

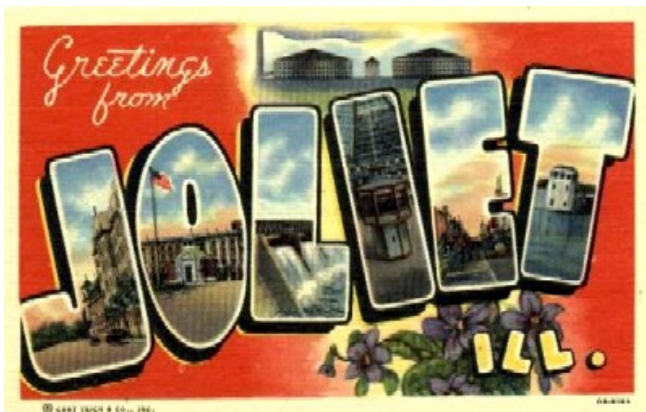
Route 66 “The Mother Road”



Historic Route 66 starts in downtown Chicago and ends in Santa Monica, CA. John Steinbeck, in 1939, proclaimed Route 66 as the “Mother Road” in his classic novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. When the movie was made just a year later, it immortalized Route 66 in the American consciousness. Shortly thereafter, more than 200,000 people migrated to California to escape the Dust Bowl of the Midwest, symbolizing the highway as the “road to opportunity.”

When World War II broke out, Route 66 proved to be invaluable in transporting troops, equipment and products across the vast West to California, where the government established multiple industries and armed force bases. When the war was finally over in 1945, the Mother Road served to transport thousands of troops home.

Perhaps more than any other American highway, the Mother Road symbolized a new positive outlook that spread throughout the nation’s postwar economic recovery. For thousands of returning servicemen and their families, Route 66 was more than just a highway. "It became," according to one admirer, "an icon of free-spirited independence linking the United States across the Rocky Mountain divide to the Pacific Ocean."



Our tour begins at Pheasant Run and joins Route 66 in Romeoville, IL. We will stop in Joliet, IL at the Joliet Historical Museum at 204 N. Ottawa Street which includes a Route 66 Welcome Center.



You will see the Gemini Giant in Wilmington as we proceed down historic Route 66. Then we are on to the Polk-A-Dot Drive-In in Braidwood for lunch. The restaurant has been open for 50 plus years and serves up some great and inexpensive fare.

Much of old Route 66 is paralleled by the interstate highway, I-55. We will follow historic Route 66 through Dwight, IL, Odell, IL and continues all the way to Pontiac, IL where we will stop at the Route 66 Museum and Hall of Fame.

The "NEW" Route 66 Museum and Hall of Fame was established in 2004, it commemorates the people, places and events that gave Route 66 its special character. It features include plaques and displays honoring members of the Hall of Fame, as well as many other exhibits of historic and unusual interest.

We leave Pontiac and head north as we continue our tour back to Pheasant Run.

