

2020

ILLINOIS

Group Tour Planner

**LOVING THE
LAND OF LINCOLN**

Central Illinois is full of
history and heritage

Group-Friendly Tour Ideas

**TRAILS TO
ADVENTURE**

Discoveries await in delightful
Southern Illinois towns



CHICAGO & BEYOND

Activities, attractions and
so much more

GREAT RIVERS COUNTRY

River cities bring fresh perspectives
to the past and present

enjoy
illinois
ENJOYILLINOIS.COM

Get a Taste of Shopping at its Best



Give your group an experience to remember at Woodfield Mall — one of America's premier shopping destinations. They'll enjoy the exclusive Signature Meet and Greet Service, Coat & Package Check, and free trolley to nearby shopping districts. And of course, you'll never pay a penny for bus parking.

Call **800.847.4849** now to plan your group tour to exciting Woodfield Mall or visit chicagonorthwest.com/group-tours.



**MEET
CHICAGO
NORTHWEST**

GIVE YOURSELF AN EDGE

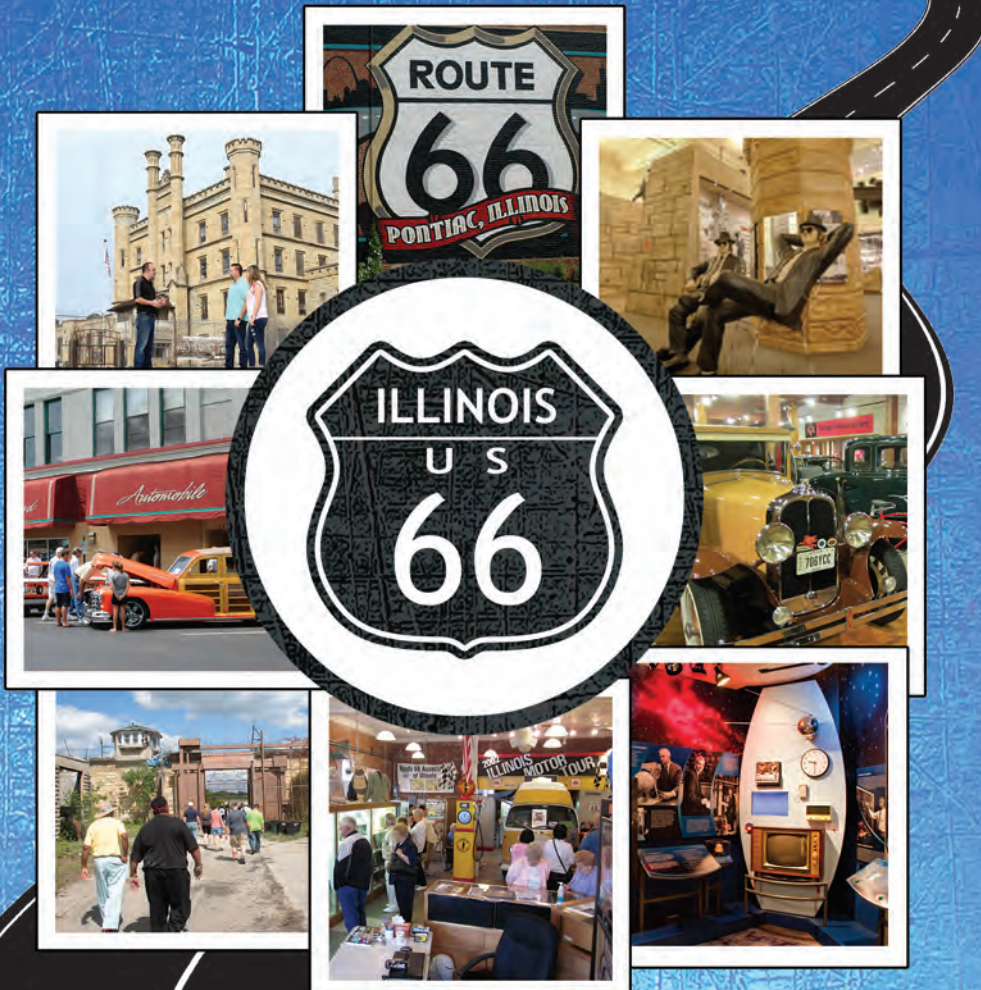
Discover the new 820-seat Dining Pavilion! Perfect for tour groups.

enjoy
illinois

OTTAWA

The MIDDLE OF
EVERYWHERE

Have you ever traveled to a destination so far from home, yet so familiar? Arrived in a place surrounded by strangers, yet every one is a friendly face? Come dip your toes where the Fox meets the Illinois, and lose yourself in a cave of salt. Take the paths of Presidents or blaze the trail with buffalo. Savor worldly cuisine or sample the local roots. Whether you're traveling cross country to visit family or just a few miles to see an old friend, you will always arrive in the middle of everywhere.



THE FIRST 100 MILES

Check out the first 100 miles of Route 66, taking in the sights and sounds of the Old Joliet Prison, Joliet Area Historical Museum, Route 66 Hall of Fame, Pontiac Oakland Automobile Museum and much, much more.



Book your tour today!
844-94-HCCVB
HeritageCorridorCVB.com



JOLIET AREA
HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Contact: DONNA REYNOLDS
events@pickusottawail.com

PICKUS OTTAWA IL.COM
815.434.2737

ILLINOIS

Group Tour Planner



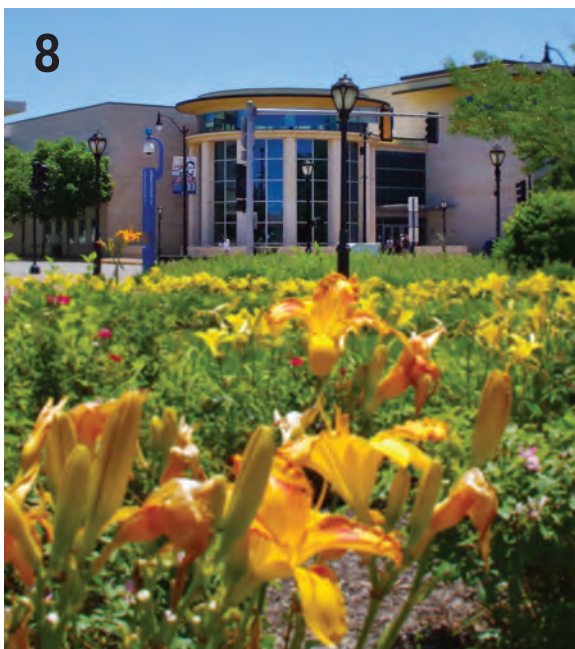
ON THE COVER

I & M Canal

Mule-Pulled Boat Ride

(Photo courtesy of Heritage Corridor CVB)

CONTENTS



8



20



28



40

FEATURES

- 8 Loving the Land of Lincoln**
Central Illinois is full of activities and attractions
- 20 Historic and Cultural Attractions in Great Rivers Country**
These river cities bring fresh perspectives to the past and present
- 28 Chicago & Beyond**
Group-friendly treasures and pleasures provide travel planners with a cornucopia of tour ideas
- 40 Trails to Adventure**
Discoveries await group travelers in the untrampled wilderness areas and delightful small towns of Southern Illinois

SAMPLE ITINERARIES

- 12 Famous, Important People and Places**
- 16 Agritourism Adventures**
- 24 Illinois is Home to a Variety of Delicious Eats**
- 32 African American History Abounds in Illinois**
- 36 Wright's Architectural Legacy In Chicagoland**
- 44 Enjoy Illinois' Outdoor Wonders**

All itineraries are samples and can be customized to fit your group's needs



CHICAGO'S NORTH SHORE

CITY LIFE, ELEVATED.



Bahá'í House of Worship

THE MOST PICTURESQUE REGION




in metropolitan Chicago can be found twenty minutes from the heart of the city along Lake Michigan on Chicago's North Shore. Our vibrant neighborhoods have their own great dining, hotels, culture, shopping, and history, and you are just minutes away from Chicago's world-famous stores, music and museums via the famous "EL" — Chicago's public transit train, or by commuter rail or car, making us a great base for a Chicago visit.


Bordering Chicago, Along Lake Michigan



Chicago Botanic Garden

www.visitchicagonorthshore.com
Contact us: askme@cncsvb.com

 ChicagoNorthShore
 @ChicagoNShore
 ChicagoNorthShore


VisitTheUSA.com

enjoy
illinois



Jan Kemmerling,
Acting Deputy
Director
Illinois Office of Tourism

Hello!

On behalf of the Illinois Office of Tourism, it is my pleasure to invite your group to explore the great state of Illinois. We have a wealth of incredible destinations and attractions throughout the state, many designed for group travel. From the unmatched cultural and dining options of our big cities to the friendly Midwestern charm of our historic small towns, groups will find that Illinois has everything.

No matter what time of year, there are unique experiences to be discovered all around the state. The city of Chicago is a vibrant hub of culture filled with world-class museums, restaurants, comedy and more, not to mention one of the most spectacular skylines in the world.

Illinois' architectural wonder extends far beyond the Windy City and into the rest of the state with the Illinois Frank Lloyd Wright Trail, which includes two UNESCO World Heritage Sites. There are plenty of other trails to be explored as well – from craft beer and wine trails, to the scenic trails that weave in and out of our majestic state parks.

Outdoor enthusiasts will find no shortage of natural beauty and adventure throughout the state. Illinois is also home to the ultimate adventure, the mother of all road trips: Illinois Route 66. This 300-mile stretch of the most famous American roadway is steeped in legend and filled with nostalgic eats, quirky museums and all kinds of kitsch. To experience some of our nation's most famous history, you can step back in time in the state capital of Springfield where you can follow in Abraham Lincoln's footsteps.

Illinois is like no other state, and when you visit, you're sure to find that we are a destination filled with a wide range of offerings. When you have everything, you know there's something for everyone.

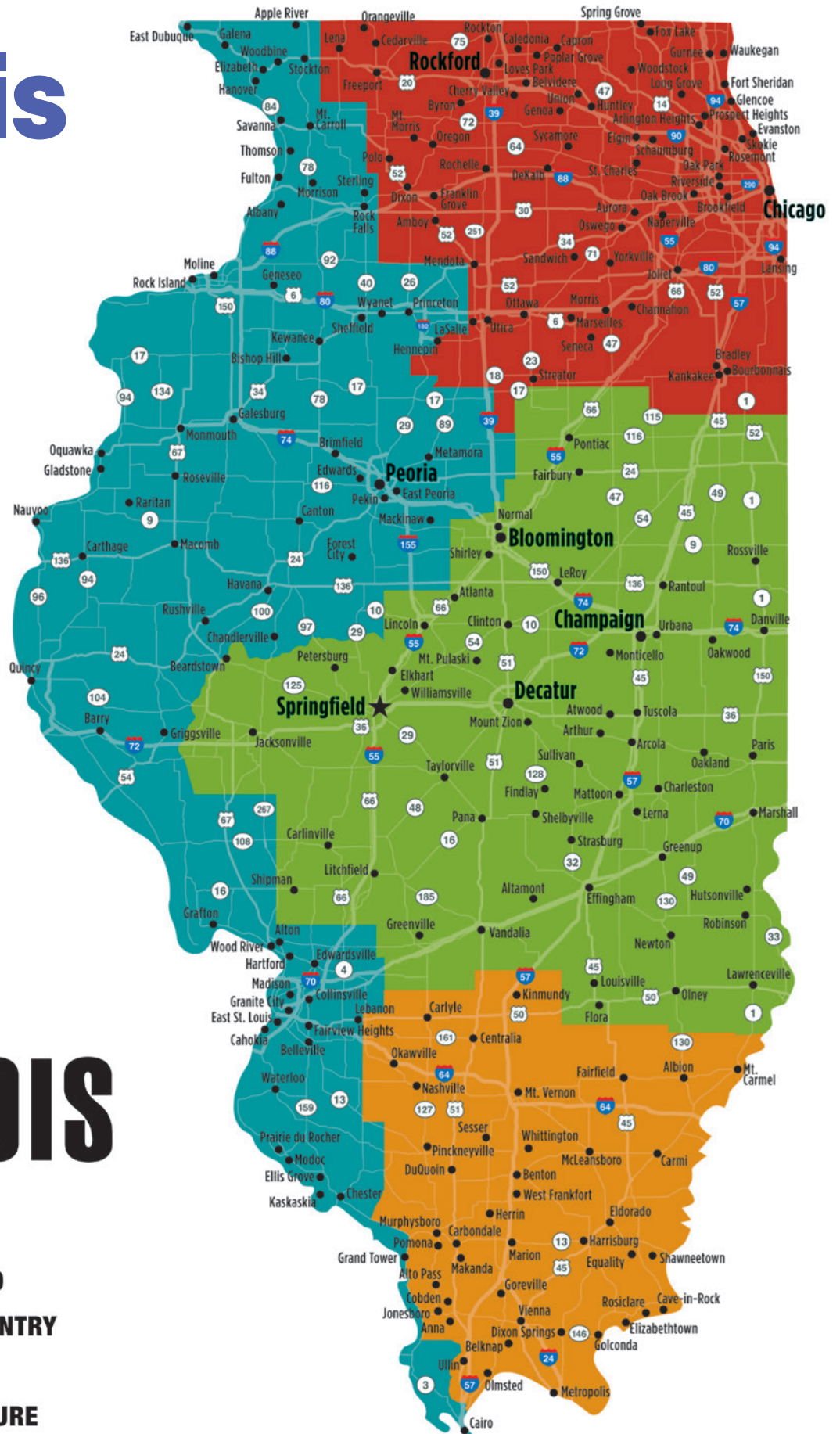
To learn more about the incredible offerings and group itineraries throughout the state, we encourage you to visit tourillinois.org for more information and the resources to start planning your travel in the Land of Lincoln.

We hope to see you soon.

Jan Kemmerling
Acting Deputy Director
Illinois Office of Tourism



enjoy
illinois



ILLINOIS STATE MAP

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

Loving the LAND OF

Central Illinois is full of activities and attractions

Central Illinois is home to captivating attractions and enticing experiences that will excite any group traveler. From its historic landmarks to its natural beauty, Central Illinois has something for everyone.

Arcola is home to the **Aikman Wildlife Adventure**, a family-owned, family-friendly zoo that features more than 200 animals. Aikman gives guests the opportunity to not only walk through the park, but drive along a designated path to peek into the enclosures. Housing many species of exotic and domestic animals, this zoo offers an exciting and educational experience for visitors. Wagon rides are available for animal feeding and group tours.

Arthur is a town packed full of culture and the feeling of home. Travel to Arthur to see shops like **Countryside Amish Furniture** to

view the beauty in the home-made items that are being sold in town, enjoy the home-made food at **Yoder's Kitchen** and explore Amish Country backroads to learn more about the culture that flourishes here.

Located in Champaign, the **William M. Staerkel Planetarium** sits as the second largest planetarium in Illinois. It offers educational and immersive shows revolving around the planets and the solar system including many shows that can be reserved based off of grade level and age.

Danville is home to the **Vermilion County Museum**, which was built as a replica of the 1833 county courthouse where Abraham Lincoln practiced law from 1841 to 1859. The museum gives guests the experience of wandering the halls and rooms where our 16th president stayed. Original furniture and artwork decorate the historical house still. Exhibits include the Lincoln Law Office in Danville, a schoolhouse, coal mine shaft and



Monticello Railway Museum

Enjoy Illinois



Vermilion County Museum



Photo courtesy of Adam Alexander

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

LINCOLN





Enjoy Illinois

Old State Capitol in Springfield

more. Guests have the opportunity to learn more about the future president and his host, William Fithian, during their visit. Bus tours and other tour groups are welcome.

Those seeking to savor the great outdoors can visit **Kickapoo State Recreation Area**, located just outside of Danville, which offers a large variety of activities for any group excursion. Experience the best of nature by enjoying the familial and convivial aura of canoeing, mountain biking, picnics and camping. Build bonds with nightly bonfires and star viewing. Equipment for biking, canoeing, kayaking and paddle boarding are available on site so packing and travel are easy. Visiting in winter? Kickapoo State Recreation Area offers many snowy activities, including skiing, sledding, ice fishing and ice skating.

In the village of Downs resides **The Epiphany Farms Estate**. This farm specializes in a farm-to-table experience and operates using sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural methods for raising crops and animals. Tours provide an overview of its operations. Groups can also make the short drive into Bloomington to enjoy the fruits of the farms' labor for dinner at **Epiphany Farms Restaurant**. Other great eating options include **Anju Above** (Asian-inspired food) and **Bakery and Pickle** (a modern speakeasy) in Bloomington and **Old Bank Restaurant & Bar** in Leroy (pub fare and brunch).

In Monticello, groups can visit the **Allerton Park and Retreat Center**, a 1,517-acre park, nature center and conference center. Surrounded by vast gardens decorated with timeless pieces of art, the Allerton stands alone in its historical beauty. Groups can stay in one of the 41 antique-decorated rooms on site or register for one of the three houses scattered among the estate. Have a peaceful breakfast or lunch at the Greenhouse Café, whose cottage-like atmosphere and surrounding greenery provide a way for guests to enjoy the beautiful Illinois breeze. Groups can also sign up for one of the mansion's tours and take garden tours.

The **Monticello Railway Museum** was founded in 1966 and has since been used for public viewing and train rides. Enjoy a ride in vintage train cars to the museum where you are encouraged to explore the train car exhibits and learn more about their history. If checked ahead of time, groups can ride on Steam Locomotive Southern No. 401, which only runs once a month. The museum hosts many events based on holiday and seasonal influence.

In Petersburg, **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site** has a re-creation of the town where young Abe Lincoln spent six years of his life. You can see log cabins, a school house, Miller's Blacksmith Shop and an equestrian statue that shows the past president riding a horse with a book in hand.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield gives guests the

ability to learn more about the 16th president through artifacts, stories and exhibits. Groups can walk through the Plaza and get pictures with Abraham Lincoln's family before heading off to see the Treasures Gallery, which is home to artifacts and photos that belonged to the Lincoln family. Children can play in Mrs. Lincoln's attic, where they can don a dress just like hers and play with educational Abraham Lincoln toys.

As a part of one of Illinois' National Historic sites, **The Lincoln Home** sits in Springfield as one of the most popular museums to visit. The house was built in 1839 and since its opening to the public has been restored to all of its 1860 glory.

Some of the rooms that can be seen on tours include Abraham Lincoln's bedroom, the formal parlor and the kitchen. Groups will get to see these historically decorated and preserved rooms while learning about Lincoln and the history of his family and his professional endeavors.

Springfield is a celebrated capital city with many opportunities to visit some of the oldest and most historically prominent buildings in Illinois.

The **Old State Capitol** has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places and features incredible historical context within the life of President Lincoln. In these halls is where Lincoln gave his famous speech to the House of Representatives in 1858, where he stationed his presidential campaign in 1860, and where he was honored and laid in state after his assassination in 1865.

Oak Ridge Cemetery, located in Springfield, is the resting place and memorial of Lincoln, his wife and three of his sons. This memorial is decorated with statues, plaques engraved with Lincoln's words, and flags to honor and mark the tombs. Guests can walk through the memorial and read some of Lincoln's speeches while paying homage to him, his works and his family.

Located on old Route 66 in Pontiac, the **Pontiac-Oakland Automobile Museum** contains one of the world's greatest collections of Pontiac and Oakland automobile brand items. The museum features a collection of different forms of memorabilia such as model cars, books or magazines and old motor oil cans.

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

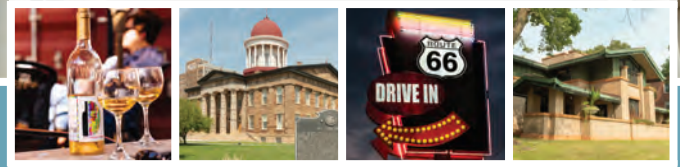
For more information, including phone numbers and websites of attractions in this region, visit LeisureGroupTravel.com/illinois-group-tour-planner

PLAN ON **unique.**



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

LET US HELP YOU CREATE A LEGENDARY EVENT!



enjoy **illinois**

Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau
VisitSpringfieldIllinois.com | 800-545-7300  

BN

Awe



IN BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

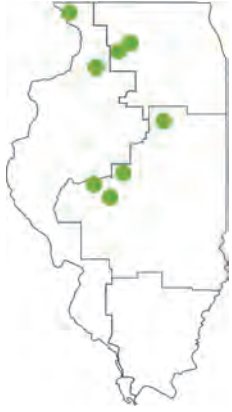
Our Visitors Center features
Route 66 & Abraham Lincoln history!



enjoy **illinois**
Visit **BN**

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL AREA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

800.433.8226 / VisitBN.org

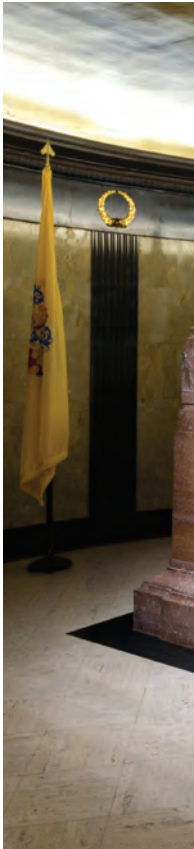


Famous, Important People and Places

*Springfield, Petersburg, Lincoln, Pontiac, Dixon,
Grand Detour, Tampico, Galena*

Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield

Illinois Office of Tourism



Lincoln Family Tomb



Illinois Office of Tourism

DAY 1

MORNING

To begin your tour visiting places of national significance, discover the Abraham Lincoln sites in Springfield, the capital of Illinois and the city where America's 16th president spent much of his life. The **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum** not only has some rare artifacts but dazzling high-tech exhibits and theater shows as well. At the nearby **Old State Capitol**, see where Lincoln delivered his famous House Divided speech and where his body lay in state after the assassination. As a lawyer, he tried hundreds of cases in the Illinois Supreme Court, once housed in the building. The old capitol served as the backdrop for the 2007 launch of Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

AFTERNOON

After a visit to **Lincoln's Tomb** in Springfield's Oak Ridge Cemetery, take a ranger-led tour of the only home Lincoln

ever owned, the centerpiece of **Lincoln Home National Historic Site**, a four-block historic district. In the visitor center, don't miss the movie about Lincoln's life in Springfield. Cap your day of Lincoln lore at **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site**, a log-cabin village near Petersburg that recreates the Railsplitter's stomping grounds as a young adult.

EVENING

Illinois is home to a variety of delicious eats. **Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum** in Springfield features delicious pub food and drinks, a gaming room and a museum designed for neon sign enthusiasts.

Groups can dine amid local memorabilia in the private museum room. On the menu are many varieties of the open-faced sandwich called the horseshoe, a Springfield specialty that consists of thick-sliced toasted bread, a hamburger patty or other meat, french fries and cheese sauce.

Springfield's hometown hero



Illinois Office of Tourism

DAY 2

MORNING

Head northeast on Interstate 55 for Lincoln, another town with Route 66 roots and reminders of Abraham Lincoln. Learn about Honest Abe's early life in Illinois at Lincoln College's **Lincoln Heritage Museum**, which has artifacts and high-

tech audio-visual displays. Then check out the **Railsplitter Covered Wagon** on Old Route 66. A roadside attraction designated the world's largest covered wagon by the Guinness Book of World Records, it features a seated Abraham Lincoln fiberglass figure reading a law book.

POST CARD.

Wish you were here!

"Boats, Buggies, & Broadway," Sullivan serves as the county seat of Moultrie County and is home to The Little Theatre On The Square, the only Equity (professional) theatre located between Chicago and St. Louis. In addition, the city serves as the north gateway to Lake Shelbyville and also marks the west edge of the area's largest Amish settlement.

Boats Buggies Broadway

Visit Moultrie County

www.visitmoultrieil.com
(217) 728-4223

enjoy illinois

AFTERNOON

Pontiac is home to the free-admission **Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum**, which celebrates the people and businesses that served motorists on the

fabled national highway, dubbed Mother Road. A great place for group photos is the huge Route 66 shield mural that emblazons the building's back wall. Next door is the free **Livingston County War Museum**, a

repository of gear, uniforms and other U.S. military mementoes from World War I up to current Middle East conflicts. Also free is the nearby **Pontiac-Oakland Automobile Museum**, which spotlights the popular Pontiac brand and the development of early car travel in America.



John Deere Historic Site, Grand Detour

EVENING

Pontiac's **Eagle Theater**, a restored movie house dating back to 1939, can host your group for a play or musical revue with a dinner buffet.

DAY 3

MORNING

Venturing to northwestern Illinois, your tour members will find more attractions with presidential connections. In Dixon, tour the **Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home**, where the 40th president of the United States lived with his parents and brother

The John Deere Attractions



Ulysses S. Grant Home, Galena

Visitgalena.org

from 1920-1923. Not far away, by the Rock River, is a statue of Reagan on horseback. Also nearby is the **Northwest Territory Historic Center**, a converted 1908 school building with a President Reagan History Room, a collection of original Reagan movie posters and the restored sixth grade classroom of “Dutch” Reagan (as the future movie star and president was known). Other exhibits focus on pioneer and Native American history.

AFTERNOON

Head to Main Street in the little farm town of Tampico for a look at the **Ronald Reagan Birthplace & Museum**. On the second floor of a vintage commercial building, your group can tour the restored apartment (furnished with period pieces) where Reagan was born in 1911. The lower level features a gift shop and exhibits about Reagan’s life as an actor and politician, plus a restored 1920s bank. Then return to Dixon and follow the Rock River to **John Deere Historic Site** in Grand Detour, where visitors learn how Deere created the first commercially successful steel plow—and changed the world of agriculture forever. Watch live blacksmith demonstrations in a replica of Deere’s original shop and tour his home for a glimpse of pioneer life in 1836.

EVENING

Back in Dixon, enjoy Italian fare at **Basil Tree Ristorante**. Or go to **Angelo’s Pizzeria** for its famed spaghetti pizza or the mac-n-cheese variety.

DAY 4

MORNING

Today we venture to Galena in the far northwest corner of Illinois. One of the Midwest’s best-preserved 19th century towns, it abounds with historical sites, fine eateries and a Main Street lined with specialty shops. Your first stop is the **Ulysses S. Grant Home State Historic Site**, where the Civil War hero and 18th U.S. president

lived after returning from the war and for brief periods during his presidency (1869-1877) and retirement. The two-story brick house contains many of Grant’s possessions and some original furnishings. Learn more about Grant and local history at the **Galena & U.S. Grant Museum**, where guests are greeted by Grant himself in hologram form.

AFTERNOON

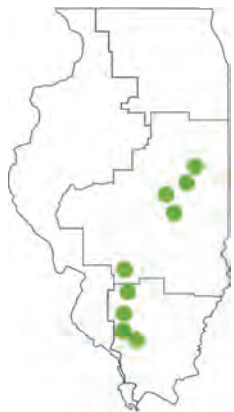
Enjoy free time to explore Galena’s architectural treasures and peruse the Main Street shops for everything from fashions and jewelry to artwork, antiques and gourmet foods.

enjoy
illinois

ABEmazing EXPERIENCE

CERTIFICATE of EXCELLENCE 2019

PresidentLincoln.Illinois.gov
217-558-8844
212 North 6th Street, Springfield, IL 62701



Agritourism Adventures

Champaign, Rantoul, Bement, Arthur, Greenville, Carlyle, Nashville, Pinckneyville, Du Quoin

Central Illinois Amish Country:
Life in the slow lane





Marcoot Jersey Creamery in Greenville makes artisan cheeses.

Illinois Office of Tourism

DAY 1

MORNING

Go behind the scenes on a tour at **Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch** in Champaign. Your group will discover the world of honey bees, see how cider is made and taste some of the apple varieties grown at this family farm that has entertained several generations of visitors. Tour members get an apple cider donut and cider in a keepsake apple cup. There's time to shop for apple butter, apple fritters and other goodies in the country store and bakery. For lunch, your group can enjoy Italian beef or pulled pork sandwiches, with iced pumpkin bars for dessert, at the farm's Flying Monkey Cafe.

AFTERNOON

Learn about small-scale sustainable farming on an educational tour of Champaign's **Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery**. In addition to meeting with the goats that produce milk for the farmstead's cheeses and gelato, your travelers will walk through the vegetable garden and orchard, and taste some of the products. There might be a chance to pick peaches, apples or berries.

Hardy's Reindeer Ranch in nearby Rantoul keeps visitors busy with corn mazes and tractor-driven tours focusing on its 16 Alaskan reindeer and Christmas tree farm. Have your picture taken kissing a reindeer.

EVENING

For dinner at Hardy's, schedule an outdoor weenie roast or a Texas BBQ dinner with stage entertainment in the Western-style banquet facility.

DAY 2

MORNING

On your way to Illinois Amish Country, stop by **Sundrop Alpacas** in Bement. See the adorable animals and shop for yarn, socks, mittens and other products made from alpaca fleece, which is as soft as cashmere and warmer than wool. The town of Arthur is the hub of the 2,000-strong Amish community in Douglas and Moultrie counties. Local tour operators can work with you to set up an Amish farm visit. They also can arrange for you to see master craftsmen making Amish furniture or watch horse-drawn buggies being constructed.

AFTERNOON

For lunch, your group can dine on hearty fare in an Amish home or at **Yoder's Kitchen**, a large, group-friendly restaurant famous for its fried chicken meals served family-style. For groups touring in fall, **The Great Pumpkin Patch**



The Great Pumpkin Patch, Arthur

Illinois Office of Tourism

Simply Arthur



Stirring the whey at Marcoot Jersey Creamery

Marcoot Jersey Creamery

in Arthur, one of Illinois' great agritourism attractions, celebrates the season with fun exhibits and displays of over 100 varieties of pumpkins, squash and gourds. The farm's Homestead Bakery, open year-round, tempts the sweet tooth with cinnamon rolls, cookies and angel food cakes. For more treats, spend some time in downtown Arthur. Specialty shops offer cheeses, fudge and baked goods, along with fabrics, crafts and antiques. The old-time soda fountain at **Dick's Pharmacy** whips up scrumptious ice cream creations. Another Amish Country option: a wagon tour any time of year at **Aikman Wildlife Adventure**, a drive-thru wildlife park populated by exotic animals, including zebras, camels and water buffalo, as well as bison, horses and more familiar creatures. The walk-thru area has a petting zoo and other habitats for smaller animals.

DAY 3

MORNING

The cheese made at **Marcoot Jersey Creamery** in Greenville is really creamy because milk from grass-fed Jersey cows has a high



Agriculture in the spotlight: Illinois Rural Life Museum, Pinckneyville

IllinoisSouth Tourism



cream content. At the artisan creamery that opened on a seventh-generation dairy farm in 2010, one-hour group tours include samples of five or six cheeses. 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. Try your hand at milking a simulated cow. Among 20 cheese varieties for sale are the popular cheese curds (plain cheddar or with garlic herb or sriracha flavoring). For more insight into the local dairy industry, take your group to **The Milk House** at Rolling Lawns Farm.

Don't leave Greenville without stopping at the quirky **DeMoulin Museum**, which is housed in a former church. Your group will learn about one of the largest manufacturers of marching band uniforms and enjoy hands-on encounters with lodge-initiation devices—like the spanking machine, bucking goat, trick chair and electric branding iron—once made by Greenville's DeMoulin company.

AFTERNOON

Follow Route 127 down to Carlyle and stop at **Ten Pin Antiques**, an antique mall that occupies a former bowling alley complete with the old signage, score-keeping monitors and bowling lanes. Continue on to Nashville and **Rainbow Ranch Petting Zoo**, where Alan Blumhorst shows you his menagerie. Besides pigs, goats and other farm critters,

the tour features exotic animals like camels, zebras, kangaroos and emus. Your group will enjoy mingling with the donkeys and miniature horses. There's a macaw show, too.

Pinckneyville is home to the **Illinois Rural Life Museum**, a treasure house of farming implements and other antiques. Charles and Mary Greer, who ran a local hog farm, will take your group through two huge buildings filled with everything from tractors to rope-making machines. Perhaps the lard kettle, sausage stuffer or apple cider press will catch your eye. Period displays include a farm house, general store, and doctor and dentist offices from way back when. Then visit Pinckneyville's 1871 **Perry County Jail Museum** and see the prisoner art inside the cells where Perry County housed its bad guys. There's also a bedroom in the building where incarcerated women stayed. The sheriff and his family lived in the jail-residence complex until the 1970s.

EVENING

For dinner, travel to Du Quoin's **St. Nicholas Brewing Company**, an upscale brewpub in a historic hotel building dating from 1879. Menu favorites range from catfish filets with fries and hush puppies to gourmet mac & cheese and sourdough-crust pizzas. Wash it down with craft beer made on site.



Charles Greer leads tours at Illinois Rural Life Museum.

Historic and Cultural Attractions in

GREAT RIVERS COUNTRY



These river cities bring fresh perspectives to the past and present

Celebration Belle



The history of Illinois is written not in ink—but water. It is impossible to imagine the state’s cultural migrations and economic growth without waterways like the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, which bonded Native American civilizations, drew French traders to the region and accelerated the industrial development of today’s thriving cities. Groups can walk through preserved settlements, enlightening museums and lively entertainment districts throughout the state’s Great Rivers County.

Built into the steep Driftless Area hillside, **Galena** is a city out of time. Once the largest Mississippi River trade port north of St. Louis, this boomtown thrived during the steamboat era, but the popularization of train travel and the beginning of the Civil War stunted its economic development. Fortunately, the city has flourished as a tourism destination, and your group can walk the curving streets that have changed little since the 1840s. **Galena’s Historic Main Street** is lined with more than 125 restaurants and shops and can be easily explored on foot, or you can embark on a **Galena Trolley Tour** to pass famous buildings like the **DeSoto House Hotel** (where Abraham Lincoln delivered a speech from the balcony in 1856). Orient your group to local history with a visit to the **Ulysses S.**



Galena

Grant State Historic Site. The famed Civil War general lived and eventually retired here before and after his presidency, and a docent can offer a thorough tour of this Italianate-style manor that retains its 1865 furnishings. History buffs will also want to tour the **Dowling House**, one of the state’s oldest surviving buildings and an exceptional example of Galena’s limestone-based architecture.

Downstream is the town of **Fulton**, best known for its Mississippi River views and strong Dutch heritage. The city’s signature attraction is the **De Immigrant Windmill**, a nearly 100-foot-tall engineering marvel that was pre-fabricated in the Netherlands. The fully operational mill grinds buckwheat, corn, rye and wheat, and you can learn about Fulton’s long history with the Dutch people in the adjacent **Windmill Cultural Center**. Groups will also enjoy the city’s **Heritage Canyon**, a 12-acre abandoned quarry that is now populated with 19th century buildings like a schoolhouse, church and log cabin. Further history awaits at the nearby **Albany Mounds State Historic Site**. These preserved burial structures give key insight into the Hopewell people, who occupied this region for over 10,000 years and whose artifacts suggest a civilization of advanced trade routes and religious practices.

The **Quad Cities** is a bi-state region united by the Mississippi River. Each downtown and main street offers its own vibe with entertainment, live music, craft breweries, restaurants, museums, and attractions.

Moline, on the Illinois side of the river is home to **Deere & Company’s World Headquarters** and the **John Deere Pavilion**. The pavilion showcases vintage farming equipment, cutting-edge technological prototypes, interactive experiences, history on John Deere and the company and exhibits on how they work to feed the world. Professional guides tell the story of John Deere and Deere & Company. The **John Deere Store**, next door, stocks gifts for friends back home. For unbeatable views and a delicious meal, set sail on **Celebration River Cruises**. The **Celebration Belle** riverboat can transport 750 passengers around scenic bends on



Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse in Rock Island

the Mississippi River, and the company offers several meal packages and themed excursions such as Fall Foliage and Big Band.

Located on a 946-acre island on the Mississippi River, the **Rock Island Arsenal** is one of the largest government-owned weapons manufacturing sites in the nation. It is home of the **First Army headquarters**, and the **U.S. Army's Center of Excellence for Additive Manufacturing**. The island was originally established as a government site in 1816, with the building of Fort Armstrong. Placed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1969, the island offers group tours that include a stop at a former bridge site that dates back to 1856, and replicas of officers' quarters when the island was an operational military fort. Guests can also explore the **Mississippi River Visitors Center** to learn about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' lock and dam system.

The **Quad City Botanical Center in Rock Island** features exotic tropical flowers, a 14-foot waterfall and reflecting pools. Also in Rock Island, experience an evening of live entertainment at **The Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse**. One of only a few dinner theaters still in existence, Circa '21 delivers exceptional shows in a beautifully restored Art Deco theater. Even your servers perform on the stage. Upcoming productions will include *Beauty & the Beast*, *Guys and Dolls* and *The Savannah Sipping Society*.

Discover the region's rich Native American history at the **Black Hawk State Historic Site**, a 208-acre preserved area the great Sauk warrior, Black Hawk, once called home. The grounds near and around the site were once home to **Saukenuck Village**

– one of the largest Native American Indian settlements in North America. Your party can walk along the Rock River, learn about Sauk culture at the **John Hauberg Indian Museum** or embark on a wildflower hike with a local naturalist.

For outdoor adventure and diverse dining, travel into the state's interior to **Peoria**. Situated along the Illinois River, this welcoming city is a group-friendly standout in central Illinois. Begin with an introduction to Peoria's most famous import at the **Caterpillar Visitors Center**, where

you can learn how the famous machinery company helped construct the Panama Canal, experience 3D project management in the Immersive Visualization Center and see the industry's 21st century potential in the Future Theater. Also along the water is the **Peoria Riverfront Museum**, a multi-disciplinary education center where you can explore a sculpture garden, admire antique vehicles and be transported to outer space at the Dome Planetarium. Visitors to these attractions may spot a turn-of-the-20th-century paddleboat leisurely floating down the Illinois River. That's the **Spirit of Peoria**, which offers peerless city skyline views and a diverse selection of cruise programming, from sightseeing excursions to the Southern-themed Dixieland Dinner Cruise.

Landlubbers will find plenty of evening options in Peoria's **RiverFront District**, a lively area where groups can enjoy a leisurely meal, try a new cocktail and listen to live music with views of the water. Local favorites include **Rhythm Kitchen Music Café** (the go-to location for Creole specialties), **Blue Duck BBQ Tavern** (which specializes in mouthwatering brisket sandwiches) and **Martini's on Water Street** (where you can sip 100 variations of the famous drink in a renovated train station). **Wildlife Prairie Park** just west of the city offers "untamed" trek adventures where groups can ride through an undisturbed prairie landscape inhabited by over 50 species native to



Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site

Illinois. For a unique lodging experience, consider an overnight stay in the property's converted Santa Fe train cabooses.

Mormonism's original settlement until religious intolerance forced Joseph Smith and his followers to depart in 1844, the city of **Nauvoo** retains much of the architecture and evidence that nearly over 10,000 Mormons once lived here. Orient your group at the **Joseph Smith Historic Site**, which provides background on the Mormons' migration west before you begin a walking tour of the city. Tours can include the **Webb Brothers' Blacksmith Shop** for ironwork demonstrations, the **Red Brick Store** (which replicates dry goods merchandise from the 1840s) and a home that belonged to famed Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints president Brigham Young. For more Mormon history, visit the nearby town of **Carthage** to tour a jail where Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were persecuted.

Filled with architectural jewels that represent the Gothic, Queen Anne and Arts & Crafts styles, **Quincy** offers a 15-building tour for motorcoach groups to experience at their own pace. The city's Greek Revival highlight is the **John Wood Mansion**, home of Quincy's founder and the 12th governor of Illinois. Visitors can walk through a preserved log cabin built in 1837 and a parsonage building that houses Adams County artifacts that date back centuries.

Alton, a city brimming with antique stores and quaint cafes that await your browsing, is also site of **Lincoln-Douglas Debate Square**. It was here in 1858 where the two men would modernize political debates, and the event that drew over 6,000 spectators would launch Abraham Lincoln to national prominence. Groups can take a self-guided tour past plaques that explain the abolitionist movement of the 1850s, and a life-sized statue of the two men is an ideal photo opportunity. Also in Alton is the **National Great Rivers Museum**, which investigates the influence of the Mississippi River on transportation technology and American culture. Interactive exhibits include a dam simulator and an aquarium that spotlights the river's ecological diversity.

A great place to stop for a photo in Alton is the **Piasa Bird**, a painting on the bluffs of a dragon-like beast that was said to have terrorized and devoured natives.

The region east of St. Louis is where famed explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark would stop before venturing to the Pacific Ocean. The **Lewis & Clark**

Historic Site in Hartford reconstructs Fort Dubois, where the Corps of Discovery made its final preparations during the winter of 1803-1804. Exhibits replicate 1803 U.S. Army designs, and daily interpreters explain to visitors the harsh Midwestern winters the crew endured. Visitors can also take an elevator ride up the **Lewis & Clark Confluence Tower**, which honors the Corps of Discovery launch on May 14, 1804 and rises over 150 feet tall for a great view of the Missouri and Mississippi river confluence. **Edwardsville**, the third-oldest city in Illinois, is home to the historic **Willey Theatre**. Opened in 1909 as an opera house and a second-floor meeting hall for the Independent Order of Oddfellows, the Willey was designated a local landmark in 1986.

Another great group stop is the **Cahokia Mounds Historic Site in Collinsville**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that encompasses over 2,000 acres of archaeological remains and 70 burial mounds. Group tours can include the interpretive center (which houses a recreated Cahokia village), several natural trails and a walk to the top of the 100-foot Monk's Mound (the largest man-made mound north of Mexico).

The city of **Prairie du Rocher** is one of the oldest remaining municipalities in the world that began as a French outpost, and you can learn about southern Illinois Francophile connections at the nearby **Fort de Chartres State Historic Site**. Named for House of Bourbon member Louis, Duke of Chartres, the structure was a major hub for 18th century French merchants before it was overtaken by British forces in the French & Indian War and left to ruin. A reconstruction of the fort is now receptive to visitors, who can walk the garrisons, learn about colonial life from historic reenactors and see the powder magazine.

Named for fertile plains and reminiscent of the Nile Delta, **Cairo** is Illinois' southernmost city and site of Fort Defiance, a Civil War fortification built on the strategic convergence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. While most of the structures have been removed, your group will have unobstructed views of America's greatest waterway from **Fort Defiance Park**.

For additional information, visit www.visitillinois.com. **IL**

For more information, including phone numbers and websites of attractions in this region, visit LeisureGroupTravel.com/illinois-group-tour-planner

ENCOUNTER A
DUTCH TREAT
InRealLife



visit  [willinois.com](http://www.visitillinois.com)
#NWillinoisIRL
enjoy
illinois

Cruise on the Celebration Belle



The largest non-gaming excursion vessel on the Mississippi River

☞ Narrated Lunch & Sightseeing Cruises
☞ Captains Dinner Cruises

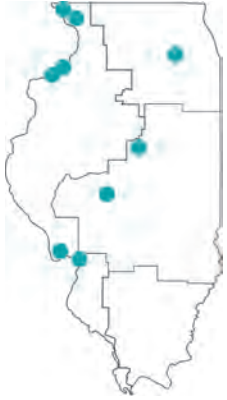
4 Hour Themed Lunch Cruises:

- ☞ Classic Oldies ☞ Big Band
- ☞ Keys & Country ☞ Fall Foliage
- ☞ Broadway & Movie Tunes
- ☞ Christian Music & Dance

All Day Cruises:

- ☞ Quad Cities and Dubuque, IA
- ☞ Fall Cruises to Wisconsin

Cruises Boarding out of Moline, IL and Dubuque, IA
Contact Susan at (800)297-0034 x204
susan@celebrationbelle.com
www.celebrationbelle.com



Illinois is Home to a Variety of Delicious Eats

*Elizabeth, Galena, Rock Island, Moline, Aurora, Bloomington,
Springfield, Alton, Grafton*





Galena Cellars

DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your journey in Elizabeth with a visit to **Dittmar Farms and Orchard** (open Saturday and Sunday). Operating since 1854, this family-owned farm specializes in apples, sweet corn, pumpkins and doughnuts. The farm offers seasonal activities such as scenic hayrides, u-pick apples, a corn maze and u-pick pumpkins. In 2018, Dittmar Farms expanded by opening a retail shop in Elizabeth, where you can purchase fresh-baked farm products year-round. Another Elizabeth treasure is **Eshelman Pottery**, 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.

AFTERNOON

The charming town of Galena resides 20 minutes from Elizabeth. Your group can satiate its hunger with a visit to a multitude of restaurants, including **Frank O'Dowd's Irish Pub and Grill**. This restaurant features an expanded menu and extensive beverage selections. After eating, your group can venture to **River Bend Gallery**, where professional artist Geoffrey Mikol creates stunning photographs that shed new light on the natural surroundings of Galena. **Pinder Pottery** (open Saturday and Sunday) specializes in handmade art crafted in Galena. Joe Pinder creates intricate and functional stoneware pottery for everyday use that are beautiful and make perfect gifts. Next, your group can head to **Blaum Bros. Distilling Co.**, where you can savor a delightful beverage. The Blaum brothers set up shop in Galena in 2013 and hand-craft small batches of rye, whiskey and vodka by meticulously controlling the process, from sourcing grains from local farmers, to milling, mashing and distilling in their custom-made copper still. Blaum Bros. has become a popular tourist attraction, thanks in part to its spirits tours that take visitors through the distillation area to the barrel room and concludes in a tranquil tasting room.

EVENING

Galena Cellars offers its visitors the chance to relax among acres of rolling farmland while sampling more than 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 glass of wine in hand. For dinner, Galena is home to a variety of top-flight restaurants, including **Fried Green Tomatoes**, a modern Italian-American restaurant in a brick-and-stone setting, and **Log Cabin Steakhouse**, which has been operating continuously since 1937 and is Galena's oldest eating establishment. Another fine option is to take a short drive east to Stephenson County, which is home to three breweries in a less than eight-mile radius: **Lena Brewing** (a dog-friendly brewery nestled among the rolling farm fields near the village of Lena), **Wishful Acres** (a small family farm and artisanal craft brewery in Lena) and **Generations Brewing** (an industrial-chic tap room in Freeport that offers artisan ales and lagers in all shapes and sizes).



Blaum Bros.

DAY 2

MORNING

Travel 90 miles to the Quad Cities, where you can enjoy a hearty breakfast at **QC Coffee & Pancake House**, located in historic Rock Island. This popular eatery serves breakfast and lunch items, including omelettes, sandwiches, burgers and cinnamon roll pancakes. Also in Rock Island, stop in at **Wild Cherry Spoon Co.** They use ethically harvested urban lumber to create handcrafted wooden spoons, spatulas, pizza cutters, cutting boards and more.

AFTERNOON

The Quad Cities is home to a unique style of pizza, featuring a crispy hand-tossed malt crust, scissor-cut strips, a healthy amount of mozzarella, generous portions of crumbly sausage meat and a spicy tomato sauce. Locals frequent their favorite Quad City-style pizza places including **Harris Pizza** (which opened in Rock Island in 1960) and **Frank's Pizza** (which opened in 1955 in Silvis). Both claim to have invented the Quad Cities-style pizza. Another fun pizza can be found at Happy Joe's (more than 13 Happy Joe's restaurants are scattered throughout

the Quad Cities). Its founder, Joe Whitty, invented the taco pizza more than 40 years ago. For generations, the Quad Cities has been home to an old-fashioned ice cream parlor that creates 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.

EVENING

The new **QC Ale Trail** introduces visitors to the 13 breweries (and counting) in the Quad Cities and invites beer lovers on a self-guided tour of the local craft breweries across the region. Groups can enjoy food and beverages at these breweries, and craft beer enthusiasts can use their mobile phone to check in at the breweries to earn commemorative QC Ale Trail items. Or, you can download the paper passport from the website (www.qcaletrail.com) and get it stamped at each local brewery you visit.

DAY 3

MORNING

Two hours east of Moline is Aurora, where you can start your day with a trip to **Endiro Coffee**, a tree-to-cup coffee company born in Uganda with a global vision to end child vulnerability. Endiro imports raw coffee from Uganda, where it is roasted and brewed in the Aurora coffee shop. The profits of Endiro help to end child vulnerability in the communities where they operate, from farms in Uganda to its partnerships with local child-focused charities in Aurora.

AFTERNOON

One of the newest entrants into Aurora's culinary scene is also one of its most celebrated as **Hardware Sustainable Gastropub and Brewery** serves delicious food and more than 450 whiskeys from around the world. Hardware offers custom blends, rare finds and distillers' private selections and also features numerous local beer options and a full list of organic biodynamic and sustainable wines. Generous patio seating is accompanied by a roaring fire pit and gathering space and strings of fresh hops from the adjacent BBGB Hop Farm, where essentials for Hardware's illustrious craft brews are grown on-site.

EVENING

A brisk two-hour drive will take you from Aurora to Bloomington, where you can visit **Epiphany Farms**, which has three restaurants in downtown Bloomington and one in Leroy. Epiphany Farms Restaurant serves family-style dinners and brunch, and all of the Epiphany Farms restaurants serve food from their over 70-acre working farmland with livestock and greenhouses.



Bloomington-Normal Area CVB

Epiphany Farms in Bloomington

DAY 4

MORNING

Barns are a staple of the Midwestern landscape. The artisans of **Sangamon**

Reclaimed in Springfield are determined to keep the story of every barn alive. A collective of local veterans and firefighters carefully dismantles these barns and turns the wood into new works of furniture and art.

AFTERNOON

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 featuring thick-sliced toasted bread, a hamburger patty, french fries and coated in a rich cheese sauce, the horseshoe is a delicacy Springfield residents 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**. 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. 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 makes it a popular destination for hungry road-trippers. Those seeking a one-of-a-kind dining experience can visit **Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill and Museum**, which features delicious pub food and drinks, a gaming room and a museum designed for car racing enthusiasts.

Another option is to drive 45 miles south, where you can visit Ariston Café in Litchfield, the oldest continually-operating restaurant on Route 66. The Ariston Café opened its doors in 1924 and offers a range of food including American, Southern, Italian and Greek fare along with a fully-stocked bar. Another quality option is the **Chef's Shoppe**, a one-of-a-kind gourmet kitchen store in Edwardsville that for more than 20 years has been bringing fun, flavor and quality into kitchens. The Chef's Shoppe offers more than 70 flavors of popcorn every day as well as 160 bulk candy dispensers, saltwater taffy, hand-painted chocolates and 53 different types of



Cozy Dog Drive-In, Springfield

Enjoy Illinois

glass bottle soda. In Collinsville, **Old Herald Brewery and Distillery** is a family-friendly restaurant experience featuring craft beers and spirits produced on-site. It also offers one of the best destination craft distillery tours in

the country along with unique private event spaces celebrating the history of the city's nearly forgotten brewing and distillery plant.

For additional information, visit enjoyillinois.com.

enjoy illinois

TOUR THE AURORA AREA!

PARAMOUNT THEATRE

CHICAGO PREMIUM OUTLETS

EMERSON CREEK

FARNSWORTH HOUSE

AWARD WINNING THEATER DESIGNER OUTLET SHOPPING HISTORIC ATTRACTIONS

JUST 40 MILES WEST OF CHICAGO

Find out what makes the Aurora Area an amazing group tour destination.

aurora area
tourinaurora.com

Call Lisa Wisner, Group Sales Coordinator: 630.256.3192 or email lisa@enjoyaurora.com

Chicago
architecture
boat cruise

Illinois Office of Tourism/Jason Lindsey



CHICAGO & BEYOND

Group-friendly treasures and pleasures provide travel planners with a cornucopia of tour ideas

From the shores of Lake Michigan in America's third-largest city to surrounding suburbs and rural realms beyond, northeastern Illinois is jam-packed with things to see and do for touring groups. This populous quadrant of the state, a tourism region called Chicago & Beyond, abounds with itinerary-enhancing attractions, from museums, historic sites and state parks to theaters, casinos and sports arenas.

The iconic sights of Chicago could easily fill a week or two or three—if one had the luxury of time. Chances are, your time frame is limited, so you have to pick and choose wisely. One sure-fire choice is the downtown lakefront's Museum Campus, which harbors a triumvirate of top-notch institutions. Halls of dinosaurs captivate visitors to the **Field Museum**, while dolphins and other aquatic creatures inhabit the **Shedd Aquarium**, the country's largest indoor aquarium. The **Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum** presents dazzling sky shows.

Navy Pier, another Chicago lakefront magnet, offers a variety of diversions, including shops, restaurants, live music at the Miller Lite Beer Garden and amusements like the sky-high Centennial Wheel. Lake Michigan cruises, some with meals served, afford panoramic views of the impressive skyline.

Several boat tour operators showcase sterling examples of architectural artistry on docent-narrated cruises along the Chicago River. Exhibits at the riverfront **Chicago Architecture Center**, overlooking the Michigan Avenue Bridge, spotlight famous skyscrapers in Chicago and around the world. It conducts architecture tours by foot, bus and boat.

Two of the city's lofty landmarks have observation decks. **Skydeck Chicago**, on the 103rd-floor of Willis Tower, challenges brave souls with The Ledge, a glass-enclosed balcony jutting four feet out from the facade of America's second-tallest building. On the 94th floor of 875 North Michigan Avenue (formerly the John Hancock Center), thrill seekers can experience the dizzying downward-facing views offered by the TILT, a tilted bay window at **360 CHICAGO**.

Millennium Park is the center of tourist activity in Chicago's Loop. At the park's *Cloud Gate* sculpture, better known as the "Bean," a tourist must-do is catching your reflection in its shiny aluminum skin. Other park pleasures: frolicking in the multimedia Crown Fountain, strolling through colorful gardens and enjoying summertime concerts. Across from Millennium Park is the **Art Institute of Chicago**, one of the largest art museums in the world.

More cultural immersion awaits a few miles south of the Loop. Highlights include the **DuSable Museum of African American History** and the massive **Museum of Science & Industry**, with its hands-on exhibits and artifacts like the World War II German submarine and walk-through body of a United Airlines jet.

National touring shows pack the house at majestic Loop theaters built as movie palaces or vaudeville venues in the early 20th century. **Broadway in Chicago's** schedule for 2020-2021 includes *Dear Evan Hansen* (July 7-September 27), *Six* (July 8-October 25), *Disney's Frozen* (October 21, 2020-January 3, 2021) and *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* (December 17, 2020-February 21, 2021).

Dozens of off-Loop theaters, such as the Steppenwolf, Royal George, Porchlight and Briar Street (home of long-running *Blue Man Group*), provide other crowd-pleasing options.

Critically acclaimed Broadway-caliber musicals are staged at **Drury Lane Theatre & Events**, close to Oakbrook Center, a spectacular outdoor shopping mall, west of Chicago via Interstate 88. Groups can take advantage of packages that combine a show and meal at the elegant on-site



DuMore Enjoying Page

Find group experiences familiar or uniquely unexpected in DuPage County.

CONTACT:
Ellen Klesta
630.575.8070 ext. 214
Ellen@DiscoverDuPage.com
DiscoverDuPage.com/Groups

DUPAGE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
enjoy illinois



Drury Lane Theatre in Oakbrook Terrace

Lucille Restaurant. On the upcoming playlist are *Steel Magnolias* (July 2-August 23), *Forever Plaid* (September 4-October 25), *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn* (November 6, 2020-January 3, 2021) and *Rodgers & Hammerstein's The King and I* (January 15-March 15, 2021). Group itineraries also can incorporate **Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art**, a captivating collection of jade carvings and other gemstone treasures in a new state-of-the-art Oak Brook location.

Take I-88 farther west to Lisle's **Morton Arboretum**, a 1,700-acre oasis of

woodlands, wetlands, prairie, lakes and meadows. Challenge yourself in the Maze Garden and stroll through the groves and gardens representing tree and plant species from around the world. Lisle also claims the **North American Pizza & Culinary Academy**, where groups can learn pizza-making techniques in a demonstration class and then dine on the results.

Aurora, the state's second-largest city, attracts groups with first-rate musicals and other productions at the **Paramount Theatre**, a jewel dating from 1931. **Hollywood Casino Aurora** lies two blocks away. Another Aurora draw, **Chicago Premium Outlets** shopping mall, lures bargain-hunters from far and wide.

In the city of Joliet, an hour southwest of Chicago via Interstate 55, live shows and behind-the-scenes tours bring groups to downtown's **Rialto Square Theatre**, an architectural beauty from the vaudeville era. History also comes alive on tours of the **Old Joliet Prison**, a castle-like former penitentiary where scenes from *The Blues Brothers* movie were filmed. For a chance to strike it rich, consider an outing to **Hollywood Casino Joliet** or **Harrah's Joliet Casino**. Summertime visitors can catch a **Joliet Slammers** minor league baseball game.

The **Kane County Cougars**, a Class A affiliate of the Arizona Diamondbacks, offers many amenities for groups at Northwestern Field in Geneva. Nestled on the scenic Fox River, picturesque Geneva is renowned for its beautiful parks, historic homes, fine restaurants and downtown specialty shops like The Little Traveler, with its 36 rooms of surprises.

Chicago Southland, an area representing 63 municipalities south of the big city, abounds with attractions perfectly suited for group tours. Rail fans find one of the most densely packed railroad regions in the U.S., with viewing locations like **Homewood Railroad Platform & Park**, where live switchyard audio, vintage equipment and murals enhance the visit. To plunge into some track action yourself, head to the new **Accelerate Indoor Speedway & Events** in Mokena, where electric Italian go-karts reach speeds up to 50 mph.

At **Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park**, another Southland gem, masterpieces by famed sculptors grace 100 acres of rolling prairie landscape on the campus of Governor's State University. On tours of **Lotton Art Glass Gallery & Studio** in Crete, see magnificent works being created from hot glass. A peek into the manufacturing of professional-grade baseball bats is available at **Homewood Bat Company**. The **Windy City Thunderbolts** play baseball at Ozinga Field in Crestwood.

The northwest suburb of Schaumburg offers professional baseball and serious shopping as well. It is home to the **Schaumburg Boomers** team and **Woodfield Mall**, one of the largest shopping destinations in the U.S., with nearly 300 stores and restaurants under one roof. **Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament** is another Schaumburg attraction with group appeal. Schaumburg is also home to **Topgolf**, an entertainment destination featuring a



FEEL THE HORSEPOWER

- Matinee and evening performances June through September
- Behind-the-Scenes Tours
- Lunch, dinner and receptions available

View performance dates online

THE TEMPEL
LIPIZZANS www.tempelfarms.com
or call 847-244-5330



Chicago Southland CVB

high-tech driving range, games and a wide variety of food and drinks. Supreme among hidden gems on the outer fringe of northwest suburbia is **Sanfilippo Estate**, also known as **Place de la Musique**. This Barrington Hills estate is exclusively open to group tours, public concerts and charity events. Your private tour will view the collection of antique music machines and mechanical marvels.

Bordering Chicago along Lake Michigan to the north, Chicago's North Shore is rich with attractions. Visit the **Chicago Botanic Garden**, the fifth most visited public garden in the U.S. with over 1 million annual visitors. Groups can explore the 27 gardens and four natural areas, uniquely situated on 385 acres on and around nine islands, with six miles of lake shoreline. In addition to a renowned Bonsai Collection, features include the English Walled Garden and the Waterfall Garden. Year-round special events include the American Craft Exposition, the Orchid Show and the new Lightscape holiday event.

Nearby on the lakefront, the **Baha'i House of Worship's** lacey, white, 135-foot-high dome enchants visitors to the first Baha'i place of worship in the Western Hemisphere (completed in 1953) and one of only seven in the world. A

new visitor center welcomes groups with the fascinating story of how the building came to be and the history of all Baha'i temples.

Along the shores of Evanston are beaches, parks, the campus of Northwestern University and the **Charles Gates Dawes House**, the chateau-like mansion of the U.S. vice president who served under President Calvin Coolidge in the 1920s. The Dawes House, with exhibits on Evanston's colorful past, is the home of the Evanston History Center, whose docents give tours not only of the home but of historic Evanston neighborhoods. At the impressive **Illinois Holocaust Museum** in neighboring Skokie, groups confront Nazi atrocities committed against the Jews of Europe during World War II. Also in Skokie is **Westfield Old Orchard**, an expansive outdoor shopping center.

Continuing north along Lake Michigan, **Six Flags Great America** in Gurnee, offering 17 roller coasters and Caribbean-themed Hurricane Harbor water park, reigns as one of the Midwest's premier theme parks. For retail revelry, there's **Gurnee Mills**, an indoor shopping center with nearly 200 stores. Northwest of Gurnee, groups can catch a classical dressage performance by the famed

Tempel Lipizzans stallions and tour the stables of these rare white horses.

Groups can also explore the **I&M Canal National Heritage Area** by climbing aboard a replica 19th century mule-pulled canal boat and ride the route Lincoln traveled.

The glories of Mother Nature can be found in northeastern Illinois' state parks. **Starved Rock State Park**, located on the Illinois River near Utica, 92 miles southwest of Chicago, is Illinois' most-visited state park. It is best known for trails that take hikers to canyons, waterfalls and spectacular overlooks. The rustic Starved Rock Lodge, constructed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, has a restaurant and 69 guest rooms, and there are 16 log cabins. Built in the same era, the inn at **White Pines Forest State Park**, near Mount Morris, is known for its excellent restaurant, cabin accommodations and Pines Playhouse music shows. For additional information, visit enjoyillinois.com. **IL**

For more information, including phone numbers and websites of attractions in this region, visit LeisureGroupTravel.com/illinois-group-tour-planner



Most Popular Tour in America

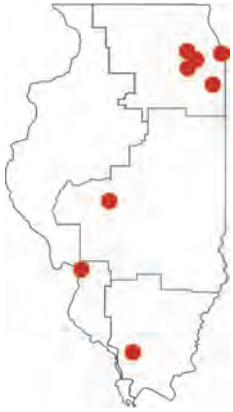
2019



SEE CHICAGO ON A SHORELINE GROUP TOUR

Architecture River Tours and Skyline Lake Tours
Great Group Rates

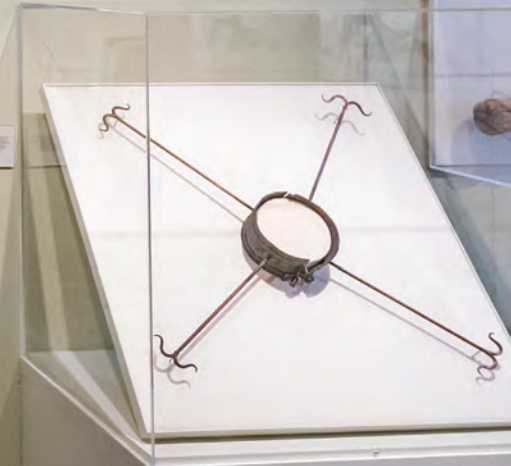
shorelinesightseeing.com
312.222.9328
Navy Pier and Michigan Avenue



African American History Abounds in Illinois

Crete, Chicago, Lombard, Oak Brook, Downers Grove, Springfield, Alton, Carbondale

DuSable Museum



DAY 1

MORNING

Start your African American history journey with the **Chicago Southland Underground Railroad Tour**. This 5½-hour tour begins in Crete, with the guide sharing tales of slaves seeking freedom and passing through the region prior to the Civil War. The tour will visit two designated sites on the National Park Service's Network to Freedom, with both locations having a verified connection to the Underground Railroad. Groups will make a stop at the John Ton Farm near Riverdale, which was known as a safehouse for fugitive slaves. Another option is Chicago's Black Metropolis Tour, which runs for up to two hours. This tour of Chicago's Black Metropolis and the Chicago Southland will explain the twists and turns of the historic struggle and triumph of Chicago's neighborhoods and political ties in the African American communities, past and present.

AFTERNOON

For lunch and an authentic restaurant experience steeped in the history of black Chicagoans, visit **Lem's Bar-B-Q** on the South Side of Chicago. Known for its rib tips and hot links, Lem's is widely considered among the best barbecue establishments in the city. Afterward, venture to the **DuSable Museum of African American History** in Chicago, the nation's first independent museum dedicated to the collection, preservation and study of the history and culture of Africans and Americans of African descent.

EVENING

Buddy Guy's Legends in Chicago's South Loop is one of the city's premier blues clubs. It offers shows featuring up-and-coming performers and famous acts seven nights a week alongside New Orleans-inspired dishes.



Pullman Porter Museum

DAY 2

MORNING

The **Pullman National Historic District** in Chicago was the first model, planned industrial community in the United States. The district became one of the most famous company towns in the country and was the scene of the violent 1894 Pullman strike. Founded in 1995 and located in the historic Pullman District, the **National A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum** offers exhibits, tours and interpretive programs throughout the year. The museum recognizes the legacy of the Pullman Porters who were instrumental in our country's transportation mode at the time, and follows the story of their unionization and link to the Civil Rights movement.

AFTERNOON

For southern-style comfort food, pay a visit to **Pearl's Place** in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood. Guests can choose from a soul food buffet (available for breakfast, lunch and dinner) or order off the menu. Another dining option is **Sweet Maple Cafe**, a cozy restaurant that serves country-style home-cooked meals and homemade sweet milk biscuits.

Those seeking a mini-road trip can drive 21 miles west of the city to Lombard, where they can visit the **Sheldon Peck Homestead**. Sheldon Peck, a social activist and conductor on the Underground Railroad, owned a house that was donated to the Lombard Historical Society by his granddaughter. In Oak Brook, the **Graue Mill and Museum** is an operating waterwheel grist mill and homestead that illustrates life in the late 1800s and the impact mills had on our culture. Graue Mill is one of the remaining stations on the Underground Railroad as Frederick Graue housed slaves in the basement of his gristmill. The **1846 Blodgett House** in Downers Grove has great cultural significance as stopover point on the Underground Railroad as several members of the Blodgett family were active in the abolitionist cause.

EVENING

In the 1900s, the Great Migration brought thousands of African American migrants to Chicago, who introduced the city to jazz and blues. That legacy lives on today in Chicago's many legendary music venues and clubs. With its more than 100-year history, **Green Mill Cocktail Lounge** in the Uptown neighborhood is famous for hosting iconic jazz musicians and notorious mobsters alike. Today, the historic spot is still known as one of the country's top jazz venues.

DAY 3

MORNING

Travel south to Springfield, where you can visit the **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum**. This museum not only documents the life of our country's 16th president but

also stages exhibits based on its impressive historical holdings, including an extensive Civil War collection and strong offerings on slavery and abolition.

AFTERNOON/EVENING

Also in Springfield is the **Acts of Intolerance Sculpture**, which commemorates the centennial of the 1908 race riot in Springfield. **Route History, Inc.** is a Springfield attraction where visitors can learn about the tragedy and resilience of African Americans, black-owned businesses and related events located along historic Route 66. Of note are Springfield's role as a haven along the Underground Railroad and the Race Riot of 1908 which led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Those seeking Soul Food can make a pit stop at **Nickey's Southern Style Kitchen** in Springfield, where you will savor an expanded menu that includes a smoked catfish sandwich and jambalaya. A few miles from the Illinois State Capitol resides the **Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum**. Through oral histories and exhibits, the museum provides insight into authentic stories about African American life in Central Illinois.

Many homes around the country were part of the **Underground Railroad**, the effort to assist people to escape slavery. Some Illinois homes that were part of the Underground Railroad offer tours to groups. Sites include the **Owen Lovejoy House** in Princeton and Beecher

Hall at Illinois College in Jacksonville. Groups can also take a tour of **Woodlawn Farm** in Jacksonville, an Underground Railroad site.

DAY 4

MORNING/AFTERNOON

Alton's riverfront location along the Mississippi River played an important role in helping slaves make connections to the freedom of the northern United States. Commemorate the heritage and black history of the Alton region with a tour along the Alton route of the Underground Railroad. For two hours, guests can learn about Underground Railroad sites like **Rocky Fork Church, Enos Apartments** and more on a narrated step-on guided tour. If you get hungry, visit **Lovett's Soul Food** in Alton, which is renowned for its snoot sandwich, fried pickle slices, fish sandwich and its fried Kool-Aid.

Those who wish to embark on a road trip can drive a few hours south to Carbondale, where you will find the **African American Museum of Southern Illinois**. This museum includes a permanent collection of African art and slave artifacts. Rotating displays include Underground Railroad message quilts, local artwork and exhibits that portray the achievements of African American citizens.

Chicago Southland
Convention & Visitors Bureau
Just Beyond the City Limits

Stop OR Stay

GET STARTED
We can help

No matter where you're coming from – or where you're going to, odds are you'll be passing through the Chicago Southland. We're the perfect place to stop or stay.

CHICAGO PROXIMITY | SUBURBAN SERENITY
EASY ACCESS

- Incentives & Services
- FREE PARKING
- Hundreds of Attractions
- Delicious Dining Options
- 30 minutes to Chicago's Loop

Contact Tobie Fitzpatrick to plan your next Chicagoland tour.
888-895-3211
GroupTour@VisitChicagoSouthland.com
TourChicagoSouthland.com

enjoy **illinois**



Horses fly

IN LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Plan for an unforgettable group getaway!

Contact our group tour specialist, Jayne Nordstrom at Jayne@LakeCounty.org or call 800-525-3669. Find helpful planning resources at VisitLakeCounty.org.



Wandering Tree Estate



Ravinia Music Festival

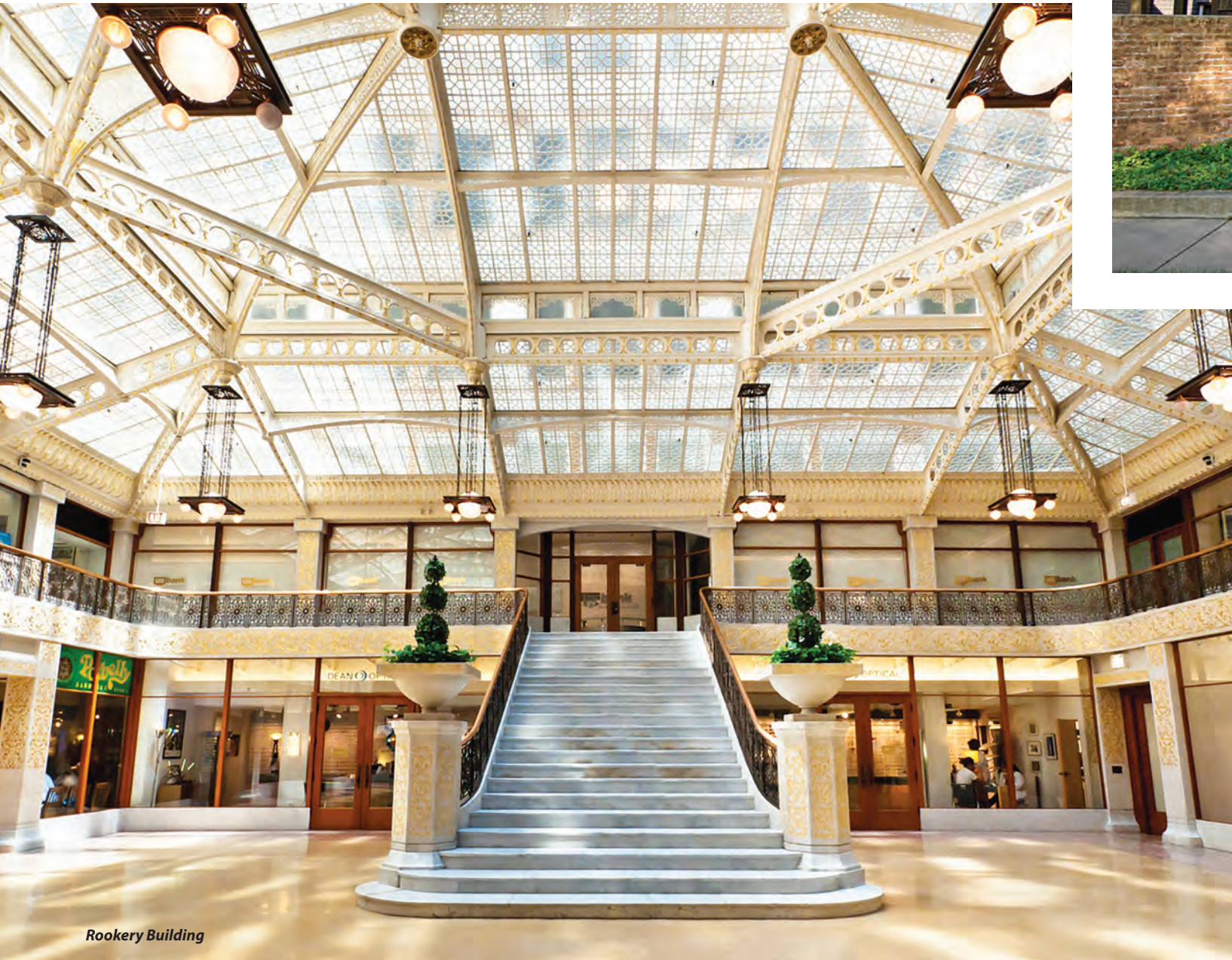


Chicago Botanic Garden



Enjoy Wright's Lasting Architectural Legacy

Chicago, Oak Park, Geneva, Hampshire, Rockford



Rookery Building



Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio

Enjoy Illinois

DAY 1

MORNING

Your Frank Lloyd Wright journey begins on Chicago's Gold Coast and the **Charnley-Perskey House Museum**. Before he popularized the Prairie and Usonian styles across the country, Wright was a draftsman for acclaimed architect Louis Sullivan, and their 1892 collaboration on this North Side landmark is considered a major turning point in the development of the American home. While the design is credited to Sullivan, visitors can spot many elements that would become associated with Wright's distinct style: modernist lines, abstract ornamentation, archways between rooms and elaborate woodwork.

AFTERNOON

Continue to the heart of Chicago's Loop to admire the **Rookery Building**, which was completed in 1888 and considered the city's first high-rise. While the entire building is considered a masterpiece of early skyscraper engineering, your group will want to spend time in the lobby, which Wright boldly updated with Persian-style ornamentation and a lighting scheme that utilizes the glass ceiling to brilliantly illuminate the space. While you're in the Loop, browse the city's famous stores and enjoy a traditional pot pie lunch in the Walnut Room at **Macy's on State Street**.

AFTERNOON/EVENING

The **Frederick C. Robie House**—one of Wright's most iconic buildings and a UNESCO World Heritage Site—is considered the crown jewel of the Prairie style. Located in the historic Hyde Park neighborhood and just outside the University of Chicago campus, the Robie House is available for touring throughout the year and showcases an architect at the peak of his powers. The structure peerlessly integrates Wright's signatures like low-pitched roofs with overhanging eaves, detailed stained-glass windows, muted colors that evoke the Great Plains and heavy wood accents. Conclude your day with a no-frills meal at **Valois Restaurant**, a diner frequented by former President Barack Obama when he was a community organizer.



Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio

Enjoy Illinois

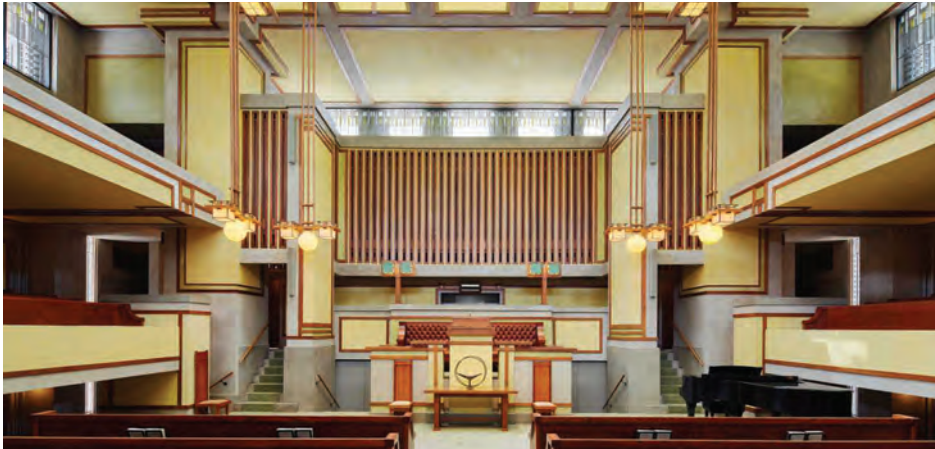
Enjoy Illinois

DAY 2

MORNING

Located just outside the Chicago city limits and seven miles from the Loop, **Oak Park** is a charming village where Wright moved to with his family in 1889. He would become a fixture of the community for the next 20 years and design 25 Oak Park buildings while perfecting his Prairie style, and the area now has the densest collection of Wright-designed structures in the world. Orient your group to the area with a tour of the **Frank Lloyd Wright Home**

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT ITINERARY



Unity Temple

Brand USA



Pettit Memorial Chapel

Enjoy Illinois

and Studio, which Wright designed himself and contains his draft room and original sketches. The Frank Lloyd Wright Trust conducts several tours throughout the neighborhood within walking distance of the studio.

AFTERNOON

Enjoy lunch at one of the many restaurants on Lake Street before touring **Unity Temple**, a triumph of modern design and one of Wright's favorite projects. After a fire severely damaged the local Unitarian church in 1905, he was commissioned to reimagine the building on a tight budget and resorted to a concrete exterior because it was inexpensive. The material was rarely used in public buildings, and especially for places of worship, but the combination of necessity and inspiration resulted in an iconic building with striking columns and elevated windows that allow natural light to enter but deny worshipers an outside view. The interior is equally revolutionary in that it avoids any explicit religious iconography but instead aims for church unity by integrating vertical lines that suggest transcendence and intimate seating that keeps all worshipers close to the pulpit. Visitors to Oak Park will also want to stop by the **Ernest Hemingway Birthplace Home**, a well-maintained Victorian house where the famous author lived until he was six.

Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio



DAY 3

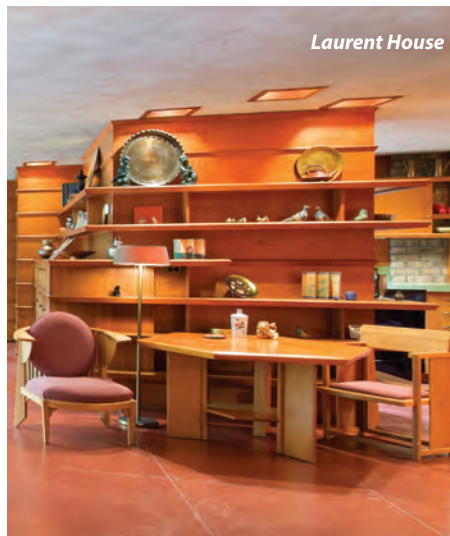
MORNING

Begin your morning with a guided tour of the **Colonel George Fabyan Villa**, a country estate with lovely views of the Fox River that Wright remodeled in 1907. After exploring the property, which includes eclectic touches like Japanese gardens and a Dutch windmill, your group can walk along Geneva's Third Street to admire Victorian mansions, shop in boutiques and relax in welcoming coffee houses. Before departing Chicagoland, stop at the **Muirhead Farmhouse** in Hampshire. The only known farmhouse Wright designed and built during his lifetime, this home is a sterling example of his Usonian style, which utilized local materials, cantilevered overhangs and ample natural lighting to create unassuming buildings for middle-class residents.

AFTERNOON

Continue west to the Belvidere Cemetery, where your group can respectfully admire the **Pettit Memorial Chapel**. A rare Wright cemetery design commissioned by Emma Pettit to honor her late husband, the memorial draws its solemn formality from

severe lines, low-pitched roofs and minimal lighting. Conclude your architectural journey at the **Laurent House** in Rockford, another exceptional Usonian space. Built for a paraplegic U.S. Navy veteran and completed in 1949, this home fuses form and function with a single-story design, open floor plan and floor-to-ceiling windows that maximize views of the backyard to create a sense of tranquility.



Enjoy Illinois



Choose Chicago



Laurent House

Enjoy Illinois

NOW WORLD HERITAGE



WRIGHT IN CHICAGO

ROBIE HOUSE ■ UNITY TEMPLE
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOME AND STUDIO ■ THE ROOKERY ■ BACH HOUSE

Let us design your tour experience in the Chicago area's most famed Frank Lloyd Wright buildings. Book your group today!

FLWRIGHT.ORG/GROUPS
312.994.4041

 Frank Lloyd Wright Trust
CHICAGO

enjoy
illinois



TRAILS

to Adventure



Discoveries await group travelers in the untrampled wilderness areas and delightful small towns of Southern Illinois

Covering a broad swath of Southern Illinois, the unspoiled scenery of Shawnee National Forest provides a refreshing change of pace in a state better known for its rich farmland and urban lifestyles. In this wooded kingdom stretching from the Ohio River in the east to the Mississippi in the west, recreation-seekers revel in geological wonders, inspiring vistas, lush canyons and rolling hills threaded with hiking paths through old-growth oak-hickory forests.

Illinois' only national forest defines common perceptions of the Trails to Adventure tourism region, whose southern reaches encompass a vast natural playground called the Shawnee, or Ozark, hills. Yet the region's northern tier embraces endless expanses of flatlands, which, like most of Illinois, resulted from long-ago glacial activity that leveled the terrain north of Carbondale and Marion. So, there's a mix of topographical features, including lakes, creeks, cypress swamps and low-lying river deltas, that blanket the tip of Illinois where it meets Missouri and Kentucky. (The word "trails" in the name Trails to Adventure suggests both outdoor recreational opportunities and the state's leading wine trail.)

Garden of the Gods is the most popular of seven designated wilderness areas in Shawnee National Forest. Located on the forest's eastern side, a half-hour southeast of Harrisburg, the awesome realm of sculpted sandstone pinnacles and bluffs seems out of place in the Prairie State. Observation Trail, a quarter-mile flagstone path with interpretive panels, takes hikers through massive boulders affording spectacular overlooks of the pristine woodlands. Scrambling among clifftops, visitors can go wild taking pictures, but signs urge caution—it's a long fall. The trail's most photographed sight is Camel Rock, a formation depicted on the Illinois quarter in the U.S. Mint's 2016 America the Beautiful Quarter series. Devil's Smokestack, a thin spire of rock, is another trail highlight.

A manmade landmark attracts sightseers to the national forest's western flank. **Bald Knob Cross of Peace**, soaring 111 feet into the heavens, sits atop 1,000-foot Bald Knob Mountain near the community of Alto Pass. Tour buses are able to negotiate the winding three-mile road to the visitor center, where a video tells the history of the bright white cross constructed of porcelain-veneer steel panels affixed to a steel framework. Bathed at night in 40,000 watts of light, the

Pomona Natural Bridge, Shawnee National Forest

Bald Knob Cross of Peace

Bald Knob Cross of Peace



beacon—built as a testament to God’s love and the Christian values of faith, charity, hope and peace—can be seen for miles. The plaza surrounding the cross has interpretive panels with Scripture from the Bible, details about the cross itself and points of interest on the horizon, including views of the Mississippi River Valley.

Eleven wineries tucked in the hills and hollows of Alto Pass, Cobden, Makanda, Pomona and other communities make up the 40-mile **Shawnee Hills Wine Trail**. The most popular time to visit is fall, when harvesting is in full swing and summer’s heat has subsided. Besides touring and tasting, groups can dine—indoors or outdoors—at the wineries, which offer full menus. Many tasting rooms command sweeping views of the vines. The trail’s first winery, Alto Vineyards, opened in 1988, and in 2006 the Shawnee Hills region was recognized as an American Viticultural Area (AVA) for its distinctive wine-growing attributes. Together, the wineries have won more than 1,200 awards. Some of them make non-grape wine, beer and hard cider.

Just east of wine country lies **Giant City State Park**, one of several state parks in the Trails to Adventure region. Nestled in Shawnee National Forest, not far from Makanda and Carbondale, the park draws hikers eager to squeeze between the massive sandstone walls on the one-mile Giant City Nature Trail. The park’s rustic lodge, built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, awes first-time visitors with its massive white-oak timbers and sandstone blocks. The spacious Bald Knob dining room is famed for all-you-can-eat fried chicken dinners served family-style. Nearby are 34 cabins and an 82-foot water tower with an observation deck offering panoramas of the picturesque bluffs, ridges and canyons.

Another way to view this area is from the high-adrenaline adventure course provided by the **Shawnee Bluffs Canopy Tour** near

Makanda. It consists of eight zip lines, three aerial suspension bridges and three short ground hikes.

Cave-in-Rock State Park, on the far eastern edge of the national forest, overlooks the Ohio River and shores of Kentucky. Its chief attraction is the 55-foot-wide cavern carved out of a riverside bluff, a former hideout for outlaws and pirates. Perched high atop Pirates’ Bluff, with a terrace providing views of barges and other river traffic, is a restaurant celebrated for its catfish dinners and desserts like pecan pie, peanut butter pie and blackberry cobbler. One wall displays scenes from the 1956 Walt Disney film *Davy Crockett and the River Pirates*, which was filmed at the park, one of many stopping points on the 188-mile Illinois portion of the Ohio River Scenic Byway.

Fort Massac State Park, adjacent to the Ohio River town of Metropolis, occupies the site of a frontier fort built in the 1700s by the French when they took control of what was called Illinois Country. A reconstruction of the timber fort as it looked in 1802 under American control invites photos, but for structural reasons the buildings cannot be entered. A video and exhibits in the visitor center, however, shed light on this strategically situated outpost, which was visited by luminaries such as General Andrew Jackson and explorers Meriwether Lewis & William Clark.



Randy Mink

Metropolis landmark

Metropolis’ identity as a tourist destination is wrapped up in its Superman attractions, which take advantage of the fact that Metropolis was the name of the fictional city in Superman TV episodes, movies and comic books. Visitors converge on Superman Square, where they pose in front of the 15-foot-tall bronze **Superman Statue** at the Massac County Courthouse; the base is inscribed “Truth - Justice - The American Way.” Across the square, they pose again at Superman cut-outs in front of the **Super Museum**, which contains the largest collection of Superman memorabilia anywhere. This Market Street shrine to the “Man of Steel” is crammed to the rafters with such treasures as the costume worn in 1951 by George Reeves, who starred in *The Adventures of Superman* TV series. Also on display are props from the old TV show, movie posters, paintings and statues, plus lunch boxes, food products, watches, neckties, and toys bearing the Superman logo.

The Metropolis riverfront, a few blocks away from downtown shops, is home to **Harrah’s Metropolis Casino**, which offers 28 table games, some 800 slot machines and a buffet restaurant specializing in Southern and country-style cuisine.

The town of Marion (pop. 17,200) is a key stop for tour groups thanks to the variety of lodging and restaurants just off Interstate 57. Downtown’s **Williamson County Historical Society Museum**, housed in an old jail/sheriff’s residence, contains more than 20 rooms focusing on local and Southern Illinois history, with collections ranging from Civil War and Native American relics to quilts and coal mining equipment.

Marion’s **Old Town Square** historic district has a half-dozen antique stores. **The Vault Cafe on the Square** occupies a former bank, and you can eat in the vault.

From early May to early September, catch a minor league baseball game at Marion’s **Rent One Park**, home of the Frontier League’s Southern Illinois Miners.

The glory of Mother Nature is on full display at **Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge**, a short drive from Marion. Its wetlands, woodlands and grasslands include three lakes and harbor a variety of waterfowl and other wildlife, which can be spotted

from nature trails and a nine-mile auto loop. **Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge**, to the south of Crab Orchard, is part of the Lower Cache River Basin, a swampy domain with ancient bald cypress trees, some more than 1,000 years old. Visitors in neighboring **Cache River State Natural Area** can explore the wetlands via canoe and hiking trails.

Pinckneyville (pop. 5,700), about an hour northwest of Marion, bills itself as “The Friendly Little City” and has several attractions ideal for group tour itineraries. The world of agriculture comes alive at the 17,000-square-foot **Illinois Rural Heritage Museum**, which spotlights area farm life through a wealth of artifacts, including tools and machines for plowing fields, planting corn, processing pork and making brooms. Exhibits in the two cavernous buildings also portray small-town life of yesteryear—in a general store, doctor’s office, modest home and other antique-filled period rooms built for the museum. Many visitors are intrigued with the vintage caskets and paraphernalia rescued from funeral homes of the past. Your travelers’ curiosity also will be piqued at Pinckneyville’s **Perry County Jail Museum**, where they can have their pictures taken in the old cells decorated with prisoner artwork. The combination jail and family home of the sheriff dates back to 1871. Some rooms showcase chapters in local history, and one contains a replica one-room school.

Guided tours of one of the world’s largest and most beautiful carillons are available in downtown Centralia. The 16-story-tall **Centralia Carillon** is a musical instrument consisting of bells played with a baton-like keyboard that is connected to the clappers of bells by a transmission system. A tour involves climbing 173 steps up the tower and a demonstration of the 65-bell carillon, with the bonus of panoramic views. A few blocks away is another crowd-pleasing attraction, the **Centralia Area Historical Museum**, which takes up two floors of an old wholesale foods warehouse. **Jerry’s Grill & Bar**, the perfect lunch spot for groups touring Centralia, has spacious rooms and an extensive menu that lists everything from the breaded pork tenderloin sandwich to Mexican and Chinese favorites.

A short drive from Centralia leads to Carlyle Lake, the largest manmade lake in Illinois, which has beaches and opportunities for fishing, boating and hiking. Five wineries in the area make up the **Carlyle Lake Wine Trail**. **Hidden Lake Winery** in Aviston, for example, is a big place with a lovely outdoor patio looking out on a private lake. Tours can

be arranged, and food is served.

If soda pop is more your group’s style, make tracks for **Excel Bottling Company**, the only independent bottler in Illinois that still uses returnable bottles. Some machines in the plant, a fifth-generation family business, date back to the 1930s. Excel’s popular Ski brand, a citrus-y pop not unlike Mountain Dew, is ubiquitous in Southern Illinois and neighbor states. All the soft drinks, including Frostie Root Beer and Blueberry Breese, are made with cane sugar. Tours of the laboratory and bottling line offer samples not only of pop but craft beer

as well. Excel’s signature Radler is a combo of grapefruit soda and hoppy wheat beer. The company recently added teas (premium black, hibiscus lemon and ginger strawberry) and fruity sparkling waters to its product line

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

For more information, including phone numbers and websites of attractions in this region, visit LeisureGroupTravel.com/illinois-group-tour-planner

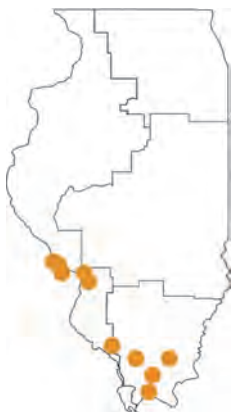


E is for Experience

Effingham
Convention & Visitors Bureau

enjoy **illinois**

WWW.VISITEFFINGHAMIL.COM



Enjoy Illinois' Outdoor Wonders

Carbondale, Shawnee National Forest, Harrisburg, Ava, Cache River State Natural Area, Pere Marquette State Park, Grafton, Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway, Elsah, Alton



Camel Rock



Zipline in Shawnee National Forest



Scratch Brewing Company

DAY 1

MORNING

Begin your excursion with a visit to **Sunny Street Café** in Carbondale, a casual restaurant serving hearty American fare. Sunny Street's breakfast menu includes traditional favorites along with Tex-Mex options like a breakfast quesadilla and low-calorie options. Once your hunger is satiated, pay a visit to **Shawnee National Forest**, one of the most diverse forests in the country, consisting of approximately 280,000 acres of federally managed lands across the Ozark and Shawnee Hills. With a geography of barrens, prairies, streams, lakes, ponds, waterfalls and rocky outcrops, Shawnee invites adventurers to participate in whatever outdoor activity they crave. 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. Those seeking a unique view of Shawnee should partake in the Shawnee Bluffs Canopy Tour. This adrenaline-filled adventure takes guests high above the forest canopy with eight ziplines soaring through bluffs and valleys. The tour also includes 11 platforms in the trees, three aerial suspension bridges and two short ground hikes.

One of Shawnee's most popular geological wonders is **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. Those seeking a rock climbing outing can visit Drapers Bluff, a private climbing park that offers incredible climbs.

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.

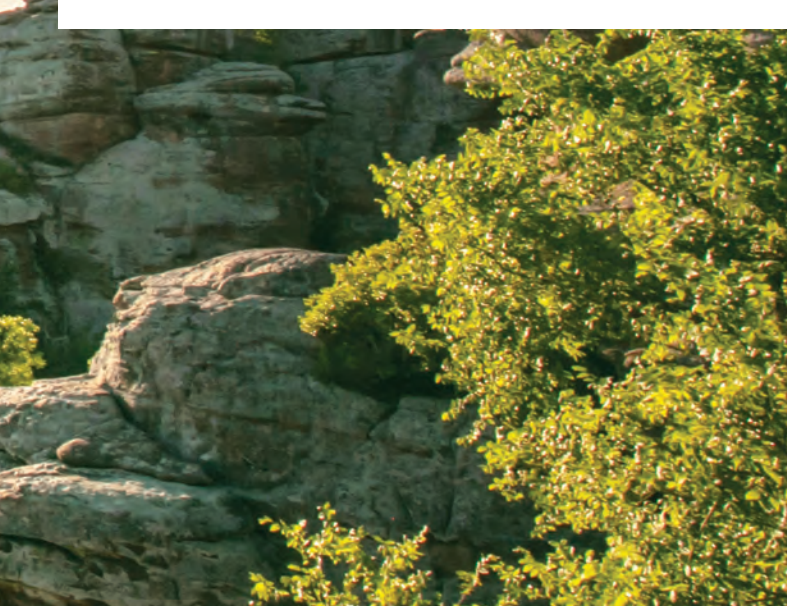
EVENING

After a long day of hiking, visit **Scratch Brewing Company** in the Southern Illinois town of Ava. Scratch is a microbrewery and farm that resides five miles from Shawnee National Forest. This bucolic location has earned Scratch a reputation as one of the most beautiful sites to drink beer on the planet. 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.

DAY 2

MORNING/AFTERNOON

If you want to continue your stay in Southern Illinois, enjoy breakfast at **Mary Lou's Grill** in Carbondale (home to fabulous biscuits and gravy) before heading south to **Cache River State Natural Area** in Belknap. Home to a wealth of natural features



Enjoy Illinois

including massive cypress trees, many of which are more than 1,000 years old, Cache River State Natural Area has been named one of America's 10 Most Beautiful Hidden Gems by Budget Travel. Groups can participate in a variety of recreational activities from hiking and biking to fishing and canoeing.

Another option is to take a three-hour drive northwest, where your group can visit **Pere Marquette State Park** located on the Mississippi River in Grafton. Featuring 8,000 picturesque acres, Pere Marquette is the largest state park in Illinois. Visitors can hike miles of wooded trails, bicycle along river bluffs, take a boat out for fishing or horseback ride through a peaceful forest. As a frequent nesting spot for migrating bald eagles, this is also the perfect

spot to catch a glimpse of the legendary national bird. Another spectacular locale is **Aerie's Resort** in Grafton, which overlooks the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. At Aerie's, guests can enjoy one of the best views in the Midwest while savoring top-notch food, wine tasting and overnight lodging. One way to get to Aerie's is via the **Grafton SkyTour** a scenic aerial lift that provides guests with a unique ride above the bluffs. Aerie's is also home to the **Grafton Zipline**, which offers a thrilling treetop canopy adventure in which guests can soak in the view from a different, and thrilling, vantage point.

EVENING

The family-owned **Grafton Winery and Brewhaus**, in the quaint river town of Grafton, overlooks the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. The establishment serves casual fare including burgers, sandwiches, salads and pasta. Opened in 2008, the winery and brewhaus features a patio that is perfect for private parties as it features a kitchen, chef, server and bar. Groups can also take a cruise on the *Hakuna Matada*, a 49-passenger tour boat that will take you on an adventure on the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. This all-weather boat features seating and café tables on both the upper and lower decks.

DAY 3

MORNING

Illinois is home to what some describe as the best scenic drive in America. **The Great River Road**, which is more than 2,000 miles long, runs along the Mississippi River through 10 states and hundreds of historic river towns. Certain portions of the Great River Road have been designated as a national scenic byway, including the 33-mile stretch from Hartford to Grafton. This lovely area is known as the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway. A drive along this stretch features spectacular views of the Mississippi River and its limestone bluffs. Along the Great River Road, visitors are greeted by several inviting towns including Alton (home to the Alton Museum of History and Art), Elsah (the entire village is on the National Register of Historic Places) and Grafton (home to several wineries, flea markets, antique shops and restaurants).

AFTERNOON

Visiting the historic village of Elsah, with stone cottages and Greek Revival buildings house quaint shops, is akin to taking a journey to a simpler time. Alton, 11 miles south, welcomes shoppers looking for antiques and art. My Just Desserts in Alton serves lunch classics plus delicious homemade pie. Shoppers can visit several antique stores, including Alton Antique Center, Country Meadows Antiques and Prairie Peddler Antiques. Alton's history stands tall with monumental monuments, but none are larger than Alton's gentle giant, **Robert**



Cache River State Natural Area



Great River Road

Wadlow, who was born in Alton in 1918 and became the world's tallest man, reaching 8 feet, 11.1 inches tall. Alton honors Wadlow with a statue, and the Alton Museum of History and Art devotes an entire room to him.

EVENING

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 was assembled 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. Old Bakery's menu consists of signature sandwiches, burgers, soups and salads and even seasonal tacos.

DAY 4

MORNING/AFTERNOON

Groups seeking a road trip to the northern portion of the state can travel to **Starved Rock State Park** in Oglesby, 94 miles southwest of Chicago, which has been voted the No. 1 attraction in Illinois. Starved Rock is home to amazing seasonal waterfalls, 13 miles of trails to explore, 18 canyons, boating, fishing (and ice fishing) on the Illinois River and a multitude of extraordinary views and great places to relax. Whether you're a history buff, outdoor enthusiast or simply enjoy relaxing by the fire in the Great Hall, Starved Rock Lodge offers an abundance of activities for everyone including guided hikes rain or shine.

art hits the wall

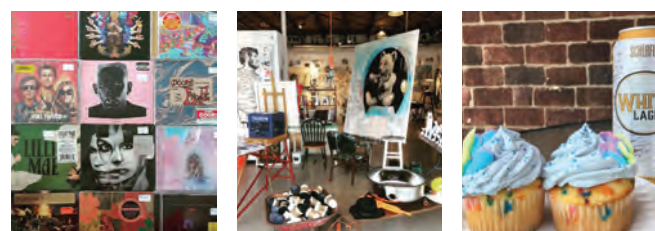
MURAL FIND + DINE TOUR
15 city murals
+ eats & sips along the way

SEEQUINCY.COM | 800 978 4748

enjoy **illinois**



EXPERIENCE



Where else...
can you take a wilderness hike through a national forest at dawn, enjoy delectable coffee and pastries at a trendy cafe for lunch, peruse a local record store for some fresh vinyl, and catch an evening art exhibit to wind down the evening... all without traveling more than a few miles?

Only Carbondale.



126 S. Illinois Avenue
Carbondale, IL 62901
618.529.4451
carbondaletourism.org



CHICAGO & BEYOND

**Aurora Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
43 West Galena Blvd.
Aurora, IL 60506
630-256-3191
enjoyaurora.com

**Blackhawk Waterways
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
201 N. Franklin Avenue
Polo, Illinois 61064
815-946-2108 or 800-678-2108
visitnorthwestillinois.com

**Chicago Southland
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
2304 W. 173rd Street
Lansing, IL 60438
708-895-8200 or 888-895-8233
visitchicagosouthland.com

**Chicago's North Shore
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
8833 Gross Point Road, Suite 307
Skokie, IL 60077
847-763-0011
visitchicagonorthshore.com

Choose Chicago
301 E. Cermak Road
Chicago, IL 60616
312-567-8500
choosechicago.com

**DeKalb County
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
111 S. Second Street, Suite 202
DeKalb, IL 60115
815-756-1336
dekalbcountycvb.com

**DuPage Convention and
Visitors Bureau**
915 Harger Road, Suite 120
Oak Brook, IL 60523
630-575-8070 or 800-232-0502
discoverdupage.com

**Elgin Area Convention and
Visitors Bureau**
60 S. Grove Avenue, 1st Floor
Elgin, IL 60120
847-695-7540 or 800-217-5362
exploreeelginarea.com

**Heritage Corridor
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
2701 Black Road, Ste. 201
Joliet, IL 60435
815-216-9961 or 844-944-2282
heritagecorridorcvb.com

**Kankakee County
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
100 Marquette Place S.
Manteno, IL 60950
815-935-7390 or 800-747-4837
visitkankakeecounty.com

Meet Chicago Northwest
1933 N. Meacham Road, Suite 210
Schaumburg, IL 60173
847-490-1010 or 800-847-4849
chicagonorthwest.com

**Rockford Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
102 N. Main Street
Rockford, IL 61101
815-489-1656
800-521-0849
gorockford.com

Rosemont Convention Bureau
9301 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue
Rosemont, IL 60018-5201
847-823-2100
rosemont.com

Stephenson County Visitor Center
4596 US Highway 20 West,
Freeport, IL 61032
815-233-1357
greaterfreeport.com

**Visit Lake County, Illinois
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
5465 W. Grand Avenue, Suite 100
Gurnee, IL 60031
847-662-2700
800-525-3699
visitlakecounty.org

Visit McHenry County
11879 E. Main Street
Huntley, IL 60142
815-893-6280
visitmchenrycounty.com

Visit Oak Park
193 N. Marion St. #208
Oak Park, IL 60301
708-524-7800
visitoakpark.com

GREAT RIVERS COUNTRY

Galena Country Tourism
123 N. Commerce St.
Galena, IL 61036
815-776.9200
visitgalena.org

**Galesburg Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
200 E. Main Street, Suite 200
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-343-1194 or 800-916-3330
visitgalesburg.com

**Great Rivers & Routes
of Southwest Illinois**
200 Piassa Street
Alton, IL 62002-6271
618-465-6676 or 800-258-6645
visitalton.com

Henry County Tourism Bureau
224 W. Third Street
Kewanee, IL 61443
309-761-8473
visithenrycounty.com

ILLINOISouth Tourism
4387 N. Illinois St., Suite 200
Swansea, IL 62226
618-257-1488 or 800-442-1488
illinoisouth.org

**Macomb Area Convention and
Visitors Bureau**
201 S. LaFayette St.
Macomb, IL 61455
309-833-1315
makeitmacomb.com

Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
456 Fulton, Suite 300
Peoria, IL 61602
309-676-0303 or 800-747-0302
enjoypeoria.com

**Quad Cities Convention and Visitors
Bureau**
1601 River Drive, Suite 110
Moline, IL 61265-1472
309-736-6820
800-747-7800
visitquadcities.com

**Quincy Area Convention and Visitors
Bureau**
532 Gardner Expressway
Quincy, IL 62301
217-214-3700 or 800-978-4748
seequincy.com

LAND OF LINCOLN

**Bloomington-Normal Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
3201 Cira Drive, Suite 201
Bloomington, IL 61704
309-665-0033 or
800-433-8226
visitbn.org

**Danville Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
100 W Main Street, Room 146
Danville, IL 61834-0992
217-442-2096 or 800-383-4286
danvilleareainfo.com

**Decatur Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
202 E. North Street
Decatur, IL 62523-1129
217-423-7000 or
800-331-4479
www.decaturcvb.com

Effingham Convention and Visitors Bureau
1505 Hampton Drive
Effingham, IL 62401
217-342-5310 or 800-772-0750
visiteffinghamil.com

ILLINOISouth Tourism
4387 N. Illinois St., Suite 200
Swansea, IL 62226
618-257-1488 or 800-442-1488
illinoisouth.org

**Jacksonville Area
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
310 E State
Jacksonville, IL 62650-2030
217-243-5678
800-593-5678
jacksonvilleil.org

Logan County Tourism Bureau
101 N. Chicago St.
Lincoln, IL 62656
217-735-9600
destinationlogancountyil.com

Shelby County Office of Tourism
315 E. Main Street
Shelbyville, IL 62565
217-774-2244 or 800-884-3529
lakeshelbyville.com

**Springfield
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
109 N. 7th Street
Springfield, IL 62701
217-789-2360 or 800-545-7300
visitspringfieldillinois.com

Visit Champaign County
17 E. Taylor St.
Champaign, IL 61820
217-351-4133 or 800-369-6151
visitchampaigncounty.org

TRAILS TO ADVENTURE

Carbondale Tourism
126 S. Illinois Avenue
Carbondale, IL 62901
618-529-4451 or
800-526-1500
carbondaletourism.org

ILLINOISouth Tourism
4387 N. Illinois St., Suite 200
Swansea, IL 62226
618-257-1488 or 800-442-1488
illinoisouth.org

**Mt. Vernon
Convention and Visitors Bureau**
200 Potomac Boulevard
P.O. Box 1708
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0049
618-242-3151 or 800-252-5464
enjoymtvernon.com

**Southernmost
Illinois Tourism Bureau**
P.O. Box 378
Anna, IL 62906-0378
618-833-9928 or 800-248-4373
southernmostillinois.com

visitSI
1602 Sioux Drive
Marion, IL 62959
618-997-3690 or 800-433-7399
visitsi.com



**SPECIAL
TOUR OFFER!**

Book your tour overnight
Sunday-Thursday at a
participating hotel,
and receive a free
wine and cheese
reception.

 **Jacksonville**
ILLINOIS

Jacksonville is 25 minutes from Springfield on I-72.

Call for info on historic sites, event schedules,
art and antiques, lodging choices, and more!

enjoy
illinois

(217) 243-5678 • (800) 593-5678 • jacksonvilleil.org

Or visit us at 310 East State Street in Historic Downtown Jacksonville



Thank You to our Advertising Partners



Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, <i>Springfield</i>	15
Aurora Area CVB	27
Blackhawk Waterways	23
Bloomington-Normal Area CVB	11
Carbondale Tourism.....	47
Celebration River Cruises, <i>Moline</i>	23
Chicago Southland CVB.....	34
Chicago's North Shore CVB.....	5
DuPage CVB	29
Effingham CVB.....	43
Frank Lloyd Wright Trust, <i>Oak Park</i>	39
Galena Country Tourism	51
Great Rivers & Routes Tourism	52
Heritage Corridor CVB	3
Jacksonville Area CVB.....	49
Lake County CVB.....	35
Meet Chicago Northwest.....	2
Moultrie County/Sullivan.....	13
See Quincy.....	47
Shoreline Sightseeing, <i>Chicago</i>	31
Springfield IL CVB	11
Tempel Lipizzans, <i>Old Mill Creek</i>	30
Visit Champaign County	19



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@ptmgroups.com

Publisher – Jeffrey Gayduk
jeff@ptmgroups.com

Managing Editor – Jason Paha
jason@ptmgroups.com

Senior Editor – Randy Mink
randy@ptmgroups.com

Director, Design & Production – Lisa Hede
lisa@ptmgroups.com

Production & Marketing Coordinator –
Annie Gavin, annie@ptmgroups.com

Vice President, Sales – Theresa O'Rourke
theresa@ptmgroups.com

Published in Partnership with Tour Illinois, a committee of the Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus

500 E. Monroe
Springfield, IL 62701

The publisher accepts unsolicited editorial matter, as well as advertising, but assumes no responsibility for statements made by advertisers or contributors. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information published, but the publisher makes no warranty that listings are free of error. The publisher is not responsible for the return of unsolicited photos, slides or manuscripts.

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

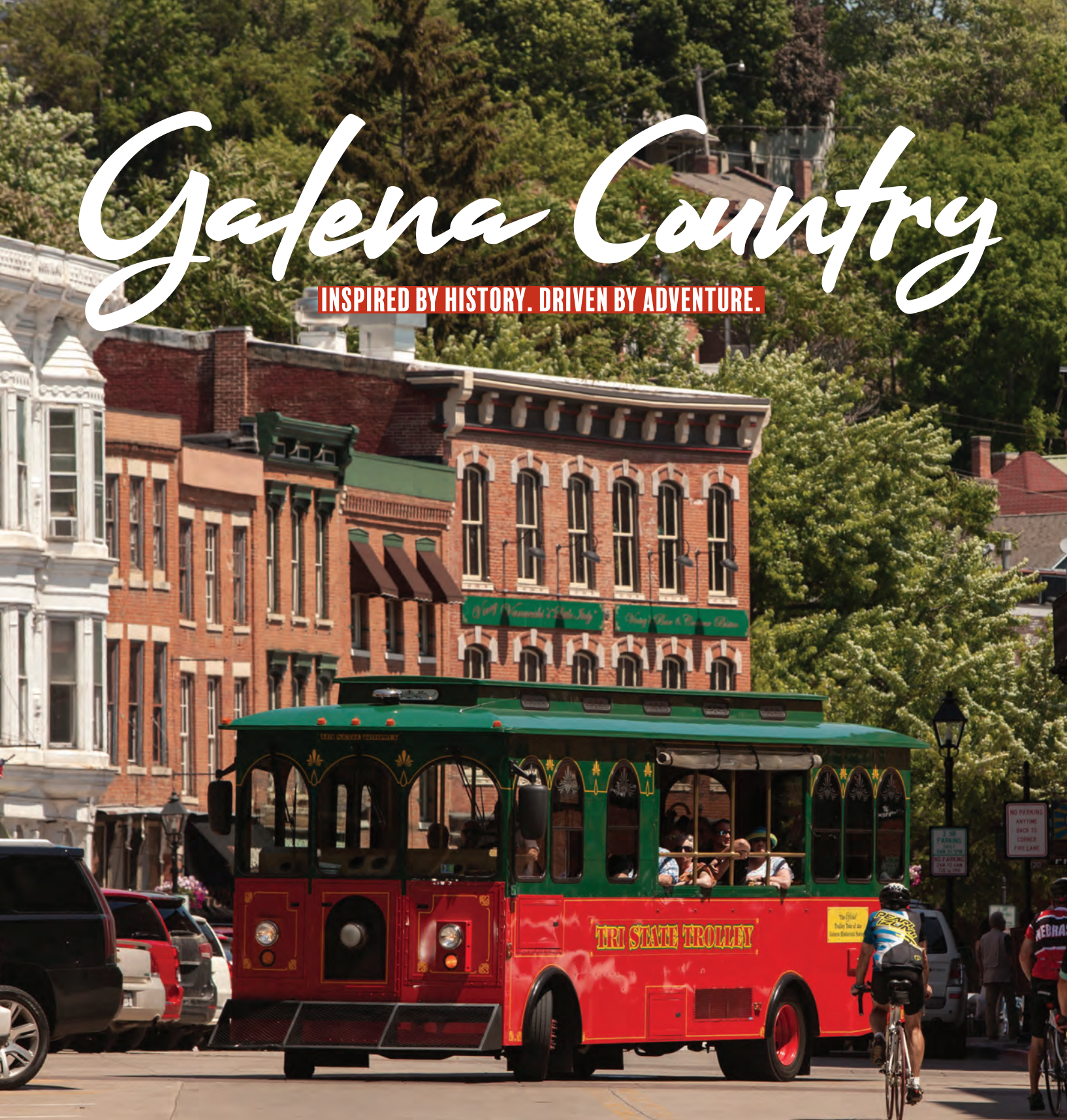


All rights reserved. Materials may not be reproduced in any form without written permission of the publisher.



Galena Country

INSPIRED BY HISTORY. DRIVEN BY ADVENTURE.



galena
country

Dripping with history, Galena Country is known for its well preserved 19th-century charm, picturesque landscape and welcoming community. This captivating location is lush with rolling hills, rich in history and loaded with incredible outdoor adventure, shopping and dining. visitgalena.org

pictured: Galena's Historic Main Street

enjoy
illinois

FIND GREAT *escapes* IN SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS

WITH GREAT RIVERS AND ROUTES



Explore the one place in America where historic Route 66 meets the Great River Road. With more than 50 group-friendly attractions and over 40 hotels to match every tour budget, let us create a customized itinerary to help your travelers explore the best of our region.

For more information contact
Katie Bennett, Tourism Sales Manager
(800) 258-6645
kbennett@riversandroutes.com



RIVERSANDROUTES.COM

