



# ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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## **ILLINOIS' FALL-O-WEEN<sup>SM</sup> SHINES WITH PUMPKINS, FOLIAGE AND FUN** *The State's "Fifth" Season Distinguishes Its Autumn Activities as Cream of the Crop*

CHICAGO – Filled with unique festivals, wine tastings and eerie events, the No. 1 pumpkin-producing state of Illinois introduces **Fall-O-Ween<sup>SM</sup>** (September 1 through October 31), a distinctive, not-to-be missed *fifth* season in Illinois offering the best of the best of autumn. Illinois festivals are just one component of the Fall-O-Ween season and this year the calendar is crowded with both old and new events statewide. And, the state's countless scenic drives make getting to the festivals part of the fun!

### **Chicago**

The **Berghoff Oktoberfest**, September 14-16, kicks-off the season in downtown Chicago at the Kluczynski Plaza at Adams and Dearborn streets. This open-air celebration offers German-style food, Berghoff's private-label beer and root beer, as well as Bavarian polka performances by the Chicago-based Johnny Wagner Band.

The spirits are rising from the depths of Lake Michigan and resurfacing at **Halloween at Navy Pier** the weekends of October 7-10, 14-16 and 21-31. The pier will be transformed into a fearsome compound with spine-tingling creatures, terrifying special effects and ghostly visitors to create a memorable and exhilarating Fall-O-Ween adventure. For younger children, the Skyline Stage will feature inflatable Halloween play areas, a haunted maze and entertainment.

Wizards, warlocks and witches beware at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual **Chicagoween!** Chicagoween, a citywide Halloween celebration, October 14 through 31, provides plenty of seasonal fun for children of all ages. The Haunted Village, located at Pumpkin Plaza (Daley Plaza), hosts pumpkin-decorating events, spooky storytellers and daily high-flying aerial performances by the Midnight Circus. Kids won't want to miss the **State Street Halloween Happening Parade**, October 22, where they can show off their costumes and trick-or-treat until their bags overflow.

For more information, contact the The Berghoff (312-427-3170, [www.berghoff.com](http://www.berghoff.com)); Navy Pier (312-595-PIER, [www.navypier.com](http://www.navypier.com)); Mayor's Office of Special Events ([www.cityofchicago.org/specialevents](http://www.cityofchicago.org/specialevents)).

### **Chicagoland**

The 20<sup>th</sup> **Annual Scarecrow Festival** in downtown St. Charles displays more than 100 hand-crafted scarecrows October 7-9. From spooky to kooky, the various characters in the scarecrow contest will give voting visitors a lot to consider. While the contest is the main event, a craft show, carnival, harvest treats and live entertainment will make the weekend as stuffed as the scarecrows themselves.

- more -

**Governor Rod R. Blagojevich**  
Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

This Fall-O-Ween at Six Flags Great America, screams and laughter will be heard from the sky-high roller coasters and from visitors down on the ground. The **15<sup>th</sup> Annual Fright Fest** transforms the amusement park into a spooky Halloween playground on weekends in October starting October 8. Creepy facades, decorations and special effects, a kid-sized corn maze, scare-free fun zones and live entertainment make this year's Fright Fest a spooktacular event for both kids and adults.

**Halloween Happenings at Westfield Old Orchard** in Skokie offers children's games, face painting and costume contests while also providing parents with a little retail therapy. The holiday celebration, October 29 and 30, invites little ghosts and goblins to trick-or-treat at Old Orchard's more than 100 stores. Both shopping and candy bags will surely be full by the end of the weekend!

For more information, contact the St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau (630-513-0566, [www.visitstcharles.com](http://www.visitstcharles.com)); Six Flags Great America (847-249-4636, [www.sixflags.com/parks/greatamerica](http://www.sixflags.com/parks/greatamerica)); Chicago's North Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau (847-674-7070, [www.visitichicagonorthshore.com](http://www.visitichicagonorthshore.com)).

### **Northern**

Illinois' **Trail of Terror** traverses through eight different counties in the northwest region of the state and includes many haunted houses, pumpkin patches and festivals along the way. Happenings from September 1 to October 31 are packaged with special hotel and bed & breakfast discounts making it easier than ever to get away and get spooked.

The **Harvest Scarecrow Festival** at Midway Village in Rockford takes visitors back in time. On October 8 and 9 time-honored harvest activities such as scarecrow-making and an old-fashioned baseball game are sure to set the stage for creating family memories. Midway Village also will host **All Hallows Eve**, a Halloween festival on October 22 that includes trick-or-treating at decorated Victorian buildings, a children's costume parade and tours throughout the vast and dark Haunted Woods.

For more information, contact Blackhawk Waterways Convention and Visitors Bureau (618-995-9463, [www.trail-of-terror.com](http://www.trail-of-terror.com)); Midway Village (815-397-9112, [www.midwayvillage.com](http://www.midwayvillage.com)).

### **Central**

There are plenty of opportunities to make friends, have fun and enjoy delicious food at **Furrow Vineyard & Winery's Oktoberfest**. One of the many events during Illinois Wine Month, this Oktoberfest offers live music, traditional German food and plenty of wine the weekend of September 24 and 25. The first winery in Central Illinois, Furrow features award-winning varieties to suit almost any palate.

Not far from the Furrow Vineyard and Winery is the **Cornfusion Corn Maze** at Hardy's Reindeer Ranch. Located in Rantoul, Hardy's offers a ten-acre corn maze themed after the "Fighting Illini." In addition to finding their way out of the agricultural labyrinth, visitors can also enjoy hay rides, an abundant supply of pumpkins and special moonlight maze nights. Those

who come back in November can catch a glimpse of the famous reindeer that reside at Hardy's.

For more information, contact the Furrow Vineyard & Winery (866-880-9463, [www.furrowwinery.com/events.htm](http://www.furrowwinery.com/events.htm) or [www.illinoiswine.com](http://www.illinoiswine.com)); Hardy's Reindeer Ranch (217-893-3407, [www.reindeerranch.com](http://www.reindeerranch.com)).

### **Western**

**The Haunted Dead Walk** in Macomb takes ghost hunters on an unforgettable expedition. Held on various dates from September 23 – November 12 in the dark of the night, this two- and-a-half hour walking tour guides visitors through buildings in downtown Macomb that are believed to be haunted. This isn't like other haunted houses as nothing is staged. In fact, it's said that real paranormal activity has occurred on many of the tours in the past!

With the countless activities offered during the **Garden Harvest Festival** at the Quad City Botanical Center, visitors can celebrate the Fall-O-Ween season from sunup to sundown. Held October 1, the event's offerings include creative scarecrows, colorful garden exhibits, a country market with handmade crafts, Fall-O-Ween décor, fresh produce and baked goods. In addition, talented musicians and dancers will perform throughout the day and old-world demonstrations like apple cider pressing and wheat weaving will educate and entertain guests.

For more information, contact the Macomb Convention and Visitors Bureau (309-833-1315, [www.makeitmacomb.com](http://www.makeitmacomb.com) or [www.hauntedmacomb.com](http://www.hauntedmacomb.com)); Quad City Botanical Center (309-343-2485, [www.qcgardens.com](http://www.qcgardens.com)).

### **Southern**

Located in Jackson and Union counties in Southern Illinois, the **Shawnee Hills Wine Trail** offers a variety of options for wine lovers. With the rolling hills and breathtaking vistas of the Shawnee National Forest as their backdrop, the seven wineries on the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail feature some of the most beautiful scenery in the Midwest, making the area an ideal autumn destination. To celebrate this year's harvest, Vienna's **Shawnee Winery Harvest Festival**, September 10 and 11, hosts grape stomping, live music, mouthwatering food and games all weekend.

The **Murphysboro Apple Festival**, September 14-18, offers visitors and residents alike plenty of opportunities to satisfy their taste buds. Special apple treats, an apple pie-eating contest and the "Apple Time Parade" keep visitors coming to this festival year after year. In fact, it is the longest-running event of its kind in Southern Illinois.

For more information, contact Shawnee Winery (618-658-8400, [www.shawneewinery.com](http://www.shawneewinery.com) or [www.illinoiswine.com](http://www.illinoiswine.com)); Murphysboro Apple Festival (618-684-3200, [www.murphysboro.com](http://www.murphysboro.com)).

### **Southwest**

Southwestern Illinois is known for its brilliant, colorful foliage during the Fall-O-Ween season,

which makes it the perfect time to visit Hartford's Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center to see the picturesque landscapes and to enjoy the **Lewis and Clark Music Festival**. Held September 17 and 18, the festival will have toes tapping to the traditional music of the late 1700s and early 1800s, and encourages music and history fans to dance and sing along to early American, French, Spanish and American Indian music.

With locations in Belleville, Millstadt and Grafton, Eckert's Country Store and Farms makes it easy for visitors to find them...and a great pumpkin! The **Jumpin' Pumpkin Jamboree**, held October 1-2, 8-9, 15-16 and 22-23, offers wagon rides to the enormous pumpkin patches so families can choose one that's just right for a jack-o-lantern. Additionally, country music, pony rides, children's activities, a petting farm and traditional festival food make this a fun-filled event for everyone.

For more information, contact the Lewis and Clark State Historic Site (618-251-5811, [www.campdubois.com/events.html](http://www.campdubois.com/events.html)); Eckert's Country Store and Farms (618-233-0513, [www.eckerts.com](http://www.eckerts.com)).

### **Make Falling Into Fall-O-Ween Easy!**

Beginning September 9, travelers can check the Illinois Bureau of Tourism's **weekly fall color updates** on [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com) to help them plan and make the most of any Illinois getaway. Together with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Bureau created the updates to report where and when the fall colors are the most brilliant in each of the state's seven regions so that potential travelers can maximize their Fall-O-Ween fun.

This September, experience the genuine culture of Illinois Wine Country during **Illinois Wine Month**. Information on exciting events, limited-time-only merchandise and special wine offers throughout the month will be available soon. Visit [www.illinoiswine.com](http://www.illinoiswine.com) for more information.

The Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers free travel resources with additional information on magnificent **3-Day Getaways**, scenic drives, fall festivals, events and attractions. All are available by calling **1-800-2CONNECT** to speak with an Illinois travel counselor or by visiting the Bureau's Web site at [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com).

This season, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism has collaborated with *AAA Home & Away* to create an official **Fall-O-Ween Guide**, a brand new resource for travelers throughout the Midwest. Guides will be available late August and can be obtained by calling 1-800-2CONNECT to speak with an Illinois travel counselor or by visiting the Bureau's Web site at [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com). Also, visitors can recognize designated Fall-O-Ween events statewide through logoed decals.

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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](http://www.illinoismediacenter.com). Additional photography, available electronically, may be obtained by contacting Katie Markese at [katie.markese@edelman.com](mailto:katie.markese@edelman.com), 312-297-7561 or Julie Connolly at [julie.connolly@edelman.com](mailto:julie.connolly@edelman.com), 312-233-1246.

*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.*