

YOUR FALL CHECKLIST

in the greater Champaign-Urbana area

October–December 2023

MAKE IT
CHAMPAIGN
URBANA



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 12–14 | 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

ILLINOIS HOMECOMING

October 15–21 | homecoming.illinois.edu

Get ready for a week full of celebrations like a 5K, Global Talent Show, Homecoming Parade, and of course the Illini Football game vs. Wisconsin. Head to downtown Champaign after the game for live music and kids activities to conclude the week.



3

CRAFT LEAGUE OF CU FINE ART FAIR

November 4–5 | craftleaguecu.org

Celebrating 40 years, the art fair showcases 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 25 | 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. Stay after for the lighting of the tree in One Main Plaza!



5

6

HOLIDAY GLOW AT ALLERTON PARK

December 2–January 13 | allerton.illinois.edu

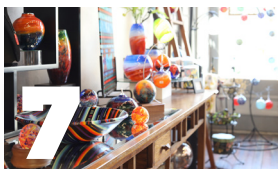
Be enchanted by the twinkle of holiday lights as they adorn the gardens and estate at Allerton Park & Retreat Center. Enjoy the stroll as you take in the magic of the season.



7

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.



Did you know?

- Over 70 Asian restaurants can be found in the Champaign-Urbana area. Explore them all and win prizes with the new CU in Asia Food passport! With cuisine from across the continent, there are so many ways to try something new. Hit just 5 spots and you'll be entered to win a \$100 gift card to one of the restaurants and a Champaign Proud T-shirt!
- The University of Illinois named #9 on Forbes' Top 25 Public Colleges. In 2023, the University has a record high freshmen class with 8,325 students, with 74% in-state residents, 1,087 international students from 49 countries. Total enrollment is 56,403 for this academic year.
- The Champaign-Urbana Job Board features postings from over 170 local employers. Updated daily, this resource simplifies your job search. Create alerts based on your interests and needs, which can be delivered directly to your inbox. Learn more at makeitcu.com.
- Just south of Champaign-Urbana is Illinois' largest Amish population in the communities of Tuscola, Arcola, Arthur, and Sullivan. Fall is an ideal time to visit this area to witness a different pace in life, while perusing their fine craftsmanship and delighting in their made-from-scratch dishes.
- University of Illinois graduate student Charles Getz, introduced whipped cream in a can to the world. The next time you sit down to strawberry shortcake or a piping cup of hot chocolate topped with whipped cream, tip your hat to Champaign-Urbana.

Want more ideas for events & activities?
experiencecu.org

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

TOP IDEAS FOR FOOD & DRINK

Encanto

115 W. Main St., Urbana | facebook.com/profile.php?id=61550193136075
With vivid murals from local artists, this new Mexican and Peruvian spot in downtown Urbana will be a treat for your eyes and your tastebuds!

Smith Burger Co. at Collective Pour

340 N. Neil St., Champaign | smithburgerco.com
Joining forces with Collective Pour, you can now get top-rated smashburgers with a wide selection of craft beer. Don't miss their deep-fried hotdogs with all the toppings!

Dubai Grill

701 S. Gregory St., Urbana | dubai-grill.com
This Middle Eastern joint on campus lets you create your own flavors when building your shawarma, falafel, and gyros with toppings like hummus, babaganog, Fattoush salad, pickled turnips, and much more.

Gallery Art Bar

119 W. Main St., Urbana | instagram.com/galleryartbar.urbana/
New in downtown Urbana, this bar features digital décor, with changing light installations setting the mood. Their creative space extends to their drinks, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, creating a perfect new happy hour space.



Lucky Moon Pies

401 E. Oak St., Mahomet | luckymoonpies.com
Tis the season for savory and sweet pies! Save yourself time and pick up these homemade delights to enjoy for yourself, or to impress your guests. Their rotating flavors will keep you coming back for more!

Pekara Bakery & Bistro

811 W. Springfield Ave., Champaign | pekarabistro.com
Breakfast or lunch, this neighborhood bistro will serve you up everything from their daily quiche to toasts and hearty bowls of soup. Pick up Central Illinois Bakehouse bread while there and don't forget one of their tasty pastries for dessert!

Cloud Mountain Kombucha

300 S. Broadway Ave., Urbana | cloudmountainkombucha.com
Located in Lincoln Square Mall, this small-batch kombucha brewery utilizes local ingredients from their own farm alongside other local farms to create inspired, and seasonal flavors. Fall in love with this fermented beverage, also found in shops around the area.

Selfie Spots

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



Clockwise from top left

1. Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch
2. Hardy's Reindeer Ranch
3. Jose Vasquez Mural at Champaign-Urbana Public Health District
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
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
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
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.

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