Illinois is a land of pioneers. It was the artisans, inventors, farmers, and makers who first built the communities of Illinois—and it’s those same folks who continue to shape the culture and make a tangible, positive impact on the local economy.

Whether it’s a master hat maker whose hats draw shoppers from across the globe or a small distillery whose craft spirits keep whiskey fans happy while sustaining local farmers, local artisans are key to the past, present, and future of Illinois. Illinois Made celebrates those makers, creators, and artisans who help craft Illinois by hand, inspiring visitors and fellow Illinoisans to discover more about the state by experiencing first-hand the passion that makes it thrive.

EXAMPLES OF ILLINOIS MADE MAKERS INCLUDE:
- Artisans & Craftspeople (i.e. Carpenters, Potters, Glass Artists, Painters)
- Food & Beverage Artisans (i.e. Distillers, Brewers, Cheese Makers, Farm-to-Table Restaurateurs)
- Farmers, Winemakers/Viticulturists
- Global Makers: artisans and businesses whose reach extends into international markets but whose humble beginnings are right here in Illinois
NOMINATE A MAKER AT ILLINOISMADE@ENJOYILLINOIS.COM

Criteria and Guidelines for Recommendations

A wide variety of artisans, makers, and businesses—from brewers to blacksmiths—can be featured on Illinois Made. Though each artisan is unique, all share a common thread that reveals their true bond to Illinois. To help bring out that quality across all our makers, we are using these guidelines when considering inclusion in the program:

• Subjects must be Illinois through and through. They must reside in Illinois and produce their crafts, products, and wares in Illinois.

• To give stories an intimate feel, we prefer makers who work in studios and storefronts versus large-scale operations—especially those willing to share their process for a unique visitor experience.

• Small-batch operations will be favored over mass production. Possible exceptions are mass productions rooted in humble beginnings.

• Makers should rely on local resources whenever possible when producing their wares. Example: A furniture maker using wood from an Illinois forest, or a chef who sources her ingredients from local farmers.

• The more history behind your business, the better.

• There are many artisan communities in Illinois. Illinois Made seeks to profile the most unique creators in each community while demonstrating how artisans of every stripe help support the vibrant culture all throughout Illinois.

• We will look for Illinois companies intertwined with other Illinois businesses. Example: An Illinois cheese maker whose cheese is served at local breweries, pizza places, and wineries.

• We will look for artisans and businesses who purposely chose to headquarter in Illinois for a specific reason or natural resource. i.e. The fine wine-making terroir of Southern Illinois or the community in which they grew up.

The Illinois Office of Tourism will carefully review all nominations and select those that best meet the criteria. Inclusion in the Illinois Made program is at the sole discretion of IOT and its partners.