

BRILLIANT

group experiences



EXPERIENCE CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, ILLINOIS

Discover the brilliance of the Midwest through our group tours and experiences in the Champaign-Urbana area. Home to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with over 56,000 students, visitors can enjoy an authentic cultural experience. As home to the second largest international population for a public university in the country, our community surprises you with accessible and thriving arts & culture opportunities, an award winning culinary scene, on-farm experiences, rich historical tours, and an escape to Amish Country.

We're easy to get to and ready to help you plan your next trip! Regardless of your group's interest, we can mix and match destinations to create a brilliant experience.

Group Planner Services

We're eager for more people to discover the hidden gems of the Champaign-Urbana area. We offer many free services to assist you in your group tour.

- Itinerary Planning
- Customized Site Visit Assistance
- Planning Guides & Marketing Materials
- FAM Opportunities
- Servicing with bags, guides, and swag

EXPERIENCES

Agricultural Adventures
Arts & Culture
Amish Country
African American History

Start customizing your next tour with our mix & match experiences.

experiencecu.org

**EXPERIENCE
CHAMPAIGN
URBANA**





AGRICULTURAL ADVENTURES



Hardy's Reindeer Ranch

Come face to face with over a dozen Alaskan Reindeer at this popular farm retreat. Guests will experience reindeer kisses, hay rack rides, and a wild-west themed Texas BBQ lunch at their southern-style banquet facility. Pick up a variety of holiday gifts in their quaint gift shop.

Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery

This goat farmstead is a top destination for local flavors. Guests can visit with the goats, wander the prairie trails, learn about the cheese making process, and taste their national award-winning cheeses. The farm is dedicated to sustainable farming practices, educating guests on the importance of local foods to our ecosystem.

Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch

This seasonal destination gets guests right on the farm to pick seasonal apples and a variety of pumpkins and gourds. Enjoy a warm sip of apple cider or fresh apple donuts while taking part in various activities on the farm. Guests can bring home local and regional flavors in their shop where you can pick up their award-winning honey. Group tours include behind-the-scenes looks into the cider press and other farm operations.

The Great Pumpkin Patch

This seasonal spot grows over 300 varieties of cucurbits (squash and gourds) from around the world. Go beyond the typical orange pumpkin and pick up something unique while learning about the many uses from roasting to baking! Navigate their various mazes, walk the beautiful grounds, and stop in the bakery for fresh-baked Amish goods. Owner Mac Condill has been a regular guest on Martha Stewart and has decorated the White House lawn with his produce.

Riggs Beer Company

Did you know that locally grown corn and wheat make great beer? You will once you've tried the German-inspired beers at Riggs Beer Company. Take a behind-the-scenes tour at this sustainable brewery and learn how these veteran brothers developed this concept to sustain their centennial family farm.



ARTS & CULTURE



Japan House

Discover the way of tea, the art of Ikebana, or the meaningful Japanese gardens at this University of Illinois spot. This peaceful retreat will teach you to be introspective as you learn about Japanese culture through tea ceremonies, classes, performances, and events. The serene gardens surrounding the center can be enjoyed year-round.

Allerton Park & Retreat Center

Surrounding the Georgian manor house at this expansive park features fourteen formal gardens with over 100 ornaments and sculptures. Immaculately designed, these gardens take you on a journey through hedges and perennials. Schedule a visit around a class at their Folk School, one of the few in the United States.

Krannert Art Museum

With the philosophy of serving as a lab and a sanctuary, the Krannert Art Museum on the University of Illinois campus is a must-visit in our region. This free, extraordinary space shares thoughtful exhibitions of fine art from around the globe alongside the impressive work of University of Illinois students and faculty.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

One of the largest performing arts centers on a college campus in the country, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts elevates our opportunities to witness brilliant music, theatre, and dance with over 300 performances across their season. Get a behind-the-scenes tour of the center in the prop shop and costume shop, and learn how many productions on Broadway and Hollywood utilize their costume library.

Monticello Railway Museum

Step into the past when you hop on a historic train at this volunteer-run museum in Monticello. Special-themed train rides ranging from murder mysteries to donut trains, vintage steam locomotives, and a collection of over 70 trains showcase this long-time mode of transportation while also providing a thrill for our inner child.



AMISH COUNTRY



Green Meadow Farms

This goat farm in Arthur offers a full Amish experience. Guests will take a horse and buggy ride around the farm and learn about the buggy-making process. Taste the yogurt and dairy products made from the goats on site.

Dinner on an Amish Farm

Step back in time as you enter the home of an Amish Family. After you've taken a moment for a silent prayer, your host will begin serving your delicious home cooked meal! You'll also venture through the family's farm to witness their daily work.

Amish Woodworking

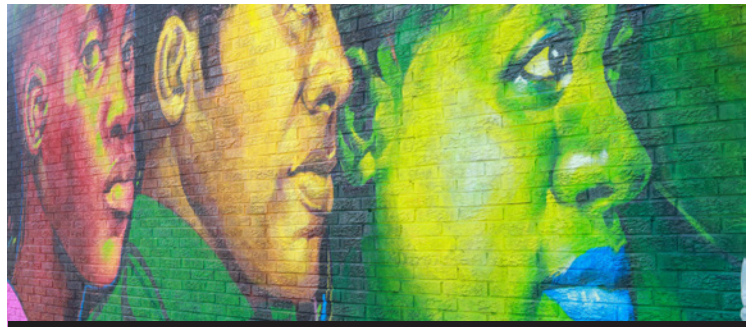
Go behind-the-scenes when you tour the impressive Amish woodworker, Das Holz Haus' facility. This large facility creates custom, hand-crafted furniture and cabinetry, focusing on intricate details that make your house a home. See the woodworkers in action, and the large Amish community helping create the end products that are made for customers all over the country.

Illinois Amish Heritage Center

Visit two historic Amish houses including the oldest Amish house in Illinois, the 1865 Moses Yoder house and the 1882 Daniel Schrock House. Also on site is the 1900 Miller Amish German School and the Hershberger-Miller barn all available for tours.

Flesor's Candy Kitchen

Sisters Ann and Devon Flesor revived their grandfather's Candy Kitchen which originally opened in 1901 to bring candy and ice cream back to Tuscola. Groups can learn from Devon, who creates small-batch, sugary confections, and hand-dipped candies. As they don't use preservatives, the candy is made daily, with thousands of pounds of candy being produced annually. Enjoy lunch on site and enjoy their homemade ice-cream and their old-fashioned soda machine!



AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY



Champaign County African American Heritage Trail

The Champaign County African American Heritage Trail is a celebration of the lives and contributions of African Americans in the Champaign County area. The mission is to educate today's residents and visitors about the rich cultural history of a people whose stories have been largely unrecognized, but who directly shaped the place we call home. Our vision is to inspire conversation, expand understanding, and contribute to a better society.

Discover over 170 years of rich cultural history and build a community with the Champaign County African American Heritage Trail. Covering Reconstruction, the Great Migration, the Depression, two world wars, the Civil Rights era, and the present day, the Trail shares powerful stories of African Americans who directly shaped the place we call home. Using the interactive mobile app or website, connect with interpretive signage throughout the community that educates and celebrates pivotal people, places, and events.

Among the Trail topics, visitors will learn about:

- Early settlers in Champaign County
- The role of the church
- Civic engagement & discourse
- The fight for equality
- African American firsts in the community

Tours also include stops to large-scale murals created by visiting artists on various themes found along the trail.

Self-guided or driving tours with guide are available. Tours can include stops in our walkable districts of downtown Champaign, downtown Urbana, and the University of Illinois campus, or further out in Champaign County to Homer Lake or Rantoul, birthplace of the Tuskegee Airmen.

BUILD YOUR BRILLIANT TOUR

Agricultural Adventures

- Hardy's Reindeer Ranch
- Prairie Fruits Farm
- Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch
- The Great Pumpkin Patch
- Riggs Beer Company

Arts & Culture

- Japan House
- Allerton Park & Retreat Center
- Krannert Art Museum
- Krannert Center for the Performing Arts
- Monticello Railway Museum

Amish Country

- Green Meadow Farms
- Dinner in an Amish Home
- Amish Woodworking
- Illinois Amish Heritage Center
- Flesor's Candy Kitchen

African American History

- Champaign County African American Heritage Trail

Contact me to start planning your customized experience or plan a site visit!

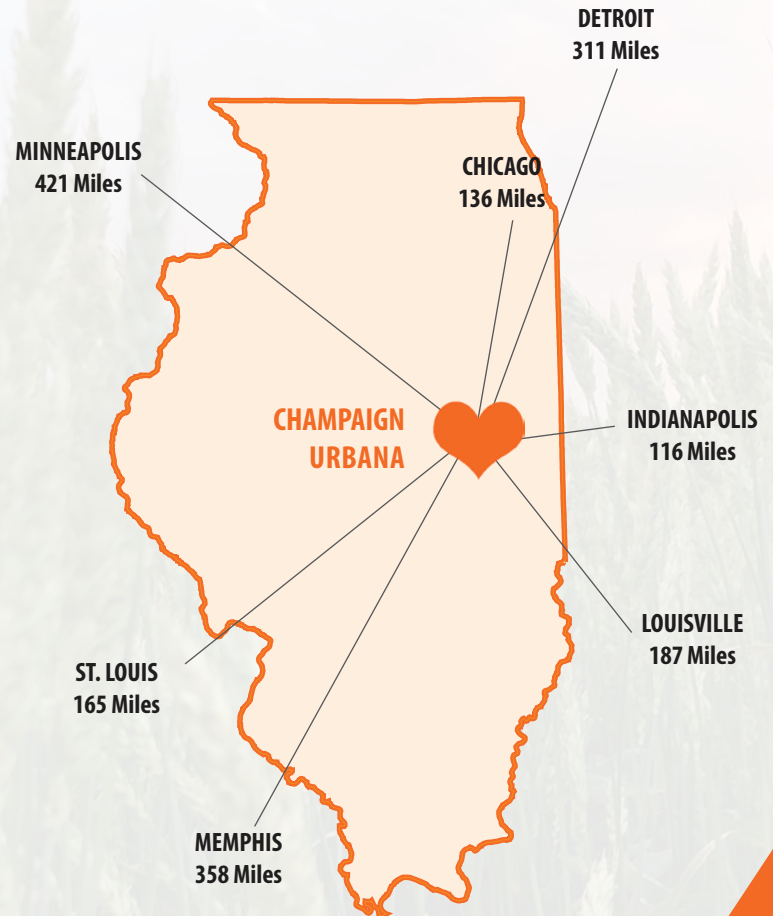


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THE OF THE MIDWEST

We know you're wondering—where exactly is Champaign-Urbana? We like to consider ourselves the heart of the state, located in East Central Illinois, centrally located between Chicago, Indianapolis and St. Louis. With three interstates intersecting in Champaign-Urbana, getting here is easy for everyone.



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