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Fall-o-ween in Illinois



frights & delights in Illinois

**Find classic fall activities & discover
new haunts**

There's a time and place where the natural world and the supernatural world intersect: Where the hotels, mansions and even the beer tours are haunted. Just a few minutes away, you can zipline above breathtaking bluffs, marvel at fall colors, or pick a pumpkin.

It's called autumn in small town Illinois.



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Many attractions have reopened with limited capacity or different operating hours. Inquire with attractions ahead of time for up-to-date travel policies and health and safety information.

📍 Day 1 Alton and Grafton

Fresh air and nature will help any fall road trip kick off on the right foot. This spectacular region is home to more than 200 miles of hiking and biking trails, many of which snake along the Mississippi River, traversing limestone bluffs and the scenic **Pere Marquette State Park**. Spend your morning exploring the area's natural beauty and fall foliage before heading into town.

Reenergize yourself with a soup, salad or sandwich at **State Street Market** in Alton before getting into the Halloween spirit for your first daytime ghostly tour. A notoriously haunted local landmark, the **Mineral Springs Mall** is full of mystery and eerie attractions, including a foreboding grand banquet hall and a **Curiosity Museum** full of creepy devices.

Whew, you survived your first paranormal encounter – you may as well reward yourself with some **shopping in downtown Alton**. Highlights include handcrafted decor at Farmstone Roots, the Rushmore clothing boutique, and Country Meadows Antiques.

Once you're shopped out, it's time to eat! Head to **Castelli's Restaurant** to experience an old-school supper club that happens to be the region's oldest restaurant. Once you try the food, you'll understand why it's remained in business so long.

Another option is **Tony's Steakhouse & Bar**, a tried-and-true Alton staple in its own right – the family-owned restaurant has been serving up steak and pasta for more than 65 years.

After dinner, you'll have to decide just how much spookiness you're willing to endure in a single evening – after all, Alton is quite possibly the most haunted town in Illinois.

If you were to look up “haunted house” in the encyclopedia, the listing would likely resemble the **McPike Mansion**. Just remember to book your tour in advance, and prepare to learn about the numerous spirits and mysterious stories that are associated with the property.

Or perhaps a walking tour focused on Alton's haunted history is more your speed. If so, **Alton Hauntings** (winner of a 2021 TripAdvisor Traveler's Choice Award) is your best bet. **Ghosts of the River Road Dinner Tour** is a bewitching option as well, and you'll be able to cover even more ground aboard a bus.

Maybe you'd prefer to take your fright night with a dash of craft beer? If so, you're in luck: the **Haunted Craft Beer Walk** includes stops at five notoriously haunted locations, and you'll get a taster glass of a different brew from Illinois Maker **Old Bakery Beer Company**.

You're probably not accustomed to so much scariness; there's no shame in being exhausted. Treat yourself to the luxurious **Beall Mansion B&B**, where you'll be pampered with feather beds, whirlpools, and – get this – a 24-hour all-you-can-eat chocolate buffet. Or you can remain downtown in the middle of the action with an upscale loft at **Cracker Factory**.

Or, since you'll be exploring nearby Grafton tomorrow, you can choose to get a head start and spend the night there. The **Ruebel Hotel**, originally built in 1879, exudes vintage charm. Due to reports of mysterious and unexplained occurrences, many claim it's haunted. Another great option is **Aerie's Resort**, which overlooks the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers and even features individual private cottages.



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Day 2 Grafton and Edwardsville

Ease into the next chapter of your trip at the quiet rural oasis of **Eckert's Country Store & Farm**. Kids and adults alike can make lasting memories picking fresh crops directly from the fields, enjoying educational events, and perusing homemade goodies at the country store.

Move on to Aerie's Resort and step up the excitement on its famous **SkyTour**, an aerial lift that provides a breathtaking ride above the bluffs with a unique view of the great rivers coming together. Remain at Aerie's and cap off the morning with a one-of-a-kind **ziplining** experience.

For lunch, it's on to **The Loading Dock**, one of the top outdoor dining establishments in the area. Come for the food and riverside seating, and stick around for the flea market and live music.

Savor the daylight with some more hiking at one of the numerous nearby nature trails, and try to remain vigilant – if you have a keen eye, you may spot more than 230 species of birds and wildlife like deer, beavers, river otters and wild turkey.

Mid-afternoon seems like an ideal time for a **Hakuna Matata** Fall Color Cruise along majestic bluffs and rugged islands. Aboard this comfortable indoor-outdoor river tour boat, you can sidle up to the tiki bar for a tropical cocktail and even do some dancing once the music starts.

The fall color tour may be over, but the fun continues. The region is home to a wide assortment of **vineyards and wineries**, and all that vino isn't going to taste itself. Choose your favorite scenery – wooded seclusion, gentle rolling hills, expansive views of the Mississippi – and find your spot to kick back and raise a glass.

A modest drive along the shore of the magnificent Mississippi will lead you to **Cleveland-Heath** in Edwardsville. The restaurant offers a terrific overall experience, with an inviting atmosphere and impressive chef-driven menu that specializes in comfort food.

We know you're sleepy after a phenomenal dinner, so feel free to retire to the hotel whenever you're ready.

Day 3 Alton, Worden, and Calhoun County

Post Commons is often described as “the living room of Alton.” The unique space's community feel makes it a great stop for an extended hangout, whether you're chatting over coffee, enjoying a light breakfast, or reading the local newspaper.

Those travelling with kids can then head out to **Boonies Farm** in Worden for a fall activity extravaganza. Launch pumpkins and gourds out of a cannon, try to find your way out of a corn maze, take a hayride to the pumpkin patch, or spend some quality time with the animals.

If you're not into the farm scene, venture out to Calhoun County to get a true sense of the community's character via a **barn quilt tour**. More than 80 quilt blocks representing local heritage are displayed on barns and buildings throughout the county; check out as many or as few as you please.



Eckert's Country Store & Farm



Grafton SkyTour



The Loading Dock



Hakuna Matata



Barn Quilt Tour

