

YOUR SPRING CHECKLIST

in the greater Champaign-Urbana area

April–June 2026



MUST-ATTEND EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



1

ENGINEERING OPEN HOUSE

April 10-11 | eohillinois.org

Discover the latest feats in engineering at this family-friendly, student-run event on campus. Don't miss the popular Tesla coil concert for an awe-inspiring display!

BONEYARD ARTS FESTIVAL

April 10-12 | boneyardartsfestival.org

Experience Champaign County's vibrant creativity at Boneyard, a three-day celebration featuring 100+ local artists and venues. Explore, shop, and be inspired as art takes over our community's businesses, organizations, and public spaces.



2

CHRISTIE CLINIC ILLINOIS RACE WEEKEND

April 23-25 | illinoismarathon.com

Need more cardio? Choose your race: 1 mile on Thursday; 5K on Friday; or the half-marathon, wheelchair half-marathon, full marathon, 10K, and youth run on Saturday. And if you'd rather skip the sweat? Volunteer or help cheer on the participants!



3



4

CHAMPAIGN AGAVE FEST

April 30-May 5 | champaignagavefest.com

A succulent celebration! This first-year fiesta will bring fans, restaurants, bars, retailers, and cultural organizations together with food and cocktail specials; tequila and Mezcal tastings; events with distillers and distributors; and fun, educational programming.



5

FARMERS MARKET SEASON KICK-OFF

May | urbanamarket.org | landconnection.org

Farmers market season is finally here! Gather your totes and head to Urbana's Market at the Square, opening May 2, and Champaign's Land Connection Market, starting May 12, for fresh greens, sweet berries, baked goods, locally raised meats, and vibrant flowers.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

Returns May 29 | 40north.org

Downtown Champaign comes alive every Friday this summer with this street-side performance series. Dance and dine to an eclectic mix of rock, hip-hop, bluegrass, jazz, R&B, indie, and more, along with free kids' activities.



6



Did you know?

- West Side Park in Champaign was voted **Illinois' Favorite "Green Getaway"** in a poll of **3,006 respondents** conducted by A Mission for Michael, a mental health organization based in California. Participants were asked to name the urban parks, gardens, riverwalks, and public green spaces that help them feel **calm, grounded, and able to switch off**. Just steps from downtown, West Side Park pairs **expansive lawns** with **shaded walkways** and **mature trees**. The **central fountain** and open gathering areas naturally draw families and neighbors, while the park's open turf and tucked-away corners make it just as easy to spread out on the grass, read a book, or simply take a breath.
- Champaign-Urbana has been recognized as a **Dementia Friendly Community** by Dementia Friendly America—an honor that took more than a year of local work and now places C-U among nearly 50 designated communities statewide. Led by Emily Harmon, an educator with Illinois Extension, the effort already includes **20+ businesses and nonprofits** trained to better support customers who may be living with dementia.
- The award-winning **CU Adventures in Time & Space** just upped their street-cred. Their newest escape room, Forest of Fables, took home an award from Top Escape Rooms Project (TERPECA) as **#2 escape room in the US** and **#37 in the world**. Book your adventure and find out why they took home this prestigious award!



- If you're looking for your next career move, the **Champaign-Urbana job board** connects you with opportunities across all industries in Champaign County. Set up alerts and get job openings delivered straight to your inbox. Explore now at yourewelcomecu.com/jobs.

Want more ideas for events & activities?
experiencecu.org

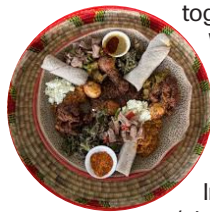
Learn more about the community + search for jobs:
makeitcu.com

TOP IDEAS FOR FOOD & DRINK

Blue Ethiopian Cuisine & Café

117 N. Walnut St., Champaign
blue-ethiopian.com

This family-owned restaurant in downtown Champaign is all about rich, slow-cooked stews, warm spices, and sharing food. It's all scooped up with injera, a spongy flatbread made from teff, an ancient grain. Oh, and the traditional Ethiopian coffee is a standout!



Bunny's Tavern

119 N. Water St., Urbana
bunnystavern.com

Patio season means an evening at Bunny's. Go for the burgers, and don't skip their world-famous loaded tots, spicy Wisconsin cheese curds, and fried pickles. Afterward, catch outdoor live music next door at the Rose Bowl Tavern.

Caprae at Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery

4410 N. Lincoln Ave., Champaign
prairiefruits.com/caprae-restaurant

Every meal at Caprae is farm-to-table in the truest sense: ultra-fresh produce, meats, and dairy sourced from their own fields and trusted neighboring farms, all brought together in dishes to celebrate the season.

While you're there, say hi to the baby goats!

KayBee Community Café

102 E. Lafayette St., Monticello
kaybeecafe.com

Inspired by Filipino values of Kapwa (shared identity) and Bayanihan (community support), KayBee is tucked inside a beautifully restored historic church and serves thoughtfully crafted coffee and locally made treats.

Kyle's Corner

501 Commerce Dr., Savoy
kylescorner.toast.site

Newly opened Kyle's Corner, with a Greek-inspired menu (Greek nacho bowls, anyone?),

is a perfect spot for families. The best part? It serves breakfast, lunch, AND dinner, so all meals are covered!



Maize on Neil

1305 S. Neil St., Champaign
maizemexicangrill.com/south-neil

Experience the authentic flavors of Mexico City, Michoacán, and Guerrero, complemented by organic, handmade, locally sourced corn tortillas and mouthwatering sauces, from vibrant green to smoky chipotle.

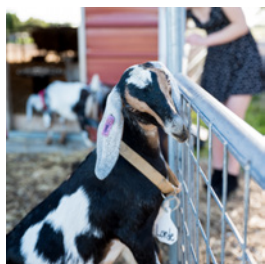
Northern Cuisine

404 E. Green St., Champaign
northerncuisineuiuc.com

Home of one of New York Times' best dishes of 2025—wok-fried crispy pork intestines—Northern Cuisine in Campustown is not to be missed! You really can't go wrong with any dish, but the mapo tofu and julienned potato with long pepper are particular highlights.

Selfie Spots

Check out these spots and share on Instagram with #experiencecu!



Clockwise from top left

1. Cherry blossoms at Japan House, Urbana
2. Peony garden at Allerton Park & Retreat Center, Monticello
3. Roger Ebert statue at the Virginia Theatre, Champaign
4. Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery, Champaign

Stay Active & Involved

Recreational Activities

Hike at Heron View Forest Preserve

399 County Rd 2650 N, Mahomet | champaignforests.org

Blue herons and bluebells await at Heron View, a 103-acre escape featuring oak-hickory woods, bottomland forest, and peaceful views of the Sangamon River. Perfect for spring.

Swim at Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center

1401 N. Broadway Ave., Urbana | urbanaparks.org

Come Memorial Day, wrangle the whole family and grab your friends to cool down. With sand areas, wet decks, a climbing wall, water slides, and lap lanes, it's a must once school's out!

Volunteer Opportunities

Earth Day Invasive Removal, Lake of the Woods

April 22 | champaignforests.org

Make an impact on Earth Day! Join Forest Preserve staff to protect natural places and connect with others by helping remove invasive plants. No experience necessary, and all ages are welcome!

Christie Clinic Illinois Race Weekend

April 23-25 | illinoismarathon.com

No race bib? No problem! You can still be right in the middle of the action—sign up as a volunteer to support this joyful event!

PLUG INTO

Job Board + Community Job Application + Chambana Welcome Crew + New to CU Mixers + Chambana Proud Podcast + Chambana Proud Shop

makeitcu.com