

YOUR SUMMER CHECKLIST

in the greater Champaign-Urbana area

July–September 2025

MAKE IT
CHAMPAIGN
URBANA



MUST-ATTEND EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



1

JULY 4 CELEBRATIONS

From festive parades to dazzling fireworks, communities across the Champaign-Urbana area—including Rantoul, Paxton, Mahomet, and Monticello—are gearing up for a fun-filled Fourth of July weekend. Plan your perfect summer celebration!



2

GOATS & GROOVES LIVE MUSIC SERIES

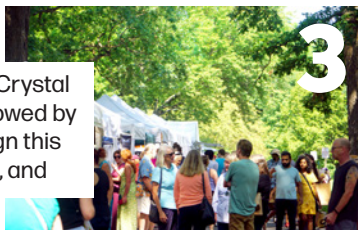
Wednesdays, 5–8 pm | prairiefruits.com

Live music, craft cocktails, and golden-hour views—what more could you ask for? Head to Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery every Wednesday evening for live, laid-back summer tunes under the pavilion, delicious drinks, farm-fresh snacks, and of course, adorable goats.

ART FAIRS

August 2–3; September 14 | 40north.org

Celebrate creativity at two must-visit art fairs: the Crystal Lake Park Art Fair returns to Urbana in August, followed by the West Side Arts Festival in downtown Champaign this September. Discover original art, meet the makers, and take something special home.

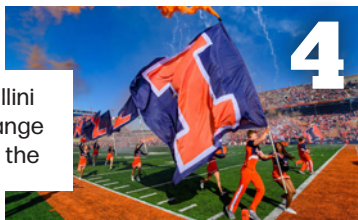


3

FIGHTING ILLINI FOOTBALL

August–November | fightingillini.com

Get ready for another season of Big Ten action as Illini football returns to Memorial Stadium! Don your orange and blue, plan the perfect tailgate, and cheer when the team kicks off on August 29.



4



5

ELLNORA: THE GUITAR FESTIVAL

September 4–6 | krannertcenter.com

Ellnora returns to Krannert Center for the Performing Arts for its 11th celebration of all things guitar. This year's lineup features Rosanne Cash, Jeff Tweedy, and a stunning array of global talent. Don't miss your chance to experience world-class music in one unforgettable weekend.



6

PYGMALION

September 18–20 | thisispygmalion.com

Celebrating 20 years, this annual event offers up a mash-up of music, tech, literature, comedy, and more across a variety of Urbana venues during one epic weekend.



Did you know?

- Urbana has once again been **recognized as a Tree City USA**—a title proudly held every year since the program began in 1976 (one of only 16 cities nationwide to earn this distinction). Urbana meets high standards in urban forestry, including a dedicated tree board, a local tree ordinance, annual Arbor Day celebrations, and investing in the care of its urban canopy. It's just one more way Urbana shows its love for green spaces.
- Speaking of green spaces, you can explore some of the **most vibrant natural spaces in our community** by checking out our newest experience pass, **CU on the Trail**. With 55 featured trails, this pass gives you the chance to hike the scenic bluffs of Lake Shelbyville, marvel at the art-lined paths of Meadowbrook Park, and even stargaze at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve—Illinois' only International Dark Sky Park! Get started at experiencecu.org/experience-passes. You can even take home this fun tee designed by local artist, David Michael Moore!
- Champaign's new **Downtown Plaza** is officially open for the summer! Come down every day throughout the summer to enjoy programming on the stage from **Rhythm & Roots** on Tuesdays during the Champaign Farmer's Market, **Sound Bites** on Thursdays over the lunch hours, and **Friday Night Live** on Friday evenings. Don't miss **The Beat** on Market Street on the first and last Saturdays of the month featuring DJs and live music playing until late in the night.
- Looking for your next career move? Check out the **Champaign-Urbana Area job board**! It connects you with opportunities across all industries in the area. Set up alerts and get job openings delivered straight to your inbox. Explore now: makeitcu.org/jobs.



Want more ideas for events & activities?
experiencecu.org

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

TOP IDEAS FOR FOOD & DRINK

Maize Mexican Grill

100 N. Chestnut St., Champaign
maizemexicangrill.com

Nothing says summer like tacos and aguas frescas on the patio. Head to Maize for bold, authentic Mexican flavors—perfect for a casual lunch or lively evening downtown.

Art Mart

1705 S. Prospect Ave., Champaign
shopartmart.com

From fresh pastries and curated wines to cheese boards and gourmet snacks, Art Mart is a local gem. Grab something delicious and head to a nearby park for the perfect summer picnic.

Martinelli's Market

500C N. Market St., Champaign
martinellismarketchampaign.com

Martinelli's is ideal for summer grazing—think deli sandwiches, specialty groceries, and freshly baked cookies. Order lunch to go and enjoy it at the nearby Neil St. Plaza.



Cloud Mountain Kombucha

208 W. Griggs St., Urbana
cloudbountainkombucha.com

This beloved kombucha brewery just moved to a bigger location! Using ingredients from their own farm and local partners, they craft inspired, seasonal flavors. Enjoy a pint—or flight—on the patio; it's the perfect sip for a hot day.

El Oasis

510 N. Cunningham Ave., Urbana | eloasisil.com

Beat the heat with tropical ice cream, fruit-packed popsicles, and over-the-top sundaes at this colorful, family-owned treat shop. A sweet, ideal summer stop after a long afternoon at the pool.

Flavor Fusion

108 N. Garrard St., Rantoul

facebook.com/flavorfc

Bold flavors and fresh twists on smash burgers welcome you at Flavor Fusion in downtown Rantoul. Highlights include their famous Street Burger, Cuban Burger, and the Mar Y Tierra—topped with shrimp!

Market Street Grill

125 S. Market St., Paxton
marketstreetgrillpaxton.com

Enjoy the patio vibes in Paxton, just 30 minutes north of Champaign. Market Street Grill offers big flavor with tasty flatbreads, burgers, double-fried wings—and their unforgettable Paxton Punch.

Alto Vineyards

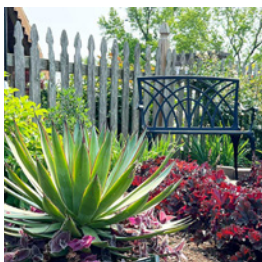
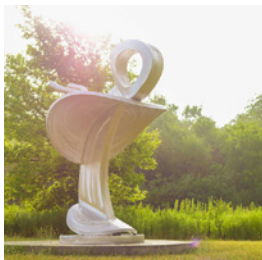
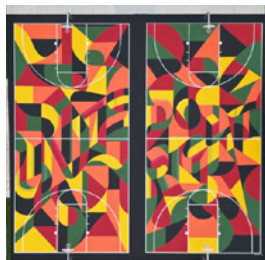
4210 N. Duncan Rd., Champaign
altovineyards.net

Sourcing grapes from Southern Illinois, Alto brings a vineyard vibe right to the north edge of Champaign. Sip Chardonnay or Rosé on the spacious patio while enjoying live music or yoga. Their Music Among the Vines series is a local favorite, pairing wine flights with community spirit.



Selfie Spots

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



Clockwise from top left

1. Douglass Park basketball courts mural by Ryan Adams, Champaign
2. Magic by John Adduci at Meadowbrook Park, Urbana
3. Idea Garden at the Arboretum, Urbana
4. Pointless by Gail Simpson at Neil St. Plaza, Champaign

Stay Active & Involved

Recreational Activities

CU Triathlon | July 20 | bit.ly/cutriathlon

Swim, bike, and run to victory at the CU Triathlon, whether you're a first-timer or seasoned athlete! Hosted by the Champaign Park District and the Stephens Family YMCA.

Dark Sky Trail | champaignforests.org

Calling all stargazers! Enjoy the wonder of the night sky at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, where this mile-long, ADA-compliant trail offers a magical, celestial experience.

Crystal Lake Family Aquatic Center | urbanaparks.org

Splash your summer away with slides, lap lanes, and lounging. Open Memorial Day through Labor Day, it's a great place to chill out, play hard, and make the most of sunny days.

Volunteer Opportunities

Area Rotary Clubs

Local Rotary Clubs offer a great way to build community, develop friendships, and serve others. See a full list at rotarydistrict6490.org.

United Way of Champaign County

United Way connects volunteers with local organizations that need a hand. Explore opportunities 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