



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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FALL INTO THE BOUNTY OF ILLINOIS' AUTUMN ADVENTURES

Discover why more Midwesterners are choosing Illinois as their getaway

Midwesterners are “falling” in love with Illinois...in fact, more than 70 percent^[1] of Midwest residents believe Illinois offers an easier and more convenient getaway than any other Midwest state. The unique combination of cultural experiences, centralized location and mix of both rural and urban destinations make Illinois the ideal choice for travelers this fall. Visitors will experience more than just leaves this fall with a getaway full of seasonal delights and surprises from world-class museum exhibits and haunting Halloween-themed tours to fun local and regional events that truly leave visitors with a more fulfilling fall experience in Illinois.

Gather family and friends to enjoy local fall activities and attractions, or venture across the state to discover new autumn treats for all ages with exciting 3-Day Getaways found on **enjoyillinois.com**.

CHICAGO

The month of October brings spooky surprises to the City of Chicago, as it's packed with an array of haunted activities during the month-long **Chicagoween** festival. The Chicago Park District offers urban pumpkin patches, haunted houses and a theater showing live performances. Daley Plaza is transformed into “Pumpkin Plaza,” an eerie city block with Halloween-themed decorations and pumpkin decorating stations. Kids can join in the fun by marching in costume as part of the State Street Halloween Happening Parade on Saturday, Oct. 24, beginning at noon, then stick around for a performance by Midnight Circus that combines circus, theater and the variety arts into a unique performance.

For more information, contact Chicago Park District (312-747-2001, chicagoparkdistrict.com).

One of the paramount places to view Chicago's breathtaking skyline while taking in the fall colors is the **Willis Tower Skydeck Chicago**. Experience what the buzz is about as you step onto **The Ledge**, Chicago's newest bird's-eye view from within a fully enclosed glass box suspended 1,353 feet above the ground. This one-of-a-kind attraction is a must-see for Chicagoans and visitors alike.

For more information, contact Willis Tower (312-875-9447, theskydeck.com).

^[1] According to a recent JWT online survey among 300 Midwest residents (IL, MI, WI, IN and MO), conducted on behalf of the Illinois Bureau of Tourism

Governor Pat Quinn

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

Animal enthusiasts can enjoy a seasonal zoo outing and partake in frighteningly fun festivities for the whole family at **Harvest Days at the Farm-in-the-Zoo** at Lincoln Park Zoo. From Oct. 3 – 4, celebrate the harvest and create creepy crafts, watch a blacksmith entertain with his trade, participate in tractor races and decorate pumpkins. This interactive, three-acre Midwestern farm nestled in the heart of Chicago educates zoo-goers on the agricultural industry. Visit the chickens, pigs, cows and goats and enjoy music and more during this free weekend event.

For more information, contact Lincoln Park Zoo (312-742-2000, lpzoo.org/index.php).

CHICAGOLAND

Taste the autumn bounty at the free **Festival of the Vine** event in Geneva, Sept. 11 – 13. Visitors can pick a beautiful harvest bouquet from the flower market, peruse the local arts and crafts show, dance to live music, visit the Kid's Patch and more. Patrons can also sample the delicious specialties of Geneva's fine restaurants during the Flavor Fare Event, or participate in educational wine seminars and tasting events. In the afternoon, don't miss out on touring the town in complimentary trolley rides and old fashioned horse-drawn antique carriage rides. Be sure to relax and unwind at the large outdoor tent with a glass of local wine and toast to the festive fall season.

For more information, contact Geneva Chamber of Commerce (630-845-9673, genevachamber.com/festivals.html).

Don't miss out on one of the most anticipated events of the season, the **St. Charles Scarecrow Festival**, Oct. 9 – 11. Scarecrow fans of all generations gather for this free downtown St. Charles event on the Fox River to explore hundreds of hand-crafted, whimsical scarecrows and vote for the favorite scarecrow of the festival in six categories. Families can enjoy the carnival rides, see the free Autumn On The Fox Art & Craft Show or Harley-Davidson Exhibit, listen to top-notch musical entertainment and savor delicious specialties from local vendors.

For more information, contact St. Charles Scarecrow Fest (800-777-4373, scarecrowfest.com).

Visit a garden of good and evil as the **Chicago Botanic Garden's Hallow Fest**, Oct. 23 – 25, fills its grounds with haunted happenings. Choose either the "friendly" or "spooky" path to Halloween-themed activities like pumpkin decorating and fortune telling or meet Fred the Vampire who will mesmerize with tricks, games and contests. Stroll through the Model Railroad Garden, decorated in festive lights, to watch the miniature ghost trains run, and refuel at the spooky snack shack to take a break from the action with tempting treats.

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

NORTHERN

Rock out at Illinois' largest street celebration, **On the Waterfront Festival**, Sept. 3 – 6, in Rockford. Visitor can hear more than 75 performers play in five different music venues in the heart of Rockford. Headliners include Barenaked Ladies, Jason Aldean and The Charlie Daniels Band. Groove to up-and-coming talent at the Emerging Artists Competition, unleash your inner child with an array of inflatable games and carnival rides at Adventure Alley, and cheer on the Ski Broncs water ski team or the Rockford Chariots Wheelchair Basketball players. Tempting food – including traditional favorites and exotic fare – are available at more than 50 food booths, prepared by nonprofit organizations and food favorites like Famous Dave's and Culver's.

For more information, contact On the Waterfront Festival (815-964-4388, onthewaterfront.com).

Pick the perfect pumpkin and celebrate all things fall at the **Annual Warren Pumpkin Festival** in Galena, Sept. 25 – 27. Visitors can browse arts and crafts, sample baked goods, cheer on the parade and bring home new treasures from the auction. This free event in downtown Warren celebrates autumn with a kaleidoscope of fall amusement for kids including games and pedal tractor pulls. From a produce stand to a volleyball tournament and new events in between, this family-oriented event is a great way to enjoy a festive fall weekend in Galena.

For more information, contact Galena Events (815-275-2654, galena.org).

Take a journey through fall seasons of the past on the McHenry County **Trail of History**, Oct. 17 – 18, at Glacial Park, between McHenry and Richmond. Hike a mile to the encampment (the encampment is also accessible to visitors with disabilities) to learn what life was like in the Northwest Territory from 1670–1850 at this fun and educational living history re-enactment. Watch history come to life before your eyes: visit the Métis Village, make a keepsake cornhusk doll, go back to school in a one-room schoolhouse and even watch military demonstrations from the past.

For more information, contact McHenry Convention and Visitors Bureau (815-338-6223, mccdistrict.org).

CENTRAL

Fall colors will proliferate throughout Morton at the **43rd Morton Pumpkin Festival**, Sept. 16 – 19. To kick off the fall season, the town hosts carnival rides, a parade on Sept. 18 and pumpkins galore. Come see why Morton, home of the Nestle/Libby's pumpkin packing plant, where more than 80 percent of the world's canned pumpkins are processed, has been declared "The Pumpkin Capital of the World." Among the main attractions of the family-style entertainment are the various pumpkin treats, from the specialty pumpkin pie to pumpkin ice cream, pumpkin pancakes or even pumpkin fudge.

For more information, contact Morton Chamber of Commerce (309-263-2491, pumpkincapital.org).

Get lost in fall excitement at **Abe's Corn Maze**, Oct. 3 – 31, in Springfield. This 10-acre Abraham Lincoln-themed corn maze takes visitors on various paths cut out in the shape of an American flag, log cabin and a portrait of the legendary president. It's a patriotic, fun and festive family adventure that is sure to be an unforgettable part of a fall getaway. After making their way through the maze, fall festival-goers will not want to miss out on the pony rides, a petting zoo, flea markets and fireworks display.

For more information, contact Abe's Corn Maze (217-522-5632, abescornmaze.org).

Cruise through the heart of downtown Springfield to check out exciting live music and cool cars during the **International Route 66 Mother Road Festival**, Sept. 25 – 27. This free event rolls in over 1,500 hot rods, classic cars and trucks for families to celebrate "all things automotive." Groove to music from the '50s, '60s and '70s all weekend long on two stages, including the Hit Men, Groove Daddies and Springfield's Elvis.

For more information, contact International Route 66 Mother Road Festival (866-783-6645, route66fest.com).

WESTERN

Red, yellow and orange hued leaves aren't the only colors to view in Western Illinois' skies this fall. At Moline's annual **Quad Cities Hot Air Balloon Fest**, Sept. 25 – 27, myriad hot air balloons take off throughout the weekend and glow high above the town after dark. The weekend wouldn't be complete without a trip to the Rock Island County Fairgrounds for a pancake breakfast Saturday morning, and those who stay for the whole weekend will want to cheer on runners participating in the Quad Cities Marathon.

For more information, contact Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau (308-792-3000, visitquadcities.com).

Those brave enough to face the ghosts of Chester need to take part in the **Haunted Historic Rivertown Tour**, held Saturdays in October. With frightening stories about ghosts that haunt a restaurant, a roadside and the local library, thrill-seekers won't want to miss out on this frightening fall tradition. For those driving down Route 3 into Chester, don't be frightened if you see the Ghost of Chester running along the road. Come see what makes this haunted town a great destination for Halloween enthusiasts, if you dare.

For more information, contact Quincy Convention and Visitors Bureau (800-978-4748, seequincy.com).

Take a ride along the historical **Spoon River Valley Scenic Drive** in Fulton County, and experience the days of one-room schoolhouses and horse-drawn mail carts. Visitors during the first two weekends in October are treated to an especially unique experience during the **39th Annual Fall Festival**, Oct. 3-4, 10-11. Among the attractions featured during the festival is Mount Pisgah Park, once an early Indian village, which draws countless visitors each year to see the ornate teepee and take tours through the historic sites. Visitors can learn more about the history of the Native Americans in this region by visiting the nearby Dickson Mounds State Museum, one of the United State's premier on-site archeological museums highlighting centuries of human culture in the Illinois River Valley.

For more information, contact Fulton County Tourism Council (309-647-6074, fultoncountytourism.org).

SOUTHERN

Visitors can unwind in the early autumn air at the **Shawnee Hills Wine Festival**, Sept. 5 – 6. Taking place throughout the Shawnee Hills in Jackson and Union counties and in connection with the Village of Cobden, this Labor Day festival delivers outstanding local wine from 12 local vineyards. Peruse wares from local artisans, enjoy culinary delicacies that pair perfectly with the wine selection, listen to live music from Blues Handel and The Kevin Lucas Orchestra and brush up on the history of Cobden at the local museum. This event is the first of many fall festivals bringing together visitors to enjoy the sights, tastes and sounds of the Shawnee Hills.

For more information, contact Shawnee Wine Trail (618-967-4006, shawneewinetrail.com).

March back in time and enjoy the peak foliage season during the **Annual Fort Massac Encampment** at the Fort Massac State park in Metropolis, Oct. 17 – 18. At this unique family-friendly event visitors can partake in military and civilian craft activities that showcase the traditions of turn of the century military styles. Both days are free and begin with a post of colors followed by mock battles, tactical demonstrations, voyagers, traders, craftsman, music and food.

For more information, contact Metropolis Bureau of Tourism (618-524-9321, metropolistourism.com).

Pick the tastiest apples of the harvest season at **Applepalooza!** and stop in Alto Pass from Nov. 7 – 8 at Rendleman Orchards Farm Market for fall recipe and baking needs. Bake seasonal delights with fresh apple ingredients such as apple butter and applesauce. Visitors can shop for all things apple, or browse the farm market to stock up on baking necessities such as spices and jams before the holidays. Don't forget to pick up an apple gift box for your friends and family.

For more information, contact Rendleman Orchards (618-893-2771, rendlemanorchards.com).

SOUTHWEST

Pick your perfect pumpkin for the fall season at **Eckert's Farms Jumpin' Pumpkin Jamboree** in Belleville and Millstadt. Open every weekend in October, an old-fashioned hayride takes visitors out to the giant pumpkin patch to find the perfect future jack-o-lantern. With sizes ranging from five to 150 pounds, there is a pumpkin for everyone. After you find your perfect pumpkin, spend some time at the farm enjoying a petting zoo and carnival rides. While visiting Eckert's, check out the tractor pulls, make-your-own scarecrow crafts, enjoy live country music and festive food such as funnel cakes, all sure to be a Halloween treat.

For more information, contact Eckert's Farms (618-233-0513, eckerts.com).

Pull out your secret family recipe and get ready for the **Belleville Chili Cook-off**, Oct. 2 – 3. Enter to win or simply enjoy the other delicious recipes from more than 40 vendors. With crowds expected to climb past 50,000, everyone is warming up to this popular Belleville festival. Purchase samples for just 50 cents and vote for your favorite chili to win the People's Choice Award. Other attractions include live music from Smash Band and Area 51, the Annual Car Show with the greatest automotive collection in the region, and Junior Idol where visitors can take to the microphone for their chance to be named the next music sensation of southwest Illinois.

For more information, contact Belleville Chili Cook-off (618-233-2015, bellevillechili.com).

Be on the lookout for scary surprises from witches to vampires at the **Haunted Trail at Carlyle Lake**, Oct. 16 – 17, in Carlyle. Meet at the McDonald's parking lot off Highway 127 to climb aboard the wagon for a hayride through the half-mile Little Prairie Nature Trail. Transformed into the ultimate Halloween-themed trail, scream with excitement as this event brings creepy creatures to life.

For more information, contact Carlyle Lake (618-594-2468, playandstaycarlyle.com).

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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 Amy Detmer at amy.detmer@edelman.com, 312-552-1142.

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.