

Two-Day Winter Getaway



Apple River Canyon

Galena, Illinois

Tuesday-Wednesday, January 15-16, 2013

Saturday-Sunday, January 19-20, 2013

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Galena Getaway



Horseshoe Bluff, overlooking the mighty Mississippi

Day 1

10:15 am: Hike Apple River Canyon You'll fall in love with the charming canyon, where icefalls cascade from cliffs along the picturesque Apple River. Once the bottom of a vast inland sea that stretched from the Alleghenies to the Rockies, this area was chiseled into cliffs and canyons by the Apple River. Our 3-mile hike winds along the Apple River, through hardwood and pine forests, along animal trails, and beside gorgeous cliff-top views of the canyon far below. We'll also check out a favorite eagle roosting spot. A bit of history... The town of Millville once flourished here. Named after two sawmills, Millville thrived as a stop on the Galena-to-Chicago stagecoach route until 1854 when the Illinois Central Railroad built its Freeport to Galena four miles north of town. In 1892, a devastating flood washed out the dam, swept away many buildings, and forever drove out the townspeople.

1:45 pm: Check into the DeSoto House Hotel After a great hike, check into our historic hotel in the heart of downtown Galena. The DeSoto House is Illinois' oldest operating hotel, where Abraham Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, and William Jennings Bryan stayed. This warm and charming 1855 landmark also served as the presidential campaign headquarters for Ulysses S. Grant. The 55 graciously decorated Victorian rooms provide modern bathrooms, televisions, and other conveniences. The Courtyard Restaurant is a lovely 4-story atrium serving breakfast and lunch daily.

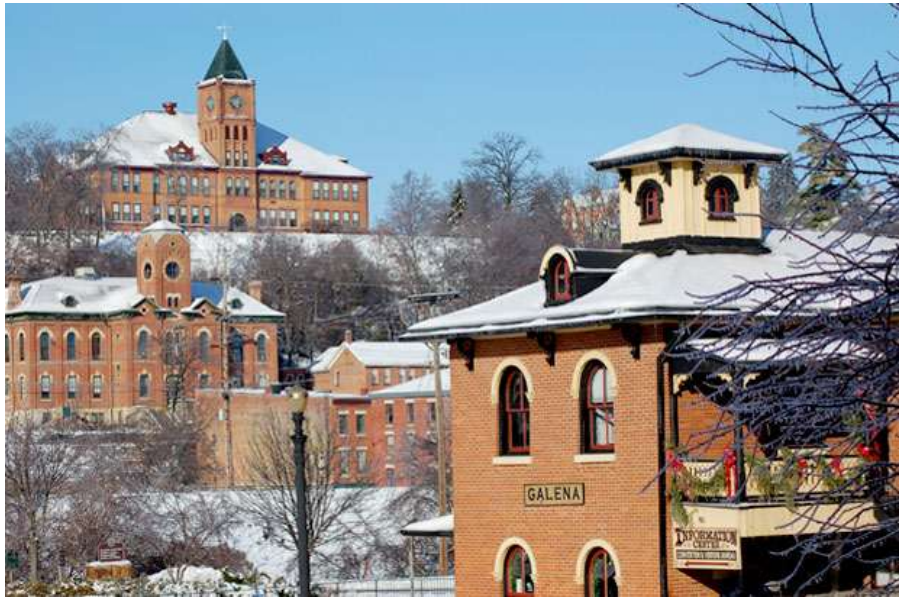
2 pm: Explore Downtown Galena

Step out of our hotel and into the center of this charming town on the banks of the Galena River. You'll love its 19th century mansions, one-of-a-kind shops, warm ambience, local wineries, and eateries.

Or if you prefer being more active, join a hike along the Galena River, which connects to the Mississippi River just four miles away.

A bit of history about Galena.... when glaciers ironed out hills and filled valleys in other parts of the state, they left the Galena area unscratched. That explains

the gorgeous, rolling countryside. It also explains the abundant galena lead veins in this area – which earned the town its name. In fact, 85% of the nation's lead once came from Galena. From the early to mid-1800s, Galena was a mining, smelting, and steam-boat center. During the Civil War, nine Union Army generals hailed from Galena, including Ulysses S. Grant, who became America's 18th president. In 1854, Galena was the most prosperous town on the Upper Mississippi. But the arrival of the Illinois Central Railroad began the port-city's decline, and it became a quiet, backwater town. Also, the demand for lead waned after the Civil War and World War I. Galena was revitalized in the 1960s by preservationists, who restored the grand old buildings.

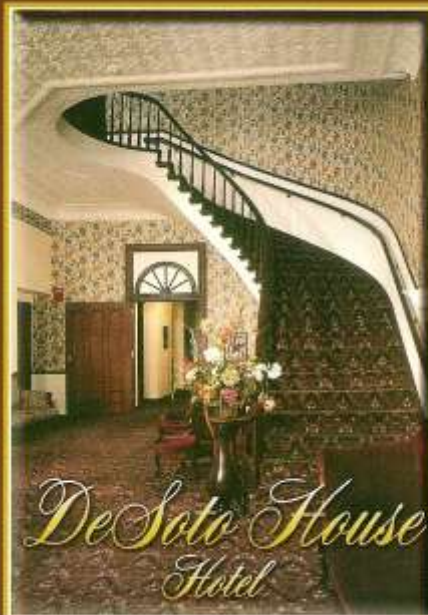


Historic Galena (Courtesy of galena.org)

6 pm: Dine at Fried Green Tomatoes

You'll love this locally famous restaurant's food and fun ambience. It's housed in the building where Ulysses S. Grant worked in the 1860s, helping his father and brothers with the family leather business.

After Dinner: Relax in your comfy room or the hotel's common areas.



Day 2

9 am: Watch Eagles Eagle-watch on the Mississippi River at the junction of Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. We'll visit a dam that is a popular wintering area for eagles because it keeps the river from freezing and stuns fish as they flow through it – providing relatively easy-picking for eagles' primary food source. We'll also hike at Eagle Point Park, described as one of the Midwest's most outstanding parks, with gorgeous vistas of the Mississippi and "birds' eye" views of eagles.



Bald eagle

10 am - 2 pm: Hike Mines of Spain Horseshoe Bluff

Nestled along the Mississippi River, this 1.5-mile trail takes us along beaver lodges and through towering canyons of Ordovician dolomite rock.

Optional: Julien Dubuque Monument

This 1-mile hike takes you to a beautiful bluff overlooking the Mississippi and to the grave-site monuments of Julien Dubuque, Iowa's first European settler, and his Mesquakie friend and father-in-law ~ Chief Peosta.

Optional: Catfish Creek

This 2-mile loop hugs the banks of pretty Catfish Creek, where backwaters of the

Mississippi run. On the flip-trip, we'll follow the upper trail past rock outcrops and through forests of white birch, river birch, and 200-year-old oaks. The village of the Mesquakie (Fox) Indians was located at the mouth of Catfish Creek; there they traded furs with French voyagers and mined lead in the countryside.



Catfish Creek



Galena countryside sunset

Head home, refreshed and restored.