



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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ILLINOIS SHINES THIS SUMMER WITH THE BEST IN FAMILY FUN

Great value awaits travelers all across the Land of Lincoln

CHICAGO – Families looking to hit the road this summer will find an abundance of budget-friendly events in Illinois. With gas prices remaining at their lowest point in years, 20 percent off on select Illinois Amtrak train lines now through June 30*, and a whole host of new festivals around the state, summer is a great time to get out and enjoy all the Land of Lincoln has to offer. Illinois has a full slate of great festivals, historic attractions and outdoor activities that will satisfy even the pickiest of family members. And this season, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism (IBOT) is matching travelers with their ideal Illinois getaway, making it convenient and enjoyable to explore one of the most affordable destinations in the nation.

To help travelers plan their trip to Illinois, IBOT has designed an interactive Getaway Match Profile Quiz on enjoyillinois.com that will pair visitors with one of the 18 uniquely themed getaways. The revamped Web site also features new ways to plan a trip, discover the latest hotel packages and deals, and easily access complete details on events and festivals across the state.

CHICAGO

Discover why fans and critics alike can't stop talking about the **Million Dollar Quartet**, playing through May 24 at the Apollo Theatre. Join Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis at the studio of Sun Records in Memphis, the one and only time they played together, for what is described as one of the greatest rock jam sessions of all time. See why audiences continue to be dazzled, and sing along to classics like "Who Do You Love?" "Great Balls of Fire," and "Blue Suede Shoes."

For more information, contact The Apollo Theatre (773-935-6100, www.milliondollarquartetlive.com).

Chicago continues to prove this year why it is consistently ranked among the top cultural destinations in the nation with museums throughout the city unveiling much anticipated additions that are guaranteed to add some excitement to summer plans. The world premiere of the Museum of Science and Industry's latest exhibit, **Harry Potter: The Exhibition**, transports visitors into the world of Harry Potter with more than 200 authentic costumes and props from the films, including Harry's original wand and glasses. Opening May 16, **The Modern Wing** of the Art Institute of Chicago will offer 264,000 square feet filled with the museum's remarkable collection of 20th- and 21st-century art. The soon-to-be second largest art museum in the United States will feature the latest in green technology, from the "flying carpet" roof design to the double layer "curtainwall." And finally, excitement continues to build around the Shedd Aquarium's refurbished **Oceanarium**, opening May 22. The new facility will allow visitors to get closer to the animals than ever before with an enlarged sea lion habitat, new Regenstein Otter Trail and Habitat, Secluded Bay and more.

For more information, contact the Museum of Science and Industry, (773-684-1414, www.msichicago.org); Art Institute of Chicago (312-443-3600, www.modernwing.org); Shedd Aquarium (312-939-2438, www.sheddaquarium.org).

Governor Pat Quinn

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

Continuing Chicago's great tradition of budget-friendly fun, the whole family can enjoy quality time together at **Millennium Park's Family Fun Festival** (June 10 – September 24), a season-long event full of interactive activities, live performances, a reading circle, and musical games for kids of all ages. Take part in hands-on garden and science activities with some of the region's most popular museums and cultural organizations, including the Chicago Architecture Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Children's Museum. Don't forget to cool off in the Crown Fountains and see your reflection as a part of the city's breathtaking skyline on the Cloud Gate sculpture. This year, Family Fun Festival special presentations include *SHELebration: A Tribute to Shel Silverstein* on July 13 and the musical mayhem of *Robbert Bobbert and the Bubble Machine* on August 31.

For more information, contact Millennium Park (312-742-1168, www.millenniumpark.org).

CHICAGOLAND

Take a break from the heat, relax and unwind at the **Chicago Botanic Garden Wine Festival** (June 6 – 7). Guests can escape the hustle and bustle of the city sidewalks and take in the beauty and serenity of the Chicago Botanic Garden while sampling more than 250 wines from around the world and delectable food creations from some of Chicago's finest restaurants and caterers. Additional highlights include cooking demonstrations from some of the Chicago area's top chefs and specialty food stores, plus live blues, rock and jazz from local talent.

For more information, contact Chicago Botanic Garden (847-835-5440, www.chicagobotanic.org).

One of the state's oldest festivals, and back for its 60th year, the **Annual Midsommar Swedish Festival** (June 23 – 28) has a taste of something that will appeal to everyone, with a craft show, music competition, carnival, pie-eating contest, Geneva Goes Green Expo, and a wide assortment of food choices. After cleaning off from the pie-eating contest, partake in any of the three parades during the six-day festival. While in town, visitors should be sure to stop into any of the more than 100 unique stores in Geneva's historic district, some of which will offer special sales.

For more information, contact the Geneva Chamber of Commerce (630-232-6060, www.genevachamber.com/festivals.html).

The highly anticipated **Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center** (opened April 19), offers a truly unforgettable experience to anyone who walks through its doors. Expected to become the regional center for learning and reflection on the history of the Holocaust, its *Zev and Shifra Karkomi Permanent Exhibition* features more than 500 artifacts, documents and photographs and a wide array of public programs. Initial exhibits include the *Miller Family Youth Exhibition*, 3,000 square feet of groundbreaking technology specially designed to educate children about Sept. 11, *The Legacy of Absence Gallery*, detailing the continuing impact of the Holocaust on the contemporary world through modern and contemporary art, and *Legacy and Memory: Building the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center*.

For more information, contact the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center (847-967-4800, www.ilholocaustmuseum.org).

NORTHERN

Follow in the footsteps of the 40th president, Ronald Reagan, during the **Reagan Trail Days** (August 14 – 16) and celebrate this legendary president with a weekend at the beautiful Rock River at Lowell Park, where it is said the former president saved 77 lives during his years as a lifeguard.

Other events include free trolley rides to all the Reagan sites including the Reagan Boyhood Home, Dixon Historic Center, Dixon Public Library, First Christian Church and Reagan Room, Loveland Building and Reagan Museum; and the "Reagan Heritage Bicycle Run," which follows a portion of the "Ronald Reagan Trail."

For more information, contact the Ronald Reagan Trail (815-288-2308, www.reagantraildays.net).

The rich history and eclectic culture of downtown Rochelle is on display during the **Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival** (August 21 – 23). Take in the sounds of summer with a variety of main stage entertainment acts including 60's music, dance, karaoke, rock and country, plus children's interactive music. While kids spin around on the exciting amusement rides or play games in the Kids Zone, adults can peruse the car, motorcycle, truck and tractor shows, small engine and miniature train displays, and arts and crafts show. Sunday offers a Fly-In/Drive-In at nearby Koritz Field for a chance to see and learn about a wide variety of planes, flight displays, and radio controlled models; head back downtown Sunday afternoon for the annual Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival parade.

For more information, contact the Lincoln Highway Heritage Festival (815-562-4189, www.lincolnhighwayheritagefestival.com).

Track the jets as they race across the sky, and get an up-close-and-personal look at the rows of gleaming civilian and military aircrafts at **Rockford AirFest** (August 22 – 23). The annual event has brought families together for years and is jam-packed with excitement that connects all generations to the thrill of aviation. Explore a variety of military squadrons as they join the U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute team, and aircraft displays that include everything from the fastest military jets to the largest cargo planes.

For more information, contact the Chicago Rockford Airport (815-969-4416, www.flyrfd.com/airfest.html).

CENTRAL

Fun for the whole family awaits at **Arthur Days Strawberry Jam** (June 5 – 6) in Illinois' Amish Country. The annual festival features a variety of crowd pleasers from the craft show and flea market to an extensive assortment of food and children's games. Before heading out of town, make sure to wander through Arthur's old-fashioned country downtown and find out why they say, "You're a Stranger Only Once!" New to the festival this year, the Blue Grass Jam will welcome bluegrass players to 'Pick, Grin & Jam' all over downtown.

For more information, contact Amish Country of Central Illinois (800-722-6474, www.amishcountryillinois.com).

Abraham Lincoln aficionados can continue celebrating his bicentennial year during the **Second Annual Shadows of Lincoln Festival** (June 6) in downtown Decatur. Step back in time and take a horse-drawn carriage ride on a tour of downtown for only a penny or follow a free guided walking tour encompassing three significant sites in downtown Decatur. Along the way interact with Lincoln-themed characters and interpreters that will capture your attention with fascinating stories about the legendary president's rise to political prominence. Prairie-style artisans will display their crafts in Central Park, including blacksmiths, basket makers, wood carvers and loom weavers.

For more information, contact City Centre Decatur (217-423-3475, www.downtowndecatur.com).

Formerly called “Cornfest,” visitors from around the Midwest join in on the action at the **Sweet Corn Blues Festival** (August 22 – 23) in Normal. This annual harvest celebration, held each August for over 15 years, features more than 50,000 ears of fresh sweet corn, endless sidewalk sales, arts and crafts, a vast flea market and some of the best blues bands in central Illinois. Come join the more than 50 blues bands as they take the festival into its 21st year. Not just a community-wide festival, the annual event serves as a “welcome home” celebration for Illinois State University students.

For more information, contact the Town of Normal (309-454-9557, www.normal.org).

WESTERN

One of only five festivals of its kind in the world, the town of Aledo hosts the 18th annual **Rhubarb Festival** June 5 – 6. Guests attending the unique festival can expect more than 2,000 homemade Rhubarb Pies to tickle their taste buds, and the historic downtown will be packed with crafts and live entertainment throughout the two-day event. The family-friendly event offers lots for the little ones too, with everything from Alley Art to the Rhubarb Derby. And make sure not to leave without taking home one of 12,000 free Rhubarbs seeds that will be given away.

For more information, contact Aledo Main Street (309-582-2751, www.aledomainstreet.com).

Railroad enthusiasts should mark their calendars for the annual **Galesburg Railroad Days** (June 27 – 28), a salute to the influence railroads and the town’s exceptional rail facilities have had in making the city a commercial and industrial center in western Illinois. Take part in Galesburg’s railroad heritage with more than 40 free events including a carnival, displays and exhibits, street fair, rail yard tours, 5 and 10K runs, hobby train show, flea market, rib cook-off, crafts and much more. The Model Train & Railroadiana Show, the largest event of its kind in the Midwest, showcases 20 model railroad layouts and exhibits and 80 dealers offering more than 250 tables of railroad related items.

For more information, contact Galesburg Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (309-343-2485, www.galesburgrailroaddays.org).

Considered one of the largest county fairs in the state, families can enjoy a quintessential summertime event at the **Rock Island County Fair** (July 21 – 26). Stroll through some of the unique artisan creations before catching the excitement of the annual demolition derby. This family-oriented, educational and agricultural fair features activities and games for kids of all ages, loads of carnival rides, the thrill of live bull riding, hot rod truck and tractor pull, and more. Capping off each night, live music is featured on the main stage, and a brilliant fireworks display will light up the sky Saturday night.

For more information, contact Rock Island County Fair (309-796-1620, www.rockislandcountyfair.com).

SOUTHERN

Join “Smallville” actors Justin Hartley and Phil Morris, and “Adventures of Superman” actress, Noel Neill, at **The Superman Celebration** (June 11 – 14) in Metropolis, the beloved character’s hometown. Characters, artists and celebrities associated with Superman comics, television shows and movies will be on hand to mingle with Super-fans. This long-standing festival continues to be a must-see event, especially for Superman and comic book lovers. Packed with a Super Car Show, Superman Road Race, amusement park area, the best in local live music and a \$1,000 Superhero Costume Contest, attendees will be entertained for hours.

For more information, contact Metropolis Tourism (800-949-5740, www.metropolistourism.com).

Featuring more than 35 performances, the fifth annual **Southern Illinois Music Festival** (June 14 – July 2) takes over venues from Mt. Vernon to Cairo and Murphysboro to Marion. Culminating with a four-concert series at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Shryock Auditorium, musicians from throughout the United States, Europe and Asia will delight audiences with the sounds of orchestral and chamber music, opera, ballet, jazz and new music, including the world famous Eroica Trio. For the younger music enthusiasts, there are Jive with Jazz and Klassics for Kids performances. The two-week long event proves its value, as the bulk of the performances are free.

For more information, contact the Southern Illinois Music Festival (618-453-2776, www.sifest.com).

Celebrate one of our nation's most legendary leaders and experience history first hand at the **Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site**. Once the Illinois' capitol building, from 1836 to 1839, and now the oldest surviving capitol building in the state, come see where then state representative Lincoln began his political career and honed his oratory skills. Sit on the bench next to a statue of young Lincoln for a great photo opportunity with the perfectly framed former Statehouse in the background, and take a guided tour to be inspired by the historically accurate setting where the future president led the discussion on moving the capital to Springfield. Then, wander down to Main Street for a little southern-style shopping and pop into The Fayette County Museum, full of Lincoln-era memorabilia, to complete the historic experience.

For more information, contact Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site (618-283-1161, www.illinoishistory.gov)

SOUTHWEST

Visitors can explore the tastes and sounds of southwest Illinois at the second annual **Wine Dine & Jazz Festival** in Belleville (June 5 – 6). The event offers a blend of everything local with live jazz acts from the metro east area, culinary delights from 12 local gourmet restaurants and tastings of more than 20 Illinois wine varietals. While there, learn from the pros all weekend as experts give food and wine pairing demonstrations. More than 25,000 people are expected to attend and meet local vintners, taste their wines and enjoy a festive outdoor environment.

For more information, contact the Wine Dine & Jazz Festival (800-442-1488, www.winedinejazz.com).

For those travelers looking for a really hot event this summer, the **Horseradish Festival** (June 6 – 7) will get visitors fired up. For nearly two decades, the festival has celebrated the multifaceted and vastly underutilized spicy member of the mustard family and brought people from around the region and the country to Collinsville for good times and great food. Adding to the excitement this year, festival-goers will be delighted with free live entertainment, specialty food booths, root toss and root sacking contests, and a chance to show off one's culinary skills with bloody mary and horseradish cooking contests. Just for kids, there are loads of children's activities, game booths and, of course, the Annual Root Derby.

For more information, contact the Horseradish Festival (618-344-2884, www.horseradishfestival.com). Step through to the 18th century and French colonial rule upon entering the **Fort de Chartres State Historic Site** in Prairie du Rocher. Touch some of the Land of Lincoln's earliest history including the partially reconstructed stone fort built in the 1750's and some of the original pieces of the earlier wooden forts. Re-enactors can be seen walking the grounds at various times throughout the summer. While on site, make sure to explore the north wall's bastions and guardhouse to peer through the rehabbed musket ports and cannon embrasures, or stop into the fort's museum in the king's storehouse.

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For more information, contact Fort de Chartres (618-284-7230, www.ftdechartres.com).

To get travelers started on their summer getaways in Illinois, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers information on related one-of-a-kind attractions, events, accommodations and bookable 3-Day Getaways through the Bureau's Web site, **www.enjoyillinois.com** or its travel counselors at **1-800-2CONNECT**. Travelers can also order the 2009 Illinois Travel Guide, the most comprehensive guide to travel in the Land of Lincoln. Guides are available at Tourist Information Centers, local convention and visitors bureaus, and regional tourism development offices statewide.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Media materials and downloadable images are now available on the Illinois Bureau of Tourism online media center at **www.illinoismediacenter.com**. Additional photography, available electronically, may be obtained by contacting Lisa Hadesman at lisa.hadesman@edelman.com, 312-552-1165.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.

*Amtrak routes included in the Enjoy Illinois discount, fare code V574: *Lincoln Service* (four daily round-trips between Chicago and St. Louis); *Illini & Saluki* (two daily round-trips between Chicago and Carbondale); *Illinois Zephyr & Carl Sandburg* (two daily round-trips between Chicago and Quincy). Blackout dates for the Illinois Amtrak discount are April 10 and 13, 2009. Passengers receive 20 percent off the best available fare. The number available seats are limited per train. Discount is valid in Business Class with the payment of that accommodation charge - subject to availability. Other rules apply and can be found at Amtrak.com.