



# ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

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## **TAKE YOUR “REBATE RETREAT” IN ILLINOIS**

*State offers enticing ideas for spending tax rebates on travel to Illinois*

CHICAGO – Taxpayers can soon enjoy the fruits of their labor by using their rebate checks for a rewarding retreat in Illinois. According to a recent Expedia.com® survey, 51 percent of Americans are somewhat likely to spend their upcoming tax rebate on travel or a vacation. <sup>[1]</sup> Travelers looking to spend their refund dollars on travel in Illinois will find a wide variety of attractions and activities to make up their ideal “Rebate Retreat.” With the summer travel season quickly approaching, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism hopes to entice consumers with convenient, budget-friendly getaways throughout the state.

The Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers comprehensive 3-Day Getaways throughout the state every season. Travelers can visit [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com) to download itineraries, get information about Illinois events and attractions and book hotels.

### **ILLINOIS WINE COUNTRY**

There’s no need to fly to California to experience wine country as Illinois’ three wine trails offer award-winning wines, stunning scenery and charming vineyards for a memorable getaway. Located one to two hours northwest of Chicagoland, the **Northern Illinois Wine Trail** (815-547-3740, [www.visitnorthernillinois.com](http://www.visitnorthernillinois.com)) connects 15 wineries along a route filled with beautiful countryside and quaint towns. The state’s most established wine region features the **Shawnee Wine Trail** (618-967-4006, [www.shawneewinetrail.com](http://www.shawneewinetrail.com)) made up of nine wineries in southern Illinois. There, visitors will experience southern Illinois hospitality at cozy bed and breakfasts, artisan shops, even a Swedish restaurant. For a getaway that mixes outdoor adventures with relaxing vineyard strolls, the **Heartland Rivers Wine Trail** (618-234-WINE, [www.heartlandrivers.org](http://www.heartlandrivers.org)) provides myriad vacation options in the southwest part of the state.

### **INDOOR WATER PARKS**

Families can enjoy fun in the water year-round with Illinois’ popular indoor water parks located across the state. Recently opened in Gurnee, **Key Lime Cove** (877-360-0403, [www.keylimecove.com](http://www.keylimecove.com)) offers a 65,000 square-foot water park and comfortable hotel accommodations, plus a full-service spa and four different eateries. For guests’ convenience, water park admission is free with overnight stays and rates start at a wallet-friendly \$219 per night. Other options include the Key West-themed **Coco Key Water Resort** in Rockford (815-398-6000, [www.cocokeywaterresort.com](http://www.cocokeywaterresort.com)), and **Grizzly Jack’s Grand Bear Lodge** (866-399-3866, [www.grizzlyjacksresort.com](http://www.grizzlyjacksresort.com)) offering an indoor water park and amusement park all located within 60 wooded acres of Starved Rock State Park in Utica.

### **LAND OF LINCOLN**

With his 200<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary approaching, it is a great time to head down to the state’s capitol city to explore the life and times of Abraham Lincoln. Fortunately for travelers, many of

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<sup>[1]</sup> Expedia.com® and Harris Interactive, 2008

the historic landmarks and attractions are easy on the wallet and offer an enriching and educational experience. Visitors can step back into the mid-1800s at **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site** (217-632-4000, [www.lincolnsnewsalem.com](http://www.lincolnsnewsalem.com)) to learn how Lincoln lived while he was there during his mid-twenties. The reconstructed village offers self-guided tours and demonstrations from costumed interpreters. To visit additional Lincoln attractions in Springfield, **Springfield Trolley Tours** (217-528-4100, [www.visit-springfieldillinois.com](http://www.visit-springfieldillinois.com)) offers hop-on-hop-off tours aboard an old-time trolley to ten different sites. And no visit is complete without viewing the impressive collection of Lincoln memorabilia and theater shows at the **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum** (217-558-8844, [www.alplm.org](http://www.alplm.org)). The museum features two new exhibits this season: *Packaging Presidents* looks at two centuries of presidential campaigns and *Summer of Hate* focuses on the controversial 1908 Springfield race riots.

### **OUTDOOR ADVENTURES AND FAMILY FUN**

With comfortable temperatures on the rise, it's time to get outside and embark on new adventures. For a modest charge of \$20-25 per person, adrenaline junkies can enjoy three to four-hour kayak or rafting trips down the Vermillion River in Northern Illinois with **Vermillion River Rafting** (815-667-5242, [www.vermillionriverrafting.com](http://www.vermillionriverrafting.com)). Perfect for families with young children, the river offers between class one and three rapids (on a scale of one to six). **Mermet Springs** (618-527-3483, [www.mermetsprings.com](http://www.mermetsprings.com)) offers a different kind of water adventure. Kids will love the stone petting zoo and submerged Boeing 727 as they scuba dive or snorkel in this stone quarry located in Southern Illinois. Travelers looking to explore the scenic Shawnee Hills region can do so by foot, wheel, boat and even hoof. **Lake Glendale Stables** (618-949-3737, [www.lakeglendalestables.com](http://www.lakeglendalestables.com)) provides hourly and overnight horseback riding tours and rustic accommodations at its lodge or lakeside campsite.

### **SHOPPING**

There's never a shortage of shopping options in Illinois – from worldwide luxury designers to local artisans, shoppers can find something for every taste. For unbeatable prices, Aurora's **Chicago Premium Outlets** (630-585-2200, [www.premiumoutlets.com](http://www.premiumoutlets.com)) offers 120 stores. Further south, the **Southern Illinois Treasure Trail** (800-526-1500, [www.cctb.org](http://www.cctb.org)) winds through seven towns, offering shoppers hard-to-find antiques including furniture, house wares, vintage license plates and more.

### **SPORTS**

With warming temperatures, there's nothing like relaxing and taking in a game. The "Boys of Summer" can be found throughout the state from Chicago to Peoria. In Chicago, baseball fans can root for their favorite teams – **Chicago Cubs** or **Chicago White Sox** – at the city's premier sports arenas. To find the sport's up-and-comers, catch a minor league ballgame with the **Schaumburg Flyers**, **Kane County Cougars** and the **Peoria Chiefs** (847-891-2255, [www.flyersbaseball.com](http://www.flyersbaseball.com); 630-232-8811, [www.kccougars.com](http://www.kccougars.com); 309-680-4000, [www.peoriachiefs.com](http://www.peoriachiefs.com)). For soccer fans, the **Chicago Fire** (708-594-7200, [www.chicago-fire.com](http://www.chicago-fire.com)) can be seen playing their exciting brand of soccer at Toyota Park in Bridgeview.

### **EXPLORE ILLINOIS' WATERWAYS**

Much of Illinois' history and culture developed along its waterways, and today visitors can explore these stories as well as a variety of tours, shops, cruises and more. To learn about Chicago's world-class architecture, experts from the **Chicago Architecture Foundation** (312-922-3432, [www.architecture.org](http://www.architecture.org)) lead boat tours along the Chicago River during the spring

and summer months. In La Salle, history buffs can step back in time as they ride aboard a full-size replica canal boat pulled by horses. The **I&M Canal Boat Ride** (815-588-1100) follows the same path as it would have in the mid-1800s. In Peoria, vibrant art galleries, exciting music venues, specialty shops and excellent restaurants make up its **Riverfront District** (309-671-5555, [www.peoriariverfront.com](http://www.peoriariverfront.com)); and visitors can sightsee along the Mississippi River aboard the **Spirit of Peoria** (800-676-8988, [www.spiritofpeoria.com](http://www.spiritofpeoria.com)), offering daytime and overnight excursions to and from Starved Rock and Pere Marquette state parks.

### **GOLFING**

Illinois' Midwest location and more than 675 golf facilities – not to mention six courses included in *Golf Digest's* list of "America's 100 Best Golf Courses" – make the state an ideal destination for golf getaways. The Rockford area offers golfers the option to create convenient packages along the **Rock River Golf Trail** (800-521-0849, [www.gorockford.com](http://www.gorockford.com)). Similarly, the **Southern Illinois Golf Trail** (800-526-1500, [www.sig.org](http://www.sig.org)) lets golfers submit details for a custom designed golf vacation; both options provide knowledgeable planners who will assist in booking tee times, equipment and accommodations.

### **SPAS**

With an increasing number of travelers incorporating spa visits into their travel itineraries, Illinois provides a range of exceptional options for every budget and type of getaway. Consistently ranked as one of the country's top spas, the **Peninsula Spa** in Chicago (312-573-6860, <http://chicago.peninsula.com>) offers luxury services, including full and half day packages ranging from \$300-600 for the ultimate pampering experience. In historic Galena, the **Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa** (815-777-2444, [www.eagleridgeresortonline.com](http://www.eagleridgeresortonline.com)) offers holistic wellness treatments as well as traditional services, all located among a serene environment of rolling hills and a sparkling lake.

To get travelers started on their Rebate Retreats, 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](http://www.enjoyillinois.com)** or its travel counselors at **1-800-2CONNECT**. Travelers can also order the 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](http://www.illinoismediacenter.com)**. Additional photography, available electronically, may be obtained by contacting Emma Douglas at [emma.douglas@edelman.com](mailto:emma.douglas@edelman.com), 312-240-2730 or Andrew Smith at [andrew.smith@edelman.com](mailto:andrew.smith@edelman.com), 312-552-1139.

*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.*