

illinois

Illinois Made



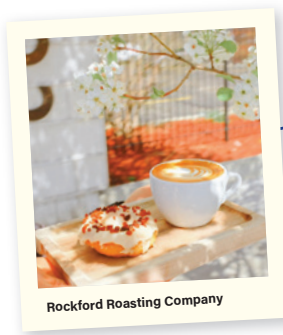
pouring on the charm

So much to see and do, you're gonna need caffeine

A vibrant city steeped in culture and a romantic small town that is a picture of charm. Two unique destinations that offer the best of the Midwest. Rockford and Galena—and the communities in between—feature trendy galleries, charming B&Bs and some of the best flavors you'll taste anywhere. Oh, and spoons, really cool spoons.



3 days
102mi
(Approx)



📍 Day 1 Rockford

Jumpstart your morning with a caffeine boost at **Rockford Roasting Company** (IM), a charming coffee shop and “brew bar” that offers high-quality lattes, drips and pour-overs plus locally produced pastries and chocolates.

Once you’ve had your fill, cross the Rock River to pay the **Rockford Art Deli** (IM) a visit. What began as a visual rebellion is now a funky print shop dedicated to representing Rockford’s creativity through unique, eco-friendly design products. While you’re in the downtown area, take a selfie at the striking Rockford monument in **Davis Park**, located on seven scenic acres along the river.

Next, head to **Riverfront Museum Park**, home to the **Discovery Center Museum**, the **Burpee Museum of Natural History** and **Rockford Art Museum**. At the Discovery Center Museum, you’ll discover hands-on experiences in the arts and sciences with over 300 interactive exhibits (such as the amazing, wind-powered **Kinetic Sculpture**), while the Burpee Museum of Natural History allows you to walk back in time to see one of the world’s most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* specimens at the **Jane: Diary of a Dinosaur** exhibit. The **Rockford Art Museum** features more than 2,000 works of art, with an emphasis on Illinois artists. Here, you’ll discover collections that include everything from American Impressionist paintings to African American art from the South.

It’s on to lunch at either **Crust & Crumbles** or **The Norwegian**. The former is a downtown artisan bakery with a selection of scrumptious sandwiches, while the latter is a brunch pub specializing in a combination of Scandinavian and soul food. Check ahead to see if they have live music on the schedule!

Continue the afternoon at the **Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden**, a 27-acre oasis of spectacular gardens and rare trees. Or, you can opt to explore **Anderson Japanese Gardens**, which is touted as one of the most authentic Japanese gardens in North America. Here you’ll find a breathtaking combination of koi-filled ponds, winding paths, gentle streams, cascading waterfalls and tranquil hideaways.

Step out of the natural splendor and into an architectural gem with a tour of the **Frank Lloyd Wright’s Laurent House** (advance reservations required). The only building ever designed by the famed architect for a person with a disability, it’s now in the National Register of Historic Places.

The riverfront vibe of **Prairie Street Brewing Co.** makes for an ideal atmosphere once you’re in the mood to unwind with dinner and a cold brew or two. The beer is exceptional, the food menu rotates seasonally so it’s always fresh, and there’s a good chance you’ll catch some live music.

Spend the night at **Embassy Suites by Hilton Rockford Riverfront** – from its spectacular rooftop bar, you’ll have access to amazing views of historic downtown Rockford and the Rock River, not to mention an impressive menu of wine, cocktails and craft beer.



📍 Day 2 Freeport and Galena

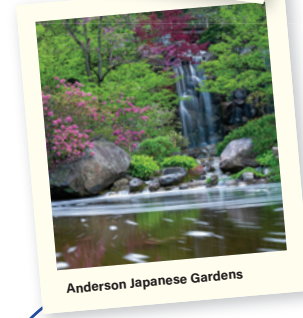
Today, it’s on to Galena—but not before a couple can’t-miss stops along the way.

If you’re a baseball fan, swing by **Little Cubs Field**, a miniature version of Chicago’s iconic Wrigley Field, which replicates 46 different features of the full-size stadium. You may even see a t-ball or Little League game in progress.

Before hitting the road, grab lunch from **Union Dairy**, the most popular ice cream parlor in Freeport. Choose from a savory menu that includes everything from 51 old-fashioned ice cream flavors to burgers, Chicago-style hot dogs and cheese curds.

Let’s move on to Galena. With so many terrific shops and limited time, you’ll have to be a little picky. Select a couple, and spend enough time at each to really soak in the experience.

At **River Bend Gallery** (IM), award-winning professional artist Geoffrey Mikol creates stunning photographs that shed new light on Galena’s picturesque natural surroundings. His family-owned gallery has developed quite a following of collectors and enthusiasts—you’ll understand why once you visit.



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You'll also find the renowned **Great American Popcorn Co** (IM), where you can sample flavors like cheesy caramel, white chocolate and puppy chow. Make sure to stop by **Galena Canning Company** (IM), a great place to scope out a rich variety of sauces, salad dressings, salsas, marinades and more.

Get to know the area further through **Galena Trolley Tours**, which offers glorious views along with illuminating narration about the town's history and architecture. Adrenaline lovers may prefer **Long Hollow Canopy Tours**, where guests can soar above the forest via zipline in a guided excursion or brave a suspended rope bridge high in the sky.

A hearty meal probably sounds pretty good right about now. Grab dinner at local favorite **Durty Gurt's Burger Joynt**, a family-run establishment that's been serving up juicy burgers and other tasty homemade dishes since 2007. Or, if you're a sandwich fan, give **Bread & Vine Bakery** a try. Start with a charcuterie board, enjoy a handcrafted sandwich, then indulge in one of their many delicious pastries and cakes.

When you've finished, it's time to kick back and enjoy some outstanding local beverages. Located in the heart of town, the brothers behind **Blaum Bros Distilling Co** (IM) have taken their passion for good booze to the next level, crafting high-quality small batches of rye, whiskey and vodka using grains from local farmers. Plus, **Galena Brewing Company** is a beer enthusiast's dream, offering a dozen different beer styles and live entertainment every weekend.

Following an adventurous afternoon, lay down for some hard-earned rest at **DeSoto House Hotel**, Illinois' oldest operating hotel, which is located on Main Street and features three restaurants. Another great choice is **Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa**—nestled on the shores of Galena Lake, it offers a 63-hole golf course, full-service spa and much more.

📍 Day 3 Galena, Elizabeth and Hanover

The smell of **Galena Roasters Coffee Shop's** specialty coffee and espresso will wake you right up—and delight your taste buds.

Next, let the stress melt away at **Galena Goat Yoga**. Or, if there are no classes scheduled, you can always try out **Hoof It Goat Treks**, which offers guided tours through native prairies and forests—with goats, of course.

For brunch, pop by **Galena Bakehouse**, where the local owners bring their innovative twist on flavors to this high-quality grab-and-go bakery. Or try **Otto's Place**, a quiet retreat off of Main Street with exceptional food and a peaceful atmosphere.

Next, experience rural bliss at **Galena Cellars Vineyard** (IM), which is housed on acres of scenic farmland and offers 40 varieties of wines. Or you could instead pay a visit to **Fergedaboutit Vineyard and Winery**, a family-friendly winery in Hanover with gorgeous views, a charming tasting room and frequent live music performances.

Now's your opportunity to escape into open space. Nestled along the rolling countryside of Elizabeth, discover contemporary and functional pottery pieces by Paul and Laurel Eshelman at **Eshelman Pottery** (IM), and pick up a piece or two to add to your stoneware collection at home.



Galena Canning Company



Long Hollow Canopy Tours



Blaum Bros Distilling Co



Galena Brewing Company



Galena Goat Yoga



Eshelman Pottery

