



OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF AAA HOOSIER MOTOR CLUB

# crossroads

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TRAIN TRAVEL  
COMES WITH ALL THE

## BELLS & WHISTLES

THE MAGIC & MYSTERY  
OF MAMMOTH

UNWIND IN  
LAKE GENEVA

NEW YEAR,  
NEW EXPERIENCES



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# Unwind in LAKE GENEVA, WISCONSIN

WHERE CHICAGO'S WEALTHIEST TURN-OF-THE-20TH-CENTURY FAMILIES ESCAPED

By Crystal Hammon

*American titans like the Maytags, the Sears and the Wrigleys sought refuge in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, building majestic estates there after the Great Chicago Fire in 1871. Today Lake Geneva is one of the Midwest's most enchanting places to embrace winter and a year-round magnet for couples, families, girls getaways, golfers and outdoor enthusiasts. This is one lakeside community worth adding to your 2021 travel plans.*

## Walking in circles

Up for a challenge? Walk the 26-mile trail that surrounds Geneva Lake. (Don't be confused. The lake's name is Geneva Lake; the town is Lake Geneva.) The Geneva Lake Shore Path is open to the public 365 days a year. Get up early and start the trail in downtown Lake Geneva. Stop midway for lunch at The Abbey Resort on the opposite end of the lake in the neighboring community of Fontana. Savor panoramic views of the harbor from two restaurants, 240° West or Waterfront. Or take your break earlier in nearby Williams Bay at Pier 290, the only restaurant that is truly "lakeside."

[www.theabbeyresort.com](http://www.theabbeyresort.com) [www.pier290.com](http://www.pier290.com) and  
[www.visitlakegeneva.com/things-to-do/shore-path](http://www.visitlakegeneva.com/things-to-do/shore-path)

## Outdoor art takes center stage

On February 3, 2021, Lake Geneva opens *Winterfest*, an annual, five-day extravaganza, crowned by the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Championship. Come the first day and stay through February 7 to see 10-foot blocks of snow transformed into sculpture. The art stays as long as Mother Nature allows. Winterfest 2021 offers a traditional beachfront bonfire and other

pandemic-friendly events, including a new Ice Sculpture Walk, sponsored by downtown businesses.

[www.visitlakegeneva.com/winterfest](http://www.visitlakegeneva.com/winterfest)

## Retail therapy for foodies

Lake Geneva's business district is dotted with upscale boutiques. "It's touristy, so there's always something new and different to see," says Tracie Loy, a nearby McHenry, Illinois resident who loves scouring downtown shops for cheeses, wines, oils and other gourmet items. Loy makes the 40-minute commute a couple of times each year, including a pilgrimage before Christmas to buy her husband's favorite chocolate at Kilwins.

[www.kilwins.com/stores/kilwins-lake-geneva](http://www.kilwins.com/stores/kilwins-lake-geneva)

## When your heart wants to soar

Birthday or anniversary soirées deserve an enduring favorite: the historic *Baker House*. This romantic spot is open for dinner or cocktails Thursdays through Saturdays during winter months. The Gilded Age mansion was built for the Baker family in 1885, but it's been a restaurant and inn much longer than it was a private home. Snag a table on the enclosed front porch for sunset views



## DISCOVER OUTDOOR ADVENTURES IN LAKE GENEVA

**Lake Geneva Zipline and Adventure Park**  
100-acres of trails for hiking, biking, ziplining and other outdoor adventures.  
[www.lakegenevaadventures.com](http://www.lakegenevaadventures.com)

**Kischwauketoe Nature Conservancy**  
Observe natural species found among 231 acres of boardwalks, trails and elevated look-outs. Bonus: a small children's fishing pond.  
[www.friendsofKNC.org](http://www.friendsofKNC.org)

**Lake Geneva Cruise Line**  
From May 1 to October 31, take a public or private cruise to learn the history of the mansions and estates built along the lake in the late 18th and early 19th century.  
[www.cruiselakegeneva.com](http://www.cruiselakegeneva.com)

**Lake Geneva Balloon Company**  
Combine your hot air balloon adventure with majestic views of the lake.  
[www.lakegenevaballoon.com](http://www.lakegenevaballoon.com)



of the lake. On Friday and Saturday nights, enjoy libations and live entertainment. Return on Sunday for an elegant brunch. Better yet, stay in one of the inn's five boutique-style rooms. If you're traveling as a family, choose the contemporary third-floor suite, designed to accommodate groups of 10.

[www.bakerhouse1885.com](http://www.bakerhouse1885.com)

### Where to stay

Lake Geneva has many resorts and inns, but staying downtown has advantages, according to Jodene Hertko, who owns a summer home in Lake Geneva. "You can go there on a Friday afternoon, park your car and never get in your vehicle again until you leave," Hertko says. "Everything is walkable." One of the area's best kept secrets: a scenic drive along Snake Road. "It doesn't matter what season," she says. "Even though it's not next to the lake, that drive is just gorgeous." Head west on Main Street and take a left onto Snake Road at the bottom of the hill, a mile out of town.

### Calling all historians and architectural buffs

One of the town's best lake views is free at the *Lake Geneva Public Library*. The library is a mid-century, Prairie-style archi-

tectural gem, built in 1954 and designed by James R. Dresser, a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright. Armchair historians can mine the library's archives, which are rich with local artifacts and lore. In nice weather, picnic in the adjacent Library Park or just sit on a park bench and be bathed by the sound of waves lapping at the nearby shoreline. During winter, bring your ice skates and skate at no charge.

[www.lakegeneva.lib.wi.us](http://www.lakegeneva.lib.wi.us)

### Your best selfie

Plan ahead for one of Lake Geneva's most Instagram-able moments: *Ice Castles*. The *Geneva National Resort and Club* is one of only four U.S. sites to host this winter wonderland. Each November, professional ice artists start growing icicles for an elaborate castle, embellished with tunnels, slides and cubby holes you can duck into to snap photos. Go at night for a jaw-dropping display of color and light. Tickets are sold online for a specific date and time. The opening date is weather dependent. Ice Castles is a high-demand event, and given COVID-19 restrictions, slots may be limited this season.

[www.icecastles.com/Wisconsin](http://www.icecastles.com/Wisconsin) and [www.genevanationalresort.com](http://www.genevanationalresort.com)