



Did you know Route 66 started In Illinois? Take our 4-day suggested tour!

As the popular saying goes, “Get your kicks on Route 66” as you explore the Mother Road. Illinois is the only Route 66 state east of the Mississippi—and where it all began. Watch for Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway Experience hubs. Each tells a unique story about locations along the route. Add to the nostalgic feel of your Route 66 experience behind the wheel of a classic American car, like a 1935 Roadster or a 1956 Thunderbird from American Classic Rides. If a motorcycle is your preferred mode of travel, you can rent a Harley Davidson or a Triumph at MCC Motorcycle Center. No matter what your vehicle of choice might be, it will be an experience of a lifetime. There is so much history, so it’s good to plan ahead by visiting the Illinois Route 66 website or seek suggestions at Route 66 sites along the way.

Day 1

Your day begins in DuPage County where you will rent your dream classic car or motorcycle. Then, head into Chicago to **Buckingham Fountain**, the eastern terminal of Route 66 before enjoying lunch at **Lou Mitchell’s Restaurant and Bakery**, which has served many a visitor – including U.S. presidents and movie stars – since 1923. Your trip back to DuPage County will take you through the city of Berwyn, Illinois, home to the **Berwyn Route 66 Museum**, with its fascinating and ever-increasing collection of memorabilia and information about the history of Berwyn’s portion of Route 66. End your day at **Dell Rhea’s Chicken Basket** in Willowbrook for a classic American meal. This historic roadhouse has welcomed Route 66 travelers since the 1940s and served as a **Blue Bird bus stop**. It is famous for its fried chicken and unique “mac & cheese.”

Day 2

The DuPage County area is rich in history, culture and landscape. Before you head out on the next leg of your journey, you may want to visit one of these suggested stops within a 5 to 25 minute drive from Route 66: **Brookfield Zoo** (Brookfield) – this world-famous zoo is one of the largest in the U.S. and houses more than 2,800 animals representing 425 different species, many living in award-winning indoor immersion exhibits. **Cantigny Park** (Wheaton) – The former home of the late **Chicago Tribune** magnate, **Robert R. McCormick**, is now a 500-acre park which includes a historic mansion, first-class military museum, magnificent gardens, and a championship golf course. **The Morton Arboretum** (Lisle) – An engaging 1,700-acre garden of trees and other woody plants from around the world. Enjoy the **Children’s Garden**, **Maze Garden**, sixteen miles of hiking trails, and nine miles of roads. Guided tours run throughout the day in season. **Naper Settlement Outdoor History Museum** (Naperville) – History comes to life at this 12-acre museum village with 30 historic structures. As you leave DuPage County, you’ll make your way to the **Historical Museum & Route 66 Welcome Center** in Joliet. This award-winning 2-story exhibit is located at the crossroad of **Route 66 and Lincoln Highway**, another historic Illinois road. While in Joliet, you may want to take the opportunity to get your photo taken in front of the huge “Joliet Kicks on 66” sign at **Route 66 Park**, or get your adrenaline pumping at the **Route 66 Raceway/Chicagoland Speedway**, one of the nation’s best state-of-the-art drag racing facilities.

Day 3

Enjoy the Route 66 scenic byways on your way to Springfield, the state capitol of Illinois and home of our 16th president, **Abraham Lincoln**. Plan to spend the night there and explore the city, or travel a little farther south to **Carlinville**, and stay at the historic **CarlinVilla**, an original Route 66 motel. Without stops, this trip would take about 4 hours, but give yourself plenty of time to stop and take in the historic towns, sites and original alignments along the way.

Day 4

Today, you’ll explore the stretch of Route 66 from Springfield to where the Illinois route ends near St. Louis, Missouri. This trip, without stops, would take about 2-1/2 hours, but there are plenty of small towns with interesting historic sites that you won’t want to miss. Plan to spend the night near St. Louis. Tomorrow, you can return to the Chicago area via Route 66 and catch sites you may have missed along the way. Or if you’re in a hurry, take Illinois Interstate 55 the entire way, and you’ll be back in DuPage County in about 4-1/2 hours.