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### **2003 Illinois Travel Guide Available Now**

*Free planning resource features “Best of Illinois” plus hundreds of statewide travel ideas*

**CHICAGO (April 8, 2003)** – With more than 200 pages of comprehensive travel information including “best of” experiences, regional highlights and scenic drives, the 2003 Illinois Travel Guide provides a multitude of ideas for year-round fun, relaxation and education. The free guide is now available and can be ordered by visiting [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com) or by calling an Illinois travel counselor at 800-2CONNECT.

Additional features such as an easy-to-use format, online contact information, and an expanded Chicago section with new transportation and walking maps, make the free resource a one-stop travel-planning tool. Midwesterners who are looking for close-to-home travel opportunities will find hundreds of ideas and resources in the new 2003 Illinois Travel Guide.

#### **Best of Illinois**

From Lincoln’s land to Lewis & Clark’s journey, and from classic road trips to more adventurous state park experiences, travelers will find must-see, only-in-Illinois attractions and sites in the “Best of Illinois” section. Found on the first few pages of the guide, along with transportation information and travel tips, the “best of” stories are activity driven and packed with actionable information to help readers plan their trips right now. “Best of Illinois” features are:

- **Land of Lincoln: Lincoln’s Illinois** – includes a chronological timeline of Lincoln’s life in Illinois with historic sites to visit.
- **Lewis & Clark: The Westward Journey Begins** – retraces Lewis & Clark’s journey in Illinois, with sites to visit along the way, including the new Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center in Hartford.
- **Road Trips: Illinois from Behind the Wheel** – showcases the state’s national scenic byways, including historic Route 66, with information on the “Mother Road’s” festivals.
- **Architecture: The Best of Illinois Architecture** – highlights Chicago architecture that can be seen by boat, bus, bike, foot and train, along with extensive information on Frank Lloyd Wright and regional listings of other interesting architecture.
- **Antiquing: Go on a Treasure Hunt** – features a variety of antiquing destinations around the state, from small shops to sprawling antique malls, and information on antique shows and flea markets throughout the year.
- **Wineries: Taste of Illinois** – provides a look at Illinois’ wineries and where to find them.

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- **Adventure Awaits You: State Parks Charts** – includes a region-by-region listing of state parks and specific amenities and activities for each, everything from lodging and camping options to boating, horseback riding, canoeing, hiking, hunting, fishing and more.

### **Regions of Illinois**

In addition to the “Best of Illinois” section, the 2003 Illinois Travel Guide is divided to feature each of Illinois’ seven regions: Chicago, Chicagoland, Northern, Central, Western, Southwest and Southern. Each regional section begins with recommendations to help travelers explore and uncover the real flavor of the specific region, followed by a regional map to help them navigate the area. The Chicago section also includes a new downtown walking map, a public transportation map and thorough descriptions of the diverse neighborhoods that make up the “Windy City,” as well as special information on shopping districts and theater venues. Each region includes its own special features to give readers the inside scoop.

For the first time, accommodations are now listed within each respective region making it more convenient for readers to locate lodging in their region of choice. To provide travelers with more lodging options, the section has now been expanded to include rental homes. All accommodation listings, from luxury hotels to bed and breakfasts, include contact information, amenities and price ranges. Attractions are also listed alphabetically within each region complete with detailed descriptions, contact information, handicap accessibility and price categories.

### **Additional Resources**

The 2003 Illinois Travel Guide provides travelers with more information resources than ever before. Along with phone numbers and addresses, the guide also has hundreds of new Web sites and e-mail addresses. Another great travel resource in the guide is the gatefold Illinois regional map that allows readers to orient themselves as they use the guide and more effectively plan their Illinois vacations.

The Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers year-round travel information and resources. Travelers can call **800-2CONNECT** to speak with an Illinois travel counselor or visit the Bureau’s Web site at **www.enjoyillinois.com**. Also available for travel planning is the spring issue of *Illinois Now!*, a seasonal magazine devoted exclusively to travel throughout Illinois. The magazine can be obtained by calling 800-2CONNECT or by visiting the Bureau’s Web site.

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The cover of the 2003 Illinois Travel Guide and statewide photography are available electronically or in slide format. For artwork, contact Jen Elving at 312-240-2813.

*The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (prior name: Department of Commerce and Community Affairs), Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.*