

NATURALLY

McHENRY Co.

WONDERFUL PLACES • WIDE-OPEN SPACES

ILLINOIS



• 2023 INSIDER GUIDE •

Where **ADVENTURE** COMES NATURALLY

Sometimes, we all want a little room to move around. After all, to yearn for quiet, wide-open spaces is to long for the peaceful tranquility that so often evades us. People weren't meant to be confined in cramped, concrete spaces. We need room to stretch out, to be free, to take a deep breath of fresh air — we need room to live.

In McHenry County, IL, that's just a way of life. One minute, you're exploring a charming downtown lined with terracotta storefronts, and the next you're lacing up your hiking boots and spotting deer tracks lining the expansive terrain sculpted by glaciers thousands of years ago. Go from white tablecloth dining to picking strawberries straight from the ground and take them straight back to your home, dirt and all.

Here, this lifestyle just comes... naturally. From charming small towns to reaping Mother Nature's bounties, you'll discover spending time in here comes instinctively. Welcome to McHenry County.

Cover Photo by Zuzanna Mendez of ZuzPix Photography



Naturally

SURPRISING

by Theresa Goodrich — the Local Tourist

One of the best things about living in McHenry County is the abundance of green space. In addition to two state parks and several city parks, the McHenry County Conservation District offers hiking, biking, equestrian trails, canoeing, fishing, camping, and more. The district owns or manages 35 public sites — the sheer quantity and uniqueness of outdoor activities is impressive. The natural areas vary beyond short, long, easy, or hard with easy, half-mile loops and more strenuous, rugged hikes. Some are natural and some are influenced by man. The 22-acre lake at The Hollows Conservation Area was the result of 30 years of continuous mining in the 1900s. Compare that to Pleasant Valley Conservation Area where you can hike 5 miles of trails through oak savanna and untouched wetland — a rarity in the Midwest. At High Point Conservation Area, trek to the highest glaciated point in Illinois. The 3-acre pond at Stickney Run Conservation Area is in the center of two short loops, but an additional offshoot leads to a cemetery with a monolithic marker from 1844.

The largest conservation area is Glacial Park with more than 3,400 acres encompassing prairie, oak savannas, and kames. It also protects 40 endangered and threatened species, which you can learn about at the Lost Valley Visitor Center. Additionally, Nippersink Creek, popular with canoers and kayakers, also runs through the area. McHenry County Conservation District's conservation areas are an incredible resource. The best way to find your favorite is to get out and explore for yourself.

Naturally SEASONAL

The gorgeous, open-air spaces around McHenry County are more than just summer destinations — in fact, you can enjoy our great outdoors year-round!

Winter:

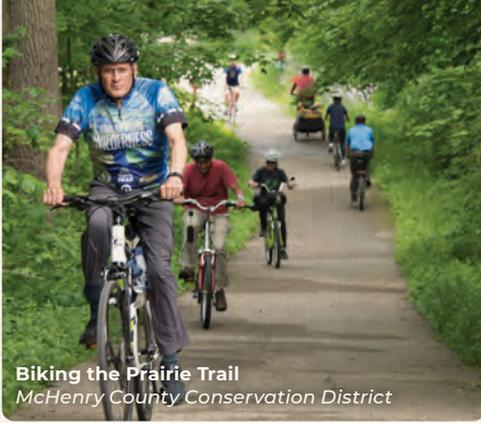
Don't let a little dip in the mercury keep you indoors. The trails and paths of **Rush Creek Conservation Area** and the **McHenry County Conservation District** provide ample opportunity for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. For anyone who's got the itch to reel in the big one year-round, the lakes around McHenry County are perfect for ice fishing (only when the ice is at least 4 inches thick, of course). And while you're up here, take a trip north of the border and hit the slopes at **Wilmot Mountain Ski Resort** in Wilmot, WI.



▲ Norge Ski Jump, Fox River Grove



▲ Wilmot Mountain Ski Resort



Biking the Prairie Trail
McHenry County Conservation District



Coral Woods Conservation Area
McHenry County Conservation District



McHenry ShamROCKS the Fox

Spring:

Rising temperatures and a sense of renewal beckon you outside to enjoy the fresh, crisp air of spring. Lace up your hiking shoes or tune up your bike for an excursion on miles of trails at **Coral Woods Conservation District** and the **McHenry County Conservation District**. Or if you prefer a smoother ride, the paved, 26-mile **Prairie Trail** winds through rural landscapes around the county as well as urban and residential environs. Finally, celebrate the warmer weather — and Irish heritage — at **ShamROCKS the Fox!**

Summer:

Ready for some fun in the sun? **The Quarry Cable Park** and **Three Oaks Recreation Area** offer unparalleled fun with cable wakeboarding, beach lounging, sand volleyball, and more! In the mood for a show like none other? You won't want to miss the **Wonder Lake Water Ski Show Team**, a McHenry County summer tradition that promises unparalleled aquatic acrobatics from a nationally recognized program — check them out at 7 p.m. Fridays after Memorial Day!



Autumn:

Fall marks an exceptionally beautiful time of year in McHenry County as the natural scenery is painted with vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows. Grab a sweater and a pumpkin spice latte and head out to **Chain O'Lakes State Park** in Spring Grove, **Coral Woods Conservation Area** and **Marengo Ridge Conservation Area** in Marengo, **Volo Bog State Natural Area** in Ingleside, and **Veteran Acres Park** in Crystal Lake for biking, hiking, or even family photos against a stunningly gorgeous, natural backdrop.



Fresh from **THE FIELDS**

They say your food tastes so much better when you work for it. The many farms around McHenry County are proof positive of that idiom with some of the most delectable fruits and vegetables this side of Chicago. Of course, we don't expect you to go out and till the fields for us, but McHenry County does provide plenty of opportunities to handpick the freshest produce anywhere in the state of Illinois. Apples, pumpkins, green beans, peas, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries — why pick your produce from a grocery store cooler when you can get it straight from the Earth?

Pick your own apples fresh from the tree at **Royal Oak Farm Orchard** in Harvard, **All Seasons Orchard**, **Prairie Sky Orchard**, and **Lang's Orchard** in Woodstock, and **Stade's Farm & Market** in McHenry. Bring home a bushel of freshly picked fruits and veggies — or decorate for fall with pumpkins right out of the patch!



Stade's Farm & Market, McHenry



Royal Oak Farm Orchard
Harvard



Crystal Lake Farmers Market

Farm experiences in McHenry County go well past baskets of fresh produce. Corn and apple tree mazes, hay rides, and shops filled with gifts and goodies are just another part of what makes the farms of McHenry County so memorable. Not only do you leave with bushels of handpicked fruits and vegetables, but you also get your fill of homemade baked goods, products from local artisans, and much more!

Of course, Illinois is a land of changing seasons, and our farms are adaptable to those changes. The first crop to arrive is asparagus in late spring. You can find the freshest asparagus at **Spears to You** in Harvard. Summer is the time to pick fresh berries, vegetables, and of course, sweet corn. Finally, stock up on pumpkins and apple cider as autumn rolls in. There's no better place than McHenry County to get into the holiday spirit — and that includes a trip out to the countryside to chop down your own Christmas tree.



Spears to You Fresh Asparagus
Harvard



Best Farmers Markets in the State **A BUSHEL BASKET FULL.**

McHenry County is well known for its farmers markets. No, seriously — check the rankings. The farmers markets scattered all over McHenry County are consistently rated some of the best in the state and are the perfect place to pick up fresh fruits and vegetables as well as crafts and other goods from local artisans. Best of all, our farmers markets aren't just a warm weather event — many of our farmers markets hold indoor gatherings throughout the winter, ensuring you can get the freshest farm-to-table goods year-round.



NOT SURE WHICH FARMERS MARKET TO VISIT?

Why not just visit all of them?
Check out the locations and hours:

CARY GROVE FARMERS MARKET

Sundays — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. June - Aug.
Cary Metra Lot • 100 W. Main St. • Cary
815-519-4341

Indoor Winter Market:

First and third Sundays — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. - May
Algonquin Township Building #6 • 3702 US-14
Crystal Lake

CRYSTAL LAKE FARMERS MARKET

Saturdays — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. June - Sept.
Depot Park • 90 E. Woodstock St. • Crystal Lake
815-479-0835 • downtowncl.org

FARMERS MARKET+ AT THE DOLE

Sundays — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. June - Oct.
The Dole • 401 Country Club Road • Crystal Lake
815-307-4787 • farmersmarketatthedole.org

Indoor Winter Market:

Select Sundays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nov. - April

HUNTLEY FARMERS MARKET

Saturdays — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. June - Oct.
Huntley Downtown Square • 11704 Coral St. • Huntley
847-515-5200 • huntley.il.us

Indoor Winter Market:

Second Saturday — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Nov. - May
Fellowship Hall • 11628 E. Main St. • Huntley

PEARL STREET MARKET

Thursdays — 5-9 p.m. May - Sept.
Veterans Memorial Park • 3400 Pearl St. • McHenry

WOODSTOCK FARMERS MARKET

Tuesdays — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. June - Sept.
Saturdays — 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mid April - Oct.
Woodstock Square • 100 N. Johnson St. • Woodstock
815-338-5164 • woodstockfarmersmarket.com

Indoor Winter Market:

Select Saturdays — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. - April
McHenry County Fairgrounds • 12015 Country Club Road
Woodstock

Fun Fact

We are home to the top two farmers markets in Illinois according to the American Farmland Trust. Farmers Market+ at The Dole is No. 1 and Woodstock Farmers Market is No. 2



Huntley Farmers Market



Woodstock Farmers Market



Pearl Street Market, McHenry



Farmers Market+ at The Dole, Crystal Lake



Crystal Lake Farmers Market

McHenry County

EVENTS

JANUARY

- ◆ Norge Ski Club Winter Tournament
- ◆ Frozen Gnome 10k & 50k

FEBRUARY

- ◆ Woodstock Groundhog Days
- ◆ Candlelight Ski & Hike

MARCH

- ◆ Festival of the Sugar Maples
- ◆ Vintage Shop Hop
- ◆ Shamrocked Woodstock Street Fest
- ◆ McHenry ShamROCKS the Fox

APRIL

- ◆ Richardson Tulip Festival



Woodstock Pride Fest

MAY

- ◆ Memorial Day Water Ski Show
- ◆ Pedalpalooza

JUNE

- ◆ Woodstock Pride Fest
- ◆ Harvard Milk Days

JULY

- ◆ Lakeside Festival at The Dole
- ◆ Fiesta Days
- ◆ America's Cardboard Cup Regatta
- ◆ Day Out with Thomas
- ◆ Heritage Fair
- ◆ Woodstock Folk Festival
- ◆ Summer in the Park
- ◆ Algonquin Founders' Day
- ◆ Rotary's Rockin' Ribfest





Fiesta Days, McHenry

AUGUST

- ◆ Crystal Lake Aquathon
- ◆ McHenry County Fair
- ◆ Bands, Brews & BBQ

SEPTEMBER

- ◆ Summer Sunset Festival
- ◆ Soul Jam
- ◆ The Great Outdoor Beer Trail
- ◆ Mexican Independence Day Celebration
- ◆ Huntley Fall Fest
- ◆ Johnny Appleseed Festival
- ◆ McHenry County Farm Stroll
- ◆ Beatles British Invasion
- ◆ Truck Off



Autumn Drive

OCTOBER

- ◆ Care4 Breast Cancer 5k
- ◆ Cider Fest
- ◆ Autumn Drive
- ◆ Witches & Wizards of Woodstock
- ◆ Woodstock Ale Fest
- ◆ Marengo Settlers' Days
- ◆ Pub in the Park



Mexican Independence Day, Woodstock

NOVEMBER

- ◆ Turkey Testicle Festival
- ◆ Lighting of the Square
- ◆ Festival of Lights Parade
- ◆ McHenry Downtown Holiday Walk

DECEMBER

- ◆ McHenry County Santa Run
- ◆ Happy Holiday Railway
- ◆ Merry Cary Parade & Festival
- ◆ A Very Merry Huntley



Lighting of the Square, Woodstock
photo by Jon Lauriet of a5 Branding + Digital



Scan the QR Code
for the complete
Events Calendar.

AUTUMN DRIVE

Fall in love with McHenry County!

How can you possibly improve on a relaxing drive through the Northern Illinois countryside on a crisp, autumn day? What about pulling over for locally grown produce, homemade jarred goods, and other handcrafted items?

Held annually in the rural farmsteads dotting the McHenry County countryside, the annual Autumn Drive invites visitors to hit the road and explore the quality, handmade items you'll find only in McHenry County. Spruce up your home with expertly made crafts like home décor, pottery, jewelry, and lawn ornaments. Rediscover and repurpose old treasures like antique furniture, trunks, tools, and even white elephant exchanges.

Of course, fruits and vegetables straight from the source are a must-have as you travel from one farm to the next. Fresh apples and pumpkins are in season for many of our growers, along with a bounty of other delicious produce like local vegetables, mushrooms, and honey. Naturally, sinfully sweet treats and goodies are in high demand, so pick up a few hand-dipped caramel apples, homemade pies, freshly popped kettle corn, and delicious baked goods and jams too!



Not to mention, the Autumn Drive is the perfect opportunity to explore the more... natural side of McHenry County. As you cruise along country roads to your next destination, marvel at the changing colors blazing across the rolling, glaciated hills characteristic of Northern Illinois and enjoy a side of the state you may not have even known was there.



Autumn Drive

"Hit the road and explore the quality, handmade items you'll find only in McHenry County"

And don't worry about calling the sitter — Autumn Drive includes fun for all ages with petting zoos, hayrack and tractor rides, corn mazes, and even pumpkin and apple launchers!



Scan the QR code for more information!



Delicious autumn snacks
photo by John Bender
of Good Boy Digital Originals

Fun Fact

Illinois may be known as the Land of Lincoln, but we're also America's Pumpkin Capital! In 2022, the Department of Agriculture reported nearly 16,000 acres covered by pumpkins with more than 40,000 pounds grown per acre, far outpacing states like California and Texas.

◀ Instagram-worthy selfie spots abound along the route!



Cody's Farm & Orchards
photo by John Bender
of Good Boy Digital Originals

On with

THE SHOW

With historic venues, gallery openings, museums, and live performances constantly filling our calendar, arts and entertainment are finely woven into the fabric of McHenry County, melding the remarkable history of our communities with our present and future. Here, you'll find contemporary artists performing on stages once occupied by some of the biggest stars from the last century and carrying on a legacy of captivating audiences.

RAUE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

A heart for fine arts.



The Raue Center for the Arts has been the heart of live entertainment in **Crystal Lake** since its opening in 1929. Thanks to the generosity of Crystal Lake resident Lucile Raue, residents today can enjoy performances from Tony, Academy, and Grammy award winners and nominees in an intimate, historic venue named in honor of its benefactor.

Woodstock

OPERA HOUSE

Where live entertainment takes center stage.



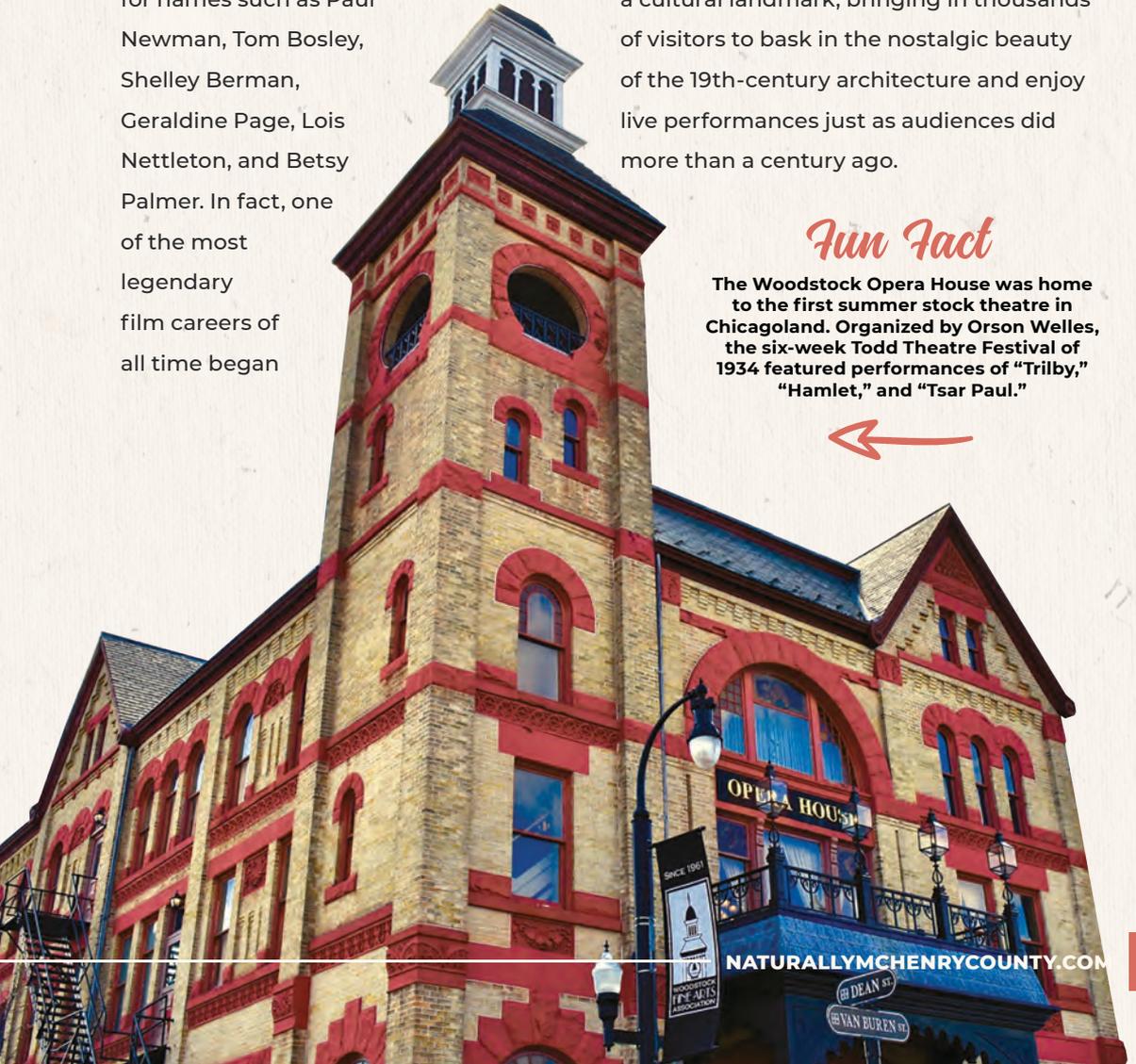
The crown jewel of the city's **Historic Square**, the **Woodstock Opera House** has been the heart of arts and entertainment since the building's construction in 1889. Originally housing the city's library, city council chamber, court, and fire department, the Opera House became a center for entertainment throughout the 20th century, serving as a launchpad for names such as Paul Newman, Tom Bosley, Shelley Berman, Geraldine Page, Lois Nettleton, and Betsy Palmer. In fact, one of the most legendary film careers of all time began

at the Opera House when a young Orson Welles began performing on the Opera House stage in the 1920s.

Today, the Opera House continues to serve both Woodstock and McHenry County as a cultural landmark, bringing in thousands of visitors to bask in the nostalgic beauty of the 19th-century architecture and enjoy live performances just as audiences did more than a century ago.

Fun Fact

The Woodstock Opera House was home to the first summer stock theatre in Chicagoland. Organized by Orson Welles, the six-week Todd Theatre Festival of 1934 featured performances of "Tribly," "Hamlet," and "Tsar Paul."



THE VIXEN

A legacy of live entertainment.

In the space once occupied by McHenry's iconic Empire Theater and the McHenry Downtown Theater, The Vixen carries on the long legacy of live entertainment on the Fox River. Opened in 2022, The Vixen is home to live music, comedy acts, kids' shows, and more. The Vixen hosts events from both local and nationally recognized acts for all ages year-round.



The Vixen

THE DOLE

Where purpose, art, music, and history come alive.

Built in 1865 for grain and ice merchant Charles Dole, **The Dole** boasts a rich, colorful history, serving as the first Crystal Lake Country Club owned by heiress Eliza Ringling, a Franciscan Order, and a First Congregational Church. Today, the gorgeous Civil War-era mansion and 1922 annex serves as an extraordinary cultural arts and music center, hosting gallery openings for local and regional artists as well as **Lou's Lounge** for live performances.

Fun Fact

Using Romantic Italianate and Second Empire architectural styles, The Dole finished construction in 1865 at a cost of \$100,000 — less than half the average price of a McHenry County home today!





SANFILIPPO FOUNDATION

Place de la Musique

With the world's largest collection of restored, automatic instruments, experience handcrafted music boxes, phonographs, orchestrions, violin machines, the world's largest restored theatre pipe organ, and the most spectacular European salon carousel in existence.

◀ Sanfilippo Place de la Musique

VOLO MUSEUM

Rev your engines for a trip through time.

Get your motor running — head out for a thrill ride through time at the Volo Museum, featuring a world-famous car collection where you can get up close to the most outstanding cars of the 20th century along with the most iconic rides in TV and movie history! But the Volo Museum is more than just cars — music machines, animatronics, antique arcade games, and so many more vintage items are featured in the museum's 45 amazing exhibits!



Volo Auto Museum

Foodie PARADISE

by Theresa Goodrich — *The Local Tourist*

If you're a foodie — or just like to eat — make sure you're wearing your stretchy pants in McHenry County. I've eaten my way through many of its 611 square miles, and while it's hard to pick favorites, there are some places that really stand out.

Duke's Alehouse & Kitchen in Crystal Lake looks like a burger and beer joint — and it is, with some of the best burgers around and an extensive beer list. But it's also a farm-to-table restaurant; their producers are even listed on the menu. If you're looking for a casual sports bar but still want to eat well, **Offsides Sports Bar & Grill** in Woodstock has wings so good people drive from Lake Geneva to get them. Skip the traditional wings and go for their Signature, which are grilled and coated with their own secret sauce.

You can also go beyond the buffalo at **Cullom Knoll** in McCullom Lake. Their wings with slacker sauce — another secret recipe — are crave-worthy, as is the Lip-Smacker Burger, a unique combination with peanut butter, jelly, cheddar cheese, and jalapenos. Trust me — it works.

Break out your inner Bavarian at **Richmond BratHaus**. Start with a giant,

authentic German pretzel followed by a sausage sampler with four varieties of encased meats. If seafood is calling you, **Port Edward Restaurant** in Algonquin will answer. Not only is the menu filled with specialties from the sea, the building is marine-themed. Landlubbers won't go hungry since they've got steaks, chops, and poultry too.



Offsides Sports Bar, Woodstock



Richmond BratHaus, Richmond



Cullom Knoll, McCullom Lake

After dinner, it's time for dessert and that means **Julie Ann's Frozen Custard** in Crystal Lake. Family-owned since 1985, it's happiness in a cup or a cone. If it's teatime, head to the whimsical **Casting Whimsy** in Woodstock. The shop is steeped in pop culture and fairy tales with teas named "Make It So" and "Dragon's Breath."

Take it from a foodie — McHenry County is a goldmine of great places to eat and drink.

▼ Julie Ann's Frozen Custard, Crystal Lake



Casting Whimsy, Woodstock

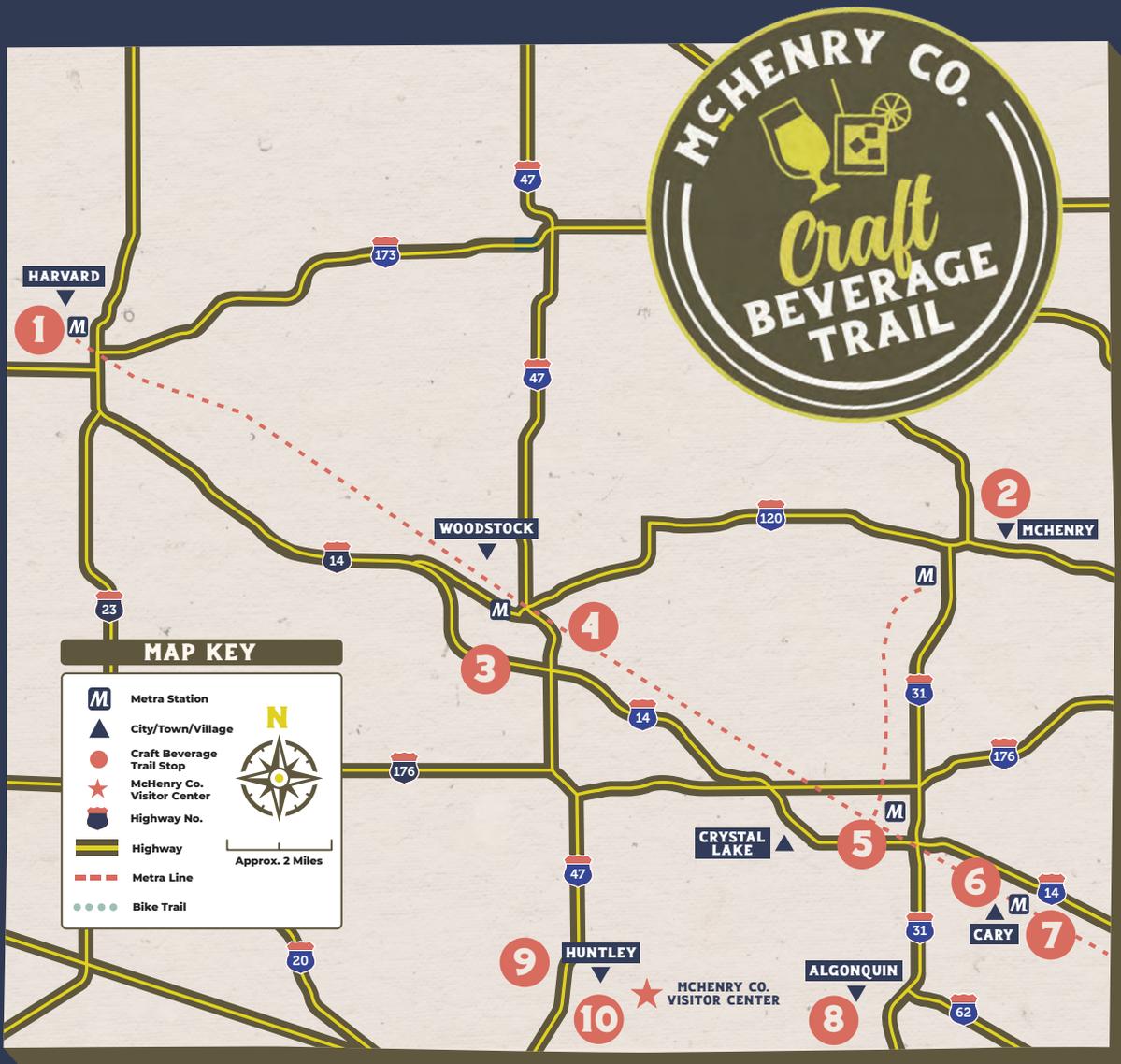


Duke's Alehouse, Crystal Lake

RAISE A GLASS ON THE Craft Beverage Trail

by Jay and Leah Hall — *Gastronom.com*

Sip your way through all 10 locations on the new McHenry County Craft Beverage Trail! This trail covers so many different kinds and styles of beers, from stouts and cream ales to lagers and unique IPAs. Plan for various events like beer yoga, live music, and tasty food trucks too!



Recommended Sips



1. RUSH CREEK DISTILLING

1501 W. Diggins St. • Harvard
rushcreekdistilling.com

Recommended Sip:
Barrel Rested Gin
or Coffee Vodka

2. MCHENRY BREWING COMPANY

3425 Pearl St. • McHenry
mchenrybrewing.com

Recommended Sip:
Fox River Scotch Ale

3. HOLZLAGER BREWING COMPANY

150F S. Eastwood Drive
Woodstock
holzlagerbrewing.com

Recommended Sip:
Trojan Unicorn
or Hawaiian Hammer

4. KISHWAUKEE BREWING

1900 Dillard Court • Woodstock
kishwaukeebrewing.com

Recommended Sip:
Märzen

5. CRYSTAL LAKE BREWING

150 N. Main St. • Crystal Lake
crystallakebrew.com

Recommended Sip:
Beach Blonde — Golden Lager

6. SPIRIT WATER

3300 Three Oaks Road • Cary
spiritwatertj.com

Recommended Sip:
Bourbon Pecan Beer

7. CARY ALE HOUSE & BREWING COMPANY

208 W. Main St. • Cary
caryalehousebrewing.com

Recommended Sip:
Lux Umbra — Blonde Stout

8. SCORCHED EARTH BREWING COMPANY

203 Berg St. • Algonquin
scorchedearthbrewing.com

Recommended Sip:
German Style Doppelbock

9. SEW HOP'D BREWERY & TAPROOM

1 Union Special Plaza,
Suite 113 • Huntley
sewhopd.com

Recommended Sip:
Friendly Village Porter

10. MORE BREWING COMPANY

126 S. Villa Ave. • Huntley
morebrewing.com

Recommended Sip:
Moreover — Hazy IPA

Download the Naturally McHenry County app, go to “Challenges,” and enter the codes you can get at each location. When you finish all 10, you will get a T-shirt and sticker. Such a fun way to try new drinks and see the beautiful country McHenry County has to offer! Tell them Jay and Leah from Gastronom sent you!

Follow Jay and Leah on Instagram — @gastronomcocktails





BREAK the *Chain*

Let's face it — when you're shopping, you want something that offers a real "WOW" factor, something that comes with a sense of exclusivity. After all, if you can find it at one chain location, anyone can find that same, mass-produced item anywhere else in the state, country, or even world. But when you shop local, you're afforded the exceptional opportunity to discover something that can't be found anywhere else — a real shopper's treasure. And here in McHenry County, there's no better place to begin your treasure hunt than the many independent shops and boutiques that define our local retail.

Downtown Discoveries



Downtown Crystal Lake shopping

DOWNTOWN CRYSTAL LAKE

A classic atmosphere.

Located just steps from the Metra station, the charming, Americana atmosphere of **Downtown Crystal Lake** shines brightly as you walk in the shadow of the gorgeously sculpted architectural terracotta, which was manufactured in Crystal Lake in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Independently owned businesses and award-winning restaurants make their homes here along with the modern, open-air **Brink Street Market**, offering a wide range of shopping opportunities no matter who's on your list.



MCHENRY

Go Downtown (x3).

Most cities are fortunate to have a downtown shopping district — McHenry has three of them. And though Main Street, Green Street, and Riverside Drive each feature their own unique identities, each is home to numerous locally owned retail stores, restaurants, and pubs.



RICHMOND

Beers, brats, & boutiques.

On the edge of McHenry County, Richmond's quaint downtown straddling a busy roadway provides an unparalleled shopping and dining experience. Independently owned boutiques, antique shops, pubs and wine lounges, and restaurants all sit within a block of each other along US-12. You can even treat yourself to some homemade delicacies from the family-owned candy shop!



HEBRON

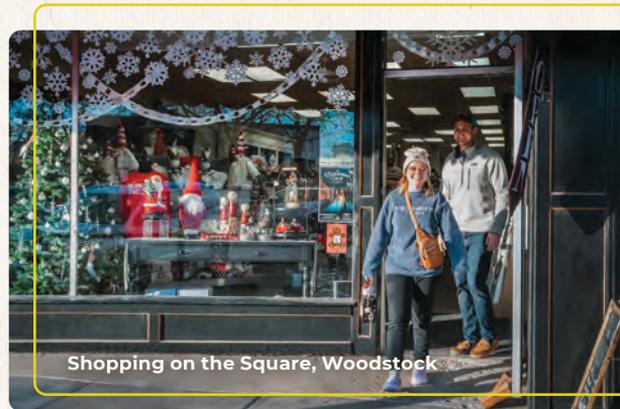
New old treasures await.

In search of something more vintage? Hebron is the perfect place to find treasures from yesteryear with several antique and resale shops all located within a block of each other. Furniture, jewelry, vintage clothing, collectibles — all are just waiting to be rediscovered and give your home that special touch.

WOODSTOCK

Hip to be Square.

Encompassing a centrally located park and between gorgeous, Victorian-era architecture, the locally owned boutiques, hobby shops, and apothecaries offer everything from handcrafted jewelry to pop culture collectibles. Plus, the Square boasts plenty of stops to refuel on coffee and snacks along the way, ensuring you'll want to spend an entire day searching for the perfect gift.



◀ **Anderson's Chocolates, Richmond**

All candy made by hand in small batches for more than 100 years.

MC HENRY COUNTY MADE ★★

When you can associate the extraordinary qualities of an item with its region, you know you've come across something special. That's what you'll find among the wide range of products made right here in McHenry County. Each filled with its own distinct character,

these makers define our region as wholly unique from others — something naturally incomparable. Explore the makers and products that set us apart.



◀ **Grounds Coffee Bar & Café, Crystal Lake**

Fresh roasted coffee to kick-start your day along with tasty breakfast treats and sandwiches.

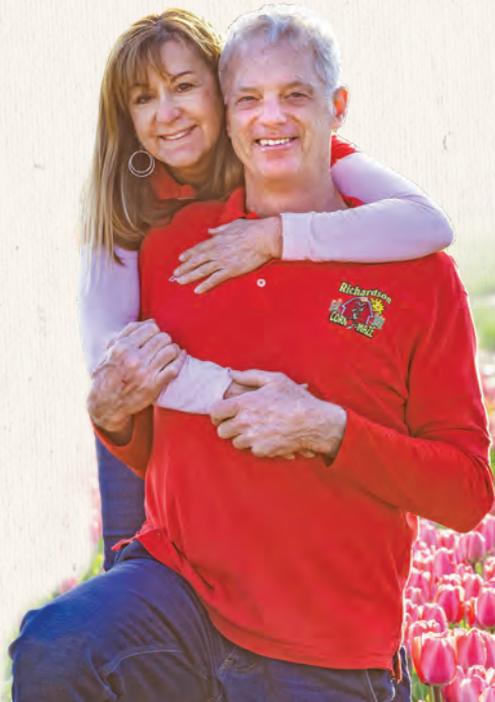


▲ **Riverside Chocolate Factory, McHenry**
Handmade chocolate, fudge, old English toffee, and other delicious treats.



◀ **Hempstock Pharms, Woodstock**

Family owned and producing organic, ethically sourced CBD products.



▶ **Richardson Adventure Farm, Spring Grove**

Tulips in the spring and Christmas trees in the winter! Plus fudge, canned goods, décor, and more!



Casting Whimsy
Woodstock



Duke's Alehouse & Kitchen
Crystal Lake



Rush Creek Distilling
Harvard



Spirit Water
Cary

Crystal Lake Brewing
Crystal Lake

Conscious Cup
Coffee Roasters
Crystal Lake • Cary

Magic Meadows Alpacas
Wonder Lake

The Irie Cup
Huntley





MORE Brewing
Huntley



Potts & Pans Steelband
Woodstock



Holzlager Brewing Company
Woodstock

Scorched Earth Brewing
Algonquin



1776 Restaurant
Crystal Lake



Anderson's Candy Shop
Richmond





Ethereal Confections
Woodstock



Kishwaukee Brewing
Woodstock



Julie Ann's Frozen Custard
Crystal Lake

Sew Hop'd Brewery
Huntley

Silver Prairie Natural
Soap Company
Woodstock

McHenry Brewing Company
McHenry





Plan Your Special Day **HERE**

There's no better place to hold your special day than McHenry County. Our distinctive blend of urban and rural extends to the many wedding venues ready to host you, your friends, and your family, from quaint farms to trendy, dedicated event spaces.

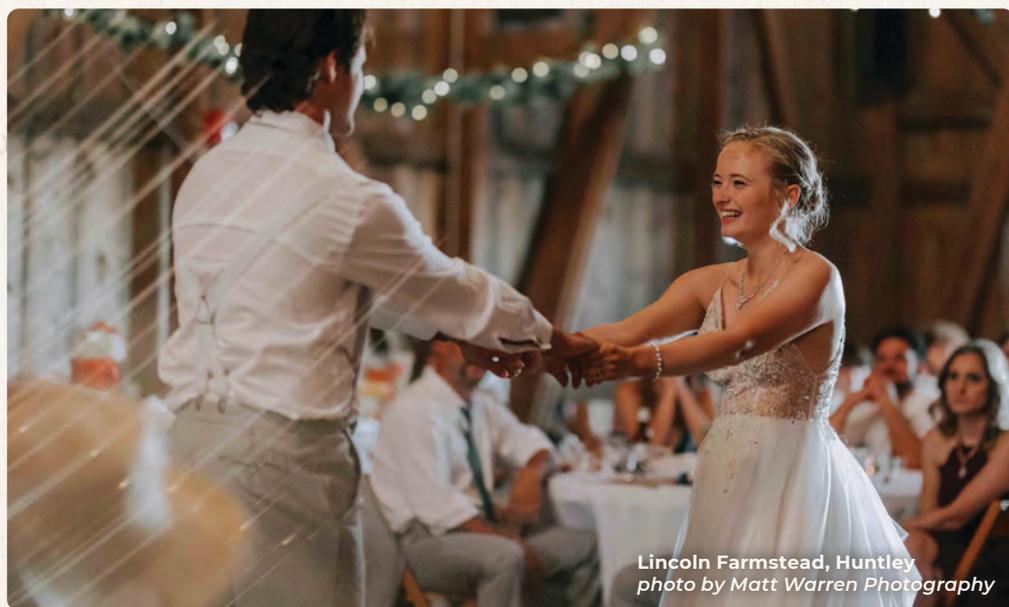
What should you expect when planning your big day in McHenry County? We talked with **Tami Hacker of Creatively Yours Wedding Planning** to get the inside scoop on how to make sure your big day goes smoothly.

When should I get my marriage license? And where do I go to get it?

In McHenry County, your marriage license is valid for 60 days from the date it was issued. Schedule an appointment with the McHenry County Clerk's office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday in Woodstock.

If I'm looking to plan a wedding in McHenry County, when should I start?

Most venues book 12-18 months out, but the more flexible you are with the date, the more options you will have for a sooner date.



Lincoln Farmstead, Huntley
photo by Matt Warren Photography



Lincoln Farmstead, Huntley
photo by Matt Warren Photography



Woodstock Country Club, Bull Valley

What resources are available to help me find credible vendors in the area?

The best resource for vendors are your friends, family, and your already booked venue or vendors. Personal experience says so much more than words online.

What are some last-minute tips for the week of my wedding?

Check in with all bridal party attendants to ensure they have picked up their attire. Confirm all honeymoon reservations, pack all décor items in labeled boxes sorted by event and location, and drop off at the venue ahead of time if possible. Create final payment and tip envelopes for vendors.

I'm looking for a rustic wedding setting. What are some of your favorite venues to work with?

The Shores of Turtle Creek in Spring Grove, **Whispering Woods** in Harvard, **Concord Center** in Woodstock, **Bluestem Farm** in Hebron, the **Starline Factory** in Harvard, and **Lincoln Farmstead** in Huntley.

What is the most affordable season to book a wedding in McHenry County?

November through March and Friday or Sundays instead of Saturday night.

What is the best weather season to book a wedding in McHenry County?

The best time of the year is the autumn months, September through November. The trees are full of color, the skies are blue, and the humidity is low.



Make a Home in **MCHENRY CO.**

We can't help if you fall in love with McHenry County — we're just so ruggedly attractive. If you've fallen for our charm and want to make this your home, the experts from **Heartland REALTOR® Organization** are here with some tips on moving to McHenry County!

» **WHAT ARE THE TOP FIVE REASONS TO MOVE TO MCHENRY COUNTY?**

- 1. OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS** — McHenry County is home to a wide variety of educational opportunities.
- 2. CULTURE** — There are festivals and outdoor events throughout the year in many towns, a very active art and theatre scene throughout the county, and historical homes and buildings.
- 3. BIG CITY AMENITIES WITH SMALL TOWN CHARM** — McHenry County has a small-town lifestyle with access to Chicago via public transportation as well as easy access to Lake Geneva, WI.
- 4. RECREATION AND CONSERVATION** — McHenry County is home to many parks, conservation districts, bike paths, and river and lake access.
- 5. VARIOUS HOUSING OPTIONS** — Including more home and land for your dollar than you could purchase in the city.

» **WHEN LOOKING FOR A HOME IN MCHENRY COUNTY, WHAT RELOCATION RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?**

There are many REALTORS® in the area who are happy to assist with all aspects of your relocation! There are also many local moving and storage companies available to assist with the transition. Heartland has a membership of Affiliates from home inspectors and contractors to financial lenders and title companies. The McHenry County Housing Authority (MCHA) provides rental assistance, public housing, senior housing, energy assistance, weatherization, home rehab, homeless prevention, dental vouchers, past-due rent assistance, and first-month rent and security deposit assistance.



Heartland REALTORS®



Woodstock Dual Language Program



Varied housing options

» HOW DO THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS RANK IN MCHENRY COUNTY?

Many people move to McHenry County just for the school districts! The services the districts offer and attention to students is phenomenal. McHenry County College serves many county residents, offering affordable undergraduate education as well as non-credit courses for residents.

» I LOVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF LIVING IN A BIG CITY BUT I'M LOOKING FOR MORE SPACE FOR MY FAMILY. WHAT MAKES MCHENRY COUNTY A GOOD CHOICE FOR ME?

In McHenry County, you have access to all the amenities you would have in a big city; however, you can have a bigger lot and more house for your dollar here. While McHenry County offers families room to spread out, it's not completely disconnected from the city with the Metra providing ready access to Chicago and the suburbs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT HEARTLAND REALTOR® ORGANIZATION:

info@HeartlandRO.com
HeartlandRO.realtor

The Heartland REALTOR® Organization, headquartered in Crystal Lake, is a not-for-profit trade organization representing over 1,200 real estate professionals throughout Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin.

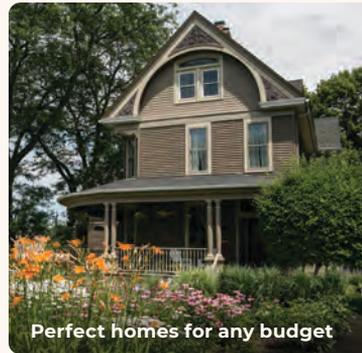
REALTOR® is a registered collective membership mark which may be used only by real estate professionals who are members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribe to its strict Code of Ethics. Not all real estate agents are REALTORS®. All REALTORS® are members of NAR.



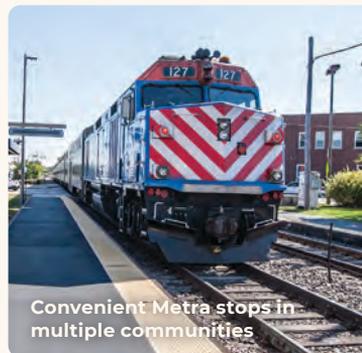
Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital



McHenry Rec. Center Young Artists



Perfect homes for any budget



Convenient Metra stops in multiple communities

NATURALLY CONNECTED

Of course, McHenry County isn't just a place to live — it's a place plugged into the international marketplace while offering a top-notch education and healthcare for your family. Check out some of the remarkable opportunities and amenities you'll find only in McHenry County.



METRA STATIONS

• FOX RIVER GROVE •	• CARY •
• PINGREE ROAD •	• CRYSTAL LAKE •
• MCHENRY •	• WOODSTOCK •
• HARVARD •	

INTERSTATE 90
Runs Along
MCHENRY COUNTY'S SOUTHERN BORDER.

An illustration of a jet airplane flying towards the left. Below it are three overlapping circles containing the following text:

- 50 MILES FROM O'HARE INT'L
- 40 MILES FROM ROCKFORD INT'L
- 60 MILES FROM MILWAUKEE INT'L

THREE MAJOR Health Systems

- + Northwestern University Medicine
- + Mercy Health System
- + Advocate Aurora

One of the
TOP 5
HEALTHIEST
COUNTIES
in Illinois



30 Medical Specialties Represented!

TOP 15 Employers

- ◆ NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE
- ◆ DISTRICT 47
- ◆ DISTRICT 158
- ◆ MCHENRY COUNTY GOV'T
- ◆ FOLLETT LIBRARY RESOURCES
- ◆ FOLLETT SOFTWARE CO.
- ◆ WOODSTOCK STERILE SOLUTIONS
- ◆ MERCY HEALTH SYSTEM
- ◆ SNAP-ON TOOLS CO.
- ◆ STRYKER
- ◆ MEDELA
- ◆ MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE
- ◆ KNAAK MANUFACTURING CO.
- ◆ INTREN
- ◆ APTAR GROUP INC.

TOP INDUSTRIES

- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Advanced Manufacturing
- ◆ Healthcare
- ◆ Information Technologies
- ◆ Plastics
- ◆ Chemical





DC Cobbs

Naturally Neighborly

McHenry County is a quilt of communities and experiences hand-sewn together by local people who know how to enjoy the best things in life. Though they share a common link and mesh together so well, each community has its own distinct identity and its own exceptional experiences. Explore the communities of McHenry County and see what each can offer you!

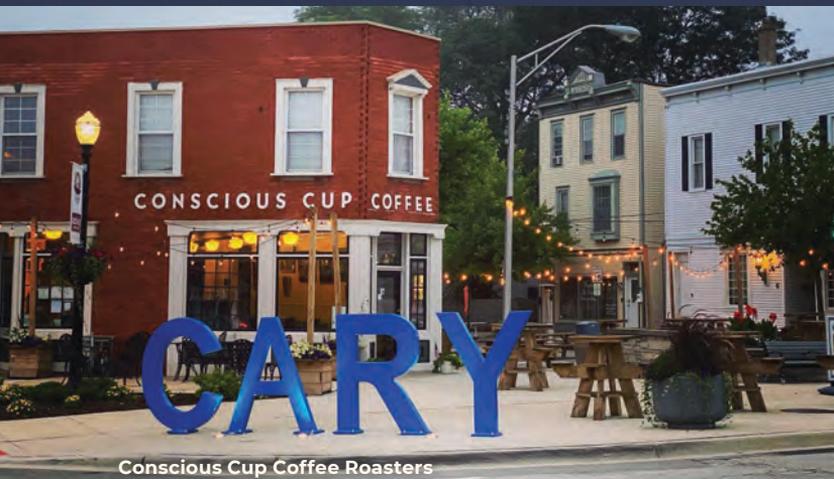
◀ *McHenry*

FROM DOWNTOWN TO DOWNTOWN

What's better than one downtown district? How about three? Located along the Fox River, the **Riverwalk** is the perfect place to unwind and explore the many independent shops and restaurants from one downtown to the next.



Cherry Tree Inn B&B



Conscious Cup Coffee Roasters

▼ *Island Lake*

SERVING UP FUN

Home to more than 8,000 residents, this small community hosts huge events every summer like **Island Lakefest** — enjoy live music and incredible fireworks displays! And if you're in the competitive mood, grab a bite and take in some beach volleyball!

▲ *Cary*

HISTORIC CHARM

On the north banks of the **Fox River**, Cary is home to appetizing options in historic settings. In summer, Cary turns into a suburban celebration with cruise nights and festivals.

Sideouts





The Quarry Cable Park

◀ Crystal Lake

CLASSICALLY ADVENTUROUS

Stunning, downtown Crystal Lake offers a relaxing, vintage experience in its charming shopping district full of remarkable discoveries. With a thriving arts center and numerous outdoor locales, Crystal Lake is the ideal place to get out and take part in brand-new experiences.

▼ Huntley

BURSTING WITH COUNTRY CHARM

Huntley boasts a population that's quadrupled in the last decade, proving this is where people want to be. With a twist of country charm, enjoy delectable dining with the family — but leave the kiddos home for the annual **Turkey Testicle Festival**.

◀ Woodstock

REAL CHARMING

With stunning, Victorian-era architecture lining an iconic square, the county seat of Woodstock is the type of city you'll want to wake up in over and over again. Nostalgic with a modern twist, Woodstock is a city that welcomes creativity and entrepreneurship.



Concert in the Park

Algonquin ▶

THE FLAVOR OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

With a walkable downtown including independently owned restaurants and pubs, Algonquin is a city of many flavors! This revitalized downtown district features everything from award-winning Italian to daring wild game dishes, plus more than 70 rotating beers.

Black Bear Bistro



Lake in the Hills ▶

JUST PLANE BEAUTIFUL

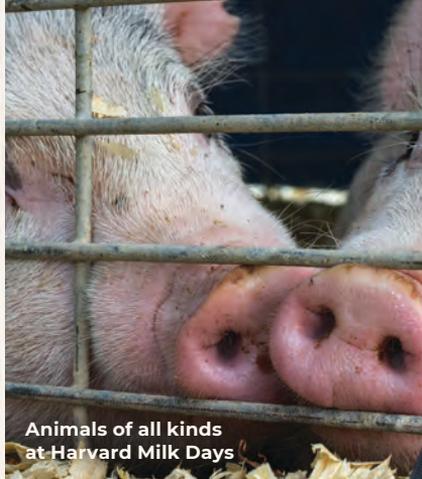
Known to locals as "LITH," Lake in the Hills is home to its own airport. Here, you'll find a quaint yet exciting village with fun festivities at **Sunset Park**.



Summer Sunset Festival

Harvard ▶

Billed as the home of **Milk Days**, this quiet, rural town hosts one of the longest-running festivals in the state every June. But Harvard is also ready to host your own big event — its repurposed factory makes it an ideal venue for whatever you've got planned.



Animals of all kinds at Harvard Milk Days

▼ Hebron

In the shadow of a basketball-adorned water tower honoring the 1952 state champions, the small community of Hebron is bursting with pride from its downtown antique shops and restaurants to its farms and country markets on the outskirts of town.



Wonder Lake



Von Bergen's Country Market

▲ Wonder Lake

One look at the body of water **Wonder Lake** is named after and it's no surprise people flock to take in the breathtaking vistas here. But there's no more spectacular sight than the show on the lake — don't miss their world class ski team every summer!



Pistakee Bay

◀ Johnsburg

There's no better place to start your **Chain O'Lakes** expedition than in Johnsburg with plenty of boat launches and marinas along Pistakee Lake and the Fox River.

Glacial Park



◀ Ringwood

The small, quiet village of Ringwood provides a peaceful place to stop and relax after a long hike at Glacial Park — maybe over a cup of coffee or an ice cream cone.

▼ *Spring Grove*

Spring Grove is the classic Northern Illinois community. Located near **Chain O'Lakes** and divided by **Nippersink Creek**, the gorgeous surroundings of Spring Grove have established it as a premier destination for families looking to relocate.



Marengo Ridge

◀ *Marengo*

Whether you're hiking the gorgeous **Marengo Ridge** or perusing consigned treasures, the city of Marengo offers the quintessential small-town experience for residents and visitors alike.



Richardson Tulip Farm

Union ▶

The town of Union may be small in population but is home to some big things. While exploring this town of just under 600 you'll find the largest railway museum in the United States, the **Illinois Railway Museum**. And if history is your thing, stop by the **McHenry County Historical Society and Museum**.



Illinois Rail Museum Trolley

▼ *Fox River Grove*

World-class skiers take flight and medieval-style castles loom large in this little village on the **Fox River**. Explore beautiful Fox River Grove and you'll find it has an event for every season.



Richmond BratHaus

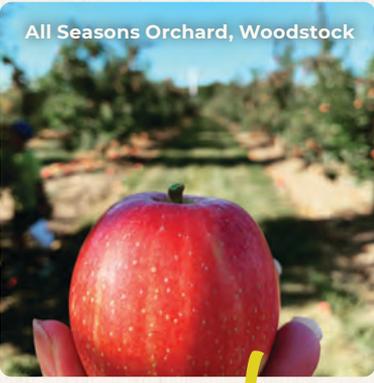
◀ *Richmond*

Quirky and hip with something wild brewing every day, Richmond is the perfect place to stop and refuel — and maybe find that one perfect gift. Be sure to indulge yourself at the family-owned candy shop right on the main drag!



Norge Ski Club

All Seasons Orchard, Woodstock



Tom's Farm Market, Huntley



McHenry County Conservation District Candlelight Hike



Seasonal

FAMILY FUN

Article and photos by Cheryl Eugenio — *O the Places We Go*

Our family of five is lucky to call McHenry County home. Living here offers so many things to do for families! In fact, here are a few of our family favorites for each season!

WINTER

When winter rolls around, we discovered a new family favorite activity — hiking! There's nothing like hiking through fresh snow, making our own tracks, and even discovering animal tracks. The **McHenry County Conservation District** offers plenty of spots to hike — some with solar lit trails and special events like candlelight hikes. Check out their fun kids and family programs too! In fact, the McHenry County Conservation District offers tons of fun programs and events year-round. From planting trees with the family at their **OAKtober** event or sampling real maple syrup from the trees at the **Festival of the Sugar Maples** to kid-friendly programs or learning how to geocache, the McHenry County Conservation District offers so many things to do with the family.

SPRING

When the weather starts warming up, my daughter never fails to ask, "Is it time for strawberries yet?" She is seriously obsessed with strawberries, so every year we look forward to heading to **Tom's Farm Market** in Huntley for their strawberry festival. With rows upon rows of sweet strawberries waiting to be picked — and sampled — my daughter is in strawberry heaven! After filling our baskets to the brim with sweet, juicy strawberries, we always treat ourselves to fresh strawberry donuts (seriously, the best!) or even a strawberry pie. In fact, you can't go wrong with any of the homemade goodies found in the cute little market. For more strawberry picking fun, another great option is **Stade's Farm**.

SUMMER

Once the weather starts heating up, we're ready to hit the beach! Thankfully, we don't have to travel too far to get some fun in the sun. We're pretty lucky to have a few different options in the area! **Three Oaks Recreation Area** is an overall great spot with plenty of sand, water, and even a splash pad. **Main Beach** in Crystal Lake not only has a beach, but an awesome playground! For more fun, the dragon paddle boat is super cool and can fit five people easily. For a quieter option, the smaller **West Beach** is perfect for relaxing.

FALL

Fall is all about fun on the farm! And we have so many choices like **Von Bergen's**, **Richardson Adventure Farm**, **Stade's Farm**, or our personal favorite, **All Seasons Orchard**. After our first visit to All Seasons, we were hooked and it has easily become one of our favorite fall family traditions. Not only does All Seasons offer apple picking, but they also have Asian pear picking. So good! Our kids' favorite for sure has to be all the activities. From entertaining magic shows or a quick ride on the train to bouncy pillow fun and ziplines galore, there is so much to do for the entire family! Parents will no doubt love the ample photo opportunities, while everyone will want to leave with a dozen of their apple cider donuts or caramel apples with homemade caramel sauce.

YEAR-ROUND

Another family favorite spot we visit year-round is **Julie Ann's Frozen Custard** in Crystal Lake. It doesn't matter whether you choose their special daily flavor, the regular custard, shakes, or sundaes — everything you try will be amazing! During the warmer months, look out for their super cool retro van making stops all over the area. I can go on and on about all the family fun in McHenry County. In fact, follow along on our adventures at otheplaceswego.com. Happy exploring!



Three Oak Recreation Area,
Crystal Lake



Tom's Farm Market, Huntley



Julie Ann's Frozen Custard
[@julieannsfrozenscustard](https://www.instagram.com/julieannsfrozenscustard)

A PLAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Not sure where to begin? Completely understandable — with so much to see around McHenry County, finding a good starting point is easier said than done. Having a schedule would be super helpful, wouldn't it?

Well, we're happy to help! Check out these handy itineraries that will help you plan your McHenry County getaway. Of course, nothing here is set in stone, so don't feel confined simply to what's listed here — mix and match to create your own McHenry County adventure!

Richardson Tulip Festival, Spring Grove



Spring

HAS SPRUNG

Your days of cabin fever are at an end and that can only mean one thing — it's time to get back outside and enjoy the great outdoors!

LODGING:

Harmony Inn Bed & Breakfast,
Huntley

DAY 1:

- ◆ Richardson Tulip Festival
- ◆ Richmond BratHaus
- ◆ McHenry Riverwalk

DAY 2:

- ◆ The Fleur de Lis Farm
Flower Picking
- ◆ Spears to You Asparagus
- ◆ Duke's Alehouse & Kitchen
- ◆ Crystal Lake Brewing





SOAK UP *Summer*

Summer is here and things are heating up — there's no better time to enjoy a weekend getaway!

LODGING:

Holiday Inn, Crystal Lake

DAY 1:

- ◆ The Quarry Cable Park
- ◆ Riverside Chocolate Factory
- ◆ McHenry Outdoor Theater

DAY 2:

- ◆ Richmond Cafe
- ◆ Kayak the Cary's Rotary Park
- ◆ Wonder Lake Water Ski Show
- ◆ Julie Ann's Frozen Custard





Fall

IN LOVE WITH MCHENRY COUNTY

Quality time can be hard to come by, but in McHenry County, families can enjoy the fall season together and build memories that will last a lifetime!

LODGING:

Hampton Inn, McHenry

DAY 1:

- ◆ Woodstock Square
- ◆ Royal Oak Farm Orchard
- ◆ Richardson Adventure Farm

DAY 2:

- ◆ Riverside Bakery
- ◆ Autumn Colors at Chain O'Lakes State Park, Coral Woods Conservation Area, or Veterans Acres
- ◆ Illinois Railway Museum

WELCOME





CELEBRATE THE *Holidays*

'Tis the season for fun in McHenry County! Take advantage of the winter season by exploring communities aglow with holiday cheer.

LODGING:

Cherry Tree Inn Bed & Breakfast,
Woodstock

DAY 1:

- ◆ Grounds Coffee Bar & Café
- ◆ Shop Downtown Crystal Lake
 - Marvin's Toy Store
- ◆ Visit Santa
- ◆ 1776 Restaurant
- ◆ Cary Dairy

DAY 2:

- ◆ Casting Whimsy
- ◆ Shop Historic Woodstock Square
 - The Backdrop
 - Apple Creek Flowers
 - The Thoughtfulness Shop
- ◆ Woodstock Opera House
Holiday Show
- ◆ Dinner at Your Sister's Tomato

Get the **INSIDER INFO**

Trips are much better when you have someone to guide you. While we can't send our reps to personally accompany you on your journey, we still want you to feel as though you're getting the inside scoop on McHenry County from an old friend. That's why this Insider Guide is packed with information about the incredible sites and activities you'll find in our little slice of Northern Illinois. From exploring the great outdoors to fun with the family, this Insider Guide is loaded with all the tips you need to make your McHenry County excursion memorable. No need to thank us — it's just what old friends do.

With pleasure,
The Insiders

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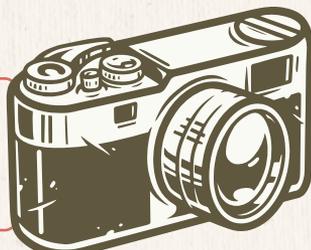
Download **THE APP!**

Planning your McHenry County getaway is easier than ever! Download the Naturally McHenry County IL! app for a mobile, interactive way to plan your trip to McHenry County, IL!



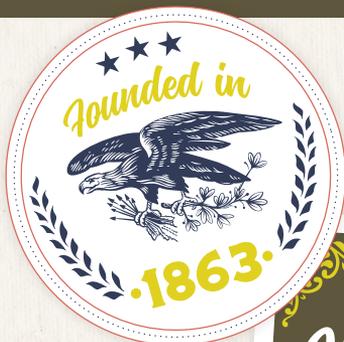
Special Thanks!

Guide photography provided by
K-Adams Foto (unless otherwise noted).
See more at kadamsfoto.com



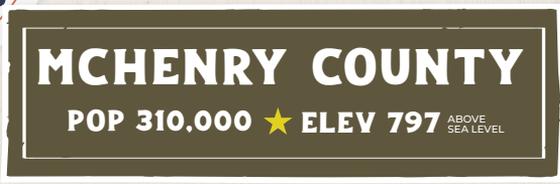
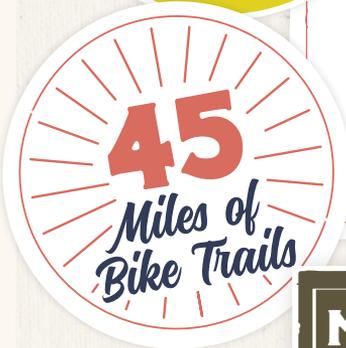
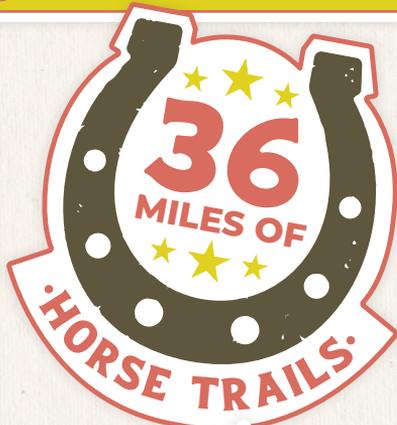
McHenry County

BY THE NUMBERS



Average
TEMPERATURES

JANUARY:	HI 28° LO 11°
FEBRUARY:	HI 33° LO 16°
MARCH:	HI 45° LO 26°
APRIL:	HI 59° LO 37°
MAY:	HI 71° LO 47°
JUNE:	HI 81° LO 57°
JULY:	HI 85° LO 62°
AUGUST:	HI 82° LO 60°
SEPTEMBER:	HI 75° LO 51°
OCTOBER:	HI 63° LO 39°
NOVEMBER:	HI 47° LO 29°
DECEMBER:	HI 33° LO 17°





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@flawlessbytiffany



@oplaceswego



@gillianflowflow



@jbtphotosmono



@jenicrain12



@jeniecegoellner



@mirf33n3y



@mariegtred



@quachdavid



@viva_la_jess



@savannah_dudzik

FOR THE FEED

Make Instaworthy memories right here in McHenry County, IL!

#NATURALLYMCHENRYCOUNTY @NATURALLYMCHENRYCOUNTY



Naturally

ENCHANTING

Reading about the amazing opportunities in McHenry County is one thing — experiencing them is another. You could spend hours thumbing through this very guide, poring over the incredible destinations and activities. But wouldn't you rather see them yourself? Discover the memorable moments awaiting you throughout the mosaic of communities that make up McHenry County and see what makes our corner of Northern Illinois so naturally attractive.

NATURALLY
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