



PRESS RELEASE

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Last-Minute Summer Getaways in Illinois for the Family to Enjoy

CHICAGO – Illinois is the perfect place for a last-minute summer getaway for families before kids head back to school next month. With no shortage of easy-to-plan, budget-friendly attractions, accommodations and adventures, Illinois offers fun for all ages.

“The beauty of taking a trip in the summer is that you don’t have to wait for the weekend to make new memories with the family,” said Cory Jobe, director of Illinois Office of Tourism. “Whether you’re looking for outdoor adventure, new ways to explore Chicago or something unique, Illinois has a destination for you.”

The Great Outdoors

- Immerse yourself in the great outdoors and spend a night in a treehouse at [Timber Ridge Outpost and Cabins](#), the closest lodging to the famous [Garden of the Gods](#) in the Shawnee National Forest. Spend your days hiking, cycling, horseback riding, bird watching or fishing, then return to the comfort of your home away from home high in the trees. Treehouses are complete with a bathroom, kitchenette, heating and air conditioning. Timber Ridge also offers two modern log cabins, an authentic antique log cabin built in 1852 and two modern homes.
- [Matthiessen State Park](#), located about an hour and a half from Chicago in LaSalle County, is a paradise for those interested in geology as well as recreation – with a picturesque combo of canyons, streams, prairie and forest. The natural beauty, along with the park and picnic facilities, make it a popular choice for a special outing. Plan a day filled with hiking, biking, fishing and more.

Chicago-area Staycation

- There's nothing like summer in Chicago -- it's the perfect time for an overnight weekend stay. Make sure your visit includes one of the hottest new things to do in Chicago -- a kayak adventure like no other. Paddle along the Chicago River surrounded by the city's towering skyscrapers. Chicago River kayaking is becoming increasingly popular, and [Urban Kayaks](#) offers many ways to take part, from tours to rentals to group outings. Get started at the location in Streeterville or the Riverwalk launch site.
- Another great way to see the city is from a [segway](#). Visitors can get close to the city's breathtaking views with a guided tour that explores the most famous attractions, like Navy Pier, the lakefront, the Museum Campus and Buckingham Fountain. The knowledgeable guides make it fun for all and make sure everyone can take advantage of the ultimate photos opps. (Some providers require riders to be at least 12 years of age.)
- Chicago-area residents now have easy access to one of the most popular family destinations, the [Great Wolf Lodge](#), thanks to the recent opening of the Gurnee location, located about an hour drive from the city. Great Wolf Lodge is a year-round resort designed to create memorable vacation experiences for the whole family. The signature attraction is the 80,000-square-foot indoor water park, which includes a multi-level interactive water fort treehouse with a massive tipping water bucket, lazy river, wave pool, family raft ride, high-thrill water slides, water features for toddlers and more. In addition, the resort has a variety of entertainment offerings and attractions designed specifically for children and families, including an entertainment center featuring a ropes course, bowling, mini golf, an arcade and a multi-story rock wall.

Bonus Idea: Bears and Bourbonnais

- [Bears training camp](#) in Bourbonnais gets underway July 21 and runs through Aug. 11. There are many family-oriented activities, including meeting and greeting your favorite team members.
- The Bourbonnais/Kankakee County area, just 60 miles from Chicago, is also a great spot to explore during a weekend visit -- be sure to stop at the [Brickstone Brewery](#) in Bourbonnais, featured as an Illinois Maker by the Illinois Office of Tourism, and tour the [B. Harley Bradley House](#), on the National Register of Historic Places and part of Illinois' new [Frank Lloyd Wright Trail](#).

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.