**Illinois Route 66 — A Brief History**

Over the next fifty years, the road carried travelers of all kinds: migrants from the Dust Bowl, military personnel, truckers, farmers, and eventually, vacationers. Entreprenurial people along the road quickly recognized the need for food, lodging, and auto services, and the travel industry was born. Eventually, other amenities, such as motor courts, souvenir shops and roadside attractions sprang up to meet the growing demands of travelers. Illinois was no exception. From the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago to the Ariston Cafe in Litchfield; from the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago to the Apple Valley Motel in Atlanta. By 1977, Interstate 55 had completely bypassed Route 66, and in 1984, the last remaining section of US 66 in Arizona was decommissioned by the federal government in 1985.

Fortunately, the legacy of Route 66 has survived. Today, travelers of the historic highway in Illinois can cruise more than 400 miles of road, including some of the original 1926 concrete segments. Historically significant structures have been preserved to help bring the Route 66 experience to life and many authentic businesses welcome the opportunity to serve today’s Route 66 travelers. The road is alive with great stories of Route 66, and as you start out Classic 66 locations in Illinois, you’ll be able to meet the legends, snap some stories and make new memories. Whether you’re a seasoned roadie or a first-time traveler, there’s plenty to experience, so go on... go get your kicks on Illinois Route 66!
1.) Buckingham Fountain
   Grant Park at Congress Pkwy – Chicago (312-742-3918)
   Located near the corners of Jackson Bvd and Michigan Avenue, Buckingham Fountain serves as the focal area for Grant Park. The fountain is considered a public monument of Chicago and the centerpiece of Grant Park. Thousands of travelers and spectators visit the fountain each year, since it is truly “Where the River Begins.”

2.) Lou Mitchell’s
   585 W Jackson Blvd – Chicago (312-633-5311)
   You’re in for a treat when you visit Lou Mitchell’s, a Chicago landmark that has been serving Chicagoans since 1926. It was originally conceived as a “Palace for the People,” and has expanded into the hottest spot in town. Lou Mitchell’s is a Chicago landmark and Route 66 institution.

3.) Al Capone Gardner
   Mount Carmel Cemetery near Berwyn, IL (331) 903-6940 ext. 308
   This monument honors the famous labor activist, Mother Jones, who wanted to be laid to rest with her “boys.” This monument is a must-see when traveling Route 66.

4.) Old Route 66 North – Lexington
   320 W Il Route 66 – Lexington (217-324-4451)
   This is the premier spot to stop and take a rest. The Cozy Dog Drive-In is on the north side of Old Route 66. A delicious dog has begun to grow, meat by meat by meat. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

5.) Historic Downtown Litchfield
   150 N Historic Old Route 66 – Litchfield (217-324-4451)
   The historic downtown district is a must see when traveling 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

6.) The 2-Cell Jail and Christiansen Memorial
   325 W State St – Ottawa (815-425-2406)
   The 2-cell jail was built in 1926 and is a remnant of the city’s law enforcement for prisoners. It is a memorial to two local citizens - Jim Christiansen, a World War I hero, and his mother, who made a donation to the construction of the jail.

7.) Rialto Theatre
   222 W First St – Bloomfield (815-459-3077)
   Just down the road is perhaps one of the most popular spots-where you can see a movie. The Rialto Theatre in Bloomfield was built in 1926 and is a remnant of the city’s law enforcement for prisoners. It is a memorial to two local citizens - Jim Christiansen, a World War I hero, and his mother, who made a donation to the construction of the jail.

8.) The Gemini Giant
   417 W Waupansie – Dwight (815-686-1223)
   Stop in to take a look at the interactive exhibits. The city is a remnant of the city’s law enforcement for prisoners. It is a memorial to two local citizens - Jim Christiansen, a World War I hero, and his mother, who made a donation to the construction of the jail.

9.) Original Brick Road
   3935 S Sixth St – Springfield (217-525-1992)
   The Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program is being retooled to be NPS approved.

10.) Historic Downtown Dwight
   600 S West St – Dwight (815-584-3077)
   Dwight is a must stop after a long day of driving. This town is a remnant of the city’s law enforcement for prisoners. It is a memorial to two local citizens - Jim Christiansen, a World War I hero, and his mother, who made a donation to the construction of the jail.

11.) The Ariston
   735 S Washington – Lincoln (217-546-8881)
   This is a must see when traveling Route 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

12.) Mink’s Filling Station at Fulgenzi’s Pizza
   1108 S Carpenter St – Chicago (773-281-9000)
   Mink’s Filling Station, a unique example of the earliest gas stations, is now on display from the collection of汽车 enthusiasts. It is a remnant of the city’s law enforcement for prisoners. It is a memorial to two local citizens - Jim Christiansen, a World War I hero, and his mother, who made a donation to the construction of the jail.

13.) The Mill on 66
   1700 Recreation Dr – Springfield (217-546-8881)
   The Mill on 66 is a remnant of the city’s law enforcement for prisoners. It is a memorial to two local citizens - Jim Christiansen, a World War I hero, and his mother, who made a donation to the construction of the jail.

14.) Odell Station
   217 S State St – Bourbonnais (815-937-3467)
   This is a must visit when traveling Route 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

15.) Original Brick Road
   3935 S Sixth St – Springfield (217-525-1992)
   The Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program is being retooled to be NPS approved.

16.) The Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum
   217 W North St – Pontiac (815-434-2306)
   Located near the historic downtown district. The murals, created in the 1970s, are a must-see when traveling 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

17.) The Museum of the Gilded Age
   217 W North St – Pontiac (800-205-2255)
   The focus of the Museum of the Gilded Age is in the history and architectural design of the area. This is a must see when traveling 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

18.) Mackin on Main Street
   217 E Old Route 66 – Pontiac (815-434-2305)
   A unique collection of 19 outdoor murals located in and around the historic downtown district. The murals, created in the 1970s, are a must-see when traveling 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

19.) Wabash Avenue Museum
   320 N Historic Old Route 66 – Litchfield (217-324-4451)
   The Museum is located where the Vincennes canal once stood. The canal was built in 1825 to provide water for the town of Litchfield. The canal was covered in 1853 and the street was later named Old Route 66.

20.) The Cozy Dog Drive In
   2650 S Sixth St – Springfield (217-505-1952)
   The Cozy Dog Drive In is on the corner of the Vincennes canal and has expanded into the hottest spot in town. The canal was covered in 1853 and the street was later named Old Route 66.

21.) Sky View Drive In
   33 North Historic Route 66 – Litchfield (217-324-4510)
   This is a must stop when traveling Route 66. It is a great place to get out and stretch your legs while soaking in the town’s history and checking out architecture at its best, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio and the Tiffany-influenced stained glass windows of the Keyes Library.

22.) Arlington Court
   240 E Old Route 66 – Springfield (217-546-8881)
   Arlington Court is on the north side of Old Route 66. The building was originally constructed in 1870, as a hotel, and has expanded into the hottest spot in town. The canal was covered in 1853 and the street was later named Old Route 66.

23.) Smoky Isles North – Lexington
   30323 South State Route 53 –53 (815-423-6770)
   The Smoky Isles North is on the north side of Old Route 66. The building was originally constructed in 1870, as a hotel, and has expanded into the hottest spot in town. The canal was covered in 1853 and the street was later named Old Route 66.