhouses and Michelin Bib Gourmand-Award winning restaurants and chefs. Another addition to that list, of course, is deep dish pizza. And few places can match **Lou Malnati's Pizzeria**, which serves a legendary pizza in 53 locations across the Chicagoland area. Lou's opened its first restaurant in 1971 and since then has been serving its deep-dish creations to generations of satisfied diners. Diners seeking a classic experience can visit **The Berghoff Restaurant** in downtown Chicago. The Berghoff opened in 1898 and today serves traditional German cuisine and steins of beer in an Old-World setting. One hundred percent family owned and operated for more than a century, The Berghoff's landmark building is filled with Chicago mementos and artifacts. For dinner, groups can enjoy exotic cocktails and Latin-inspired global cuisine at **Carnivale**, which offers shareable portions and has tables that can seat up to 16. Carnivale also has a lively atmosphere that will entertain any group with performances from musicians, bands, DJs, dancers and even aerialists.

COLLINSVILLE

Entering its fourth generation of family baking, **Kruta Bakery** opened in 1919 in East St. Louis before moving to the Southern Illinois city of Collinsville in 1974. The bakery still uses some of the same recipes Frank Kruta brought with him from Eastern Europe almost a century ago, including their signature Stollen pastries, breads, cakes and Danish rolls.

EFFINGHAM

Firefly Grill & Restaurant in Effingham, three hours south of Chicago, goes to extraordinary lengths to make its customers feel at home. Firefly's founders wanted their restaurant to feel more like an experience than merely a dining establishment, and did just that to the point *Bon Appetit* magazine ranked it among the nation's most eco-friendly restaurants. Firefly's kitchen was arranged as an expedition for customers to see all of the work that goes into creating the dishes and guests can wander the building and observe an organic farm that supplies most of the dishes on the menu.

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GALENA

Located in the lovely northwestern city of Galena, **Galena Cellars** offers its visitors the chance to relax among acres of rolling farmland while sampling 40 wine varieties in three tasting rooms. Groups can take a narrated walking vineyard tour and learn how Galena Cellars wine is made, savor a wine tasting at both the downtown location and at the vineyard, or spend time on its wrap-around deck with a favorite glass of wine in hand. All private events are hosted by a knowledgeable Tasting Room associate that teaches guests how to drink wine for a superior tasting experience.



Galena Cellars

MAKANDA

Anchoring the eastern end of the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail in Southern Illinois, **Blue Sky Vineyard** offers award-winning Illinois wines, classical Tuscan style and magnificent views of the Shawnee National Forest. Built with Tuscan-inspired adornments including stucco walls and Portuguese tiles, Blue Sky complements its wine with hearty sandwiches, soups, pizzas, snacks and beer. Visitors can savor its extensive indoor seating area and two charming outdoor terraces that overlook its vineyard and rolling countryside.

MARTINSVILLE

Groups looking to take a road trip to a unique location can travel to tiny Martinsville in Southern Illinois, a town with a population of two that also happens to serve one of the best burgers in the country: The Moonburger. This no-frills burger is found at the venerable **Moonshine Store**, a general store that serves the burger until 12:30 p.m., when the grill is promptly shut off. Owners Helen and Roy Tuttle bought the Moonshine Store in 1982, and since then, have seen visitors from all 50 states and around the world and their burger was even featured on the *CBS Sunday Morning* show.

Blue Sky Vineyard allows diners to enjoy an al fresco dining atmosphere.



Adam Alexander

MOLINE

For generations, the Quad Cities has been home to an old-fashioned ice cream parlor that dispenses homemade ice cream, possesses a massive selection of candy and features rows of handcrafted mahogany booths for families to relax. Now in its fourth generation, **Lagomarcino's** (which opened in 1908) has been making chocolates, candy and ice cream for more than a century. The venerable shop is one of the only soda fountain confectionaries left in the country and even today, its confections are made in the original copper kettle kitchen in its original Moline location.



MURPHYSBORO

Illinois' barbecuing scene grows more impressive with each passing year, and one major reason why is **17th Street Barbecue** in the Southern Illinois town of Murphysboro. Pitmaster Mike Mills has been branded "The Legend" on the barbecue circuit as he is a four-time barbecue world champion and was inducted into the Barbecue Hall of Fame in 2010. Thus, it's no surprise his 17th Street establishment has also received numerous accolades from publications across the country for its baby back ribs that have been dubbed "the filet mignon of barbecue." Smoked over apple and cherrywood, as opposed to the traditional hickory wood, giving it a distinct flavor, the ribs are served with Mills' signature Magic Dust, a complex spice rub, and coated with his apple-packed barbecue sauce. 17th Street Barbecue has earned numerous awards including being named one of the 101 Best Restaurants in America by the Daily Meal, the Best Ribs in the U.S. by *Bon Appetit* magazine and one of the country's Top 10 Extraordinary Ribs by the *Huffington Post*.

Lagomarcino's in Moline has been making chocolates, candy and ice cream for more than a century.

SPRINGFIELD

The state capital of Illinois, Springfield is a bustling town filled with government activity. It is also the city 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 relish. Springfield has a multitude of establishments that serve the horseshoe, including **D'Arcy's Pint**, a cozy, neighborhood-style pub that features authentic Irish fare and traditional American classics alongside a healthy beer selection. And, of course, it serves a variety of horseshoes, including those with beef, ham, corned beef, turkey and bacon. Those seeking an old-fashioned hot dog in Springfield will find a delicious option at the **Cozy Dog Drive In**, which has been serving corn dogs on a stick since 1946. In fact, Cozy Dog is credited with inventing the delicious deep-fried dog in its current incarnation. The restaurant's location on Route 66 and its massive amount of memorabilia make it a popular destination for hungry road-trippers.

For more information on these establishments, visit enjoyillinois.com. **IL**

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As vacations increasingly are being recognized as special opportunities for kids to bond with both their parents and grandparents, the term “multigenerational” has become a travel industry buzzword. Happily, Illinois abounds with attractions that extended families can enjoy.

Multigenerational travel is typically defined as taking a trip with three or more generations, but grandparents traveling with grandkids count as well. The trend continues to grow as grandparents in the baby boomer generation are living longer, have more disposable income and want to share experiences—not just material things—with their children and grandchildren. In many cases, grandparents are willing to underwrite some or all of the vacation costs.

In today's fast-paced world and with families living farther apart geographically than at any time in history, travel is increasingly seen as the best way for extended-family members to get together and make memories. Recent surveys show that 40 percent of travelers went on a multi-gen trip in the last 12 months and that nearly a quarter of grandparents traveled with their grandchildren alone. Many tour companies are benefiting from this development, especially when families get together with friends for group excursions.

Following are eight experiences that will fit well into family-focused tour itineraries and provide memories for years to come. Everyone in the clan will have a good time at these Illinois favorites, which are perfect destination spots for families large and small.



BROOKFIELD ZOO, BROOKFIELD

Kids, parents and grandparents can enjoy family togetherness while observing animals from around the world at one of the country's largest zoos. Located in suburban Chicago, Brookfield Zoo showcases a wide range of creatures in cageless enclosures that simulate natural habitats. The 7.5-acre Great Bear Wilderness, home to polar bears and grizzlies, includes an underwater viewing area, while Habitat Africa The Savannah is shared by giraffes, endangered painted hogs and red river hogs. Gorillas, orangutans, spider monkeys and other rainforest animals inhabit Tropic World. Seven Seas has dolphin presentations, Hamill Family Play Zoo is popular with the little ones and a Motor Safari tram provides guided tours of the zoo.



JOHN DEERE PAVILION MOLINE

Kids from 5 to 85 will find something to love at this free, family-friendly attraction operated by Moline-based Deere & Company, a leading manufacturer of agricultural, construction and forestry equipment. Climb aboard the giant machines and operate a simulated excavator or dozer. In the hands-on Discovery Zone, guests can see films, make a stop-motion video, and build bridges and roads with blocks and machines. The John Deere Store is stocked with green-and-yellow Deere logo gear, toys and collectibles.

MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL SIX LOCATIONS

The whole gang can enjoy America's pastime in relaxed settings in suburban Chicago and downstate. Game tickets are affordable, seats are close to the action, and everyone looks forward to the between-innings entertainment and giveaways. All stadiums offer attractive picnic packages, party areas and special fan experiences for groups. Check out the Windy City ThunderBolts in Crestwood, Kane County Cougars in Geneva (Class A affiliate of the Arizona Diamondbacks), Schaumburg Boomers, Joliet Slammers, Peoria Chiefs (Class A affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals) and Chicago Dogs in Rosemont.

HISTORIC NAUVOO, NAUVOO

Pioneer history comes alive at this collection of 30-some historic sites from the 1840s when early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints established Nauvoo on the banks of the Mississippi River. The well-preserved Mormon settlement features demonstrations of pioneer crafts like blacksmithing, bread baking and brick making. Horse- and ox-drawn wagon rides are available. Summer entertainment includes outdoor concerts and the folksy variety show *Sunset on the Mississippi*. All tours and events are free.

ILLINOIS RAILWAY MUSEUM, UNION

Because kids are always fascinated by trains and older adults often wax nostalgic over the heyday of rail travel, the appeal of this museum cuts across generations. One of the largest museums of its kind in the nation, it boasts more than 400 cars and locomotives. Several large exhibit buildings are packed with antique equipment, including restored Pullman sleeping and dining cars. Rides in electric streetcars are offered throughout the day; diesel-powered and steam trains run on a five-mile track weekends and holidays from May through September. There's a train-themed playground for the kids.

LAMBS FARM LIBERTYVILLE

All ages enjoy good old-fashioned fun at this family favorite. Guests can feed hay to the horses, llamas, alpacas, donkeys and cows. They can pet and groom goats and sheep, watch pigs wallowing in the mud, hear turkeys gobbling and see Joseph the camel. The Discovery Center has small mammals, reptiles and exotic birds. Other diversions include miniature golf and rides on the carousel and miniature train. For shopping, Lambs Farm has a thrift store, pet and garden center, and country store selling made-from-scratch cookies, chocolates, jams and breads.

Barnyard encounters bring joy to the little ones at Lambs Farm.



Lambs Farm



SANFILIPPO PLACE DE LA MUSIQUE BARRINGTON HILLS

This private museum in Barrington Hills is known worldwide for its impressive collection that includes antique music machines, arcade and gambling machines, chandeliers, the world's largest restored theater pipe organ and a spectacular European salon carousel. With a carved and lit-up façade that measures 89' wide by 42' tall, the carousel possesses 36 horses, several gondolas and chariots and a spinning lover's tub that all turn to the sounds of a Gavioli band organ. These items, along with the largest collection of restored automatic musical instruments in the world, can be found within a majestic French Second Empire setting.



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847-636-5450, TheChicagoDogs.com
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309-675-0606, HistoricNauvoo.net
- **ILLINOIS RAILWAY MUSEUM**
815-923-4391, IRM.org
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Illinois Group Tour Planner

Editorial & Advertising Office

Premier Travel Media
621 Plainfield Road, Suite 406
Willowbrook, IL 60527
P 630.794.0696 • F 630.794.0652
advertising@ptmggroups.com

Publisher – Jeffrey Gayduk
jeff@ptmggroups.com

Managing Editor – Jason Paha
jason@ptmggroups.com

Senior Editor – Randy Mink
randy@ptmggroups.com

Production & Marketing Coordinator – Annie Gavin
annie@ptmggroups.com

Director, Design & Production – Robert Wyszowski
rob@ptmggroups.com

Vice President – Theresa O'Rourke
theresa@ptmggroups.com

Published in Partnership with the Illinois Office of Tourism

500 E. Monroe
Springfield, IL 62701

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Illinois Group Tour Planner is published by Premier Travel Media, 621 Plainfield Road, Suite 406, Willowbrook, IL 60527. The magazine is distributed free of charge to qualified tour operators, travel agents, group leaders, bank travel clubs and other travel organizations.

Send Address Change to:

Premier Travel Media
621 Plainfield Road, Suite 406
Willowbrook, IL 60527

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