TRAVEL ILLINOIS

catch the

SPIRIT OF THE SEASONS

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ON THE COVER The Godfrey Hotel Chicago
Photographer: Starboard + Port
Get ready for winter fun along the Heritage Corridor. At Starved Rock State Park, hike to spectacular icefalls and watch bald eagles soar. Explore the historic I&M Canal and scenic canal towns. And find adventure at every turn on famed Route 66.

Blaze Your Own Trail at HeritageCorridorCVB.com
“Boats, Buggies, & Broadway,” Sullivan serves as the county seat of Moultrie County and is home to The Little Theatre On The Square, the only Equity (professional) theatre located between Chicago and St. Louis. In addition, the city serves as the north gateway to Lake Shelbyville and also marks the west edge of the area’s largest Amish settlement.
Whether you want your food from a cart or with a side of theatrics at Alinea, every taste bud is at home here. 
choosechicago.com/welcomehome
Come ride the “third wave” of coffee—it’s all about bean pedigree, local roasting, custom brewing and mindful drinking. The third wave has inspired places such as Crown Brew Coffee in Carterville, a small town near Shawnee National Forest in southern Illinois. Crown Brew prides itself on brewing without machines—even for espresso. “Almost everything we do in our shop is manual brewing,” co-owner Josh Benitone says. That calls for precise measurements, timing and techniques. “It’s very chemistry-driven.” And totally transparent. “We have all of our brewing in front of our customers because we want them to ask questions,” Josh says. “We do a lot of educating.”

Crown Brew also roasts its own beans, carefully sourcing them from growers in Asia, Africa, Central America and South America. The shop keeps close ties with the actual farmers, creating direct links between coffee trees and coffee cups. “Farmers are exporting the beans to where we’re roasting,” Josh says. Local roasting maximizes freshness and flavor. “We keep beans moving as fast as possible from roast to consumer to provide the best product.”

Josh especially favors beans from Guatemala, where he had a coffee epiphany while doing nonprofit work there about five years ago. “I didn’t really like coffee,” he says—until a woman offered him a cup of local brew. His reaction?

No Average Joe

COFFEE CONNOISSEURS, YOUR CUPS RUNNETH OVER AT ILLINOIS SHOPS THAT PUT JAVA ARTISTRY ON FULL DISPLAY.
“Oh my gosh, this tastes great!” Josh asked where the coffee came from and how it was made. “My mind was blown,” he recalls. “Coffee grows on trees?”

Determined to bring that kind of coffee—and taste revelation—back to Illinois, Josh and co-owner Jared Gravatt launched Crown Brew. They chose Carterville for its prime location between bigger towns like Carbondale and Marion (where Jared is from). In addition to serving great coffee, they wanted the shop to be a community gathering place. “Anyone can meet over a cup of coffee,” Josh says. “It was an easy thing for people to buy into.”

Even noncoffee fans enjoy the rustic but modern vibe in the historic building downtown. “We bring people into the experience itself,” Josh says. “We treat it like a winery or brewery.”

At 43,000 square feet, the Chicago Starbucks Reserve Roastery will be about 24 times the size of an average Starbucks. It turns coffee into theater, letting visitors experience every step in the bean-to-cup process. Burlap sacks of beans arrive, then giant roasters stir the beans before they’re sent via glass tubes to on-site coffee bars. There, you’ll buy the beans whole or enjoy them in your favorite handcrafted brew.

The Reserve Roastery will offer interactive tours, showcase multiple brewing methods, and sell special Reserve drinks and beans. There’ll be food, too, including artisan breads from Italian baker Rocco Princi.

Chicago’s Starbucks Reserve Roastery on Michigan Avenue will be the latest (and biggest) in a series of showplaces the coffee chain has opened around the globe. And it’s just a couple of miles from the Jackson Boulevard building where Starbucks first expanded beyond the Seattle area in 1987.
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<td>Besides coffee, Zion offers specialty cocktails, wine and beer in the Peoria Warehouse District.</td>
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COFFEE TRENDS

MILK OPTIONS
Oat milk steams and froths better than other nondairy options.

COFFEE FLIGHTS
Sample different flavors at once.

NITRO BREW
Enjoy the creamy texture of coffee pumped up with nitrogen gas.

COFFEE TALK
DON’T KNOW BEANS ABOUT COFFEE? HERE’S A QUICK GUIDE TO CHOOSING A ROAST TYPE.

LIGHT ROAST
More bean flavor than darker roasts.
Other names: Light City, Half City, Cinnamon, New England

MEDIUM ROAST
A little sweeter than light roasts; good balance of aroma, flavor and acidity.
Other names: American, Breakfast, City

MEDIUM-DARK ROAST
Little to no acidity, stronger aroma and flavor, some bitterness.
Other names: Full City, After Dinner

DARK ROAST
Caramelized sugars cover the natural flavor for a roasty or burnt character.
Other names: Continental, Espresso, European, French, Italian

PHOTOGRAPHS: RYAN DONNELL, (ROCKFORD) ALYSSA SCHUKAR, (BEANS) CARSON DOWNING
Arrive curious. Leave inspired.

DUNN MUSEUM

1899 W. Winchester Rd, Libertyville, IL
DunnMuseum.org

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Discover all there is to see and do in Downers Grove, including the shops and restaurants in our vibrant downtown.

Seven hotels to choose from, including two full service. We have accommodations and meeting space to fit your group or event.

Downers Grove is located in the heart of DuPage County at the intersection of I-355 and I-88, 20 miles west of the city of Chicago with easy access to Metra train service and O'Hare and Midway airports.

Downers Grove Visitors Bureau
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LAUREN TOM
THE ILLINOIS-BORN ACTRESS DISCUSSES HER BOUNDARY-BREAKING DISNEY CHANNEL SHOW, GROWING UP IN THE CHICAGO ‘BURBS AND THE UNCOMMON MAGIC OF DEEP-DISH PIZZA.

Even if you don’t recognize her right away, you know Lauren Tom. The versatile suburban Chicago native played pink-jumpsuited Dr. Amy Wong on the animated series *Futurama*. She brought to life both Minh and her daughter, Connie, on *King of the Hill*. She’s even voiced boys, like Gizmo on *Teen Titans Go!* But she doesn’t just do voice work. Lauren worked on Broadway (*A Chorus Line*, *Hurlyburly* and *Doonesbury*) and played dutiful daughter Lena in the 1993 film *The Joy Luck Club* and Ross’s girlfriend Julie on TV’s *Friends*.

Recently, she starred for three seasons as a family matriarch on the award-winning, authenticity-obsessed Disney Channel show *Andi Mack*. The family comedy-drama made a name for its inclusivity, even though it wasn’t originally intended to feature Asian stars. Lauren talked to *Travel Illinois* about her vast career and love of her home state.

Tell us about *Andi Mack*. It didn’t look like other kids’ shows, in terms of showing diversity and multiple generations. The starring role was actually written for a white Jewish girl, because our creator was writing from her own experiences. But then Peyton Elizabeth Lee won the part, and so they cast the mother and grandmother Asian as well! Kids are so sophisticated now, and the president of Disney Channel wanted a show that included people of different races and backgrounds and socioeconomic classes, so that more people might be able to find themselves on-screen.

And it got a lot of attention as a result. It feels really great to know our message is landing. Many Disney projects have featured gay characters, but ours is the first Disney Channel show to have a character come out as gay, for an audience that skews so young. We’ve gotten feedback from kids, as well as an award from GLAAD, some other nominations and a special Emmy for social awareness. We just have to live up to it and follow it through.
WHAT CAN A HOLOGRAM TELL YOU ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

EXPIENCE THE FIRST INTERACTIVE 3D EXHIBIT OF ITS KIND

Abe and Ida Cooper Survivor Stories Experience features Dimensions in Testimony developed by USC Shoah Foundation in association with Illinois Holocaust Museum.

ilholocaustmuseum.org
The cast of Andi Mack

Your show was diverse. Is it similar to your upbringing?
We were literally the only Asian-American family in Highland Park. That was a long time ago, and things are different now, in Highland Park and everywhere. That’s why my show means so much to me, like it’s correcting a problem. I think kids today are going to have a much different experience.

About 25 years passed between The Joy Luck Club, which was supposed to open doors for more Asian performers and stories, and last year’s Crazy Rich Asians. What took so long? What Crazy Rich Asians had that we didn’t was social media. It was a way to organize the entire community to go out and pay their dollars. It’s sad that it took 25 years to get something this major to appear, but I’m glad it was made. I was prepared to support the movie no matter what, but I enjoyed it so much! Every aspect from the film looked so beautiful, and presenting Asian men as sexy—I just thought that was a much-needed correction.

Speaking of men, your husband is also from Highland Park, isn’t he?
You couldn’t make up our meet-cute story. He and I lived on the same street in L.A. I thought he was so cute, but we never met because our dogs hated each other. Every time we passed on the street, the dogs would go crazy and one of us would have to cross the street.

One day, a friend of mine was supposed to drive me to the airport, but he flaked. So I decided to drive myself, and when I drove by the cute guy’s house, he was out front. I stopped and introduced myself and asked if he could drive me instead. He said yes, and when we were in the car, he asked me where I was from. I say, “Highland Park, Illinois.” And he says, “That’s where I’m from!” And we both get chills, completely. My best friend since kindergarten is his nieces’ and nephews’ orthodontist. We knew all the same things. It was instant trust.

So you must get back to Chicago doubly often.
My mom still lives there, and we do little family trips. I love walking in Water Tower Place, seeing shows at Steppenwolf or the Joffrey Ballet, and strolling around Millennium Park.

Get deep-dish pizza at Giordano’s. You really can’t get pizza like that anywhere else in the country. I love it.

I’ve loved shopping on Oak Street downtown. (Find boutiques like Jimmy Choo, Hermès, Tod’s and Prada.)

GOROCKFORD.COM

Rock Cut State Park
Bakery and Pickle, Bloomington

THE BACKSTORY / With 100 acres of central Illinois farmland fueling its fresh dining experiences, Epiphany Farms Hospitality Group recently expanded its destinations to include a secret supper club in Bloomington’s historic downtown. The speakeasy-type restaurant sits behind a market counter filled with fresh-baked goods and an extensive offering of seasonal pickles.

THE EXPERIENCE / Book a table to enjoy the supper club, and come dressed to impress. For the spontaneous type, sleuth out the password to access the late-night, à la carte farm-to-fork menu and cocktails.

THE GARNISH / The speakeasy’s mixologists pour fresh Prohibition-era cocktails, like the Scofflaw, with seasonal house grenadine. The traditional house tonic stars Epiphany Farms grape skins, plus dried herbs such as juniper and lemongrass.
D’Arcy’s Pint, Springfield
THE BACKSTORY / In Springfield, a horseshoe has nothing to do with Clydesdales. Here, it’s an open-face sandwich made with meat, French fries and cheese sauce dripping over Texas toast. This famed entree sandwich was first served in the capital city.
THE EXPERIENCE / At D’Arcy’s, pints are poured with a cheerful side of “fáilte” (welcome), and horseshoe sandwiches appear alongside traditional corned beef and cabbage specials.

Billy Goat Tavern, Chicago
THE BACKSTORY / Original owner William “Billy Goat” Sianis and his nephew, Sam, spent years hollering “Cheezborger! Cheezborger! Cheezborger!” Two of Sam’s patrons happened to be John Belushi and Bill Murray, who went on to join Dan Aykroyd in immortalizing the tavern on Saturday Night Live.
THE EXPERIENCE / Billy Goat staff still shout at patrons from behind an open grill as they serve up traditional Cheezborgers (all-natural beef and never any lettuce or tomato) from the tavern’s subterranean main location on Lower Michigan Avenue.
THE GARNISH / William famously—and effectively, for 71 years—cursed the Chicago Cubs for turning away his pet billy goat when he tried to bring it to a 1945 World Series game for good luck.

3 Arts Club Cafe, Chicago
THE BACKSTORY / Who says the in-store shopping experience is dead? Not Restoration Hardware, a high-end home furnishings merchant that integrates restaurant and retail. Its awe-inspiring spaces combine shopping with food, wine, art and design. The 3 Arts Club Cafe offers a first-rate browsing and dining experience in Chicago’s Gold Coast neighborhood.
THE EXPERIENCE / This four-story landmark building once housed young women studying the arts. The heart of the transformed space is the light-filled courtyard, where diners sit among olive trees and enjoy turkey club and shaved ribeye sandwiches while sipping fresh-squeezed lemonade or adult beverages.
THE GARNISH / The intimate, 22-seat 3 Arts Club Wine Vault boasts a gold-plated ceiling.

Dell Rhea’s Chicken Basket, Willowbrook
THE BACKSTORY / Route 66 connected Chicago’s skyscrapers to Santa Monica’s beaches in 1926, thus earning its place in American lore. This famous Mother Road stop outside Chicago started welcoming travelers at an old gas station and lunch counter in the ’30s.
THE EXPERIENCE / In 1946, the Chicken Basket got a face-lift, expanding the original lunch counter. Today the retro diner still offers heaping baskets of chicken (four pieces, plus coleslaw and biscuits) beneath a classic neon sign. Expect a 30-minute wait, because all chicken is fried fresh to order.
THE GARNISH / The Chicken Basket holds a spot on the National Register of Historic Places.

Moonshine Store, Martinsville
THE BACKSTORY / The population of Moonshine dropped from two to zero when Roy Lee Tuttle passed in 2015 and Helen (his widow) moved out of the town’s only building, which happened to be their century-old store. The Tuttles’ daughters-in-law run the legendary place now, serving hundreds of Moonburgers daily.
THE EXPERIENCE / Get there before 12:30 p.m. (sharp!) when the grills shut off for the day. Order your burger plain or with cheese—or, if you’re super hungry, choose a double bacon cheeseburger. Inside seating is limited, but head outside to find picnic tables. It’s cash only.
THE GARNISH / All burgers come condiment-free. Patrons help themselves from a self-serve station with plenty of options.
The son of former slaves helped found a Chicago organization devoted to collecting and promoting black history in 1915. The efforts of this scholar, Carter G. Woodson, eventually grew into Black History Month, now celebrated nationwide each February to coincide with the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Throughout the state, immersive experiences note the lives of African Americans and their achievements, tightly woven into the nation’s fabric.

Here are five top spots to visit during Black History Month or any time:

1. LABOR LEADERS
   Visit Pullman National Monument, the Chicago neighborhood that gave rise to the country’s black labor movement. The National A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum honors the African American men hired to serve railroad passengers in Pullman sleeping cars. Citing poor labor conditions, some members formed the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first black labor union chartered in America and the first to sign a collective bargaining agreement with a major U.S. company. A new exhibit highlights the porters’ notable descendants, including media mogul Tom Joyner and former first lady Michelle Obama. While in this historic neighborhood, stroll among the row houses for a visit back to the 19th-century company town.

2. WARTIME HEROICS
   The story behind the only American infantry regiment commanded by a staff of African American officers comes to life as part of an upcoming exhibit (February 2020) at Chicago’s DuSable Museum of African American History. Clearing a Path for Democracy: Citizen Soldiers of the Illinois Fighting 8th examines the Chicago-based regiment’s decorated accomplishments in the face of discrimination.
Five scenic wineries in the Quincy surrounds

mississippi valley wine trail

~ download/call for guide ~
visit all 5 for a signature t-shirt or wine glass

Happy Trails are here

Williamson County

Kick back and relax with the family or just enjoy the colors of fall by the campfire. Take a hike through the National Wildlife Refuge or enjoy a cozy evening at one of the local lodging facilities.
3 NATIONAL FIGURES
Stand inches away from some of the most famous words in American history, from the hand of one of the country’s most revered leaders. The handwritten copy of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address—delivered during the height of the Civil War—goes on display mid-November at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield. The museum also dives deep into slavery and abolition, including a special-effects-laden corridor that examines the wide-ranging debate leading up to the Emancipation Proclamation. (Think ghostly orators shouting advice to the president.)

4 STIRRING STORIES
Less than 2 miles from the Illinois State Capitol and past Lincoln’s final resting place at Oak Ridge Cemetery sits the Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum. Walk through The Door of No Return as part of the new Middle Passage interactive exhibit, which tells the story of trafficking Africans to parts of the world through compelling audio and visuals, such as a replica of a slave ship. The museum also honors President Barack Obama—whose political career began in the Illinois legislature—with an exhibit featuring speech excerpts, campaign paraphernalia and other memorabilia.

5 ART AND ARTIFACTS
Carbondale’s African American Museum of Southern Illinois celebrates culture through hundreds of original art pieces, photographs, literary works and artifacts. See local artist DeSande R’s painting of Billie Holiday when Holiday was just starting to sing in clubs. It hangs on the wall alongside art by internationally known painter Najjar Abdul-Musawwir (a Southern Illinois University professor) and a print by Margaret Taylor-Burroughs, co-founder of what is now Chicago’s DuSable Museum of African American History. Artifacts include slave shackles used on children and adults, as well as books on African history by black authors. Rotating displays include traditional furniture and masks.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN CHICAGO
AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER
Learn over lunchtime when excerpts from black poets and authors are discussed every Thursday at noon. Materials available prior to the date.

THE SECOND CITY’S BLACK HISTORY MONTH SHOW
Take in sketches created by Second City alumni of color, including Keegan-Michael Key, Sam Richardson and Amber Ruffin (multiple dates).

HAROLD WASHINGTON LIBRARY CENTER
Enjoy a variety of programs throughout February in the building named after the city’s first African American mayor, two blocks from Grant Park.
CHICAGO’S NORTH SHORE

The most picturesque region in metropolitan Chicago can be found twenty minutes from the heart of Downtown Chicago on Chicago’s North Shore. Affordable world-class hotels provide easy access to Downtown Chicago and North Shore attractions.
As a firefighter, Brian Frieze springs into action to save people and buildings. With Sangamon Reclaimed, he’s still on the job. But now he’s rescuing historic barnwood from demolition and preserving both the barns’ materials and their stories.

The first barn Brian dismantled belonged to a family friend. He couldn’t shake the image of the wood structure disappearing into a trash heap simply because no one would commit to taking it down. So Brian and a few friends showed up with a flatbed trailer and their tools, and they went home with a garage full of vintage wood.

That was six years ago. Since then, Brian has disassembled many old buildings in the Sangamon River valley in central Illinois, and started a company that fashions the old-growth wood into high-quality furniture. Brian, also a veteran, and his crew of craftsmen use some of the wood to make Flags for Heroes artwork, sold to benefit organizations that support other veterans, firefighters and police officers.

The wood carries deep historical ties. Brian salvaged wood from the 1873 Herndon Barn, built by the brother of Abraham Lincoln’s law partner. He salvaged 12,000 board feet of lumber from Quincy’s 1853 Morgan-Wells House before its demolition. At the Quincy Firehouse (circa 1850), Brian recovered lumber of an unusual dimension—beams 3 inches thick by 13 inches wide by 26 feet long—from above the engine bays.
Just west of Chicago lies the perfect fall weekend getaway.

DiscoverDuPage.com
The wood fuels the business, but for Brian, there’s even more to it: “It’s important to pass on the history of each of these structures through each piece we build,” he says.

To help preserve the history, Sangamon Reclaimed provides buyers with details about the wood used in its works. A brass plate affixed to each piece ensures that the story lives on.

“My favorite story of a building we’ve reclaimed always changes, because every structure is different,” Brian says. “The projects that come out of it add our tie to that story.”

“IT’S IMPORTANT TO PASS ON THE HISTORY OF EACH OF THESE STRUCTURES THROUGH EACH PIECE WE BUILD.”

BRIAN FRIEZE
Farm to table breakfasts • Miles of beautiful, quiet, winding country roads for biking • Yoga retreats • Spa services • Local art & music attractions • Nearby Illinois Nature Conservancy Nachusa Grasslands for hiking, birding and bison views • At the doorstep of Franklin Creek State Park for amazing wildflowers, hikes and history • Beekeeping and agritourism training • Apple picking • Indoor and outdoor event venue • Gift certificates.
1. Locally crafted wines & tasting room.
3. 17 well spaced cabins near Starved Rock.
4. Artisanal hand crafted beer & restaurant.
5. Hike along beautiful rock formations and wildlife.
6. A quaint market full of handmade gifts.
7. Lodge & cabins, trolley tours, tribute shows.
8. Murals and unique shopping in downtown.
Chicago Architecture

OUTINGS AND EVENTS PUT YOU AT THE DOORSTEP OF (AND SOMETIMES IN THE HIDDEN CORNERS WITHIN) THE WINDY CITY’S MOST DAZZLING BUILDINGS.

Chicago Architecture Center

First-time visitors who come to town for the buildings should head directly to the Chicago Architecture Center’s new (in 2018) home along the Chicago River downtown. Two-story windows frame landmarks like the Tribune Tower and The Wrigley Building. And a vast model of the city uses 4,200 scale-model buildings to orient you for upcoming explorations. A historical film interacts with the tiny city via a light show, helping you visualize events like the Great Chicago Fire. Upstairs in the Skyscraper Gallery, you’ll walk among towering models of the world’s tallest buildings. Other exhibits highlight Chicago’s neighborhoods and show the evolution of the city’s housing over the last 150 years. Check the center’s schedule for info on upcoming programs.
Open House Chicago, October 19–20

Come on in! During this free event, you can explore interiors of the city’s architecturally significant skyscrapers, theaters, offices, private clubs, sacred spaces and more, including many that are rarely open to the public. The weekend event lets you design your own tour by choosing from among more than 250 buildings across the city. You could step inside the basement vault of the Art Deco Chicago Board of Trade Building; admire the six-sided Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist, styled like a Greek amphitheater; or marvel at The Brewster Building, a light-filled 1893 residential masterpiece with a cage elevator and suspended glass-block walkways.

Illinois’ Frank Lloyd Wright Trail

Though the Prairie School pioneer created treasures throughout the state—now collected into an official route for enthusiasts—Chicago claims several must-sees. A young Wright apprenticed on the Charnley-Persky House, now a museum. Robie House, a quintessential Prairie-style home on the University of Chicago campus, routinely appears on lists of the 20th century’s most significant buildings. And The Rookery, an iron skyscraper in the city’s financial district, boasts a dramatic center light court created during a 1905 Wright remodel.

Can’t Make It To The Open House?
Inside Chicago Walking Tours takes participants, well, inside notable buildings during educational (and engaging) two-hour tours.

Want An All-Wright Vacation?
Book an overnight stay at the Wright-designed Emil Bach House, which has two guest rooms upstairs and a Japanese teahouse in the garden.

Building Blocks and Blocks
Exhibits, performances, tours and talks with architects and artists from around the world fill fall calendars in Chicago. The months-long Chicago Architecture Biennial is the largest architecture and design exhibition in North America (September 19–January 5, 2020).
Wild Beauty

ON A TRIP INTO THE STATE’S PRESERVES AND WETLANDS, BRING YOUR BINOCULARS TO SPOT ROAMING HERDS, SOARING FLOCKS AND OTHER NATURAL WONDERS.

WHERE

NACHUSA GRASSLANDS
OPEN-AIR VISITORS CENTER
3,600 acres in the preserve
90 MILES west of Chicago

MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE
WEB CAMS AND VISITORS CENTER GIVE CLUES FOR SPOTTING THE HERD
1,000 acres of pasture on the land of a former U.S. Army arsenal
50 MILES southwest of Chicago

130 BISON IN THE HERD
MALES WEIGH 2,000 LBS
FIVE TRAILHEADS

1,000 BISON IN THE HERD
72 BISON IN THE HERD
20+ MILES OF TRAILS FOR HIKERS & BIKERS

WHERE

Bison ROAM

CHECK YOUR CALENDAR
Once a year, the preserve hosts Autumn on the Prairie, a one-day event (September 21 this year) with tours and hikes.

WHILE YOU’RE IN THE AREA

LINCOLN WAY INN, FRANKLIN GROVE
Hints from the neighboring land—bison, butterflies and bees—embellish the five suites and many common areas of this bed-and-breakfast.

FRANKLIN CREEK STATE NATURAL AREA, FRANKLIN GROVE
Hopscotch across the creek as you string together four trails for an almost 5-mile hike past a cave, quarry and ponds.

SMOKED ON 3RD BBQ, ROCK FALLS
Dine on farm-to-fork barbecue, such as brisket smoked low and slow for 16 hours.

HICKORY CREEK BREWING COMPANY, NEW LENOX
Black walnuts grown on-site flavor Blind Squirrel brown ale at this relatively new microbrewery.
Festivals • Wineries • Pumpkin Fun • Apple Picking
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PEACE OF EARTH LODGE, RUSHVILLE
Serenity sets in at this extraordinary property made up of two cabins, a screened-in 16x20-foot tree house and three rental rooms. The cabins and tree house lack modern amenities—no Wi-Fi or TV, and bathroom facilities are a short walk away. The owners encourage guests to explore trails on the 30-acre site.

DICKSON MOUNDS STATE MUSEUM, LEWISTOWN
Almost 100 years ago, Don Dickson discovered an ancient burial mound on his family’s farm. Today, a museum sits on the archaeological site.

GRANDPA’S, HAVANA
The down-home food outshines the generic interior at this family-owned restaurant. Check out the chalkboard specials, or order from the menu of burgers, sandwiches and pizza.

TOWNHOUSE RESTAURANT, HAVANA
Temperate fall nights draw customers to the patio for weeknight specials, such as fried chicken with mashed potatoes or steak and shrimp, with beer on tap.

Make some plans to get away to scenic St. Charles, IL in the coming months. Spring and summer colors will come alive all along the Fox River Valley. Food, fairs, frivolity and family fun are on the menu this season. So take a moment and plan a getaway. Find out more at visitstcharles.com or give us a call at 800-777-4373.

#EXPERIENCESTC
‘TIS THE SEASON TO BE TOASTING. ILLINOIS WINERIES STEP UP WITH SPARKLING CREATIONS TO RING IN THE NEW YEAR OR RAISE A GLASS TO A NEW (OR LASTING) ROMANCE.

**CRISP**
Blend of Riesling and Illinois-grown Viognier grapes.

**FRESH**
Hints of apricot, melon and honeysuckle.

---

**SPARKLING AROUND THE STATE**
Illinois is not, in fact, Champagne, France, so its sparkling wines aren’t called Champagne. But these wineries still bring the bubbly.

**GALENA CELLARS VINEYARD AND WINERY, GALENA**
Three generations of experience produce sparkling wine. Join a vineyard tour or visit the tasting room.

**ILLINOIS SPARKLING COMPANY AND AUGUST HILL WINERY, UTICA**
Using traditional methods, owner Mark Wenzel hand-blends every bottle for ISC, the sister brand to August Hill Winery.

**BAXTER’S VINEYARDS AND WINERY, NAUVOO**
Fifth-generation owners operate the state’s oldest winery, started in 1857. Sip Baxter’s Bubbly, made from melon, apricot and honeysuckle.
CHEERS IN THE CITY

If it’s champagne you crave, get to Chicago, where the bubbles flow in both traditional and unexpected ways.

MARGEAUX BRASSERIE
On the third floor of the Waldorf Astoria, black-tie servers offer a variety of bubbles (it changes on a nightly basis) from a roving champagne cart.

POPS FOR CHAMPAGNE
The ambience sparkles at the nation’s oldest champagne bar with nearly 150 champagnes and sparkling wines to choose from in the landmark Tree Studios building.

ODYSSEY CHICAGO RIVER
Celebrate Global Champagne Day (mid-October) aboard the glass-top boat as it plies the Chicago River during a five-course champagne dinner cruise with stunning, climate-controlled views.

THE SPA AT FOUR SEASONS
Sip champagne while your fingers (or toes) luxuriate in a bath of bubbly. Or book a couples’ massage, then toast during a private Skylight Swim under the stars.

SUGARFINA BOUTIQUE
Grown-up gummy bears—made with Dom Pérignon Vintage—come in a few flavors at suburban Oakbrook Center, the state’s only outpost of the fancy grown-up candy chain.

RM CHAMPAGNE SALON
Bring a date to this cozy candlelit spot for sips of champagne and sparkling wines while dining on oysters, steak frites and more from the French-bistro inspired menu.

LYN-FRED WINERY, CHICAGO SUBURBS
At several tasting rooms, sample a handful of fruity sparkling wines made from Midwest fruits, along with snacks like savory and sweet fresh breads.

PRAIRIE STATE WINERY, GENOA
Toast with Bubblin’ Blue, a sparkling version of the winery’s popular German-style Kishwaukee Blue wine. Nosh on apps, salad and panini sandwiches.

COOPER’S HAWK WINERY AND RESTAURANTS, AROUND THE STATE
Pair a sparkling flight (Blanc de Blanc, Rosé, Almond and Raspberry) with Key lime pie.

FRUITY
Aroma and flavor of raspberries.

BOLD
A classic brut, full-bodied and aged five years.

If it’s champagne you crave, get to Chicago, where the bubbles flow in both traditional and unexpected ways.
Merry and Bright

SIP SOME HOT COCOA (OR GLÜHWEIN) AND CATCH THE HOLIDAY CHEER AT THESE FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS.

MERRY MOMENTS AROUND THE STATE

Chicago looks skyward to kick off its holiday season with multistory helium balloons, showers of confetti and fireworks over the Chicago River during the BMO Harris Bank Magnificent Mile Lights Festival on North Michigan Avenue (November 22–23), where grand marshals Mickey and Minnie Mouse help illuminate more than 1 million lights.

Warm holiday spirits abound—literally—with mugs of spiced Glühwein at Daley Plaza’s Christkindlmarket (beginning mid-November) in Chicago. Vendors sell imported German treats, steins and cuckoo clocks through Christmas Eve. Throughout the market, find sausages, potato pancakes, strudel and other tempting savory and sweet foods.
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9/11 Memorial
Photo courtesy of William Hoffman

Black Bart’s Pumpkin Patch

Santa’s Downtown Home

Scovill Sculpture Park

Enjoy Our Decatur Experience!

Black Bart’s Pumpkin Patch

Santa’s Downtown Home

Scovill Sculpture Park

Enjoy Our Decatur Experience!

The Decatur area offers so much to see and do! Come visit us this Fall or Winter! For more information on our area, call 217-423-7000 or visit www.decaturcvb.com

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The historic town square of Carlinville (48 miles southwest of Springfield) hosts Christmas in Carlinville (December 6–8). A tented Christmas market, live nativity, horse-drawn carriage tours, costumed carolers and a stirring reading of ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas conjure the simple joys of the season.

Faux snow falls indoors while kiddos wander through a forest of more than 50 trees at Chicago’s Museum of Science and Industry’s Christmas Around the World and Holidays of Light (November 14–January 5). The trees and displays represent cultural traditions from around the world; find ornament making and live performances on select weekends.

Bishop Hill (a village of 128 residents an hour northwest of Peoria) goes big on its Swedish heritage during Julmarknad (November 29–December 1, December 7–8). Mischievous Tomten elves scurry around town, peeking through store windows and greeting guests. Leave this year’s Christmas baking to the locals; stock up on homemade cookies and baked goods at the Colony School during the first weekend and chocolates by the pound the second weekend at the Dairy Building.

Thaw out at Fifth Third Bank Winter WonderFest, a massive indoor playground on Chicago’s Navy Pier, starring the Kringle Carousel and indoor ice-skating (December 6–early January).

**Bright Lights by the Numbers**

1 mile of walking paths weaves through towering trees, some that respond to voice and touch with glowing colors, at Illumination: Tree Lights at The Morton Arboretum in Lisle (various dates, November 22–January 5).

15 miles of extension cord power the 3-mile drive-through exhibit with more than 30 displays at the Holiday Lights Fair (November 28–December 30) at DuQuoin State Fairgrounds (20 miles north of Carbondale).

25 years of experience power Zoolights at Chicago’s Lincoln Park Zoo (various dates, November 29–January 5). Snag 3-D holiday goggles for extra eye-popping action at some of the 100-plus themed displays.

95 feet, in length, of the smoke-spewing Chinese dragon at the East Peoria Festival of Lights Parade (November 16). See more parade floats at Folepi’s Winter Wonderland (November 22–December 31).

5,000 candlelit luminarias line streets and sidewalks during Galena’s Night of the Luminaria and Living Windows (December 14). Spot more than 30 animated windows before popping into the shops along Main Street, which stay open late.

1,000,000 lights tell the story of Jesus’ birth during the Way of Lights (November 22–December 31) at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville (94 miles southwest of Springfield).
Explore

Where else can you enjoy brunch at a local cafe & bakery, take to the trails of a national forest for an afternoon hike, top off the evening at a historic movie theater... and stay the night only a few miles away from it all?

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CREATIVE LICENSE

WRITERS Jen Nilsson and Kristin Bienert

Great River Road near Mississippi Palisades State Park, Savanna
FIND ROOM TO ROAM ON THESE SCENIC ROAD TRIPS. FUEL UP FOR FALL WITH ARTSY HANGOUTS, LOCAL WINE, THE SMALL-TOWN SCENE AND LEAFY VIEWS THAT PRETTY MUCH LOOK LIKE PAINTINGS.

ROUTE 1
50 miles
CARBONDALE
MAKANDA
ANNA
POMONA
MURPHYSBORO

ROUTE 2
60 miles
PEORIA
PERU

ROUTE 3
365 miles
GALENA
ELSAH
Taste of the Shawnee

OVERVIEW Experience the beauty of Shawnee National Forest with this loop through five towns set among towering rock formations, tree-lined trails and southern Illinois vineyards. Explore artisan studios, hike a sandstone natural bridge and dig into legendary local BBQ.

TOWNS

Carbondale Stroll through this university town situated at the starting point of the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail. (For more on the wine trail, turn to page 70.) Stock up on deli sandwiches at Town Square Market before heading south toward Shawnee National Forest and Makanda.

Makanda An artists’ haven at the gateway to Shawnee National Forest, Makanda Boardwalk is lined with studios selling local art. Don’t miss Rainmaker Arts and its secret garden full of copper sculptures that match the fallen leaves lining the garden path. Overnight in Giant City Lodge.

Anna Settle in for a unique outdoor dining experience at The Blue Boar, where a natural spring and waterfall surround stone picnic tables. The Cajun-inspired menu includes crawfish étouffée and shrimp po’boys.

Pomona This town within the forest is home to a short but remarkable loop trail that reveals Pomona Natural Bridge. Rushing water carved this bridge into the sandstone, creating a walkable arch.

Murphysboro Wind down at 17th Street Barbecue. Pitmaster Mike Mills is known as “The Legend” for his baby-back ribs, sprinkled with a special dry rub and slow-cooked over an open pit of cherry and apple wood.
Cozy up with friends in front of the massive stone fireplace at Giant City Lodge, crafted in 1936 by the Civil Corps of Engineers. The rustic lodge sits within Giant City State Park, part of southern Illinois’ Shawnee National Forest.
A TOUR OF TREES

Trace the Illinois River

OVERVIEW Follow a portion of the Illinois River as its waterways blossom into lakes and backwaters. Take in the river’s serene beauty north of Peoria on a drive with sweeping views. A handful of riverfront communities offer museums, antiques shops and restaurants, including one housed in a 19th-century church.

TOWNS

Peoria The largest town along the Illinois River, Peoria draws crowds to its downtown riverfront. Explore the arts and science exhibits at Peoria Riverfront Museum and Dome Planetarium. During a self-guided tour at Caterpillar Visitors Center, climb into a simulator to experience what it’s like to operate actual equipment. The Spirit of Peoria riverboat delivers fall foliage cruises. Grab a bite at The Blue Duck Barbecue Tavern or nearby Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery and Eatery, housed in a stone Presbyterian church built in 1889.

Peoria Heights In 1910, Teddy Roosevelt dubbed Grandview Drive the World’s Most Beautiful Drive during a post-presidency trip to the area. The 2.52-mile bluff-top drive winds through an affluent neighborhood; pull-offs allow for panoramic snaps of the hillside fall foliage and the river below. At the north end, hikers looking for a moderate trek with plenty of hills can follow the 1.25-mile Pimiteoui Trail to Forest Park Nature Center.

Mossville Find gifts, antiques and clothing in The Hayloft Shops, housed in a barn on the main street.

Chillicothe Numerous downtown stores, like The Little Shop of Hoarders and Altered Relics, sell antiques and repurposed goods. Happy Thought Coffee and The Vault gift shop sit on the corner in a former bank building. Besides caffeinated beverages, find soups and salads, wraps, sandwiches, and flatbread pizzas. Or, go for the nontraditional coffeehouse daily specials, like a loaded baked potato or stuffed green pepper.

Peru On the Illinois River, 10 miles west of Matthiessen and Starved Rock state parks, Peru anchors one end of the 100-mile I&M Canal. More than a century and a half ago, it linked the Illinois and Mississippi rivers with the Great Lakes. An industrial town, Peru was at one time home to the world’s largest clock manufacturer, Western Clock Company (also known as Westclox). Wind through Westclox Museum to find hundreds of Big Ben clocks on display.
Illinois boasts seven national scenic byways: Great River Road, Lincoln Highway, Meeting of the Great Rivers, Historic National Road, Ohio River Scenic Byway, Illinois River Road and historic Route 66.

**FESTIVALS AND DRIVES**

Whether the beauty comes from nature or from artists, Illinois has fall events to celebrate it all.

- For demonstrations: *Cedarhurst Art and Craft Fair*, Mt. Vernon, September 7–8.
- For handmade artwork and wares: *Renegade Craft*, Chicago, September 7–8 and December 7–8.
- For the Midwest’s longest-running art fair: *Greenwich Village Art Fair*, Rockford, September 14–15.
- For 140 miles of fall events: *Spoon River Valley Scenic Drive Fall Festival*, Canton, October 5–6 and 12–13.
- For rural-heritage events and a self-guided driving tour: *Knox County Scenic Drive*, October 5-6 and 12-13.
- For local farms and fall produce: *Autumn Drive*, Woodstock and Marengo, October 18-20.
Along the Banks of the Mississippi

OVERVIEW: Experience the history of the mighty Mississippi River with this trip along a portion of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway, a bucket-list destination for drive-lovers. Explore historic river towns that rose from the limestone bluffs along the route.
TOWNS

Galena Perched among hills and vineyards, Galena’s Main Street bustles with boutiques, wine-tasting rooms and breweries. View the fall colors from a lakeside retreat (with a year-round outdoor hot tub) at The Cottage on Lake Galena, or drive 26 miles east for a hike through rolling Apple River Canyon State Park.

Savanna Stop to admire the rock formations of Mississippi Palisades State Park before strolling Main Street, which sits on the banks of the Mississippi. Browse the work of local artisans while sipping espresso at Savanna Marketplace.

Rock Island Surrounded by the Mississippi and Rock rivers, this downtown district is a must-stop for outdoor art. Visit Quad City Arts for a map of public sculptures throughout the area. Southwest of town near Illinois City, rent a boat to paddle Lake George (seasonal availability) or hike along moderate trails (2- and 12-mile loops) at Loud Thunder Forest Preserve.

Nauvoo This small town with deep historical roots was settled by Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Visit the Joseph Smith Historic Site before swinging by Nauvoo State Park, where the area’s first vineyard is still maintained by park personnel.

Quincy Tour Log Cabin Village, its structures dating back to the era of Abraham Lincoln, and visit the site of the sixth Lincoln-Douglas debate at Washington Park. Don’t miss the nearby Quincy Art Center, located in a carriage house.

Elsah End the drive with what feels like a walk back in time. This entire village is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, thanks to the original stone buildings lining its narrow streets.
FAIR CITY ON THE WORLD’S STAGE

MORE THAN A CENTURY AFTER THE WORLD’S FAIR GRACED CHICAGO—AND A KILLER STALKED ITS MIDWAYS—REMINDERS DELIGHT FANS OF BESTSELLING THE DEVIL IN THE WHITE CITY.
In 1893, the world converged at the Chicago World’s Fair to show off its best features and brightest ideas in a specially built fairgrounds hugging the Lake Michigan shoreline south of downtown. The development’s gleaming buildings shone so brightly that they seemed to give off their own light, earning the fairgrounds an enduring nickname: the White City. Attractions housed within also dazzled fairgoers. Life-size reproductions of Christopher Columbus’ fleet. An Egyptian temple. A simulation of a Hawaiian volcano. A pavilion of German artillery. Electric lighting that offered a glimpse into America’s future. The fair proved to be a watershed moment for Chicago, emerging elegant and phoenix-like from its devastating Great Chicago Fire only two decades earlier.

Erik Larson’s 2003 novel-like nonfiction The Devil in the White City contrasted the minds behind the fair’s design—including famed architect Daniel Burnham and landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted—with serial killer H. H. Holmes, who used the fair to lure his many victims. Interest in the book persists, with a Leonardo DiCaprio-led series in the works at Hulu. While they wait for the premiere, fans can find fair remnants around Chicago today.

TRACES OF THE CHICAGO WORLD’S FAIR

THE JOFFREY BALLET’S THE NUTCRACKER
Check out the famed Chicago company’s local take on the Christmas classic, set during the time of the Chicago World’s Fair. Herr Drosselmeyer is reimagined as a dashing fair executive; Marie (sometimes known as Clara) is the daughter of an immigrant sculptress (Nov. 30–Dec. 29).

DEVL IN THE WHITE CITY RUNNING TOUR
The 8-mile route takes a leisurely pace with stops at key locations featured in the book, including the site of Holmes’ macabre murder castle, now a post office. Guides share history and historical photos.

MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY
Originally the fair’s Palace of Fine Arts, it’s the only structure built for the event that remains standing on the site. It now provides a home for the Western Hemisphere’s largest science museum.

JACKSON PARK
Relax in The Garden of the Phoenix, a Japanese strolling space on Wooded Island used by fairgoers for the same purpose. Olmsted’s design included the surrounding lagoons. Adorn your Instagram with the Statue of the Republic, a 1918 smaller-scale replica of the fair icon.

ORIGINAL FAIR TICKET BOOTH
Moved to a famous Oak Park home—the Frank Lloyd Wright–remodeled Hilds-DeCaro House—a tiny ticket booth from the fairgrounds graces the building’s side yard.

MIDWAY PLAISANCE PARK
In a linear stretch connecting Jackson and Washington parks, an ice-skating rink with warming house and rentals marks the exact location of the fair’s Ferris wheel. Skate-walker equipment is available for beginners. The World’s Fair Ferris wheel (the first of its kind) was designed by a Galesburg, Illinois, native who wanted to build something to rival Paris’ Eiffel Tower, itself a World’s Fair marvel. The 264-foot wheel (demolished in 1906) would have towered over Navy Pier’s Centennial Wheel, which stands 68 feet shorter.

ANTIOQUITY AND INTRIGUE

OLD JOLIET PRISON
Creepy shrieks, creaks and rattles are said to reverberate around this once-abandoned Hollywood icon—a backdrop for The Blues Brothers and Prison Break. The Joliet Area Historical Museum leads tours of the old joint, a towering limestone fortress.

GRACELAND CEMETERY
In the cemetery’s middle, see the glass-enclosed statue of Inez, a little girl killed by lightning. Folks say her ghost plays in the cemetery on rainy days. See graves of White City notables, including Daniel Burnham’s, on an island in Lake Willowmere.

CHICAGO GHOST TOURS
Free Tours by Foot’s walking route hits the Congress Plaza Hotel (check out Room 441), Death Alley (a makeshift morgue for the Iroquois Theatre fire) and the site of SS Eastland (an excursion boat that overturned, killing 844 people).
SURE, IT’S COLD OUTSIDE, BUT THAT’S NO REASON TO HIBERNATE AT HOME.
EMBRACE THE WINTER WEATHER (AND THE CHANCE TO GET COUPLES-COZY) AT THESE DIVERSE DESTINATIONS AROUND THE STATE.
GALENA

Snow-filled nights enhance the romance of Galena, where luxury bed-and-breakfasts and quaint countryside cottages are tucked into the rolling hills.

**INN AT IRISH HOLLOW**
Cottages dot the hills of this 500-acre working farm in the countryside. (You should hope to get snowed in!) Attention to detail shows in hand-painted chocolates and farm-fresh food presented like plates of art.

**GOLDMOOR INN**
Thirteen deluxe suites, three cottages and two log cabins perch on a bluff above the Mississippi River. Romance is the theme here, with gourmet breakfasts delivered to the room and couple’s massages awaiting after a day of snowshoeing.

**JAIL HILL INN**
Lock yourself in for the weekend at this one-time county jail that’s now a luxury inn. Recently named TripAdvisor’s best B&B in the country, there is no better place to brush off the cold with a game of fireside Scrabble and a glass of complimentary sparkling wine.

**VENTURE OUT**
Take to the slopes at CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN RESORT for downhill skiing and snowboarding above the Mississippi River. Or rent winter gear at EAGLE RIDGE RESORT AND SPA’S NORDIC CENTER and try snowshoeing, ice-skating or sledding. See ice carvings, a balloon glow and more during the Annual Winter Carnival (February 21-23, 2020).

Stroll and shop along Galena’s MAIN STREET, warming up with wine tasting at GALENA CELLARS, followed by dinner at ONE ELEVEN MAIN, a converted mortuary that sources both its ingredients and its ghost stories locally. Cap off the evening with cocktails and live music at MISS KITTY’S GRAPE ESCAPE.
CHICAGO

Winter weekends are a chic experience in downtown Chicago, where sparkling destinations (plus rooftops) entice.

**THE GWEN HOTEL** Dive into 1930s Chicago at The Gwen, steeped in the glittery opulence of the speakeasy era. Grab a cocktail and try your luck at curling—the hotel boasts the city’s only rooftop curling rink, with Lake Michigan views. Warm up between matches in the cozy curling lodge.

**THE GODFREY HOTEL CHICAGO** Feel the peace at The Godfrey, where deep colors and plush robes inspire comfort in a boutique setting. Head to the rooftop to roast marshmallows over a firepit, or rent a heated, transparent igloo to take in the Chicago skyline while staying warm and toasty.

**THE PENINSULA CHICAGO** Settle into a five-star experience at The Peninsula, where afternoon tea surrounded by 20-foot windows in the sun-splashed lobby is a winter tradition. Scrape the sky with rooftop ice-skating amidst pine trees on the twinkling terrace, high above Michigan Avenue.

**CHECK IN**

**Cloud Gate in Millennium Park**

Follow a ribbon of ice at the SKATING RIBBON that encircles MAGGIE DALEY PARK. Stop at nearby Cloud Gate in MILLENNIUM PARK on your way back to your hotel. Indulge in retail therapy on the Mag Mile or Oak Street.

Get your ticket to one of the many BROADWAY IN CHICAGO shows in the downtown theater district, or find a fine-dining experience on the cheap during CHICAGO RESTAURANT WEEK (January 24–February 6).
CHAMPAIGN/URBANA REGION

Art and nature provide sanctuary in Champaign-Urbana, where snow-carpeted gardens surround elegant mansions-turned-inns.

CHECK IN

CHAMPAIGN GARDEN INN, CHAMPAIGN
Unwind in the sitting room of this Victorian-style mansion’s six-room bed-and-breakfast in Champaign’s oldest neighborhood. Dogs Dasher and Princess will welcome you home after a romantic dinner for two in trendy downtown Champaign, just 4 blocks away.

THE SENATOR’S INN, SAVOY
A grand 25-room mansion with four guest rooms is ideally designed to entice a long-term stay. The 1915 inn’s period decor blends with modern luxuries, such as an in-suite Jacuzzi and on-site spa and wellness center. Sip a hot toddy at the attached pub.

ALLERTON PARK AND RETREAT CENTER, MONTICELLO
Even the home of the former gardener has been converted to a rustic guesthouse on the center’s wooded 1,500-acre estate. Stay secluded in one of several tucked-away cottages, or get social in the 17-room mansion at the property, 25 miles west of Champaign. Listen to the crunch of boots on snow during a guided full-moon hike, or warm up with a yoga class in the mansion’s library.

VENTURE OUT

Bundle up for a hike and enjoy the soft winter whites of the UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS ARBORETUM, or take in the sight of snow-covered artwork in the 30-acre WANDELL SCULPTURE GARDEN at Meadowbrook Park.

Indulge in a foodie’s paradise in CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, recently voted Midwest Living’s Greatest Food Town. Roam the second-largest public art collection in the state at the KRANNERT ART MUSEUM, or catch a live performance at the KRANNERT CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS.
FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

THE TIMELESS AND POWERFUL ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM PROMISES A JOURNEY CONTRASTING UNFATHOMABLE ATROCITIES WITH LIFE-AFFIRMING LESSONS.

WRITERS Trevor Meers and Jess Hoffert
Approaching the exterior of Skokie’s Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, visitors get a sense of the journey they’ll experience inside. A dark, angular entryway (embodying the devastation and grief of the Holocaust) contrasts with a curving, light-filled building where visitors emerge from exhibits eliciting empowerment and action. The material here is challenging. But a visit to this Chicagoland institution proves transformative, galvanizing and, quite unexpectedly, inspiring.

The experience starts out somber, as you see and hear stories of the 6 million Jews and millions of other minorities murdered during World War II. Although the Holocaust began some 80 years ago, vivid details transport you to the time of Nazi Germany: personal effects of Jews who were forced into ghettos, a rail car used to transport people to concentration camps and a miniature model of a gas chamber showing white figurines being herded into a room. Gruesome imagery is kept to a minimum, but the horror isn’t downplayed. (The Karkomi Holocaust Exhibition is recommended for ages 12 and up.)

Future generations will be able to hear stories from Holocaust survivors firsthand—and even ask them questions—thanks to state-of-the-art technology at the Illinois Holocaust Museum’s Take a Stand Center. In the Abe and Ida Cooper Survivor Stories Experience, artificial intelligence gives voice to holograms of survivors. In response to a question, Poland-born Sam Harris (above) tells a story of his sisters hiding him to help him survive a concentration camp.
People as a group should learn to understand what one does affects us all. We leave a trail behind, whether it’s love or dirt, and the Earth is really small.

CHICAGO’S SAM HARRIS, A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR
As you spiral upward through the exhibits, the museum extends the story from World War II through today. Brightly lit spaces shed light on post-war life in Skokie, which once had the largest per capita population of Holocaust survivors outside Israel. Rotating exhibits showcase recent events that have occurred as a result of hatred and discrimination, and the Room of Remembrance—a simple round space with thousands of names illuminated on the wall—allows for quiet reflection. Exhibits targeted at kids drive home how bullying and other forms of everyday mistreatment are seeds of hate to be stamped out. The journey through the museum reminds us of the power of our collective voices to say “never again.”

The dangerous silence of bystanders becomes a recurring theme at the museum. Instead, visitors are encouraged to be “upstanders,” people who speak up and take action in the face of injustice. More than 70 non-Jewish families who helped rescue Jews during the Holocaust are honored at the outdoor Ferro Fountain of the Righteous. The kid-centric Make a Difference! The Harvey L. Miller Family Youth Exhibition profiles famous upstanders, such as Rosa Parks, and provides problem-solving scenarios for injustices that occur at school or around the neighborhood.

**BE AN UPSTANDER**

**MORE TRANSFORMATIVE DESTINATIONS**

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, SPRINGFIELD**

Lifelike vignettes tell Abe’s moving story, from his humble beginnings in a log cabin to his assassination. Special effects and layered digital-projection screens immerse visitors in drama at the Union Theater.

**BAHA’I HOUSE OF WORSHIP, WILMETTE**

Nine circular gardens, each adorned with a fountain, surround the striking white structure. Inside, eyes gaze upward at the 138-foot-tall dome above the auditorium, inviting quiet awe and contemplation.

**CAHOKIA MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE, COLLINSVILLE**

Earthen mounds mark the ghostly footprint of a great Native American city that rose and mostly vanished before Columbus ever left Europe. Audio tours provide insight into Cahokia, once bustling with 10,000 to 20,000 residents in 1150 A.D.

**SWEDISH AMERICAN MUSEUM, CHICAGO**

In the Swedish enclave of Andersonville, personal stories bring immigrant journeys to life. Kids interact with a 20-foot steamship at the Brunk Children’s Museum of Immigration on the third floor.

**PLAN AN AFTERNOON TO EXPERIENCE ALL OF THE MUSEUM’S EXHIBITS.**
With its heart and history centered around the Des Plaines River, once paddled by the city’s namesake explorer, present-day Joliet delights visitors with museums and historical landmarks. A vaudeville-era movie palace, the Rialto Square Theatre offers a robust live performance schedule in the sumptuous style of the roaring ’20s, when Joliet boomed with industry. If history doesn’t get your heart pumping, two riverboat casinos and three racetracks—including the dragster-friendly Route 66 Raceway—promise to thrill, all an hour southwest of Chicago.
Beyond the shows, Tuesday afternoon tours of Joliet’s Rialto Square Theatre take visitors behind the scenes. Follow the footsteps of past performers like Tony Bennett and Billy Idol when you walk on stage.
**SPOTLIGHT ON**

**JOLIET**

**SEE**
- The Chicagoland Speedway (1) hosts a costumed Trunk-or-Treat Halloween event for kids (October 19).
- Set off on a short (.59-mile) self-guided walking tour around a 19th-century blast furnace at the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site. For a longer hike or bike ride (3), connect to the 80-mile I&M Canal State Trail from the site.
- Discover area history and the Paul McCartney chair (he sat in the retro seat while touring Route 66 in 2008) at the Joliet Area Historical Museum (4). The downtown museum occupies a former Methodist church.
- Catch a concert or musical at the “Jewel of Joliet,” the historic Rialto Square Theatre. The inner lobby mimics The Hall of Mirrors at Palace of Versailles.

**SAVOR**
- Bite into the O’Hare Burger, topped with Swiss cheese, mushrooms, and grilled onions, with a side of fresh-fried chips at Hamburgerseria.
- Choose from more than 45 varieties of doughnuts, eclairs, and cinnamon rolls made by hand using original recipes at Home Cut Donuts (2).
- Settle in for a cup of coffee and a dunk-worthy, lightly glazed vanilla cruller at Donut Den.
- Dine on hand-cut steaks and double-baked potatoes at Al’s Steak House and Banquets, celebrating 60 years.

**STAY**
- Try your luck at 1,000-plus slot machines and 30 table games, then check into a room at the riverside Harrah’s Joliet Casino and Hotel (5).
- Off Route 66, Hollywood Casino Joliet Hotel and RV Resort includes a free hot breakfast and shuttle service to the adjacent Hollywood Casino.
- Pet-friendly TownePlace Suites by Marriott features complimentary breakfast, plus suites with fully equipped kitchens for guests who want to dine in.
18-MRP-1006

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Join the Knox County Scenic Drive (October 5–6 and 12–13) for a trip through the countryside that includes the Wolf Covered Bridge and historic landmarks.
Galesburg mixes a rich literary history (writer and poet Carl Sandburg was born here) and contemporary college-town culture (Knox College). While exploring, visitors discover this picturesque town maintains its distinct, old-fashioned charm. That’s because more than 1,000 buildings appear on the National Register of Historic Places. Still a bustling train hub, Galesburg honors its history with the Galesburg Railroad Museum.
GALESBURG

SEE
► Find inspiration on the Quotation Walk at the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site (1), a marked trail that winds beside the poet’s cottage birthplace.
► Swim, fish, boat or build a sandcastle along the shores at Lake Storey.
► Jaw-dropping aerobatics and biplane antics highlight the annual National Stearman Fly-In (2) (September 2–7).
► Explore 30-plus antiques and specialty shops lining the brick-paved Seminary Street Historic Commercial District.
► An exhibit in Knox College’s Old Main (3) details the building’s fame as the site of an 1858 senatorial debate between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas.

SAVOR
► Overlook brewing operations as you sip the final product at Iron Spike Brewing Company (4), housed in a former fire station.
► Innkeeper’s Fresh Roasted Coffee (5) roasts only environmentally friendly, shade-grown Arabica beans.
► Bite into a slice of thin-crust pizza at Pizza House, Galesburg’s go-to pizza joint since 1955.
► Come for the 15 takes on chicken wings; stay for the beer and a round of pool at Cherry Street Restaurant and Bar.
► Make like a Knox College student at The Beanhive, a coffee shop popular for its 20 coffee selections and 13 varieties of tea.
► Delight in the creamy Spinach Bisque Soup at the French-inspired Landmark Cafe and Creperie (6).

STAY
► Step through the grand columns of The Great House Bed and Breakfast, where local legend holds that the basement served as a station on the Underground Railroad.
► Wake up to another era and Belgian waffles at Seacord House Bed and Breakfast, an 1800s Victorian resplendent with family antiques.
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Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
222 SW Washington St., Peoria, IL
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RiverfrontMuseum.org
Adjacent to the Scovill Zoo, the Children’s Museum of Illinois offers plenty of interactive and hands-on activities.
Abe Lincoln settled in the area with his family in 1830 and gave his first political speech here on the importance of the Sangamon River, which now forms the city's water sports mecca, Lake Decatur. Hop aboard the trolley for a 15-minute ride through downtown Decatur to see the landmark mansions of early magnates, plus places to eat and shop.
SPOTLIGHT ON

DECATURE

SEE
► National Register of Historic Places sites abound, including the Italianate Oglesby Mansion, the 19th-century one-room Trobaugh-Good House and the Transfer House (1), imagined in 1896 by William W. Boyington, who also designed Chicago’s famed Water Tower.
► At the Scovill Zoo, see more than 400 animals, including penguins, alligators and camels, or get up-close views at the petting zoo (2).
► Once a month (through October), tour the James Millikin Homestead (3), the Italianate-style home of the Millikin University founder.
► Make a graphite rubbing of each of the 15 Looking for Lincoln wayside exhibit medallions scattered throughout downtown.
► Dig into delectable barbecue at Smokin’ BBQ Festival in Central Park (September 13–14).
► Enjoy a concert along Lake Decatur’s shores at The Devon G. Buffett Amphitheater.
► Decatur Area Arts Council hosts gallery tours and creative workshops at the downtown Madden Arts Center.

SAVOR
► Del’s Popcorn Shop (4) tempts taste buds with more than 21 varieties.
► Bite into a crisp-edged burger and slurp a custard shake at Krekel’s.
► Settle in for fresh-made pasta at French-inspired bistro Bizou.
► Dine on the classics at The Gin Mill’s (5) 1880s bar.
► TapRoot offers a sustainable, locally sourced take on comfort-food favorites.
► The fluffy biscuits with sausage gravy wins fans at Coney McKane’s.

STAY
► The Decatur Conference Center and Hotel features a restaurant and sports bar. Or head outside to play hoops, volleyball, disc golf and horseshoes. Equipment available at the front desk.
Arcola, Arthur, Sullivan, and Tuscola invite you to travel back. Travel back to a simpler time, where craftsmen and artisans create beauty with their hands. Travel back for heirloom antiques and unique shops. Travel back for one-of-a-kind recreation and dining experiences that will appeal to your whole family.

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Effingham Convention & Visitors Bureau
Wine grapes flourish on rolling, well-draining hills. Many of the trail’s tasting rooms (such as Blue Sky Vineyard, shown) offer sweeping views of vines.
The Shawnee Hills Wine Trail features 11 wineries along a 40-mile scenic drive through the vast Shawnee National Forest at Illinois’ southern tip, beginning in the gateway town of Carbondale. Along the way, stop for a picnic in the rolling hills, take a hike to amazing geological formations, play a round of golf, and then settle in for the night in a cozy B&B, cabin or suite at one of several wineries. Many wineries host events throughout the grape-growing and harvest seasons in the Shawnee Hills American Viticultural Area—the state’s first designated region for wine grapes.
### Spotlight on

#### Shawnee Hills Wine Trail

**See**
- Natural attractions dot the area. Find good hiking at Little Grand Canyon (1) near Pomona.
- Eight ziplines whiz riders past sandstone bluffs on a Shawnee Bluffs Canopy Tour.

**Savor**
- Pomona Winery’s (2) wines are made from nongrape fruits (like local berries).
- The estate-grown wines of Blue Sky Vineyard pair well with hearth bread in the Tuscan-inspired tasting room.
- Choose among wine, ales and hard cider at Von Jakob Winery and Brewery.
- Hedman Vineyards and Winery produces wines that complement Scandinavian dishes.
- Sip the award-winning dry red Norton in Hickory Ridge Vineyard and Winery’s cozy tasting room.
- Sample a rosé, a Chambourcin or a wine slushy on a deck overlooking a lake at Kite Hill Vineyards (4).
- The popular Saluki wines at Feather Hills Vineyard and Winery pay tribute to Southern Illinois University’s mascot.
- Enjoy a vineyard picnic for two with local cheeses and fruits at Owl Creek Vineyard’s cafe.
- StarView Vineyards’ owners have planted the trail’s first merlot grapes.
- Catch the sunset from the vast rooftop tasting deck at Alto Vineyards (5).
- Settle in around the all-season outdoor fireplace at Honker Hill Winery.

**Stay**
- Sleep in one of two bedrooms at the historic Windy Hill Acres Inn.
- Relax in the new private bar at comfy, eco-chic Makanda Inn and Cottages.
- The Hobbit House (3) from Rocky Comfort Cabins has a grass roof and round windows. Follow the trail to Blue Sky Vineyard.
Festivals and Events

Known as the “Festival Arts City,” there’s always something going on in Mt. Vernon. From live musical entertainment to gallery openings, Mt. Vernon is the place for the artist in all of us. Check out the Events and Festivals Tab on our website for complete calendar listings. While you’re there, visit our Stories section to discover Mt. Vernon like a local!

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www.enjoymtvernon.com
## TRAVEL RESOURCES

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TRAVELER INFORMATION

DRIVING IN ILLINOIS

Illinois highways and roads are well-maintained and provide posted signage for drivers, so taking a road trip is a breeze. Chicago is a day's drive or less from major cities, including Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and Toronto, Ontario.

State law requires you to wear a seatbelt when traveling by car. Speed limits are posted in miles per hour (mph) and vary between 70 mph on rural interstates and freeways and 65 mph on urban interstates and freeways.

You may not use your cell phone for texting while driving, and you must use hands-free technology to make calls.

For construction updates, maps, seasonal road conditions and other information, visit gettingaroundillinois.com.

ILLINOIS TOLLWAYS

Some northern Illinois highways require tolls for use. Rates vary; not all toll plazas have attendants. Electronic toll collection is available through I-PASS or any transponder that’s part of the E-Z Pass system.

Drivers who miss tolls have seven days to pay online. Note the date, time and locations of unpaid tolls—that information will be required when submitting payments online.

For maps, rates, online payment options and other info, visit illinoistollway.com.

REST AREAS AND WELCOME CENTERS

The state of Illinois serves drivers with 30 rest areas and 11 welcome centers, located on highways throughout the state. Open 24 hours a day, they offer restroom facilities, picnic areas, lighted walkways, maps, security cameras and parking for recreational vehicles, among other services. For locations, visit ildot.illinois.gov.

ARRIVING BY PLANE

Domestic travelers can fly direct to destinations, including Springfield, Peoria, Rockford, Moline and Bloomington-Normal, as well as Chicago.

Once you land at either of Chicago’s two major airports, Chicago Transit Authority trains can get you downtown. For info, go to transitchicago.com.

Regular shuttles to many Chicago downtown hotels leave from the central train stations. You can also get a taxi or rideshare. For more information on getting to and from Chicago’s airports (including renting vehicles or arranging limo services), visit flychicago.com.

From O’Hare International Airport The Blue Line elevated train (aka the L) takes you to downtown Chicago in about 45 minutes. Follow the Trains to the City signs at the airport. If you arrive at the international terminal, follow the signs to the Airport Transit System, where you can get a free ride to Terminal 2 and then catch the L train into the city.

From Chicago Midway International Airport The CTA Orange Line L train takes about 25 minutes from Midway to downtown Chicago.

OTHER TRANSIT AROUND CHICAGO

Metra runs commuter rail services from downtown Chicago to outlying suburbs and surrounding cities. For maps, schedules, alerts and more, visit metraail.com.

The Regional Transportation Authority serves Chicago and its many suburbs. Its RTA Trip Planner can help you figure out how to get where you want to go. Visit rtachicago.org.

Amtrak runs trains to 30 cities in Illinois, and Greyhound Lines serves most major Illinois cities. Go to amtrak.com or greyhound.com.

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