

# illinois

Great Rivers Country



## meeting of the great rivers

**From the local experts at the Great Rivers  
& Routes Tourism Bureau**

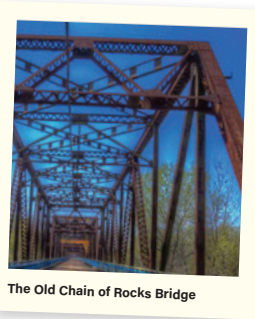
Meet America's mighty rivers along the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway in southwest Illinois. This 33-mile stretch of roadway is the only place in the country where the mighty Mississippi comes together with the historic Missouri and Illinois rivers. And it happens to also be one of the most scenic road trips around, offering year-round jaw dropping views from the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge to the newly opened Grafton SkyTour.



**2 days**  
**74mi**  
(Approx)

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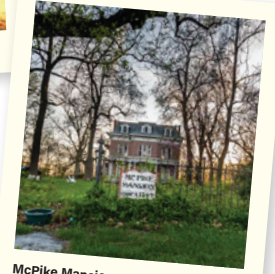
Great Rivers Country



The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge



Lewis & Clark State Historic Site



McPike Mansion



Beall Mansion Bed & Breakfast



Grafton Sky Tour



Grafton Wine Vineyards



Aerie's Riverview Winery

Many attractions have reopened with limited capacity or different operating hours. Inquire with attractions ahead of time for up-to-date travel policies and health and safety information.

## 📍 Day 1 Alton, Hartford & Madison County

Discover the energy and spirit of the Mississippi River from **The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge** in Madison County on Route 3, just before hopping on the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway. The bridge was once the Route 66 link between Illinois and Missouri across the historic river. Take a walk on this now pedestrian-friendly span and enjoy a new river experience. The bridge itself has a quirky history with its 30 degree bend halfway across.

The Byway itself begins in Hartford which is also home to the **Lewis & Clark State Historic Site**. Early American explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark set up camp at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers as they prepared for their momentous journey to map the western United States. Explore the interpretive center and surrounding grounds for a look back in time.

More river experiences await in Alton with the **National Great Rivers Museum** and **Melvin Price Locks & Dam**. The museum highlights the impact of rivers on nearby regions. The locks and dam is the newest and most technologically advanced system on the Mississippi River today.

Alton itself is a classic river city. Perched on the banks of the Mississippi River, the city stretches into the surrounding bluffs with restaurants and shops offering startling views of the river. Alton once rivaled nearby St. Louis in size due to its thriving river commerce and later evolved into an industrial town. Today, the downtown shopping district offers a wide range of retail delights from artistic hand-thrown

pottery to antiques, clothing shops and more. Considered "One of the Most Haunted Small Towns in America," haunted tours showcase the historic **Mysterious Mineral Springs Mall**, the **McPike Mansion** and more. Alton also hosted Abraham Lincoln on more than one visit before he became the nation's 16th president and was the **site of the last Lincoln-Douglas Debate** in 1868.

Secret recipe fried chicken, house-made toasted ravioli and more await at **Castelli's Restaurant** at 255. For more than 75 years, the Castelli family has been serving up regional favorites.

Pamper yourself with a stay at the elegant and historic **Beall Mansion Bed & Breakfast Inn**. Treat yourself to the mansion's famous Chocolate Bar and enjoy a glass of champagne upon arrival. In-room spa services are also available.

## 📍 Day 2 Elsah, Dow, Grafton

Explore the quaint and historic **Village of Elsah** nestled into the bluffs on the Byway. The entire village is on the National Register of Historic Places. Take a stroll along the narrow streets, stop by the whimsical **Elsah General Store** to pick up vintage candy or a bottled soda. The nearby **Village of Elsah Museum** offers a glimpse into daily life along the Mississippi River in the 1800's.

Tucked away in the woods near Elsah, **TreeHouse Wildlife Center** is the ideal spot to discover native wildlife of the region. The center rehabilitates injured and sick wild animals and releases them back into the wild. American Bald Eagles, bobcats, red foxes and more are on site.

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drive  
on

The journey continues on the next page

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The confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois rivers is also home to the riverfront community of Grafton. Outlaw Jesse James reportedly walked the streets of Grafton which is now home to riverfront dining, lodging and bluff top scenic views. The newly opened **Grafton SkyTour** takes visitors from Grafton's Main Street 300 feet high to the river bluffs on a leisurely open air chair lift or gondola ride. At the top of the bluff sits **Aerie's Resort**, home to **Aeries Riverview Winery** and **Grafton Zipline Adventures**. Zip through the tree canopy of the bluffs on an adventure that includes rope bridges, trails and a surprise ending.

Channel your inner cajun at the **Grafton Oyster Bar** for breakfast, lunch or dinner. From alligator sausage and shrimp cheesecake appetizers to salads, soups,

seafood entrees, and, of course, oysters, the floating riverfront restaurant serves up a delightful dining experience.

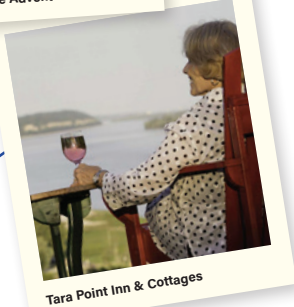
Enjoy a sip of locally crafted wine at **Grafton Winery & Brewhaus's** riverfront location or at **Grafton Winery the Vineyards**. Relax beside the river with a cold drink and the signature Dock Salsa at **The Loading Dock**.

Stretch your legs at **Pere Marquette State Park**, one of the largest state parks in Illinois. Miles of trails ranging from beginner to advanced weave through the park offering scenic views and glimpses of wildlife.

Relax at **Tara Point Inn & Cottages** and raise a glass to the spectacular views of the Mississippi and Illinois rivers at the end of your day.



Grafton Zipline Adventures



Tara Point Inn & Cottages



Pere Marquette State Park



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