



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

Enjoy Autumn in Illinois: September – November 2011

For Distribution

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Illinois Office of Tourism

Autumn is a very special time in Illinois. As the vibrant fall colors begin to appear, travelers have the opportunity to attend exciting and relaxing events throughout the state. From festivals and fairs to corn mazes and pumpkin patches, Illinois offers unique ways to celebrate the season.

The events listed below are just a sampling and many more can be found at the Illinois Office of Tourism's official Web site, enjoyillinois.com, where you'll be able to see eye catching and interactive features showcasing all the excitement Illinois autumns have to offer. The new fall content will be live on September 13.

CHICAGO & BEYOND

October 1-31

Chicago Artists Month

Various Locations

Chicago

Chicago's citywide collaborative arts event, Chicago Artists Month, returns this October with 200 events; ranging from exhibitions to open studio tours and neighborhood art walks presented by museums, galleries, cultural centers and arts organizations throughout the city. This month's activities showcase approximately 5,000 artists living and working in Chicago. For more information, please visit www.chicagoartistsmonth.org.

October 1-30

Six Flags Great America Fright Fest

Rt. 132 (Grand Ave.) and I94

Gurnee

It's Thrills by day, chills by night at Fright Fest Presented by Snickers®. Six Flags Great America will be totally transformed into a Halloween playground, Fridays - Sundays. Have a ghoulish good time with hair-raising shows, electrifying street entertainment and thrilling haunted houses. Plus, experience all the rides in the dark. There will also be a special trick-or-treat just for kids. For more information, please call 847-249-4636 or visit www.sixflags.com/greatAmerica/events/CalendarEvents.aspx.

October 8-9

Scarecrow Harvest Festival

Midway Village Museum

6799 Guilford Road

Rockford

Make your own scarecrow to take home for your front porch autumn decorations. Midway Village will provide the straw. Purchase traditional scarecrow accessories on site or bring your old clothes from home. Explore the charming Victorian era village and gardens at one of the most scenic times of the year when the leaves are in full color and the traditional harvest activities are in full swing. For more information, please call 815-397-9112 or visit www.midwayvillage.com/event_calendar.cfm?id=1010.

October 9

42nd Annual Burgoo Festival

Downtown

Utica

Stroll the main streets of Utica for a day of crafts, shopping, food & fun! Marching bands and other entertainment will be sure to please. While there, be sure to try the Pioneer Stew that has been simmering and stirred all night in giant copper pots over a wood fire. This annual event draws thousands of all ages. For more information, please call 815-667-4861 or visit www.lasallecountymuseum.org.

October 17-23

Fashion Focus Chicago 2011

Various Locations

Chicago

Fashion Focus Chicago showcases some of the city's top designers, and features runway shows and shopping events in Millennium Park and other various locations around the city. Tickets must be purchased in advance for headlining shows. For more information, please visit www.explorechicago.org/city/en/things_see_do/event_landing/events/tourism/fashion_focus_chicago.html

GREAT RIVERS COUNTRY

September 16 - 18

50th Annual AETA Working Farm Show "John Deere" Feature Tractor

AETA Showgrounds

13451 Illinois Highway 92

Geneseo

Visit the 50-acre showground and experience the fall harvest, early 1900's style. Watch the corn and bean field harvest with antique tractors, horses plowing fields, oat and wheat threshing and an actual saw mill. Throughout the show grounds; gas engines, garden tractors, farm tractors and equipment will be on display. Children activities, 1900's craft demonstrations, speakers and music are featured daily. For more information please call 309-945-1440 or visit www.ae-ta.com.

September 24-25

Great River Grape Escape

Quincy Riverfront in Clat Adams Park

Front & Broadway streets

Quincy

This is a fall wine-tasting event featuring 12 Illinois wineries, complimented by musical entertainment and food. Admission to the event is free and open to the public. The festival allows consumers to sample the great varieties of wine and meet many of the producers from around the state. For more information, please call 217-214-3700 or visit www.quincygrapeescape.com.

October 1-9

Spoon River Valley Scenic Drive

700 East Oak Street

Canton

Forty-four years ago, the Spoon River Valley Scenic Drive Fall Festival was launched to celebrate its history, people, land and the river at its heart. The spirit of that original event lives on, though much has been expanded. The annual driving tour, which is open year-round, features more than 100 miles of scenic routes through 15 communities. Held on the first two weekends in October, visitors from all over the world flock to the drive for the fall scenery, arts, crafts, music, food, produce, historic sites, museums, old-time farming, collectibles and antiques. For more information, please call 309-647-8980 or visit www.spoonriverdrive.org.

October 8-22

Vintage Voices

Alton City Cemetery

5th & Vine Streets

Alton

Saturdays in October, The 10th Anniversary of Vintage Voices celebrates "Visionaries & Pioneers at the River's Edge." Relive the past firsthand during this 1 & 1/2 hour tour of the cemetery. Along the way, meet descendants both famous and legendary who made significant footprints in Alton's history. Alton Little Theater actors and other local talent will greet guests at the gravesites and tell their stories as they walk through this park-like setting. For more information, please call 618-465-6676 or visit www.greatriverroad.com/Cities/Alton/vintage.htm.

October 15-16

Punkin Chuckin' Contest

Uhlman Family Farm

Corner of Springfield and Allentown roads

Morton

There are so many ways to chuck a pumpkin! In the pumpkin capital of the world, the Morton Punkin Chuckin' Contest, which celebrates its 16th year, is a competition for the young and old to see who can go the distance, shooting pumpkins out of cannons. About 400 pumpkins will be used in the contest, with cars parked in the middle of a harvested cornfield as the targets. There is a host of pumpkin delicacies to enjoy—ice cream, pie and chili, along with pumpkin souvenirs and more. For more information, please call 309-266-5135 or visit

www.mortonchamber.org/pumpkin-festival.

LAND OF LINCOLN

September 15-18

Corvette Funfest

Mid America Motorworks
17082 N US Highway 45
Effingham

Corvette Funfest, held annually on Mid America Motorworks' 150 acre corporate campus, is one of the largest gatherings of corvette enthusiasts in the country. During the three-day celebration, more than 15,000 corvettes are displayed and over 45,000 enthusiasts enjoy the sights and seminars. For more information, please call 217-540-4200 or visit <http://corvettefunfest.com>.

September 23 -25th

International Route 66 Mother Road Festival

Downtown
Springfield

Rev up your engines for the largest event in the heart of historic downtown Springfield. Imagine over 1000 classic and vintage cars and trucks from across the U.S. and Canada and 80,000 spectators filling the streets for a weekend of great, free entertainment for families and children of all ages. Friday evening is an amazing site as all the cool cars and trucks parade into downtown during the Rt. 66 City Nights Cruise. From there the fun continues all the way through close on Sunday. For more information, please call 866-RTE-66IL or visit www.route66fest.com.

October 7-8

9th Central Illinois Bragging Rights BBQ Competition

Downtown
Arthur

More than 50 top competitive BBQ teams gather to vie for the bragging rights in this exciting event. There will be plenty of BBQ vendors, large and small smokers and equipment to investigate, and lots of nationally ranked BBQ experts to talk to. The Thrill of the Grill is a special contest for the not-quite-ready-for-prime-time backyard enthusiast. For more information, please call 800-722-6474 or visit www.CIBR-BBQ.com.

October 7 - 8

Spookapalooza

Avon & Lincoln Theaters
426 North Water Street
Decatur

Join us for a weekend of ghostly bus tours, free monster movies, and chilling overnights in one of the most haunted towns in the Midwest. Come along for intense investigations of these supernaturally charged theaters! Spend the night looking for the theaters' ghosts and also get a history and tour of the theaters as well. For more information, please call 888-446-7859 or visit www.haunteddecatur.com.

November 10-13

Festival of Trees

U.S. Cellular Coliseum
101 South Madison Street
Bloomington

The spectacular Christmas décor, entertainment, and special events will entertain all ages. Come and enjoy a wide variety of custom-designed trees, including a selection of celebrity trees, a gingerbread village, unique centerpieces and festive wreaths. All items are available for bid in a silent auction. The Festival of Trees is in its 18th year as a family-centered community event. Proceeds from the festival benefit The Baby Fold, a local organization serving children and families. For more information, please call 309-454-1770 or visit www.festoftrees.org.

TRAILS TO ADVENTURE

Through September 18

Murphysboro Apple Festival – 60th Year

13th & Walnut streets
Murphysboro

The Murphysboro Apple Festival is Southern Illinois' longest running family festival, featuring the largest parade in the region! A few of the many events during the festival include an apple peeling contest, apple pie eating contests, arts & crafts, the Murphysboro Clarkes vintage base ball team tourney, special exhibits at the General John A Logan Museum and so much more. For more information, please call 618-684-6421 or visit www.murphysboro.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=2&Itemid=187.

September 17

Annual Shrimp Festival

Downtown
Golconda

Enjoy shrimp cooked more ways than you can imagine, locally grown prawns for purchase, helicopter, carriage rides, live music, beer & wine tents and lots more. For more information, please call 800-248-4373 or visit www.mainstreetgolconda.org/calendar.htm.

October 1

Carbondale Downtown Art & Wine Fair

Jackson Square
Carbondale

Shawnee Hills Wine Trail Association will be joining the Carbondale Mainstreet Association once again to hold a very tasty event. Fantastic wines, with a variety of local artists and artisans, downtown stores and restaurants open. This event provides something for everyone to enjoy. For more information, please call 618-529-8040, www.carbondaledawf.com.

October 1-2

Heritage Festival

Jefferson County Historical Village

1411 North 27th Street
Mt. Vernon

Craft demonstrations, music, ham & beans lunch, along with other foods are available at this family friendly event. Authentic log cabins and museum containing Jefferson County memorabilia are all featured. For more information, please call 618-246-0033 or visit www.jchs.mvn.net/Events.html.

October 22 – 23

Makanda's Vulturefest

Downtown

Makanda

Black vultures and turkey vultures fly and swoop in the skies surrounding Makanda each fall. Local residents await their return each fall as an end to the hot summer and the beginning of cooler fall weather. This event is a celebration of the vulture's annual migration with live music and displays by local artists for purchase. Come join the celebration and see this awe inspiring, unique event as these birds return. For more information please call, 618-457-6282 or visit www.villageofmakanda.com/events.html.

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