

I Needa Geneva! Top Day Trip from Chicago: 4 Hours in Geneva, Illinois



Sometimes, you wake up on a Saturday, and instead of grabbing coffee at the cafe around the corner, you take a drive to one of your favorite coffee spots in a cute town almost an hour away. That's what our past Saturday consisted of, and as the insightful quote grounding my feet as I walked down the stairs of [Graham's 318 Coffeehouse](#) in Geneva, IL states, that's all the therapy you need. Okay, I actually had tea, but my honey went for the coffee.



Truth be told, we're always looking for an excuse to go to our favorite Chicago day trip town, Geneva, Illinois, about 40 miles outside of Chicago (not to be confused with Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, which is a bit further away). You see, in 2015, my now husband took me on a second date to Geneva for the day. If you're thinking a day trip might be eager for a second date, you're right! But, we had known each other before. We took the two pictures below on our second date back then! Ross' smile and our walk along the river bank may have fore-"shadowed" future marriage!





3 years ago, we loved it - and we still do! Located on the Fox Valley River, State Street is the main road lined with adorable shops and eateries. We try to visit once a year, and this year's visit took us to some old favorites and new ones!

Our first stop was of course, Graham's. We were on a coffee run, after all. Graham's 318 Coffeehouse is nearly 15 years old and it's full of delicious baked goods, quirky mugs, and a feel-at-home cozy vibe.



Our next move was a walk along the river. We typically visit close to New Year's, so it was really beautiful to see the town after all the snow melted. I bet it's gorgeous when the trees begin to bloom in the Spring!



After visiting a couple boutiques, one of the owners recommended a Mexican restaurant, called [Bien Trucha](#) (meaning: good trout). We couldn't believe what a hip, happening restaurant we had found in off-the-beaten-path Geneva! It was even named in the Chicago Tribune as one of [Chicago's essential Mexican restaurants](#) in 2017! Beyond the unassuming facade, we could instantly see why.



Very well-designed table settings were simple, clean, and inviting.



This bright table behind us was just so vibrant and - I just love it!



Bien Trucha was authentic, yet modern, cozy, yet elevated, down to earth, yet a destination. We started off with this oh-so-fresh Manzana Ensalada - with apples, manchego, candied pecans, and fresh arugula. A salad after my own heart!



Love how the small tables line the walls in this narrow eatery.



We ordered tuna tacos that were unlike any I've ever had (and I'm from Texas, so I've had my fair share of tacos)! The tuna cubes were lightly breaded, and we could tell they were marinated because they were so tender, versus an often-tough tuna steak. They had celery aioli (I love celery!), avocado, arugula, and habanero-lime confit. They were fresh, flavorful, and two each were filling and satiating. Their habanero salsa was fantastic too!



Can you tell we liked them? One photo isn't nearly enough!



We got two thumbs up from this hungry hubby!



We then took a walk and even stopped into some hip restaurants (informing them that we had already eaten) that seem to have emerged since our last visit, just to take a look around and scope out our next trip. How awesome is the artwork at [Craft Urban](#)? Next time, please!





We continued on our walk and stopped into some unique art galleries and shops. One shop that caught our attention for about 20 minutes was [Artemisia](#). The home goods store was full of eclectic and unique finds, many of them artisan or handmade. I would like to live, or maybe just have a meeting or a lunch date in their upstairs! Check out these amazing artistic rooms!





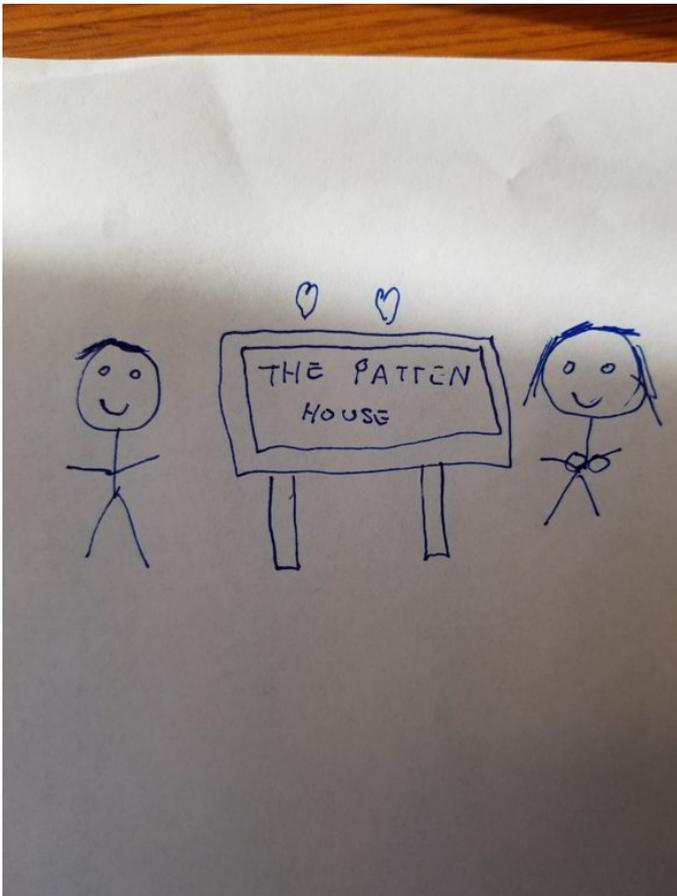
We almost took this table home with us! Just kidding - but what. a. table! As a dining table lover, this one is just amazing!



While we had already eaten (and the thought crossed our minds to stay all day for an early dinner), we stopped in to say hello at our favorite [Patten House](#), an historic home and cajun restaurant with a great bar. It's just so heartwarming inside and delicious, and it may have just been the place my husband captured my heart 3 years ago on our day trip date. (The Old Fashioned cocktails didn't hurt, either.)



It may have also been the place I captured his heart - this cartoon he made says it all. I just love those hearts! Thanks, honey!



Along our way back to the car (street parking was free, by the way!), we made the obligatory stop at Graham's Fine Chocolate shop - the next door neighbor to the coffee shop. This chocolate sauce may need to come home with us next time too.



We picked out a few small treats for the road. Okay - they didn't make it to the road - we enjoyed them on a bench outside before heading back to the city.



All in all, our third annual trip to Geneva was an easy drive on a Saturday morning, full of new spots to explore and treats galore. It's quirky, it's fun, it's full of art and great food. Y'all, Geneva's happenin'!



Don't forget to stay overnight at the [Herrington Inn](#) right on the river for a truly authentic, and relaxing night away from the city. If you've been to Geneva, or you find yourself taking a trip there, give me a shout and let me know what to check out on our next visit!

SaveSave

SaveSave

SaveSave

SaveSave

SaveSave