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SOUL OF ILLINOIS AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRAVEL GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

New guide is the ideal travel companion for discovering the soul of Illinois

CHICAGO – Just in time for the summer travel and family reunion season, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism (IBOT) has released a new travel companion, The Soul of Illinois African-American travel guide. From its captivating cover design of iconic bronzed images to its comprehensive content which masterfully navigates statewide attractions from an African-American traveler's perspective, the guide pays homage to the state's rich African-American history and profiles an exciting array of options and activities throughout Illinois' seven regions.

Offering a wealth of details, the guide includes well-known restaurants, information on locally known destinations, festival dates, salon listings and more. To pay tribute to the state's rich Underground Railroad history, the guide highlights the locations of several stations which comprised Illinois' Underground Railroad network. Wine enthusiasts will be enticed to explore the state's numerous vineyards, boasting more than 70 wineries. Readers will find an endless array of information on activities for every member of the family.

The striking design and vibrant artwork give travelers a unique and inspired glimpse into the beauty and energy of the state, effortlessly directing visitors from the hot happenings in Chicago to the cool canyons of Utica.

This guide is the latest component of the Soul of Illinois campaign, which has positioned the state as a destination of choice for the growing African-American travel market. It follows the launch of a travel Web site, soufulillinois.com, and the introduction of the My Illinois campaign, which enlists native Illinoisan celebrities such as Oscar-winning actress Jennifer Hudson, R&B legend Chaka Khan and actor Harry Lennix to share narratives and remembrances of their beloved state in an effort to promote Illinois tourism.

According to IBOT Deputy Director Jan Kostner, "The travel guide offers an exciting new dimension to the Soul of Illinois campaign. It serves as another captivating invitation to travelers to explore this great state."

Travelers can access the guide online at soufulillinois.com, or order a free copy by visiting www.enjoyillinois.com or by calling **1-800-2-CONNECT**. For more information about Illinois destinations and attractions, visit soufulillinois.com.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.