

Lincoln's Legacy



There's a passion about Lincoln here. You'll feel it the moment you set foot in the awe-inspiring Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield. Go back in time and revisit the president's humble beginnings in Lincoln's New Salem in Petersburg, the Lincoln Log Cabin in Lerna and the Lincoln-Douglas Debate Museum in Charleston.

Day 1

Start your tour of all things Lincoln in Springfield at the amazing [Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum](#). This 200,000-sq.-ft. complex is the largest presidential museum in the nation. Be sure to see Ghosts of the Library in the Holavision® Theater, which features a live storyteller interacting with historical holographic ghosts; and Lincoln's Eyes at the Union Theater, with jolting special effects such as cannon rumblings that transport theatergoers to a Civil War battleground. Nearby, enter the hallowed halls of [the Old State Capitol](#), where Lincoln gave his famed "House Divided" speech and would later lie in state after his assassination. Stop for a sandwich and slice of homemade pie at nearby [Robbie's Restaurant](#). Afterwards, visit the [Lincoln Home](#), where the family lived before heading to the White House. Then pay your respects at the [Lincoln Tomb](#) in Oak Ridge Cemetery. The monumental site is the final resting place of the president and his family. Have dinner at [Fritz's Wagon Wheel](#), a Springfield staple that's been serving up American favorites for 60 years.

Day 2

Head out to [Lincoln's New Salem](#), near Petersburg. Interpreters dressed in frontier garb portray pioneers in this re-created 1800s village of timber shops and houses where a young Lincoln once lived. New Salem's [Theatre in the Park](#) features outdoor plays from mid-June through late August. Next stop is Lincoln, Abe's namesake town. Visit the [Postville Courthouse](#), a replica of the county courthouse where Lincoln argued cases as an attorney, complete with a courtroom and offices furnished as they might have been in the mid-1800s. At the [Lincoln Heritage Museum](#), located on the Lincoln College campus, you'll find a remarkable collection of Lincoln artifacts. Have lunch seated in an authentic 1940s dining car at [McCarty's at The Depot](#) in Lincoln. The [Macon County History Museum and Prairie Village](#) in Decatur is the next stop. This five-acre site features an original log courthouse in which Lincoln actually tried cases, an 1880s railroad depot, a blacksmith's shop and a video presentation that traces Lincoln's history in Macon County. Enjoy dinner in one of the lovely dining rooms or on the seasonal outdoor deck of [The Beach House](#). This upscale restaurant is located in a former 1930s stone beach house in Nelson Park, overlooking Lake Decatur.

Day 3

Begin your day in Vandalia, Illinois' state capitol from 1819-1839. Tour the imposing Federal-style [Vandalia Statehouse](#) where Lincoln spent his first years as a legislator. The building, which once contained all three branches of the state government, has been completely restored and features period furnishings. Stop for lunch in Strasburg (north of Effingham) at [The Timbers Restaurant and Lodge](#), located on 30 acres of woodlands adjacent to scenic Hidden Springs State Park. After lunch, make your way to Lerna (southeast of Mattoon), where you'll discover the [Lincoln Log Cabin](#), former home of the president's father and stepmother. Today the 86-acre historic site includes a working living history farm with a replica of the Lincolns' two-room cabin, costumed interpreters who portray the Lincolns and their neighbors, and a visitor center with exhibit galleries. In nearby Charleston is the [Lincoln-Douglas Debate Museum](#), the only museum in Illinois that retraces the senatorial debates of 1858 between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas (one of the debates actually took place on the spot where the museum now stands). Move on to Danville for more Lincoln history. Tour the [Dr. William H. Fithian Home](#), featuring the second-floor balcony where Lincoln made an impromptu speech in 1858 during his senate campaign,

along with the bed he actually slept in that night. Next door is the [Vermilion County Museum](#), a reproduction of an early Danville courthouse where Lincoln tried more than 200 cases. The museum includes a recreation of Lincoln's Danville law office, with a desk that he actually used.