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NEVER MISS AN ISSUE

The town that time forgot

Take a few steps down Main Street in Galena, Illinois, and you'll feel like you've just entered a time warp. The quaint town of 3,600, located 165 miles northwest of Chicago, looks much the same today as it did in its 1850s heyday. Visitors are drawn to Galena's nostalgic Victorian charm and the rural scenery of the surrounding hills so uncharacteristic of the famously flat Prairie State. Galena also lures travelers with over 100 gift and specialty shops, antiques stores and artists' galleries.

An ideal place to start a Galena visit is the handsome 1858 mansion on Bench Street, which houses the **Galeana/Jo Daviess County Historical Society and Museum** (815-777-9129). Exhibits provide an overview of the town's history, beginning with its origins as a lead-mining settlement in the early 1800s, to its prominence as a prosperous river port in the 1850s and its present-day role as well-preserved time capsule for a long-ago era.

Next, take a self-guided tour of the renovated **DeSoto House Hotel** (800-443-6562) on Main Street. Billed as the largest hotel in the West when it opened in the mid-1850s, the building conjures up a time when northwestern Illinois was a vital part of the Western frontier. During the Civil War, Galena sent nine generals, including Ulysses S. Grant, to fight for the Union cause, and the **Old Market House State Historic Site** (815-777-2570) on Commerce Street offers a fine display of Civil War uniforms and other period clothing. For an intimate look at the post-Civil War era, don't miss a tour of the **Ulysses S. Grant Home State Historic Site** (815-777-0248) on Bouthillier Street. The house was presented to the Civil War hero upon his return to Galena in 1865.

With 85 percent of its buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Galena is a treasure trove of 19th-century American architecture: Italianate, Federal, Greek and Gothic

Revival and Queen Anne styles are all represented. Lovingly restored commercial and residential buildings line Main Street and climb up the town's steep hillsides. Houses open to the public include Galena's oldest, the **Dowling House** (815-777-1250), at Diagonal and Main streets, built in 1826 as a residence and trading post for miners, and the town's largest mansion, the **Belvedere House and Gardens** (815-777-0747), on Park Avenue, built in 1857 for a Galena steamship owner and ambassador to Belgium. Don't miss the famous green drapes from the movie *Gone With the Wind* on display there.

Galena eateries please a wide range of palates. The gracious **Generals' Restaurant** (815-777-0090), in the DeSoto House Hotel offers steaks and seafood, as well as specialties like baked Mediterranean stuffed chicken. Galena's oldest restaurant, the reliable **Log Cabin** (815-777-0393), is favored by locals and visitors, thanks to its casual atmosphere and diverse Greek and American menu. Try **Happy Joe's Pizza and Ice Cream Parlor** (815-777-1830) for fun family dining or **Bubba's** (815-777-8030) for New Orleans-style seafood specialties, such as jambalaya, coconut shrimp and crab cakes.

Lodging in Galena ranges from historic bed-and-breakfasts to lavish resorts. **Annie Wiggins Guest House** (815-777-0336; rates from \$95 to \$175), dating from 1846 and decorated in the Victorian style, offers extras like lemonade on the veranda. To stay where Mark Twain and Abraham Lincoln often hobnobbed, check out the **Aldrich Guest House** (815-777-3323; rates from \$85 to \$250).

The posh 6,800-acre **Eagle Ridge Inn & Resort** (800-892-2269; inn rates from \$129 to \$279; home rates from \$149 to \$1,099), encompasses an 80-room inn and over 400 vacation home rentals. Guests can enjoy four golf courses, swimming, tennis, horseback riding—even hot-air balloon rides.

For more information, contact the Galena Convention and Visitors Bureau at 800-747-9377 or www.galena.org. —Marya Smith

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