

# 2015 WINTER SEASONAL EVENTS



**Breathtaking snow-dusted landscapes**, events unique to the season, and endless indoor and outdoor activities make the winter season a great time to discover all that Illinois offers. Travelers can take advantage of cross-country and downhill skiing, bald eagle watching, indoor waterparks, historical celebrations surrounding Abraham Lincoln's birthday and President's Day, some of the best culinary experiences in the country and more in Illinois. Hundreds of attractions offer plenty of memorable ways to enjoy Illinois in winter, including these events in Chicago.

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## CHICAGO & BEYOND



### Cross Country Skiing at The Morton Arboretum

Lisle | Winter Season

The Morton Arboretum in Lisle offers cross-country skiing during the snowy winter season. Visitors can enjoy beautiful scenes while traveling along 3.5 miles of groomed trails that span across a multitude of landscapes. The course, which allows skiers to move at their preferred pace, is ideal for outdoor enthusiasts and families alike.



### The Skating Ribbon at Maggie Daley Park

Chicago | Winter Season

With two ice skating rinks located in the heart of downtown Chicago, guests can indulge into the ultimate winter experience at the new Maggie Daley Park and the popular [McCormick Tribune Ice Rink](#), now in its 12th season. During the snowy months, skaters can practice their best figure eights while sipping on a cup of delicious hot chocolate.



### Bald Eagle Watching at Starved Rock State Park

Utica | Now - February 25th

Starved Rock State Park in Utica offers bald eagle watching from January 3 through February 25. The majestic birds migrate south from Canada during the season, making Illinois home to one of the greatest populations of wintering bald eagles. Visitors can see the birds in their natural habitat on a Bald Eagle Trolley Tour or on a hike along one of the park's scenic trails.



### Woodstock Groundhog Days

Woodstock | January 25th - February 2nd

The town of Woodstock, which served as the filming location for the hit movie Groundhog Day, commemorates its cinematic legacy during Groundhog Days, January 25 - February 2. The weekend-long festivities include movie trivia, a screening of the film, tours of filming locations and a chili cook-off. Of course, guests will also be on the lookout to see if Woodstock Willie sees his shadow.



### Chicago Restaurant Week

Chicago | January 30th - February 12th

Foodies can get their fill during Chicago Restaurant Week, taking place January 30 - February 12. More than 250 restaurants in the city and surrounding suburbs participate in the event by offerings value pricing for lunch and dinner. Chicago Restaurant Week is a two-week long event this year, so food lovers have ample opportunities to try a variety of the city's diverse cuisine.



### Chicago Auto Show

Chicago | February 14th - 22nd

Car enthusiasts from around the world converge in Chicago every February for the largest auto show in North America. The Chicago Auto Show, happening February 14 - 22 at McCormick Place, features more than 1,000 different vehicles on display, including cars, trucks, sport utility vehicles and concept cars. In addition to the displays, the event has special auto-related exhibits and celebrity appearances.

## LAND OF LINCOLN



### Lincoln Museum's New Exhibit "Undying Words: Lincoln 1858-1865"

Springfield | Now - February 2016

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and Library's new exhibit, "Undying Words: Lincoln 1858-1865" is a collaboration with the Chicago History Museum. The exhibit features original versions of Lincoln's most famous speeches, Abe and Mary Todd's carriage, his bed where he laid to rest and a 7-foot tall "Rail Splitter" portrait, now until February 2016.



### Springfield Winter Wine Festival

Springfield | January 29th - 31st

Wine buffs can sample more than 20 local Illinois wines at the Winter Wine Festival in Springfield from January 29 - 31. For people who want to learn more about the state's wine industry, the festival's educational tract provides in-depth information about the history of winemaking in the Midwest and good and wine pairing presentation.



### 40th Central Illinois Jazz Festival

Decatur | January 30th - February 1st

The 40th Central Illinois Jazz Festival is happening January 30 - February 1 in Decatur. Recognized as the Midwest's premier jazz event of the season, the musical weekend offers intimate appearances and performances from the region's top jazz musicians.



### Maple Syrup Tapping at Funks Grove

Shirley | February 1st - March 31st

Funks Grove, located on the legendary Route 66, is a great destination for visitors who are searching for an authentically Illinois winter experience. Beginning in February, Funks Grove offers guided tours that show how maple syrup is tapped and boiled down to the delicious treat. After the tour, guests can try samples of the syrup and purchase bottles for souvenirs.



### Hatch: A Creative Re-Use Art Festival

Champaign | February 27th - March 15th

Art enthusiasts will love the creative works on display at Hatch: A Creative Re-Use Art Festival, taking place February 27 - March 15 in Champaign. The pieces featured at the festival were transformed from old scrap material into stunning works of art. Visitors can enjoy exhibits filled with inspired, recycled pieces as well as an art fair where they can purchase one-of-a-kind collectables.

## GREAT RIVERS COUNTRY



### Eagle Meet and Greet

Alton | Now - January 31st

Nature lovers flock to Alton every winter season to attend the town's Eagle Meet and Greet. Bird watching experts provide insight about the unique species, its habitat and the best spots to see eagles soaring around the Alton area. Bird enthusiasts can experience an encounter with a live bald eagle and take in their majesty from an up-close vantage point.



### Skiing and Snowboarding at Chestnut Mountain Resort

Galena | Now - March 31st

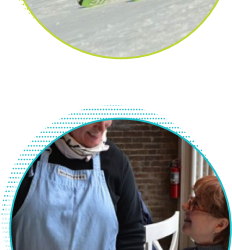
Visitors can grab their snow boots and enjoy Illinois at Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena, now through March 31. The resort is one of the Midwest's top-rated ski and snowboard destinations, with slopes overlooking the beautiful Mississippi River. Chestnut Mountain also has an indoor pool, whirlpool, sauna and on-site restaurants to continue the fun after a day outdoors.



### Ski Snowstar Winter Sports Park

Andalusia | Now - March 31st

Ski Snowstar Winter Sports Park is a family-friendly ski resort located only a short drive from the Quad Cities in Andalusia. Adventurists of all ages can participate in a multitude of winter sports, including skiing, snowboarding and tubing. Ski Snowstar is open now until the end of March and is complete with 28 acres of ski terrain and 15 trails.

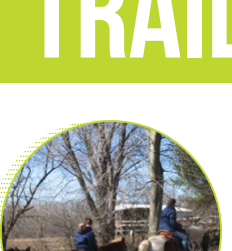


### Alton Restaurant Week

Alton | January 16th - 25th

Many of Alton's locally owned restaurants come together to offer diners a taste of the town's best flavors during Alton Restaurant Week, January 16 - 25. Now in its fourth year, the celebration has expanded to 16 participating restaurants and 10 days of festivities. Diners can indulge in discounted prefix menus at some of the town's finest steakhouses, cafes and eateries.

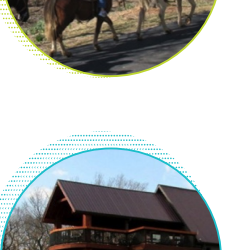
## TRAILS TO ADVENTURE



### Shawnee National Forest Winter Horseback Riding

Golconda | Winter Season

Winter horseback riding in the Shawnee National Forest offers stunning views of bluffs and rock formations unique to Southern Illinois. Milder winters in the region allow several stables to offer a variety of riding options throughout the season, including guided and unguided horseback rides.



### Romantic Weekend at Rustle Hill Winery

Cobden | Winter Season

Rustle Hill Winery in Cobden is the ideal place for a romantic weekend away from reality. Couples can enjoy live music, great wines and beers, cozy accommodations and a delicious restaurant during their stay.



### Bald Eagle Watching in the Cache River Wetlands

Cyprus | Now - April 1st

Bald eagle watching in the Cache River Wetlands is a prime destination for experienced bird watchers and amateur enthusiasts to witness grand eagles and other birds in their natural habitat. Now through April 1, visitors can stop in the Cache River Wetland Center to pick up resources and materials needed to spot eagles and identify birds along the rivers.



### Maple Festival

Makanda | February 21st - 22nd

Maple Festival in Makanda is a free family-fun event, providing the opportunity to learn the history and see the process of making maple syrup from the woods to the kitchen. The festival includes maple syrup demonstrations, tree identification hikes and a home-cooked pancake breakfast. Visitors can also enjoy blacksmithing, hide tanning, silk embroidery, furniture making and other demonstrations.



### 37th Annual Big Muddy Film Festival

Carbondale | February 24th - March 1st

Film fans can get their cinematic fill at the 37th Annual Big Muddy Film Festival, February 24 - March 1 in Carbondale. The festival has grown from 35 entries in its first year to nearly 300 entries in recent years, representing a wide variety of cinema genres from around the world. Festivalgoers can take in dozens of films throughout the weekend on the campus of Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

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