



[Midwest Living](#) / [Travel](#) / [Calendar of Events](#)

18 Top Midwest Events in August

Get a taste of sweet corn, take a hot air balloon ride and watch dragon boats race at Midwest festivals in August.

Writer: *Shelby Deering*



Illinois

Peoria Irish Fest, Peoria August 25–27 The Peoria Riverfront looks a little greener during this yearly salute to the Emerald Isle. Sample whiskey, listen to an Irish storyteller and watch kilt-clad athletes compete in the Highland Games (peoriairishfest.com).

Bruce Munro: LIGHT, Rockford Through November 5 Savor the warm summer nights and stroll among eight illuminated large-scale sculptures by the internationally acclaimed artist at an evening exhibit at Nicholas Conservatory and Gardens (nicholasconservatory.com).

Indiana

Swiss Wine Festival, Vevay August 24–27 The nation of Switzerland has produced wines for centuries; Switzerland County, Indiana, follows that legacy. Now in its 46th year, this riverside festival features local wineries, country music, Swiss dancing and boat cruises on the Ohio (swisswinefestival.org).

Iowa

National Balloon Classic, Indianola Through August 5 Oohs and aahs abound at this nine-day airborne affair,

where nearly 100 hot-air balloons float over Iowa cornfields. Take a ride, watch fireworks or experience the night glow, when balloons show their colors against the darkening sky (nationalballoonclassic.com).

Taste of Iowa City, Iowa City *August 23* This college town's premier food festival takes over all of downtown when restaurants set up shop right outside their doors for a fun day of feasting (traveliowa.com).

Kansas

Wild Bill Hickok Rodeo, Abilene *August 2–5* Steer wrestling, bull riding and barrel racing are not for the timid. See these events and more as nearly 500 gutsy cowboys and cowgirls compete in one of the country's top professional outdoor rodeos at Eisenhower Park Fairgrounds (wildbillhickokrodeo.com).

Michigan

National Blueberry Festival, South Haven *August 10–13* Blueberries grow on more than 21,000 acres in Michigan. Celebrate the state's prized crop with pie-eating contests, creative blueberry dishes and a 5K race to burn it all off (blueberryfestival.com).

Minnesota

Lake Bemidji Dragon Boat Festival, Bemidji *August 2–5* Watch teams paddle dragon boats in fast-paced races on Lake Bemidji. Shoreside attractions include a cornhole tournament and hot-off-the-grill vendor fare (bemidjdragonboat.com).

The Tribute Fest, Duluth *August 23–26* Tribute bands take the stage at Bayfront Festival Park, with proceeds going to homeless veterans. Don't miss Rubber Soul's Beatles covers or Heartache Tonight playing Eagles hits (thetributefest.com).

Missouri

International Institute's Festival of Nations, St. Louis *August 26–27* Experience the traditions of Spain, Jamaica, Israel and more at the city's largest multicultural fest. Foods, dance performances and booths showing off global goods will fill two days at Tower Grove Park

(festivalofnationsstl.org).



Photo courtesy of International Institute's Festival of Nations.

Birthplace of Route 66 Festival, Springfield August 11–12

In 1926, America's favorite highway received its name at a meeting of Springfield officials. Celebrate the legacy with vintage cars, a parade, a 6.6K run and performances by Big and Rich and Three Dog Night (route66festivalsgf.com).

Nebraska

Sweet Corn Festival, Omaha August 12–13 Head to Lauritzen Gardens to savor buttered-up, fresh-from-the-field corn or Nebraska sweet corn ice cream. Activities include cooking demonstrations and educational activities (lauritzengardens.org).

North Dakota

Wild West GrillFest, Mandan August 18–19 The scents of summer fill the air at Dykshoorn Park. Grill masters and local

chefs cook up a variety of meats and vegetables alongside musicians and craft vendors (mandanprogress.org).

Rollin' on the River Inline Marathon, Grand Forks *August 26* No running shoes needed here—just wheels. Pull out your skates and glide along the Red River for a marathon, half-marathon or quarter-marathon course (gfinline.com).

Ohio

The Berlin Painter and His World, Toledo *Through October 1* Dive into ancient history at the Toledo Museum of Art through a traveling exhibition of works by the Berlin Painter, an anonymous artist who specialized in Athenian vase painting during the fifth century B.C. (toledomuseum.org).

South Dakota

Wing and Brew Festival, Brookings *August 12* Surrender your fingers to sauces and rubs that put a kick into summer. Wing-eating contests and volleyball games add friendly local competition (travelsouthdakota.com).

Wisconsin

Blooming Butterflies, Madison *Through August 13* There's a butterfly! And another one! Hundreds of the mesmerizing insects flit among tropical plants (and alight on visitors' shoulders) in the conservatory at Olbrich Botanical Gardens (olbrich.org).

The Box Project: Uncommon Threads, Racine *Through August 27* More than 35 of the world's top fiber artists thought inside the box as they created pieces in small containers. The unique exhibition makes its only Midwest stop at the Racine Art Museum (ramart.org).

Tags: [events](#), [July August 2017](#) [Midwest Living](#)

add your comment

[Log in to leave a comment](#)

