



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

Enjoy Spring in Illinois: March – May 2011

For Distribution

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Illinois Office of Tourism

Spring in Illinois brings a perfect combination of beauty, culture and family fun. From museum exhibitions and theater performances to outdoor festivals and scenic garden views, the warmer weather showcases Illinois at its best. The events listed below are just a sampling and many more can be found at the Illinois Office of Tourism's official Website, www.enjoyillinois.com/gr.aspx?region=illinois, beginning on March 9.

CHICAGO

Through May 8

Working at the Broadway Playhouse

175 East Chestnut Street

Chicago

WORKING is a vital new musical based on the book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Chicago's own Studs Terkel. Newly adapted by Stephen Schwartz (WICKED, PIPPIN and GODSPELL), WORKING is the working man's A CHORUS LINE. It is a musical exploration of 26 people from all walks of life, with songs by all-star composers Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Tony Award™ winning Lin-Manuel Miranda, Mary Rodgers, Susan Birkenhead, Stephen Schwartz and Grammy Award™ winning James Taylor. WORKING celebrates everyday people, fills you with hope and inspiration and is the perfect musical for anyone who has ever worked a day in their lives. For more information, please call 312- 977-1700 or visit www.broadwayinchicago.com.

March 5-13

Chicago Flower & Garden Show

Festival Hall at Navy Pier

600 East Grand Avenue

Chicago

Enjoy lush theme gardens from Chicago's top landscapers/designers, a garden market, a children's activity garden, the Garden Gourmet with Chicago's top chefs, educational seminars,

and much more. For more information, please call 773-868-3010 or visit www.chicagoflower.com.

Begins March 18

Body Worlds & The Cycle of Life

Museum of Science and Industry
57th Street and Lake Shore Drive
Chicago

Body Worlds & The Cycle of Life, a new exhibit from physician and pioneering anatomist Dr. Gunther von Hagens that focuses on the human life cycle, will make it's U.S. debut at the Museum of Science and Industry. The Cycle of Life, a 14,000-square-foot exhibit, features a special presentation on the human life cycle and the arc of aging, by exhibition designer, Dr. Angelina Whalley, as well as more than 200 specimens preserved through plastination, the remarkable scientific process invented and perfected by Dr. Gunther von Hagens. For more information, please call 773-684-1414 or visit www.msichicago.org.

May 3 – 8

Spring Awakening

Oriental Theatre/Ford Center for the Performing Arts
24 West Randolph Street
Chicago

The winner of 8 Tony Awards, including Best Musical, told by Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater through "The most gorgeous Broadway score this decade" (*Entertainment Weekly*) – Spring Awakening explores the journey from adolescence to adulthood with poignancy and passion you will never forget. Join this group of late nineteenth century German students on their passage, as they navigate teenage self-discovery and coming-of-age anxiety in a powerful celebration of youth and rebellion in the daring, remarkable *Spring Awakening*. For more information, please call 800-775-2000 or visit www.broadwayinchicago.com.

CHICAGOLAND

March 17 - May 29

Elton John and Tim Rice's AIDA

Drury Lane Theatre
100 Drury Lane
Oakbrook Terrace

AIDA is a sweeping tale of conflicting loyalties and star-crossed lovers with an exhilarating pop-rock score by Elton John and Tim Rice. "AIDA is not opera. It's truly a pop musical with spoken dialogue and all kinds of recognizable song types: urban-based rhythm and blues, gospel inspired songs, ballads and, of course, Crocodile Rock songs." - Elton John. For more information, please call 630-530-8300 or visit www.drurylaneoakbrook.com.

April 29 – May 1

The 12th Annual Long Grove Chocolate Festival

Downtown Historic Long Grove Village

307 Old McHenry Road

Long Grove

Enjoy the sweet life! This annual festival kicks off the outdoor special event season in Long Grove each spring with a celebration of everything chocolate. The historic district, home to more than 60 distinctive shops and restaurants, including the world renowned Long Grove Confectionery, becomes a chocolate lover's paradise! Enjoy chocolate in all its many splendors; sway to the live entertainment throughout the village all three days, and fall to the temptations of the many food, specialty vendors and tasty restaurants. For more information please call 847-634-0888 or visit our website at www.longgroveonline.com/chocolate.html.

Begins May 7

Six Flags Great America and Hurricane Harbor

I-94 and Grand Avenue (Route 132)

Gurnee

Six Flags Great America is fun for the whole family with 14 heart-pounding roller coasters, a free 20-acre water park with over 30 heart pounding water slides, spectacular shows and parades, family rides and big pint-sized fun for the kids with four children's areas including Wiggles World and over 35 rides for the little ones. The Best Water Park in the Nation...Just Got Bigger Coming in the summer of 2011 - Riptide Bay at Hurricane Harbor! Catch a wave at the only place to surf on Lake Michigan. The newly expanded water park will boast more slides and attractions than any other in the state. Best of all it's FREE with admission to Six Flags Great America. For more information please call 847-249-4636 or visit www.sixflags.com/greatAmerica.

Begins May 19

Nature Unframed: Art at the Arboretum

The Morton Arboretum

4100 Illinois Route 53

Lisle

If gorgeous landscapes could sculpt, weave, or paint, imagine what beauty they'd create. A brand new art exhibition will reveal how trees at The Morton Arboretum inspired artists to develop a diverse and surprising set of creations. Renowned artists from around the world designed eleven striking pieces specifically based on how they "read" the unique landscape "galleries" where the works will be displayed. The art will complement stunning beauty at the Arboretum, which features the largest collection of flowering, ornamental trees in the Midwest. For more information, please call 630-968-0074 or visit www.mortonarb.org.

NORTHERN

Through May 15

GIANTS: African Dinosaurs

Burpee Museum of Natural History

737 North Main Street

Rockford

GIANTS offers a glimpse of what the dinosaur world was like in Africa more than 100 million years ago--and what it takes to search for fossils in one of the harshest environments on Earth. Discover what is involved in uncovering and piecing fossils back together. Wonder at the magnificence of the toothy six-foot-long skull of Carcharodontosaurus, Africa's answer to T. rex. For more information, please call 815-965-3433 or visit www.burpee.org.

April 9

The Berenstain Bears in Family Matters The Musical

26 North Williams St.

Crystal Lake

Welcome to Bear Country where you are invited along as Mama Bear follows a cookie trail to sort things out with the family. Find out what each one has hidden in the cookie jar in this musical rendition of one of kids' favorite families. There's trouble in the tree-house...Brother Bear has trouble with a school quiz, so he hides it in the cookie jar. Sister Bear makes friends with a frog and hides it in the cookie jar. Papa has been eating candy when he's supposed to be on a diet and the wrapper ends up in the cookie jar...It's up to Mama to follow the cookie trail and sort things out! This fun-filled musical weaves together three of their most popular books. For information and tickets call 815-356-9212 or visit www.rauecenter.org.

April 16-17

President U.S. Grant's Birthday Celebration

Galena History Museum

Galena

Experience the many events commemorating the birthday of Galena's favorite son: the 18th President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant. Step back into the 1820s with living history demonstrations, a period church service and more. For more information, please call 815-777-9129 or visit www.galenahistorymuseum.org.

May 26

Rockford RiverHawks Baseball Home Opener

See Rockford's professional baseball team, members of the North American League, play their first home game of the season against the Schaumburg Flyers. Specials, giveaways, entertainment and good, old-fashioned summertime baseball make a visit to the ballpark a great family outing. For more information, please call 815-885-2255 or visit www.rockfordriverhawks.com.

CENTRAL

Throughout Spring Season

“Team of Rivals”

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum
212 N. Sixth Street
Springfield

To learn more about the Civil War, you won't want to miss “Team of Rivals: Lincoln's Cabinet at the Crossroads of War”, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum's newest exhibit. The exhibit continues through August 15. Based on Doris Kearns Goodwin's book of the same name, Goodwin, herself, serves as your “virtual” tour guide throughout the exhibit, with recorded videos that narrate each section of the exhibit. For more information call 217-558-8844 or visit www.presidentlincoln.org.

March 19

Spring Bloom Arts Festival

Bloomington Sale Barn
2027 South Main Street
Bloomington

The Spring Bloom Arts Festival is a juried show of fine art and fine craft, with exhibitors from across the nation. The festival features one hundred artists with original artwork in a variety of disciplines. It is presented by the McLean County Arts Center, one of the oldest community arts organizations in the Midwest. For more information, please call 309-829-0011 or visit www.mcac.org.

April 22-23

Spores N More Morel Mushroom Festival

Various Locations
Lake Shelbyville Area

Come and enjoy the thrill of the hunt for the elusive Morel Mushroom. Enjoy the welcome dinner and reception with homemade rich mushroom soup along with spaghetti, baked potatoes, hotdogs, drink and dessert plus a speaker that will discuss mushrooms. Participate in a Geocache event sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lake Shelbyville. There will be plenty of Morels to hunt, food to eat, vendors, and lots more in the towns of Findlay, Shelbyville, Sullivan, and Windsor. For more information, please call 800-874-3529 or visit www.lakeshelbyville.com/events/sporesnmore.htm

April 27-May 1

13th Annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival

The Historic Virginia Theatre
203 West Park Avenue
Champaign

This annual festival is a celebration of film at its finest. Roger Ebert hand picks this selection of films to share with the audience. Taking place at the newly renovated Virginia Theatre in Downtown Champaign, moviegoers have a once in a lifetime opportunity to get up close and personal with cast, crew and writers for screenings and discussions throughout the festival.

Nestled in the heart of a thriving downtown district, eclectic cuisine, boutique shopping and vibrant nightlife abound. For more information, please call 217-244-0552 or visit www.ebertfest.com.

WESTERN

Through May 1

Jim Henson's Fantastic World

Lakeview Museum of Arts & Sciences

1125 W. Lake Avenue

Peoria

Jim Henson's Fantastic World offers a rare peek into the imagination and creative genius of this multi-talented innovator and creator of Kermit the Frog, Big Bird and other beloved characters. The exhibition features original artworks, including drawings, cartoons and storyboards that illustrate Henson's talent as a storyteller and visionary. Among the variety of exhibition objects are puppets, television and movie props, photographs of Henson and his collaborators at work and original video productions, including excerpts from Henson's early career and experimental films. For more information, please call 309-686-7000 or visit www.lakeview-museum.org.

March 25-27

QCCA Flower and Garden Show

QCCA Expo Center

2621 4th Avenue

Rock Island

It's like walking into a springtime heaven at the QCCA Flower & Garden Show in Rock Island, Illinois. Over 20,000 square feet of blooming flowers, dazzling ponds and waterfalls! And hundreds of garden-related displays by the area's leading landscape architects and garden designers! There is a seminar series by leading experts to answer your questions and inspire you. For more information, please call 309-788-5912 or visit www.qccaexpoctr.com.

Sandburg Days – Festival for the Mind

Carl Sandburg College

2400 Tom L. Wilson Boulevard

Galesburg

Annual festival celebrating the life and legacy of Galesburg native, two-time Pulitzer Prize winning poet and Lincoln biographer, Carl Sandburg. Festival includes three days of literary, history, sporting and children's events. For more information, please call 309-341-5221 or visit <http://apps.sandburg.edu/Festival/index.html>

May 28-29

Mackinaw Valley Vineyard International Wine & Beer Festival

33633 Illinois 9

Mackinaw

Mackinaw Valley Vineyard wine and beer tasting will be featured all day long from at least 15 countries, and guests are invited to enjoy the food and entertainment from acts like Stevil Dan, Greg Williams, Sister Groove and the Crosstown Jam, Sally Weisenberg Trio, Colt45 and Johnny Walker. This is a perfect opportunity for adults in the area to get away and enjoy a relaxing day of music, wine, beer, and springtime fun! For more information, please call 309-59-WINE (9463) or visit www.mackinawvalleyvineyard.com.

SOUTHERN

March 1-31

Shawnee Hills Wine Trail - Vintage Arts Month

Shawnee Hills Wine Trail

Jackson & Union Counties

March is Vintage Arts Month. Travel the trail and view local artist works while sampling our award winning Illinois wines. All twelve wineries will be participating with local artists whose works will be exhibited and sold at the wineries. The Shawnee Hills Wine Trail is proud to partner with area artists and will be displaying a diverse array of works including, photography, ceramics, water colors, wood, acrylics and more. For more information, please call 618-967-4006 or visit www.shawneewinetrail.com.

March 5-6

Fandomfest Metropolis - Comic and Toy Show

Metropolis Community Center

900 West 10th Street

Metropolis

The show will have a variety of vendors showcasing comics from the 1940s to present-day, vintage Star Wars toys, autographed celebrity items, games, t-shirts, western items and more. A Film Festival and Trivia Contests will be held both days, and the popular costume contest on Saturday. All attending will receive a free poster and will be eligible for door prizes. For information call 615-573-4537 or visit www.metropolistourism.com.

May 14-15

Reds, Whites & Blues Festival

Blue Sky Vineyard.

3150 South Rocky Comfort Road

Makanda

Anchoring the eastern end of the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail, Blue Sky offers a taste of Tuscany in the hills of Southern Illinois. Enjoy award-winning Illinois wines, local artisans, and live blues music. \$6.00 Admission - Includes glass & sampling. A variety of hearty sandwiches, pizzas, and snacks, as well as wine-alternatives such as beer and mixed drinks are offered, while you enjoy large indoor seating area and two beautiful outdoor terraces that overlook the vineyard and

rolling countryside. For information, please call 618-995-WINE or visit www.blueskyvineyard.com.

May 27-28

Heritage Festival

Along the beautiful Ohio River
Elizabethtown

Celebrates the area's rich heritage and history with exceptional period entertainment and activities to fill your weekend including; 1800's outdoor play, a pageant, quilt show, duck races on the Ohio, area craft and food vendors. Festivities also include a period ball, a Regal Women's Tea and live entertainment throughout the activities. For information, please call 618-287-7090 or visit www.hardincountyil.org.

SOUTHWEST

April 2-30

Baby Bonanza

Rainbow Ranch Petting Zoo and Exotic Farm
9906 State Route 15
Nashville

Rainbow Ranch Petting Zoo & Exotic Farm's critters are waiting to be petted and appreciated. Bottle-feed the babies including lambs, kids and calves. Stroll the 150-year-old family farm with a personal tour where you will meet all the friendly animals that call Rainbow Ranch home! There are llamas, alpacas, donkeys, sheep, goats, fallow deer, pot-belly pigs, peacocks, ducks, chickens, emus, swans, cows, horses, a camel, and even a couple of zebras! For more information, please call 618-424-7979 or visit www.rainbowranchzoo.com.

April 16

Voices of the Civil War

Alton Visitor Center
200 Piasa Street
Alton

Commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War as you join us for a self-guided living history tour along Alton's Lincoln & Civil War Legacy Trail. Visit seven sites along the trail to hear the tales of Alton's past come to life as they are told by costumed docents from the Alton Little Theater and Community Service League. The tour is a self-guided driving tour. For more information, please call 618-465-6676 or visit www.visitalton.com/visitors-events-details.cfm?someevent=1584.

May 13-15

Art on the Square

Belleville's Public Square
Rt. 159 & West Main

Belleville

Named the #1 Fine Art Show in the Nation, Art on the Square features 100 juried artists from around the world. The show also has entertainment on the main stage and children's stage, artist demonstrations, children's art activities and a relaxing food and wine court. Free Admission. For more information, please call 800-677-9255 or visit www.artonthesquare.com.

May 14 - 15

Camp River Dubois: Point of Departure

Lewis & Clark State Historic Site

#1 Lewis & Clark Trail

Hartford

The Detachment is ready to head west, up the Missouri River...Re-enactors will portray expedition members executing marching drills, cooking and shooting demonstrations. Early American artisans will be demonstrating as well, such activities as woodworking and candle making. For more information, please call 618-251-5811 or visit www.CampDubois.com.

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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.

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