

Your calendar is clear, and the weather is cooperating! Now... what to do?

Take a short drive and visit one or more of the 21 counties covered by Discover Downstate Illinois. Surprises await!

There's so much to see and do!

Craving a great cup of coffee? (Not your average joe!) The entire area has more than its fair share of creative and caffeinated hotspots. Get the coveted coffee list [here](#).

Have energy to burn? There are [golf courses](#) galore and a seemingly endless amount of [hiking trails](#)! But don't overlook [other activities](#) as well. From sport shooting and sailing lessons to spelunking and more - Downstate Illinois has fun for every outdoor enthusiast.

Or learn a thing or two. Places of [historical significance](#) are scattered throughout Downstate Illinois. Take a short drive and see where Honest Abe got his political start (hint: it was the state capital *before* Springfield). You could also visit the oldest courthouse in the state as well as a reconstructed Civil War Fort. Or go way back in time and discover a national historic landmark dating back 9,000 years!

Looking for [quirky family fun](#)? You'll find it in Downstate Illinois. Get up close and personal with exotic creatures at a petting zoo. Visit a working family farm to watch and learn how cheese is made. Discover a place where you play musical instruments *outdoors* - and another venue where you play laser tag *indoors* (at the world's largest arena)! And speaking of big... don't miss an entire town that's larger than life! Photo ops are everywhere as you pose next to a giant rocking chair, pencil, or inside a birdcage. You can even mail yourself a postcard from inside the world's largest mailbox.

And the [food](#)! No matter what time of day, there's no shortage of local fare to fill your tank. Award-winning BBQ, wood-fired pizza, maple pecan sweet potato fries and so much more satisfy the hungriest travelers. And if you have a hankering for something special, search the menus from some of our partnering restaurants [here](#).

Wishing for wine? Or a cold craft beer? Grab your designated driver and hit the road. You'll find [many tasty options](#) in the 21-county area. Wineries, microbreweries, and distilleries are all great places to meet the locals. Plus, the stories behind these small businesses are almost as good as the libations.

[Shop local](#) during your travels. Unusual finds and unique offerings are abundant in Downstate Illinois. From handmade rope and brooms to hand-poured candles and crocheted hats, don't forget that your purchases support local artists and makers. And the Midwest hospitality doesn't cost extra.

Or simply take in the [scenery](#). Wander the historic Kaskaskia Cahokia trail or walk across the longest covered bridge in the state. Stroll around one of the many lakes or take a hike and enjoy a bluff side view of the river. These 21 counties are full of nature's beauty.

Before you head home, top it off with [something sweet](#). Check our list to find artisan ice cream, unique concretes, homemade candy, jumbo cupcakes, everything covered in chocolate – plus more tasty treats!

And keep an eye on upcoming entries on the Discover Downstate Illinois calendar. You're sure to find events that pique your interest. Favorite summertime offerings include Grizzlies minor league baseball, motorsport racing, the Centralia Balloon Fest, and the Illinois State Fair. While outings like pumpkin picking, an epic coffee trail, and festive holiday light shows fill the calendar's cooler months.

No matter the season, no matter the occasion – Discover Downstate Illinois.

No matter the season, Discover Downstate Illinois is your guide to g

matter the season, keep the Discover Downstate Illinois calendar handy. It's your guide to great views, things to do, and

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Take a day. Or two. Sometimes that's all we need to refresh, relax, and reset.

A change of scenery can do wonders. So whether it's a solo excursion - or an outing with family or friends - hit the road and Discover Downstate Illinois.

Whatever your roadtrip goals, the 21 neighboring counties between the Mississippi and Wabash Rivers are bound to have what you're looking for.

Picturesque views? Absolutely. Boutique shopping and great golf courses? Check and check. Delicious food and drink? Yes, of course!

Enjoy sailing and hiking, smash burgers and specialty pizzas, museums and minor league baseball. Plus, visit the towns known for sunflower fields, white squirrels, and giant

And four interstates through the region make your options easier.

Stories behind

Sunflower fields, white squirrels, apple orchards, ski soda, Cahokia trail, old schoolhouse, a fire breathing dragon, military museums

River travel..

Great views,

No matter your mood,

.. confluence of Kaskaskia and Mississippi rivers

Four interstates run through the region.

Down and back or rest your head at one of the many charming Bed and breakfasts.