

neighborhood *Spring/Summer 2017* TOURIST

SHOPPING, RECREATION, FESTIVALS, AND MORE ...INSIDE!



Destination:
**DOWNTOWN
MORRIS**

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ROLLING DOWN THE
ROCK RIVER

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Location, location, location

Begin your journey together at the venue of your dreams

By AIMEE BARROWS

Your wedding date is finally on the calendar, and now it's time to find the perfect place to celebrate with friends and family. While you can go the traditional route of having your wedding and reception at a church and banquet hall, having your big event at one of the many unique Northern Illinois venues will make your wedding a day that you and your guests won't soon forget.

Whether you prefer a more casual affair or a formal event, these out-of-the-ordinary venues can accommodate every taste and budget, while showcasing your unique personalities.

EMERSON CREEK POTTERY AND TEAROOM

Barn weddings are the ultimate rustic-chic setting, and the Emerson Creek Tearoom in Oswego takes the popular theme to an entirely new level with its beautiful country setting. The venue offers one-of-kind weddings and recently was awarded The Knot's "Best of Weddings" for 2017.

"We offer something that won't find anywhere else. We have a rustic barn that is also formal and elegant in a beautiful country setting," said Kayleigh Borchardt, sales manager at Emerson Creek. "We provide a beautiful canvas that couples

can turn into their own vision. I love that couples can get married in a peaceful, country location. We say it's a pleasant return to simple days and simple ways."

The remodeled barn, complete with chandeliers and twilight lights that add a touch of elegance, hosts the cocktail hour and after-dinner dancing. Attached to the barn is a large tent where dinner is served, and after dinner, guests can roast s'mores in the fire pits behind the barn. Tranquil cornfields are the backdrop for Emerson Creek's two outdoor ceremony locations.

Emerson Creek works exclusively with My Chef, a Naperville-based catering company that offers both plated dinners and buffets. Coffee and soft drinks are included in the catering package, but the couple provides the alcohol, which is served by wait staff.

Emerson Creek Pottery and Tearoom is sells a wide array of hand-crafted pottery, gifts and bakeware in a 100-year-old farmhouse from the spring through the fall. Shoppers are invited to stay for lunch in the Tearoom with a made-from-scratch menu that changes every week. The Tearoom also hosts rehearsal dinners on Thursday evenings for up to 40 people.

► For more information about weddings at Emerson Creek Pottery and Tearoom, visit www.ecreekpotteryandtearoom.com.

ILLINOIS BEACH RESORT ►

If you've always dreamed of a beachside wedding, Illinois might not be the first place that comes to mind. But you don't have to travel to Florida or to a faraway locale to make your dream come true. Instead, the Illinois Beach Resort in Zion can host your destination wedding right on the shores of beautiful Lake Michigan, so you can get married on a beach without the hassle of travelling.

The resort is the only one in Illinois that's located right on the lake's shoreline. The resort offers beach-side ceremonies and many picturesque photo opportunities. Not only will you have photos taken right on the sand, the resort is located in the



Illinois Beach State Park, so you can take photos in the forest if you prefer to have more greenery in the background.

With an onsite resort, guests won't have to travel far from the reception site. It features a 92-room hotel, complete with a full health club and Olympic-sized swimming pool for guests to enjoy during their stay. You can choose from several reception spaces that can accommodate parties from 60 to 250 people, the largest of which has floor-to-ceiling views to soak up the amazing shoreline view. The resort offers full catering and bar service, and the menu can accommodate for food allergies or dietary restrictions.

"We make things easy, we have rehearsal dinner and breakfast options, and we also do tastings, and have on-site staff the day of the wedding," says Kim Hall, wedding sales manager. "We can do everything from a formal, black-tie wedding to a casual, shorts and sandals wedding. We definitely have a most rustic, natural vibe because of the gorgeous views, but couples can dress up the room to make it more formal. We call this a destination wedding, in your backyard."

► For more information about the Illinois Beach Resort, visit www.ilresorts.com.

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