

YOUR SUMMER CHECKLIST

in the greater Champaign-Urbana area

July–September 2023

MAKE IT
CHAMPAIGN
URBANA



MUST-ATTEND EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



OUTDOOR MUSIC

Between Friday Night Live in downtown Champaign, concerts in our area parks and preserves, Streetfest & Toast to Taylor Street, and live music under the tent at the Rose Bowl Tavern, there's something to enjoy every day.

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

You'll find fireworks and parades from Champaign to Rantoul to Mahomet and Monticello from July 1–4. Make your plans to celebrate!



SHOP AN ART FAIR

August 5 & September 16 | 40north.org

Discover local artists at two upcoming art fairs—Crystal Lake Park Art Fair in Urbana in August, and West Side Arts returns for year two in downtown Champaign in September.

FIGHTING ILLINI FOOTBALL

September–November | fightingillini.com

Back in Memorial Stadium under head coach Bret Bielema, Fighting Illini football returns September 2. Get your orange & blue gear, pack for a tailgate, and get ready to cheer for the Illini!



ELLNORA: THE GUITAR FESTIVAL

September 8–9 | krannertcenter.com

This biennial festival returns for the 10th time, celebrating all things guitar. Check out their full line-up featuring Emmylou Harris and Ani DiFranco, alongside countless other performers.



PYGMALION

September 21–23 | thisispygmalion.com

Bringing together music, literature, comedy, tech, and makers, Pygmalion is the event to check out on campus and throughout Urbana this fall.



CU PRIDE FEST

September 29–October 1 | unitingpride.org

Illinois' largest Pride celebration south of Chicago returns to downtown Urbana for a parade, drag extravaganza, and so much more!



Did you know?

- The City of Urbana was recently awarded a Gold Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists.
- Willard Airport upgraded all airplanes to Chicago and Dallas-Ft. Worth to Embraer 175, allowing for 76 passengers, including the option for first class.



- Illini Pride is the University of Illinois' largest Registered Student Organization (RS) with 3,000 members across 13 groups that support Illini teams. This fall, watch the Block I at football games and the Spike Squad at Illini Volleyball. Their membership supports several philanthropic organizations in the area.
- The new Community Job Application provides a seamless portal for new and current residents to get connected to jobs and the Champaign Welcome Crew, our community brand ambassador program. Through three short steps, you can immediately get connected to the Champaign-Urbana area. **Check it out at makeitcu.com.**
- The weekly Champaign Proud Podcast, streamed on all major platforms, shares the stories of the people, places and events that make our community brilliant. Tune in each week to learn what to do in your downtime, and to get inspired by the many good things happening in C-U.

Want more ideas for events & activities?
experiencecu.org

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

TOP IDEAS FOR FOOD & DRINK

Sooie Bros Bar B Que Joint

103 W. Kirby Ave., Champaign | facebook.com/sooiebrosbbajoint

The minds behind CBPB Popcorn Shop bring you wood-smoked barbecue, complete with all the sides you're craving.

The Space

1 E. Main St., Champaign | thespacecu.com

The Weird Meat Boyz, known for their hot sauces, now offer a full menu of smash burgers, souped up hot dogs, and delicious shareable items like oysters and pickled eggs.

Sidney Dairy Barn

311 E. Main St., Sidney | sidneydairybarn.com

East of Urbana, you'll find this popular summer spot. Their homemade ice cream is perfect for these hot summer days.

Forage Kitchen

503 E. Green St., Champaign | eatforage.com

There's no better time to eat on campus than summer! Check out Forage Kitchen for seasonal salads and grain bowls, perfect to keep you cool and healthy.

The Wheelhouse

109 N. Main St., St. Joseph | atthewheelhouse.com

This farm-to-fork spot is right off the Kickapoo Rail Trail. Make a stop for their seasonal menu, taking advantage of all summer's bounty.

Shawarma Joint

102 E. University Ave., Urbana | shawarma-joint.com

Get your fill of Middle Eastern flavors at this popular spot. The shawarma is a must have, or get their vegetarian plate with hummus, falafel, and more.

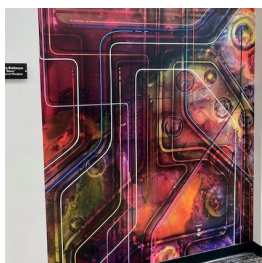
El Rancho Grande II

505 Commerce Dr., Savoy | elranchograndeii.com

Make it Taco Tuesday (or every day!) at this tasty Mexican spot in Savoy. Their vast burrito selection will give you reason to go back time and again.

Selfie Spots

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



Clockwise from top left

1. Art on the Fly at Willard Airport
2. Block I in Grange Grove
3. Crystal Lake Park Aquatic Center
4. Clearview Farms when sunflowers bloom

Stay Active & Involved

While the weather is warm, there are plenty of ways to stay cool and active. Also, check out the many volunteer opportunities throughout the community this summer.

Outdoor Activities

Allerton Park & Retreat Center

515 Old Timber Rd., Monticello | allerton.illinois.edu
Stroll the fourteen formal gardens and get inspired by what's possible. Cool down as you hike the trails along the Sangamon River.

Lake Shelbyville

925 IL-32, Sullivan | sullivanmarina.com
An hour south of C-U, you can boat on the vast Lake Shelbyville, or kayak on their kayak trail. Check out their beach for a day in the sun!

Sholem Aquatic Center

2205 Sangamon Dr., Champaign | champaignparks.com
Splash the day away in this zero-depth pool, or go around the lazy river to stay cool!

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.

United Way of Champaign County

Get a list of community organizations needing volunteers at 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