

# YOUR FALL CHECKLIST

in the greater Champaign-Urbana area

October–December 2024



## MUST-ATTEND EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

1

### PUMPKIN PICKING

Fall means all things pumpkin! Pick your pumpkins and gourds as well as other fall goodies at **Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch**, **The Great Pumpkin Patch** in Arthur, or the **Negangard Pumpkin Patch** in Sidney.

### CU FOLK & ROOTS FESTIVAL

October 3–5 | [folkandroots.org](http://folkandroots.org)

This homegrown festival features dozens of performances from national, regional, and local bands from folk to indie to jazz. Taking over venues across downtown Urbana, you'll catch shows, demonstrations, workshops and more.



2

### URBANA FALL FUSION FESTIVAL

October 5 | [40north.org](http://40north.org)

Pumpkins and gourds take over downtown Urbana for this returning fall festival. Enjoy live music, art, performances, professional pumpkin carving demo, kids' activities, photo ops and more!

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### CRAFT LEAGUE OF CU FINE ART FAIR

November 9–10 | [craftleaguecu.org](http://craftleaguecu.org)

For over 40 years, this art fair has showcased the best of local artists at the Savoy Recreation Center. From jewelry to pottery to wood turning, you'll find something for yourself or for those on your holiday shopping list.



4

### PARADE OF LIGHTS

November 30 | [champaigncenter.com](http://champaigncenter.com)

Holiday cheer is in the air in downtown Champaign for the annual Parade of Lights. Come early for pictures with Santa as well as horse & carriage rides before the parade.

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### HOLIDAY GLOW AT ALLERTON PARK

December 6–31 | [allerton.illinois.edu](http://allerton.illinois.edu)

Be enchanted by the twinkle of holiday lights as they adorn the gardens and estate at Allerton Park & Retreat Center. Enjoy the stroll as you take in the magic of the season.

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### SHOP LOCAL

With dozens of boutiques and locally-owned shops around Champaign-Urbana, there's no need to shop online for your holiday gifts. Challenge yourself this year to shop local. Stay tuned to Experience Champaign-Urbana's website for their annual shop local guide.

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## Did you know?

- Champaign was included in Livability's Top 25 Places to Live in the Midwest, citing amenities such as accessible parks, short commute, affordability, diverse cultures, and a spirit of innovation.
- The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign moved back into the top 10 of PitchBook's Top Ten for Startup Founders. This annual ranking of universities is based on the number of venture capital-backed companies started by alumni.
- The companion animal nutrition program at Illinois is one of the oldest in the nation. Our researchers contributed to some of the first commercial puppy food formulations, and today they're studying everything from weight loss diets to alternative fibers supporting pet microbiomes.
- The University of Illinois Rare Book & Manuscript Library (RBML) contains the largest public university collection of rare books and manuscripts in the United States as part of the public trust. The collections—nearly 500,000 volumes and just over two linear miles of manuscript material—encompass the broad areas of literature, history, art, theology, philosophy, technology, and the natural sciences.
- Each year, nearly 12 million rides are handled by the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD). To put this in perspective, fellow Midwest cities Nashville and Indianapolis (both substantially bigger) provide approximately 10 million rides each year.

Want more ideas for events & activities?  
[experiencecu.org](http://experiencecu.org)

Learn more about the community+ search for jobs:  
[makeitcu.com](http://makeitcu.com)

# TOP IDEAS FOR FOOD & DRINK

## The Space

1 E. Main St., Champaign | [thespacecu.com](http://thespacecu.com)

With an all new menu heading into fall, this hot spot known for the burgers is branching out into an innovative farm-to-table menu.

## La Mixteca Urbana

510 N. Cunningham Ave., Urbana | [lamixtecarestaurantil.com](http://lamixtecarestaurantil.com)

Just outside of downtown Urbana, this family-owned Mexican spot creates crave-worthy dishes like their birria rolls or Mixteca Quesadilla.

## Wood N' Hog Barbecue

101 W. University Ave., Urbana | [woodnhogbarbecue.com](http://woodnhogbarbecue.com)

Simply driving past this Urbana spot gets the taste buds tingling as you smell the savory scents of their smoker, preparing a full-day of delicious barbecue to enjoy at home.

## Sushi Kame

39 E. Green St., Champaign | [sushi-kame.com](http://sushi-kame.com)

This longtime favorite treats you to fresh sushi flavors through their popular poke bowls or affordable lunch specials.

## Flying Machine Avionics

202 S. First St., Champaign | [instagram.com/avionicsfmc](http://instagram.com/avionicsfmc)

With exclusive use of Page Roasting Company's Espresso blend, this coffee shop on the Boneyard Basin will wake you up in the morning with their lattes and delicious pastries.

## Cast Iron Pub

125 W. Sale St., Tuscola | [castironpub.biz](http://castironpub.biz)

Chef Kenny Hogue brings his culinary expertise from Michelin star restaurants across the country back to his hometown of Tuscola. Discover the elevated flavors in this small town.

## Caprae at Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery

4410 N. Lincoln Ave., Champaign | [prairiefruits.com](http://prairiefruits.com)

Discover farm fresh flavors at Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery's new on-site restaurant, Caprae. Enjoy a weekend brunch or all day service on Fridays and Saturdays while you also visit with the goats!

## Selfie Spots

Check out these spots, or any on our fall checklist, and share on Instagram with #experiencecu!



Clockwise from top left

1. The Great Pumpkin Patch
2. Hardy's Reindeer Ranch
3. The Power of Black Women Mural at 511 E. White St., Champaign (artist: *Georgie Nakima*)
4. Winter Nights at Prairie Farm

## Stay Active & Involved

Fall is the ideal time to get outside to enjoy the colors and crisp air. Also, check out the many volunteer opportunities throughout the community this season.

### Outdoor Activities

#### Meadowbrook Park

2808 S. Race St., Urbana | [urbanaparks.org](http://urbanaparks.org)

Fall colors pop against the sculpture that rises from the prairie. Take a walk at this Urbana staple.

#### Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve

109 S. Lake of the Woods Rd., Mahomet | [ccfpd.org](http://ccfpd.org)

Get a birds-eye view of fall foliage when you climb the Hi-Tower Carillon, where you'll see acres of trees in all their autumn glory.

#### Middle Fork River Forest Preserve

3485 County Rd. 2700 E., Penfield | [ccfpd.org](http://ccfpd.org)

Don't miss an amazing view of the stars at Illinois' only International Dark Sky Park. Reserve your camping space!

### Volunteer Opportunities

#### Area Rotary Clubs

Join one of the many local rotary clubs to network and provide service to the community. See a list at [rotarydistrict6490.org](http://rotarydistrict6490.org).

#### United Way of Champaign County

Get a list of community organizations needing volunteers at [uwayhelps.org/volunteer](http://uwayhelps.org/volunteer)

### PLUG INTO

Job Board + Community Job Application + Chambana Welcome Crew + New to CU Mixers + Chambana Proud Podcast + Chambana Proud Shop  
[makeitcu.com](http://makeitcu.com)