



ILLINOIS OFFERS A UNIQUELY AMERICAN EXPERIENCE THROUGH PRESIDENTIAL HERITAGE ITINERARIES

New Itineraries Highlight Obama, Lincoln, Grant and Reagan

The Chicago Illinois Tourist Office is showcasing its rich presidential heritage with itineraries designed around the experiences of four U.S. presidents – Barack Obama, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant and Ronald Reagan – whom all lived and made their mark in Illinois.

“Travellers can experience true Americana through our presidential trail itineraries, featuring points of interest related to each president,” said Jan Kostner, deputy director of the Illinois Bureau of Tourism. “These itineraries underscore the abundance of cultural offerings and architectural landmarks across our state.”

Hours of operation for some historic sites are subject to change. Click the Obama image on GoChicago.com for more information.

OBAMA TRAIL

Barack Obama was elected the 44th president of the United States on 11th November 2008. He has lived in Illinois since 1985. After years as a community leader in Chicago, he ran for and held a position in the Illinois State Senate from 1997 – 2004. He was elected to the U.S. Senate representing Illinois from 2005 – 2008.

The Obama Trail includes:

- **The Old State Capitol**, Springfield: On the steps of this National Historic Landmark, Obama announced he would run for president. He returned a year later to announce his choice of Joe Biden for his vice presidential candidate.
- **The Illinois State Capitol**, Springfield: The “new” Illinois State Capitol currently houses the state’s executive branch, where Obama delivered several speeches. Travellers can watch Illinois politics in action from the balcony-level seating when the legislature is in session.
- **Grant Park**, Chicago: Referred to as Chicago's "front yard," Grant Park is among the city's most prominent and beautiful public spaces. Obama gave his victory speech to hundreds of thousands of supporters here. The park is home to several free concerts and music festivals throughout the summer.
- **University of Chicago Law School**, Chicago: Take a self-guided audio tour of where Obama taught constitutional law from 1992 to 2004. His favourite classroom was Room V, also called the Harry A. Bigelow Lecture Hall.

LINCOLN TRAIL

The mark of the 16th U.S. president is evident throughout Illinois, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the central region of the state. Abraham Lincoln moved to Illinois at age 22; more than 30 years later, he left the state for a new career as president in the



nation's capital. Visitors to these historic sites can experience Lincoln's life in a manner that evokes personal reflection.

The Lincoln Trail includes:

- **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site**, Petersburg: A reconstruction of the village where Abraham Lincoln spent six years of his early adulthood. It was in New Salem that Lincoln had clerked in a store, served as postmaster and deputy surveyor, and was elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1834 and 1836.
- **Lincoln Home National Historic Site**, Springfield: Purchased in 1844 following the birth of their first child, Robert, Abraham and Mary Lincoln raised their family in this home for seventeen years.
- **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum**, Springfield: Mixing 21st-century technology with 19th-century history, the museum sheds light on one of the country's most influential figures through interactive exhibits and unique theatre productions. The library is also home to the world's largest collection of pre-presidential Lincoln materials.
- **Lincoln's Ghost Walk: Legends & Lore**, Springfield: An experiential tour highlights historic Lincoln sites and mysterious stories related to Lincoln's life and death.
- **Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site**, Springfield: Designed by sculptor Larkin Mead, the tomb is the final resting place of Abraham and Mary Lincoln, along with three of their four sons.

GRANT TRAIL

Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th president, worked at his father's leather shop in Galena when he was called into service at the outbreak of the Civil War. Grant, a West Point graduate, quickly rose through the ranks of the Union Army to become its commanding general. Following the war he returned to Galena until the presidential election in 1868.

The Grant Trail includes:

- **Ulysses S. Grant Home State Historic Site**, Galena: Grant's former home was given to him by residents of Galena in appreciation for his war service in 1865. His children donated the home to the city in 1904, and it has since been maintained as a memorial to Grant.
- **Galena Historic District**: Encompassing 85 percent of the city and including more than 1,000 properties built before 1900, this member of the National Register of Historic Places is home to a variety of unique architectural styles and includes some of the country's most impressive examples of Greek Revival.
- **Massbach Ridge Winery**, Elizabeth: The scenic beauty and agriculture of Northwest Illinois is highlighted by two of its popular wineries. Visitors can enjoy the flavours of the region with wine tastings, vineyard tours and winemaking demonstrations.

REAGAN TRAIL



President Ronald Reagan's spent his formative years in Illinois. "Dutch," as his father called him, was born in February 1911 and lived with his family for more than 20 years in Tampico, Monmouth, Galesburg and Chicago, and then Dixon from 1920 to 1933. While there, Reagan taught Sunday school with his mother, developed his love of music and the arts as a drum major for the YMCA band, and honed his leadership skills on the Eureka College football team.

The Reagan Trail includes:

- **Ronald Reagan Birthplace**, Tampico: Travellers can visit this restored apartment in which Reagan was born and view Reagan memorabilia in the next-door gift shop and museum.
- **Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home**, Dixon: Mentioned in Reagan's autobiography, the fully-restored house on 816 S. Hennepin was home to Jack and Nelle Reagan and their two sons, Neil and Ronald, from 1920-1923.
- **Dixon Historic Centre**, Dixon: A history research and learning centre housed in President Ronald Reagan's boyhood South Central School and associated with the Smithsonian Institution.
- **Lowell Park**, Dixon: The riverside park where Reagan was a lifeguard for seven summers and where he is credited to have saved 77 lives. The park is open for picnics, hiking, biking, fishing and boating.
- **Ronald Reagan Museum and Peace Garden**, Eureka College, Eureka: Reagan's alma mater houses the second largest collection of Reagan memorabilia outside of the Reagan Library in California. The nearby Peace Garden commemorates his 1982 speech at the college, "The Beginning of the End of the Cold War."

ENDS

For further information on the city of Chicago and Illinois' ongoing initiatives, please contact Jackie Cooper PR:

Kerry Barnes

020 3047 4064

kerry_barnes@icpr.com or chicago@icpr.com