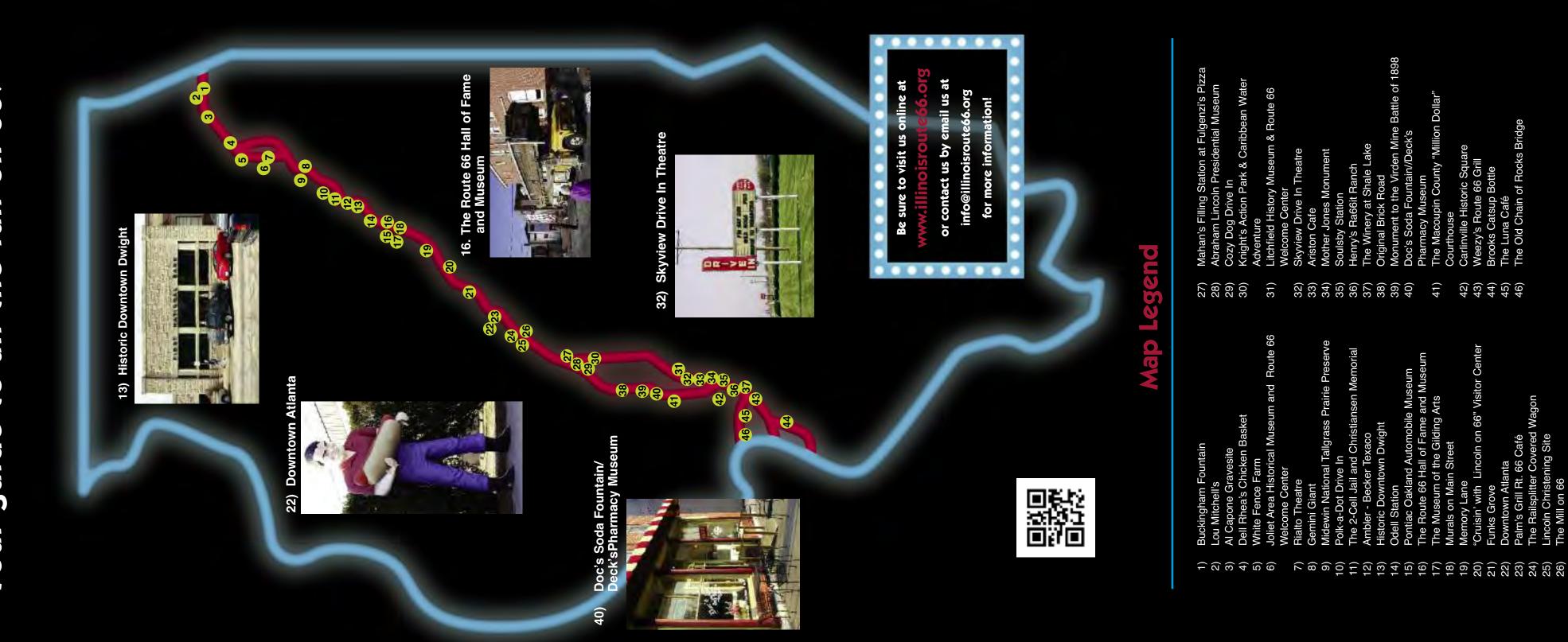
LLINOIS ROUTE 66 Guide Map Your guide to all the fun on 66!



ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 LICENSE PLATES

The Illinois Route 66 license plate is an ideal way for you to help preserve and promote Route 66. Register your plate with the Illinois Secretary of State at www.cyberdriveillinois.com or apply at any local license service facility.

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THE MOTHER ROAD BEGING

Since its official designation as a Heritage Corridor by the Illinois Bureau of Tourism in 2001, the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project has been serving the needs of Route 66 communities, businesses and travelers. As a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the development and promotion of the Route 66 experience throughout the state, we obtained status as an America's Byway designated by the Federal Highway Administration in 2005. Although we are a non-governmental body, we maintain a close network of partners at the local, state and federal level to support our efforts.

Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway

700 E. Adams Street Springfield, IL 62701 217-525-9308 866-378-7866 illinoisroute66.org







AMERICA'S BYWAY Illinois Route 66!



Where The Mother Road Begins...

ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 — A BRIEF HISTORY

Route 66 defined a remarkable era in the growth of our nation. As it threaded its way across eight states, it left its indelible mark on our nation's physical, historical and cultural landscape. No other road symbolizes optimism, freedom and the American Dream quite like Route 66.

It began with an Oklahoma businessman and entrepreneur, Cyrus Avery, who envisioned a road stretching diagonally across the country between



Lake Michigan and the Pacific Ocean.
The diagonal course made it possible to connect hundreds of rural towns throughout the country and provide

small communities access to a national highway system. The road was officially named Route 66 in 1926, but it was Avery who proclaimed it the "Main Street of America."

Many "main streets" in Illinois were already connected by the Pontiac Trail, the original automobile route between Chicago and St. Louis. In 1920, State Bond Issue 4 enabled the construction of a new "hard road" to connect the two cities in a more direct fashion — the first in a series of efforts to make highway travel more efficient. Already paved in concrete by 1926, the Illinois stretch of US 66 was the first to claim it was "slab all the way."

Over the next fifty years, the road carried travelers of all kinds: migrants from the Dust Bowl, military personnel, truckers, farmers, and eventually, vacationers. Enterprising business people along the road quickly recognized the need for food, lodging and auto services and the travel industry was born. Eventually, other amenities, such as motor courts, souvenir shops and roadside attractions sprang up to meet the growing demands of travelers.

Illinois was no exception. From the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago to the Apple Valley Motel in Granite City; from the Lou Mitchell's Restaurant in Chicago to the Ariston Cafe in Litchfield; from the Standard Oil Station in Odell to the Soulsby Station in Mt. Olive, the road was lined with businesses eager to serve Route 66 travelers. Many of these familiar landmarks became regular stops, not just for the goods and services they provided, but for the warmth and hospitality served on the side. Route 66 became a linear community that spanned more than 2400 miles between Chicago and Los Angeles.

Ultimately, the desire for faster, safer and more efficient roadways led to the construction of a 4-lane Route 66 following World War II. In addition to the extra lanes, the road was also

realigned to bypass the small towns that had grown accustomed to heavy traffic and the



By 1977, Interstate 55 had completely replaced Route 66 in Illinois and in 1984 the last remaining section of US 66 in Arizona was bypassed by

commerce that

came with it.

Interstate 40. Route 66 was officially decommissioned by the federal government in 1985.

Fortunately, the legacy of Route 66 has survived. Today, travelers of the historic highway in Illinois can cruise more than 400 miles of road, including some of the original 1926 concrete segments. Historically significant structures have been preserved to help bring the Route 66 experience to life and many authentic businesses welcome the opportunity to serve today's Route 66 traveler.

The road is alive with great stories of Route 66 and as you visit our Classic 66 locations in Illinois, you'll be able to meet the legends, swap some stories and make new memories. Whether you're a seasoned roadie or a first-time traveler, there's plenty to experience, so go on ... go get your kicks on Illinois Route 66!

2017-05/30K



Grant Park at Congress Pkwy – Chicago (312-742-3918)



Located near the corners of Jackson Boulevard and Michigan Avenue, Buckingham Fountain serves as the traditional starting point of Route 66. The fountain is considered a public icon of Chicago and the centerpiece of Grant Park. Thousands of travelers start their Route 66 adventure here, since it is truly "Where the Mother Road Begins."

565 W Jackson Blvd – Chicago (312-939-3111)



You're in for a treat when you visit Lou Mitchell's- a Chicago landmark and Route 66 favorite since 1923. The friendly crew at Lou Mitchell's serves up great food to more than 1,200 customers each day. Their unique traditions include a free homemade donut hole as you wait to be

Mount Carmel Cemetery Near Berwyn, IL (331) 903-6940 ext. 308



Take an interesting side trip, while in Berwyn, to visit the Capone family gravesite, which includes the marker for the famous American gangster, Al Capone (1899-1947).

645 Joliet Rd – Willowbrook (630-325-0780)



The Rhea family has welcomed Route 66 travelers since the 1940's, when the restaurant served as a Blue Bird bus stop. Today. they serve some of the best fried chicken you'll eat! Make sure to save some time to browse through all the great 66 memorabilia and their incredible collection of chickens.

Featured on the Food Network show "Diners, Drive-ins & Dives" with Guy Fieri.

1376 Joliet Rd – Romeoville (630-739-1720)



Since 1954, the Hastert family has offered family entertainment and superior dining. Spend some time exploring the grounds, touring the antique car museum, or enjoying the games, rides and petting zoo. Don't forget the great food, served family style in any one of ten uniquely decorated dining rooms.



204 N Ottawa St – Joliet (815-723-5201)

Stop in to take a look at the interactive exhibits. This museum offers its visitors a glance back in time while offering hands on exhibits that keep kids coming back for more. Don't forget to check out the unique gift shop before you leave.

102 N Chicago St – Joliet (815-726-6600)



Also know as the "Jewel of Joliet," the historic vaudeville movie theatre was built in 1926. It was originally conceived as a "Palace for the People" and is considered to be one of the most beautiful theaters in the nation. The theater was restored to its original magnificence during the 1980's. Make time to tour this architectural masterpiece.



810 E Baltimore St – Wilmington

The old Launching Pad Drive-In is the home to the Gemini Giant, a fiberglass "Muffler Man" sporting a space helmet and rocket ship. It is a remnant of our fascination with space travel in the 1960s. Come on by and take a picture with a piece of history.

30239 South State Route 53 – Wilmington (815) 423-6370



This 18,500-acre unit is within the USDA / U.S. Forest Service system. In 2015, a small herd of bison was introduced and has continued to grow. Visitors have the opportunity to view the herd in their natural setting.

See It From The Beginning...

222 N Front St – Braidwood (815-458-3377)



Just down the road is perhaps one of the most popular spots-where you can still see Marilyn, Elvis, James Dean and the Blues Brothers, while enjoying classic drive-in cuisine. The Polk-a-Dot has maintained its memorable 50's and 60's atmosphere since it opened in 1956.

Center Street - Gardner



40's appearance.

The Gardner 2-Cell Jail was built in 1906 and is a popular photo opportunity for travelers. A memorial adjacent to the jail honors Rev. Christian Christiansen for his contributions that helped prevent the construction of Nazi atomic bombs.

417 W Waupansie – Dwight (815-584-3077)



Once a thriving service station, the circa 1940's Texaco station serves as a Route 66 rest stop and interpretive center. The station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was awarded funding through the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program to be restored to its

Dwight - (815-584-3077)

Historic Downtown Dwight is a must see when traveling 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town's history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright designed First National Bank and the Tiffany-inspired stain glass windows of the Keeley Institute.

400 S West St - Odell (815-998-2133)



Partnerships between local, state and federal government, private business and Route 66 preservationists made the restoration of this classic 1932 station possible. The station's architectural style, known as "house with canopy" lends even greater historical significance to the site.

205 North Mill Street - Pontiac, IL (815-842-2345)



A must see for every car lover. A spacious gallery showcases Pontiac and Oakland car models from the early 1900s until the end of the Pontiac brand in present day. Don't forget to save time to meander through the gift

110 W Howard St – Pontiac (815-844-4566)

Housed in a historic firehouse, this facility tells the story of the people and places that have been inducted into the hall of fame. The museum displays significant Illinois artifacts from along Route 66. The upstairs features "Route 66—A Photo Journal," a series of pictures by Michael Campanelli that captures the true spirit of Route 66.

217 North Mill Street - Pontiac (800-835-2055)







Downtown - Pontiac (800-835-2055)

A unique collection of 19 outdoor murals located in and around the historic downtown district. The murals, created in four days during the Walldog Summer Bash in June 2009; honor the commercial, social and political history of the city. Enjoy beautiful art in a Norman Rockwell town like setting.

Old Route 66 North – Lexington



Take a stroll down "Memory Lane," an original stretch of Route 66 pavement for walking or biking. Open to auto traffic on special occasions, Memory Lane is filled with unique signage reminiscent of the 66 era. There's plenty of 66 to see in

Lexington, including their neon sign, Route 66 Park and great downtown business district. Pull off and enjoy some of Lexington's heritage.

200 N Main St – (309-827-0428)



The Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66 Visitors Center is located on the ground floor of the nationally accredited, McLean County Museum of History. Discover the history of travel along the road through interpretative exhibits.

5257 Old Route 66 - Shirley (309-874-3360)



There's more than maple sirup at Funk's Grove! Since 1824, the Funk Family has been producing its special brand of pure maple sirup (yes, it's spelled that way on purpose) from more than 6,000 taps in this prolific stand of maple trees. Be sure to

leave plenty of time to enjoy a timber walk, visit the mineral museum or tour the many other sites on the property.

Downtown on Old Route 66 – Atlanta (217-648-2351)

Downtown Atlanta is filled with wonderful Route 66 sites and attractions, including the Route 66 Park and Atlanta's Country Market. The community has hosted the world-famous "Letterheads" in recent years, the product of which is a series of historic murals. We can't forget "Tall Paul," the former Bunyon's Giant, who has found a new home in this charming community.

23.) Palm's Grill Rt. 66 Café

Downtown on Old Route 66 – Atlanta (217-648-2351)



Blue-plate specials, bingo, and a bus stop—welcome to the Palms Grill Café. Lovingly restored to its circa 1934 appearance, the café now invites visitors to step back in time and experience the way it used to taste. The Café is housed in the Downey Building along with the Atlanta Museum, where you can view local history exhibits, including ones dealing with Abraham Lincoln's association with Atlanta.

1750 Fifth St – Lincoln (217-732-8687)



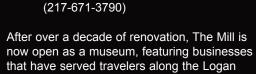
Recognized as the World's Largest Covered Wagon by Guinness World Records and Best Roadside Attraction for 2010 in Reader's Digest, the Railsplitter and its driver, Abe Lincoln, welcome visitors throughout the year. Built by visionary Dave Bentley, this





The Courthouse Square Historic District features several shops, eateries and businesses, and is rich in Abraham Lincoln & Route 66 history, including the Lincoln Christening site.

738 S. Washington – Lincoln



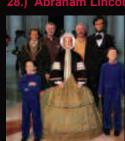
County stretch of Route 66.

1168 Sangamon Avenue – Springfield (217-544-8520)



Mahan's Filling Station, a unique example of the earliest of gas stations, is now on display across from the Historic Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield, next to Fulgenzi's Pizza & Pasta, home of the world's greatest hamburger.

112-212 N Sixth St – Springfield



(217-558-8948) This 200,000-square-foot complex includes an Archive, Library, and Museum. It features interactive exhibits, lifelike statues of Lincoln's life, and innovative theater presentations. It is over 50 percent larger than any other presidential library/museum and is the most visited.

2935 S Sixth St - Springfield (217-525-1992)



The Cozy Dog Drive In is the home of the one and only Cozy Dog, a delicious hot dog on a stick, created by proprietor Ed Waldmire, Jr. in the 1940's. The Waldmire family still makes the delicacy daily, Monday through Saturday. The restaurant's walls are lined with Route 66 history, which you can soak up as you enjoy a cozy dog any time of the day.

1700 Recreation Dr – Springfield (217-546-8881)



This is the premier spot to stop and take in some fun for the entire family. Knight's Action Park, opened in 1952 by George Knight Sr., started out as a golfing range and has expanded into the hottest spot in the area. They offer waterslides, a wave

pool, batting cages, putt-putt golfing, a driving range, bumper boating and much, much more. Once you're finished catching some rays and cooling off, stay late and catch a flick at the Route 66 Drive-in.

334 North Historic Route 66 – (217-324-3510)



The museum is located where the Vic Suhling gas station once stood. The retro design of the building, with exterio r neon trim and restored neon Suhling sign welcomes visitors.

150 N Historic Old Route 66 – Litchfield (217-324-4451)

Come check out the latest movie at the last remaining original Route 66 Drive-in. This drive-in theater has a 400-car capacity and is a great place to spend time with the family or to snuggle with a loved one while watching a great flick.

413 N Historic Old Route 66 – Litchfield (217-324-2023)

Noted author, Michael Wallis, calls the Ariston, ...the best the old road has to offer." You'll understand why after you join the hundreds of locals and Route 66 visitors who dine at the Ariston each day. Owners Nick and Demi Adam carry on the family tradition of excellent food,

first-rate service and reasonable prices that Nick's father began in 1924.

Union Miners Cemetery, Lake St – Mt. Olive (217-999-4261)

This monument honors the famous labor activist, Mother Jones, who

fought for coal miner's rights. The miners that were killed in the 1898 Virden mining riot are buried in this cemetery, where Mother Jones wanted to be laid to rest with her "boys."

Old Route 66 - Mt. Olive (618-635-2527)



New life has been given to a Route 66 icon, affectionately known by many as the Soulsby Station. The station appeared on the landscape when the road was still unpaved in 1926. Route 66 historian and author, Tom Teague, gathered volunteers to restore and preserve the structure in honor of its former proprietor and friend to Route 66, Russell Soulsby.

1107 Historic Old Route 66 – Staunton (618-635-5655)



Rabbits, both the hopping and the VW types are on display at Henry's Ra66it Ranch, a must-see emporium of highway and trucking memorabilia, including a collection of Campbell's "humpin, to please" trailers. The emporium also includes a wide array of Route 66 gift items. Rich Henry and his wife Linda are Route 66 authorities. They enjoy greeting visitors

1499 Washington Avenue — Williamson, IL (618-637-2470)

and sharing tales from the road.



Real Illinois wine served in a California style winery that has a country luxury twist. Enjoy beautiful vineyard and lake vistas, rent a Surrey Bicycle, hike or picnic along the scenic trails. When sophistication and simplicity meet fun is sure to follow!

Snell and Curran Rds - Auburn

This beautiful 1.4 mile long segment of restored handlaid brick road is a segment of 66 done in 1931 and placed over a concrete roadbed. Route 66 at its best.

Virden Square – Virden



Of historic significance, the Virden Mine Battle of October 12, 1898 occurred when a train bringing strike breakers was met by striking miners resulting in a battle in which seven miners and five coal company guards were killed and scores wounded. The

Virden Mine Battle is still recognized as a landmark event in the history of the labor movement in the United States and October 12th was declared Miner's Day as a result.

133 S Second St – Girard (217-627-3491)

In 2007, the store reopened as Doc's Soda Fountain offering lunch, ice cream and old fashioned treats along with a free drug store museum displaying items dating back to 1884.

200 E Main St – Carlinville (217-854-2141)



Built in 1870, this famous courthouse is reported to have cost over a million dollars to complete and created a scandal the likes of which are still talked about. The building is made of limestone and is a fantastic example of the mid-1800's Renaissance Revival style architecture.

Carlinville (217-854-2141)

The Carlinville Square is the crown jewel of the large historic district that features buildings built in the 1880s. The beautiful gazebo that adorns the center of the park accents all the great shops downtown.

108 S Old Route 66 - Hamel (618-633-2228)

There is plenty of road food, cold drink and hospitality at Weezy's Route 66 Bar & Grill in Hamel, "the best little town on Route 66." The grill is open seven days a week, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

800 S Morrison – Collinsville (618-345-5598)



This is roadside Americana at its finest. Although the "bottle" served as a water tower for the catsup maker since it was built in 1949, today it marks one of Collinville's most unique attractions. You may have to wander off 66 a bit to find it, but it's worth the drive.

201 E. Chain of Rocks Rd. – Mitchell (618-931-3152)



This is a must stop after a long day of driving. This roadhouse was built in 1924 and used to be an old Al Capone hangout. Famous for their sign, the Luna has a unique history and offers its visitors the coldest beverages around, great food and great stories.

Old Chain of Rocks Rd. - Madison (314-436-1324)



The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge was built in 1929 as part of the construction of Route 66. The bend, approximately half-way through its one-mile stretch is perhaps one of the bridge's most unique features. Today, the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge is the world's longest pedestrian and bicycle bridge. Open for foot and bicycle

traffic year-round, the Chain of Rocks Bridge opens for vehicular traffic during special events.