



## Gillespie, Illinois Community Profile Itinerary

Gillespie is a town in Macoupin County with a population of 3190. Coal mining was the primary industry of Gillespie, bringing many European immigrants to the area to work. Though today the mines are closed, in their heyday they were considered some of the nation's largest. You can learn more history of coal mining in the area at the Illinois Coal Museum at Gillespie.

### ATTRACTIONS



#### ILLINOIS COAL MUSEUM AT GILLESPIE

The mission of The Gillespie Coal Mining Heritage Commission is to collect, preserve, study, exhibit, and stimulate appreciation for and advance knowledge of role of coal mining in Illinois.

121 S Macoupin St

[curator@gillespiecoalmuseum.org](mailto:curator@gillespiecoalmuseum.org)

[\*Illinois Coal Museum at Gillespie Official Website\*](#)



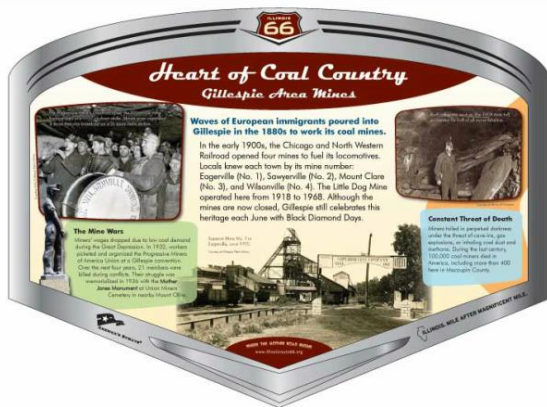
[Canna Theatre of Gillespie](#)

Known as the Lyric Theatre until the early 1960s, the Canna Theatre has been redefined as a single screen movie theater that provides a unique viewing experience. Come and enjoy a movie in a classic 1920s Hollywood atmosphere.

108 E. Chestnut St.

(217) 617-5101

[Canna Theatre of Gillespie Official Website](#)



### [Gillespie, Illinois Route 66 Interpretive Statue](#)

#### **Gillespie Area Mines**

Waves of European immigrants poured into Gillespie in the 1880s to work its coal mines. In the early 1900s, the Chicago and North Western Railroad opened four mines to fuel its locomotives. Locals knew each town by its mine number: Egerville (No. 1), Sawyerville (No. 2), Mount Clare (No. 3), and Wilsonville (No. 4). The Little Dog Mine operated here from 1918 to 1968. Although the mines are now closed, Gillespie still celebrates this heritage each June with Black Diamond Days.

#### **The Mine Wars**

Miners' wages dropped due to low coal demand during the Great Depression. In 1932, workers picketed and organized the Progressive Miners of America Unions at a Gillespie convention. Over the next four years, 21 members were killed during conflicts. Their struggle was memorialized in 1936 with the Mother Jones Monument at Union Miners Cemetery in nearby Mount Olive.

#### **Constant Threat of Death**

Miners toiled in perpetual darkness under the threat of cave-ins, gas explosions, or inhaling coal dust and methane. During the last century, 100,000 coal miners died in America, including more than 400 here in Macoupin County.

#### **MAJOR EVENTS:**



### [Black Diamond Days](#)

6/1/2018- 6/3/2018

Macoupin County's "Original Festival of Coal", features a Little Miss & Mini Miner contest, Miss Black Diamond Days Jr. Miss & Black Diamond Days Queen, parade, fishing tournament, Coal Kids Corner, dog show, washer and cornhole tournament, live entertainment and plenty of food and drinks.

Downtown Gillespie

(217) 839-4888

[Black Diamond Days Official Website](#)



### [4<sup>th</sup> Annual Blue Carpet Corridor Festival](#)

June 8, 2018

The Blue Carpet Corridor, from Chatham down to Collinsville (including Edwardsville), is a unique section of Route 66 characterized not only by its Mother Road charm, but also its rich mining history and colorful mobster lore. Route 66 is known for its quirky attractions, roadside hospitality, and family fun. And on the second weekend in June, the blue carpet will be rolled out to welcome thousands of travelers.

(618) 307-5049

[Blue Carpet Corridor Official Website](#)

### [DINING](#)

## **AMENITIES**

### **City of Gillespie**

115 Macoupin Street

(217) 839-2919



### **Cavallo Bus Lines**

509 Illinois Ave.

(217) 839-2187

[Cavallo Bus Lines Official Website](#)

[CLICK HERE Gillespie Google Map](#)



### **Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway**

700 East Adams

Springfield, IL 62701

(217) 525-9308

[info@illinoisroute66.org](mailto:info@illinoisroute66.org)

[www.illinoisroute66.org](http://www.illinoisroute66.org)