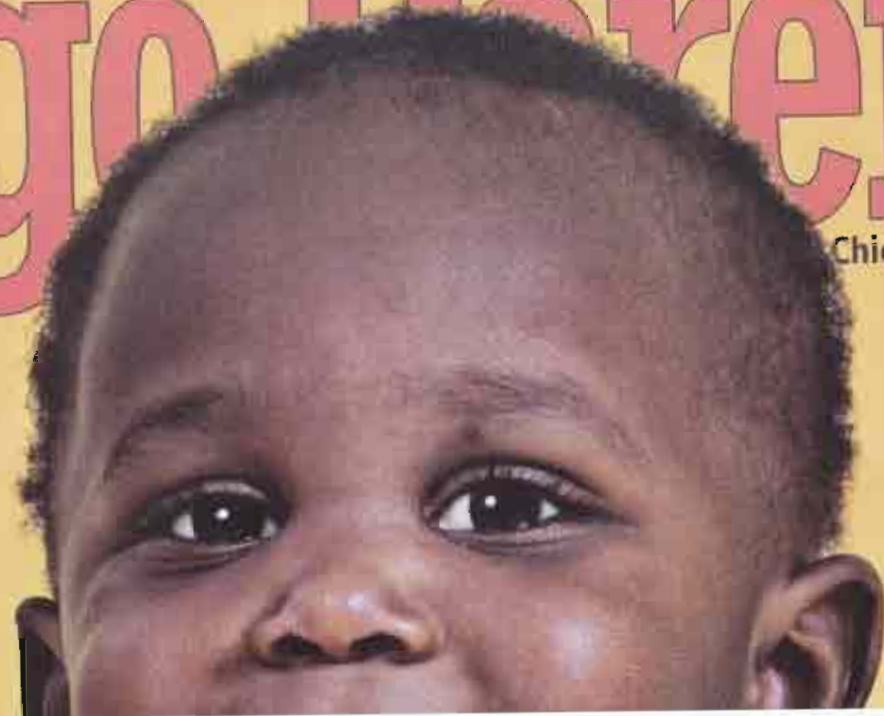


South Suburban Edition

# Chicago Parent

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## Budget-friendly travel

# Fun close to home

*Spring trips can offer savings for families*

BY ROBYN MONAGHAN

**W**ouldn't it be great if they'd wait until spring to have spring break?

If this season catches you without the cash to escape the zone where spring still feels like winter, we've found some not-so-distant destinations where your brood can bond without breaking the bank.

Or wait till May and relish the resorts' full fun factor.

*Robyn Monaghan has been a journalist for 20 years and is a mom who lives in Plainfield.*

## Galena

Who would have thought you could afford it? This upscale resort will even pay for your gas to get there.

Eagle Ridge is just 150 miles west of Chicago at one of the state's most popular tourist areas, the Galena territory, ranked among America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations.

There's horseback riding or hot air ballooning in the summer, sleigh rides and sledding in the winter. For mom and dad, there are four courses of "golf nirvana" ranked among the "Best Resort Courses in America" by Golfweek Magazine, a full-service spa and a fitness center. And everybody loves the indoor pool and hot tub no matter what the season.

Amid thousands of acres of rolling hills, Galena is packed with teachable moments. Get history lessons at the Vinegar Hill Historic Lead Mine and Museum, which dates back to 1822, and the U.S. Grant Home, presented to the general by grateful townspeople in 1867. A geology field trip is minutes away at nearby Crystal Lake Cave



### Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa

- 444 Eagle Ridge Drive, Galena, IL 61036
- (815) 777-5000
- [www.eagleridgeresortonline.com](http://www.eagleridgeresortonline.com)

with its stalactites, stalagmites and crystal-clear underground lake.

The Family Time Package at Eagle Ridge Resort, \$569 for four days and three nights, comes packed with perks. The resort pays

for your drive with \$25 to be used at its own gas pump. When you check in, you'll get a welcome basket for the family filled with favorite snacks. Ask about pet-friendly accommodations.

The extras, like hot air ballooning (\$175) and horseback riding (\$36 per hour) are pricey, but the family can save up for it together until it's warmer by pitching in pennies for chores.