



The Ultimate Five Day/Four Night Illinois Route 66 Itinerary

Day 1: Start your 66 experience in Chicago. The heart of the Windy City is where Route 66 begins, and there are great attractions, famous restaurants, and beautiful quality hotels in the downtown district.

Be sure to grab a selfie at the Begin Route 66 sign, and then walk right in to the Art Institute of Chicago. If you are a “roadie”, be sure to take in the scenic Lake Shore Drive experience along the beaches of Lake Michigan. You’ll find plenty of additional world class attractions nearby, including Navy Pier, Skydeck Chicago, the Field Museum, Museum of Science and Industry, Adler Planetarium and the Shedd Aquarium, to name a few. Enjoy dining at one of the famous Route 66 Chicago restaurants, such as The Berghoff or Lou Mitchell’s. Complete your overnight stay by taking in the Chicago Blues and Jazz music scene at local clubs or catch a performance of the Blue Man Group.



Begin Route 66 Sign in Chicago

Day 2: Start your day by stopping in Berwyn, as you head south down on the Mother Road. Take in Berwyn’s Toys & Trains shop, before making your way to a food stop at the Steak ‘n Egger in McCook or Del Rhea’s Chicken Basket in Willowbrook. Add to your Route 66 photo collection while visiting the famous Joliet Collins Street Prison from the “Blues Brothers” movie, the Joliet Iron Works site, the historic Rialto Theatre, and also the Joliet Area Historical Museum & Route 66 Welcome Center. Note: Joliet also has two world class casinos, making this city a potential alternate overnight start to your trip, if you already have seen and experienced Chicago.



Hall of Fame Museum in Pontiac

Be sure to allow time for the rest of your day in Pontiac, Illinois, where you will experience the Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum, the Pontiac-Oakland Automobile Museum, the Museum of the Gilding Arts and the Murals on Main Street Tour. Enjoy supper at the Old Log Cabin restaurant or Bernardis II Italian restaurant. For your overnight, relax at any of Pontiac's five motels. Alternately, you can stay overnight in Bloomington-Normal at many fine hotels and motels.

Along the way to Pontiac, there are a few iconic roadside stops to take in: The Gemini Giant in Wilmington, the Two Cell Jail in Gardner, and two classic restored gas stations – Ambler Becker in Dwight and Standard Oil in Odell.

Day 3: The drive along 66 from Pontiac to Bloomington-Normal is a picturesque example of rural Americana and takes only an hour. You’ll particularly enjoy Memory Lane in the small town of Lexington. When you arrive in Bloomington-Normal, a must-see attraction is the Sprague Super Service Station in Normal and the McLean County Museum of History & Route 66 Visitor Center in downtown Bloomington. For the kids, check out the Children’s Discovery Museum. Plan on a fun-filled morning before heading south.



Children’s Discovery Museum in Normal

As your journey continues, and if you are in-season, buy some delicious Funks Grove Pure Maple Sirup in Shirley, cruise by the famous Dixie Truck Stop in McLean, and then spend a couple hours in historic Atlanta, Illinois.

Atlanta is home to one of the famous Muffler Men statues, as well as the Hawes Grain Elevator Museum and the Route 66 Arcade Museum, as well as a Smiley Face water tower. It is also home of the award-winning Palms Grill Café – a perfect retro diner stop to grab a hearty meal. You'll want to make your way a few miles down the road to Lincoln, Illinois next.



Bunyon's Giant in Atlanta

Lincoln is home to many attractions, including The Mill on 66, the World's Largest Covered Wagon, Postville Courthouse (where Lincoln practiced law), the Lincoln Heritage Museum and the downtown district. You may also have time as the day winds down to visit the quaint shops in Elkhart as you arrive in Springfield. Springfield's downtown night club and music scene, along with fine dining and quality lodging, make the state capitol an ideal overnight stop in your journey.

Day 4: Make a day of it in Springfield, and take in the amazing Abraham Lincoln experiences, ranging from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, Lincoln's Home National Historic Site, Lincoln's Tomb (where you can rub his nose on a bust of Lincoln) and the Old State Capitol.



Cozy Dog - Springfield

Grab a delicious meal at the famous Cozy Dog Restaurant that put Springfield on the map for inventing the corn dog, Charlie Parker's Diner for their local favorite horseshoe meal or The Chili Parlor for their make-it-your-way chili, to name just a few of the great dining options.

Also, don't miss the architectural marvel – Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana-Thomas House. And, if the kids need a break, have a blast at Knight's Action Water Park and Route 66 Drive-In Theatre.

As your exciting day in Springfield comes to a close, you'll want to head down south, via the Auburn Brick Road and Doc's Soda Fountain in Girard, for your final overnight, with quality lodging options in Litchfield or at the Grand Magnuson near Carlinville. Rest up for your final day five adventure in Illinois.

Day 5: The southern leg of Route 66 in Illinois traverse two main alignments of the road, and so you'll have a number of options in what communities to visit. Carlinville has a beautiful downtown, with great small business shopping experiences and the famous "Million Dollar Courthouse".

Litchfield will satisfy your hunger cravings with a stop at the Ariston Café or Jubelt's Restaurant. The new Litchfield History Museum & Route 66 Welcome Center is also worthy of a visit. For outdoor fun, visit Lake Lou Yaeger as well. Down the road in Mt. Olive is the Soulsby Service Station and Mother Jones Monument.

Stop for great family fun at Henry's Rabbit Ranch in Staunton, where you'll find both the furry animals and the VW rabbits. Grab a bite at Weezy's in Hamel, view a giant catsup bottle and visit the Cahokia Mounds state historic site in Collinsville, experience the historic districts of Edwardsville and then end your Illinois journey with a photo opportunity at the Chain of Rocks Bridge that crosses the Mississippi River into Missouri (pedestrian bridge only).



Henry's Rabbit Ranch in Staunton

Visit www.illinoisroute66.org or call 217-572-1380 for more itineraries, suggested accommodations, additional attractions, events along the road, visitor information and further details.

Day 1 - Suggested Chicago sites – within 5-10 miles of downtown Chicago, 15-20 minutes each.

Day 2 - Chicago to Berwyn – 10 miles, 25 minutes

Berwyn to Willowbrook – 13 miles, 21 minutes

Willowbrook to Joliet – 32 miles, 47 minutes

Joliet to Wilmington – 17 miles, 24 minutes

Wilmington to Pontiac – 44 miles, 46 minutes

Total travel = 116 miles, 2hrs, 43min.

Day 3 – Pontiac to Bloomington-Normal – 39 miles, 45 minutes

Bloomington-Normal to Atlanta – 61 miles, 65 minutes

Atlanta to Lincoln – 11 miles, 14 minutes

Lincoln to Elkhart – 13 miles, 18 minutes

Elkhart to Springfield – 21 miles, 23 minutes

Total travel = 145 miles, 2hrs, 45min.

Day 4 – Springfield to Auburn – 21 miles, 27 minutes

Auburn to Grand Magnuson near Carlinville – 38 miles, 50 minutes

OR Auburn to Litchfield – 37 miles, 50 minutes

Total travel = 58-59 miles, 67min.

Day 5 – Litchfield to Carlinville (or vice-versa) – 23 miles, 26 minutes

Litchfield to Mt. Olive – 9 miles, 14 minutes

Mt. Olive to Hamel – 17 miles, 19 minutes

Carlinville to Staunton – 22 miles, 32 minutes

Staunton to Hamel – 10 miles, 14 minutes

Hamel to Edwardsville – 8 miles, 12 minutes

Hamel to Collinsville – 19 miles, 25 minutes

Collinsville to Chain of Rocks Bridge - 18 miles, 24 minutes

Edwardsville to Chain of Rocks Bridge – 17 miles, 22 minutes

Total travel = 74-80 miles, 1hr & 48 minutes.