



## ILLINOIS OFFERS A TRULY AMERICAN EXPERIENCE FOR OVERSEAS VISITORS

*Chicago/Illinois Summer and Fall Packed with Sights, Sounds and Presidential History*

From the people and cuisine to the attractions and events, Illinois is a destination packed with sights, sounds and history creating a truly American experience for overseas visitors. Memorial Day (May 25) marks the start of the summer festival season in Chicago and throughout the state, during which the destination maintains an array of things to celebrate – architecture, art, green, food, music, cars, American presidents, wine, good shopping value and more.

### **Chicago Attractions**

Witness the world premiere of ***Harry Potter: The Exhibition*** at the **Museum of Science and Industry** now through September 27, 2009. This exhibit showcases more than 200 props, artefacts and costumes from the famed Harry Potter films.

**The Field Museum** welcomes visitors to experience ***Real Pirates*** in an exhibition on display now through October 25, 2009. Featuring the untold story of The Whydah, the first authenticated pirate ship ever found, museum patrons can view more than 150 pirate artifacts.

**John Hancock Observatory**, one of Chicago's most visited attractions, recently added a new multimedia Sky Tour in six languages, narrated by David Schwimmer, a dedicated concierge desk and Espresso by Lavazza café. Featuring award-winning, casually-elegant European style, the unique concept café is unlike anything else in the city.

This summer, the **Sears Skydeck** will debut ***the Ledge***, adding four fully enclosed all-glass bays extending four-feet over the west side of the 103<sup>rd</sup> floor to the already spectacular views extending 50 miles and across four states. The revamped lower level experience will include a new interactive exhibit and theater presentation.

The **Art Institute of Chicago** opened its doors to the newly constructed ***Modern Wing*** on May 16, 2009. Designed by Renzo Piano and overlooking Millennium Park, the new wing houses modern and contemporary collections while offering a spectacular view of the adjacent park.

In celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the telescope, Chicago's **Adler Planetarium** is offering an extensive exhibition now through December 31, 2009 – ***Telescopes: Through the Looking Glass***. The exhibition will showcase some of the oldest telescopes in the world alongside historic documents and models of the universe.

Chicago has a vibrant theater scene, offering everything from original productions at off-beat venues to Broadway classics like ***Mary Poppins, Chorus Line and Jersey Boys*** at gloriously restored old theaters. Starting November 2009, **Broadway in Chicago** will host the world premiere of ***The Addams Family***, a new, pre-Broadway production based on the bizarre family. Area restaurants cater to theater-goers, and steak-lovers will find numerous options to suit their palate, like **Lawry's The Prime Rib**. Located in Chicago's historic McCormick Mansion, Lawry's serves signature roasted prime ribs of beef or seafood and vegetarian entrees in a charming English Manor setting.

From its impressive lake view rooms, entertainment packages and all-season rooftop garden and swimming pool, families and international travelers alike have found several reasons to favor **Chicago's Essex Inn**. The hotel recently earned bronze level ***Green Seal certification*** for its environmentally sound practices, giving visitors another incentive to visit.

From architecture to history, Chicago has a sightseeing tour for everyone. **The Chicago Architecture Foundation** offers more than 80 different tours of Chicago and its neighborhoods, including walking, bus



or river cruise options. **Bike and Roll** provides guided tours along the lakefront, by Millennium Park and through city neighborhoods from the seats of an all-new Trek bike fleet. Chicago was recently voted the No. 1 bike-friendly U.S. city by *Bicycling Magazine*.

Celebrating its 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary, **Chicago Gray Line** operates sightseeing tours via deluxe motor coaches, upper deckers and hop on & off trolleys. They recently added an Obama tour visiting locations favored by the new president. **Chicago Trolley and Double Decker Company** also operate sightseeing tours throughout the city.

### **Near Chicago**

**Chicago Plus** is comprised of communities within 60 minutes of the city. Skokie, located in the northern Chicagoland region, houses the **Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center**, opened in April 2009 and dedicated to preserving the memories of those lost in the Holocaust and teaching current generations about the need to fight hatred. **Oak Park**, located in the western Chicagoland region, is home to the Ernest Hemingway Birthplace and Museum and **Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio**.

Shoppers will find good value at the **Chelsea Premium Outlets** in **Aurora**, just 45 minutes west of Chicago. The shopping destination features incredible deals at 120 outlet stores, including Giorgio Armani, Kenneth Cole, Brooks Brothers, Nike, Polo Ralph Lauren and more.

**Woodfield Chicago Northwest** combines one of the largest shopping areas in the United States with some of the Midwest's best choices for lodging, dining, sporting and visitor attractions. One of the area's most popular attractions includes **Arlington Park**, a leading track for Thoroughbred horseracing.

### **Around Illinois**

As home to the **Burpee Museum of Natural History**, nationally-renowned **Anderson Japanese Gardens** and 10,000 acres of trails, lakes and open space, **Rockford, Illinois** is a high-value, high-convenience destination. Located just 60 minutes west of Chicago O'Hare International Airport, Rockford offers hotels, dining, festivals and entertainment at minimal costs.

**Springfield, Illinois** is full of shops, antique stores and art galleries, but is often most recognized for its special connection to the 16<sup>th</sup> U.S. President, Abraham Lincoln. Now celebrating **Lincoln's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday**, Springfield is hosting bicentennial events through 2009, including an all-American street festival July 3 – 4. Return to Springfield September 25 – 27 for the **International Route 66 Mother Road Festival**, another very American celebration, featuring cars, music, food and fun.

The **Great River Road National Scenic Byway** follows the Mississippi River for more than 550 miles with beautiful river and woodland views. **Alton**, located 30 minutes from St. Louis along the Mississippi River, offers scenic opportunities for hiking, biking, fishing, eagle watching and fall color gazing. As one of the most haunted small towns in North America, visitors can partake in spooky events and haunted tours year-round, and especially in October around Halloween.

**Champaign County and the Quad Cities** offer **agricultural tours** for farmers, co-ops and agricultural businesses. Sample itineraries take visitors from Chicago's 'mag mile' to the National Soybean Research Laboratory in Champaign and John Deere headquarters in the Quad Cities.

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**For further information on the city of Chicago and Illinois' ongoing initiatives, please contact Jackie Cooper PR:** Kerry Barnes, 020 3047 4064, [kerry\\_barnes@jcpr.com](mailto:kerry_barnes@jcpr.com) or [chicago@jcpr.com](mailto:chicago@jcpr.com)