



The right  
information  
changes  
everything.

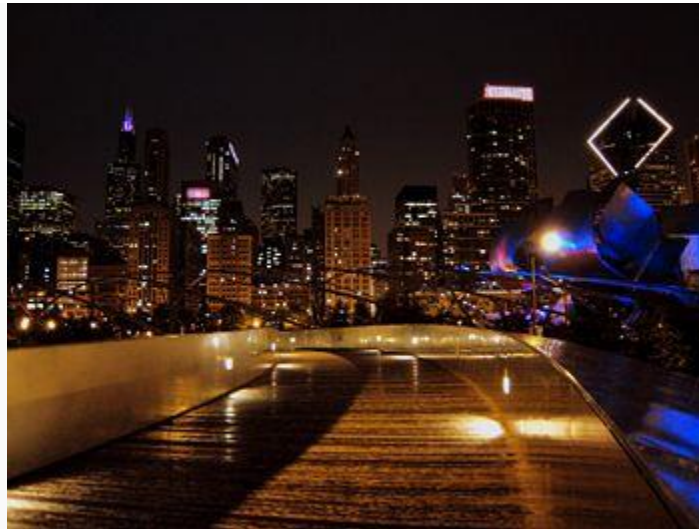
Chicago City Guide



world trade resource

# Chicago

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Chicago's skyline viewed from Millennium Park

**Chicago** is the home of the blues and the truth of jazz, the heart of comedy and the idea of the skyscraper. Here, the age of railroads found its center, and airplanes followed suit. Butcher of hogs and believer in progress, it is one of the world's great cities, and yet the metropolitan luxuries of theater, shopping, and fine dining have barely put a dent in real Midwestern friendliness. It's a city with a swagger, but without the surliness or even the fake smiles found in other cities of its size.

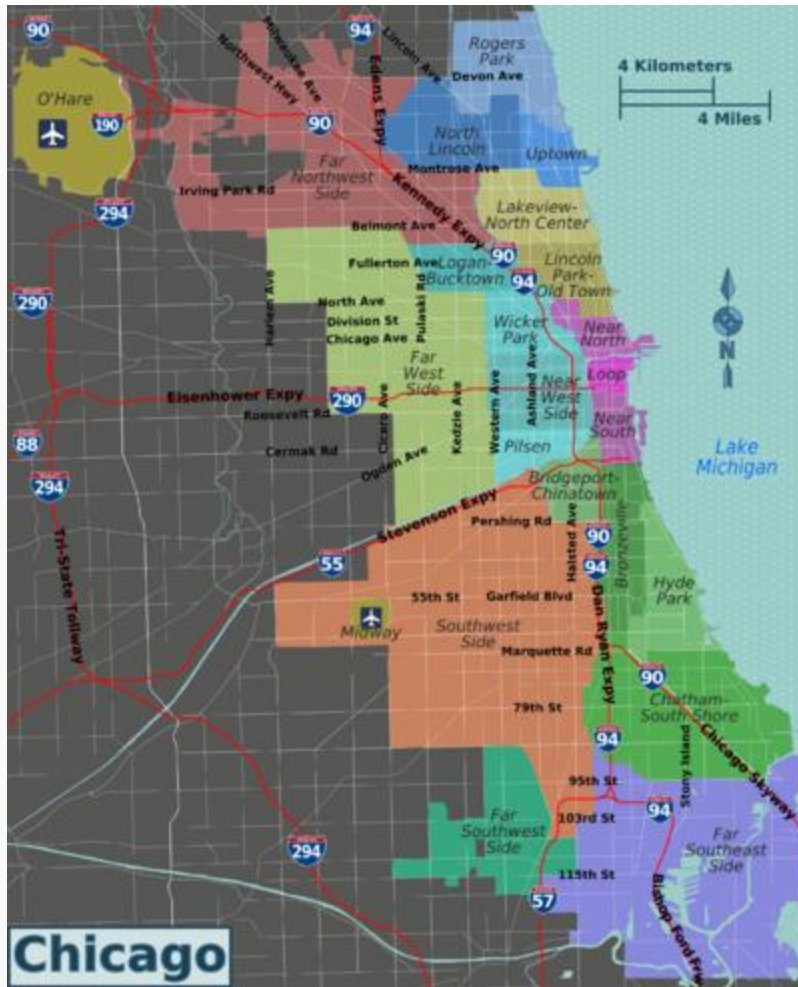
As the hub of the Midwest, Chicago is easy to find — its picturesque skyline calls across the waters of Lake Michigan, a first impression that soon reveals world-class museums of art and science, miles of sandy beaches, huge parks and public art, and perhaps the finest downtown collection of modern architecture in the world.

With a wealth of iconic sights and neighborhoods to explore, there's enough to fill a visit of days, weeks, or even months without ever seeing the end. Dress warm in the winter, and prepare to cover a lot of ground: the meaning of Chicago is only found in movement, through subways and archaic elevated tracks, in the pride of tired feet and eyes raised once more to the sky.

## Districts





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Many visitors never make it past the attractions downtown, but you haven't truly seen Chicago until you have ventured out into the neighborhoods. Chicagoans understand their city by splitting it into large "sides" to the north, west, and south of the central business district (the Loop). Chicagoans also tend to identify strongly with their neighborhood, reflecting real differences in culture and place throughout the city. Rivalries between the North and South Sides run particularly deep, while people from the West Side are free agents in critical issues like baseball loyalty.



Districts of Chicago

- Downtown** (The Loop, Near North, Near South)  
The center of Chicago for work and play, with shopping, skyscrapers, big theaters, and the city's most famous travel sights
- North Side** (Lakeview, Boystown, Lincoln Park, Old Town)  
Upscale neighborhoods with entertainment aplenty in storefront theaters and the Friendly Confines of Wrigley Field, along with a *ton* of bars and clubs, and one of the largest LGBT communities in the nation
- South Side** (Hyde Park, Bronzeville, Bridgeport-Chinatown, Chatham-South Shore)  
The historic Black Metropolis, brainy Hyde Park and the University of Chicago, Chinatown, the White Sox, soul food, and the real Chicago blues
- West Side** (Wicker Park, Logan Square, Greektown, Pilsen)  
Ethnic enclaves, dive bars, and hipsters abound on the fashionably rough side of town
- Far North Side** (Uptown, Lincoln Square, Rogers Park)  
Ultra-hip and laid-back, with miles of beaches and some of the most vibrant immigrant communities in the country
- Far West Side** (Little Village, Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Austin)  
So far off the beaten tourist track you might not find your way back, but that's OK given all the great food, a couple of top blues clubs, and enormous parks.
- Southwest Side** (Back of the Yards, Marquette Park, Midway)

-  Former home to the massive meatpacking district of the Union Stockyards, huge Polish and Mexican neighborhoods, and Midway Airport
-  **Far Northwest Side** (Avondale, Irving Park, Portage Park, Jefferson Park)  
Polish Village, historic homes and theaters, and some undiscovered gems in the neighborhoods near O'Hare International Airport
-  **Far Southeast Side** (Historic Pullman, East Side, South Chicago, Hegewisch)  
The giant, industrial underbelly of Chicago, home to one large tourist draw: the historic Pullman District
-  **Far Southwest Side** (Beverly, Mount Greenwood)  
Ireland in Chicago: authentic Irish pubs, brogues, galleries, and the odd haunted castle, all extremely far from the city center

## Understand

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Chicago was known as a fine place to find a **wild onion** if you were a member of the Potawatomi tribe, who lived in this area of Illinois before European settlers arrived. It was mostly swamps, prairie and mud long past the establishment of Fort Dearborn in 1803 and incorporation as a town in 1833. It could be argued that nature never intended for there to be a city here; brutal winters aside, it took civil engineering projects of unprecedented scale to establish working sewers, reverse the flow of the river to keep it out of the city's drinking supply, and stop buildings from sinking back into the swamps — and that was just the first few decades.

By 1871, the reckless growth of the city was a sight to behold, full of noise, Gothic lunacy, and bustling commerce. But on October 8th, Mrs. O'Leary's cow reportedly knocked over a lantern in the crowded immigrant quarters in the West Side, and the **Great Chicago Fire** began. It quickly spread through the dry prairie, killing 300 and destroying virtually the entire city. The stone Water Tower in the Near North is the most famous surviving structure. But the city seized this destruction as an opportunity to rebuild bigger than before, giving canvas for several architects and urban planners who would go on to become legends of modern architecture.

At the pinnacle of its rebirth and the height of its newfound powers, Chicago was known as **The White City**. Cultures from around the world were summoned to the 1893 World's Colombian Exposition, to bear witness to the work of Louis Sullivan, Daniel Burnham, and the future itself. Cream of Wheat, soft drinks, street lights and safe electricity, the fax machine, and the Ferris Wheel bespoke the colossus now resident on the shores of Lake Michigan.

As every road had once led to Rome, every train led to Chicago. Carl Sandburg called Chicago the **Hog Butcher for the World** for its cattle stockyards and place on the nation's dinner plate. Sandburg also called it the **City of the Big Shoulders**, noting the tall buildings in the birthplace of the skyscraper — and the city's "lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning." But Chicago

is a city in no short supply of nicknames. Fred Fisher's 1922 song (best known in Frank Sinatra's rendition) calls it **That Toddlin' Town**, where "on State Street, that great street, they do things they don't do on Broadway." It's also referenced by countless blues standards like **Sweet Home Chicago**.

Chicago is also known as **The Second City**, which refers to its rebuilding after the fire — the current city is literally the second Chicago, after the one that disappeared in 1871. The moniker has stuck, in no small part due to its popular association with the city's long-held former position as the United States' second largest city. And many know the nickname from Chicago's great comedy theater in Old Town.

Chicago's history with corruption is legendary. During the Prohibition era, Chicago's criminal world, emblemized by names like Al Capone, Baby Face Nelson, and later Sam Giancana, practically ran the city. The local political world had scarcely more legitimacy in a town where voter turnout was highest among the dead and their pets, and precinct captains spread the word to "vote early, vote often." Even Sandburg acknowledged the relentless current of vice that ran under the surface of the optimistic city.

Today, Chicago is known as **The Windy City**. Walking around town, you might suspect that Chicago got this nickname from the winds off Lake Michigan, which shove through the downtown corridors with intense force. But the true origin of the saying comes from politics. Some say it may have been coined by rivals like Cincinnati and New York as a derogatory reference to the Chicagoan habit of rabid boosterism and endless political conventions. Others say that the term originated from the fact that Chicago politicians change their minds "as often as the wind."

Finally, the city is known as the **The City That Works**, as promoted by longtime Mayor Richard M. Daley, which refers to Chicago's labor tradition, the long hours worked by its residents, and its willingness to tackle grand civic projects. Daley and his father, former Mayor Richard J. Daley, ruled the city for decades in what can only be described as a benevolent dictatorship; as other Midwestern manufacturing cities like Cleveland and Detroit went into decline, Chicago thrived, transforming from a city of stockyards and factories to a financial giant at the forefront of modern urban design. But with Richard M. retiring in 2011, Chicagoans face the rare prospect of a Daley-less city government, and will have to decide all over again if democracy can work in this town.

While the city has many great attractions downtown, most Chicagoans live and play outside of the central business district. To understand Chicago, travelers must venture away from the Loop and Michigan Avenue and out into the vibrant neighborhoods, to soak up the local nightlife, sample the wide range of fantastic dining, and see the sights Chicagoans care about most — thanks to the city's massive public transit system, every part of Chicago is only slightly off the most beaten path.

# Climate

Climate	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Daily highs (°F)	29	34	45	58	70	80	84	82	75	63	48	35
Nightly lows (°F)	13	18	28	39	48	57	63	62	54	42	31	20
Precipitation (in)	1.7	1.4	2.7	3.6	3.2	3.8	3.6	4.1	3.5	2.6	2.9	2.2

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Check **Chicago's 7 day forecast** at NOAA



Insider tip: it has been known to snow in Chicago

Weather is definitely not one of the attractions in Chicago. There's a good time to be had in any season, but it is a place where the climate has to be taken into consideration.

Little known fact is despite Chicago's winters, there are more days with a maximum temperature of between 80-84F than any other five-degree range. Obscured by Chicago's ferocious winters are the heat waves of summer. The days in July and August that go above the "normal" are often times disgustingly hot and humid, dew points can be similar to those found closer to the Gulf of Mexico. Summer nights are

usually reasonable, though, and you'll get a few degrees' respite along the lakefront — in the local parlance, that's "cooler by the lake."

But then there are those winters. The months from December to March will see very cold temperatures, with even more bitter wind chill factors. Snow is usually limited to a handful of heavy storms per season, with a few light dustings in-between. (And a little more along the lakefront — again in the local parlance, that's "lake effect snow".) Ice storms are also a risk. It's a city that's well-accustomed to these winters, though, so city services and public transportation are highly unlikely to shut down.

That said, Chicago does have a few nice months of weather. May and September are pleasant and mild; April and June are mostly fine, although thunderstorms with heavy winds can also occur suddenly. Although there may be a slight chill in the air in October, it rarely calls for more than a light coat and some days that's not even necessary. In some years, the warmth stored by the lake may prolong a pleasant autumn into November.

## Literature

Chicago literature found its roots in the city's tradition of lucid, direct journalism, lending to a strong tradition of social realism. Consequently, most notable Chicago fiction focuses on the city itself, with social criticism keeping exultation in check. Here is a selection of Chicago's most famous works about itself:

Karen Abbott's *Sin in the Second City* is a recent best-seller about Chicago's vice district, the Levee, and some of the personalities involved: gangsters, corrupt politicians, and two sisters who ran the most elite brothel in town.

Nelson Algren's *Chicago: City on the Make* is a prose poem about the alleys, the El tracks, the neon and the dive bars, the beauty and cruelty of Chicago. It's best saved for *after* a trip, when at least twenty lines will have you enraptured in recognition.

Saul Bellow's *Adventures of Augie March* charts the long drifting life of a Jewish Chicagoan and his myriad eccentric acquaintances throughout the early 20th century: growing up in the then Polish neighborhood of Humboldt Park, cavorting with heiresses on the Gold Coast, studying at the University of Chicago, fleeing union thugs in the Loop, and taking the odd detour to hang out with Trotsky in Mexico while eagle-hunting giant iguanas on horseback. This book has legitimate claim to be *the* Chicago epic (for practical purposes, that means you won't finish it on the plane).

Gwendolyn Brooks' *A Street in Bronzeville* was the collection of poems that launched the career of the famous Chicago poetess, focused on the aspirations,

disappointments, and daily life of those who lived in 1940s Bronzeville. It is long out of print, so you'll likely need to read these poems in a broader collection, such as her *Selected Poems*.

Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* is a Mexican-American coming-of-age novel, dealing with a young Latina girl, Esperanza Cordero, growing up in the Chicago Chicano ghetto.

Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* is a cornerstone of the turn of the 20th century Chicago Literary Renaissance, a tale of a country girl in the big immoral city, rags-to-riches and back again.

Stuart Dybek's *The Coast of Chicago* is a collection of fourteen marvelous short stories about growing up in Chicago (largely in Pilsen and Little Village) in a style blending the gritty with the dreamlike.

John Guzlowski's *Lightning and Ashes* chronicles the author's experiences growing up in the immigrant and DP neighborhoods around Humboldt Park in Chicago, talking about Jewish hardware store clerks with Auschwitz tattoos on their wrists, Polish cavalry officers who still mourned for their dead horses and women who walked from Siberia to Iran to escape the Russians.

Erik Larson's *Devil in the White City* is a best-selling pop history about the 1893 Colombian Exposition; it's also about the serial killer who was stalking the city at the same time. For a straight history of the Exposition and also the workers' paradise in Pullman, try James Gilbert's excellent *Perfect Cities: Chicago's Utopias of 1893*.

Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time-Traveler's Wife* is a recent love story set in Chicago nightclubs, museums, and libraries.

Mike Royko's *Boss* is the definitive biography of Mayor Richard J. Daley and politics in Chicago, written by the beloved late Tribune columnist. *American Pharaoh* (Cohen and Taylor) is a good scholarly treatment of the same subject.

Carl Sandburg's *Chicago Poems* is without a doubt the most famous collection of poems about Chicago by its own "bard of the working class."

Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* sits among the canon of both Chicago literature and US labor history for its muckraking-style depiction of the desolation experienced by Lithuanian immigrants working in the Union Stockyards on Chicago's Southwest Side.

Richard Wright's *Native Son* is a classic Chicago neighborhood novel set in Bronzeville and Hyde Park about a young, doomed, black boy hopelessly warped by the racism and poverty that defined his surroundings.



## Movies



Hold on to your baby carriages in Union Station!

Chicago is America's third most prolific movie industry and a host of very Chicago-centric movies have been produced here. These are just a few:

*Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (John Hughes, 1986). The dream of the northern suburbs: to be young, clever, and loose for a day in Chicago. Ferris and friends romp through the old Loop theater district, catch a game at Wrigley Field, and enjoy the sense of invincibility that Chicago shares with its favorite sons when all is well.

*Adventures in Babysitting* (Chris Columbus, 1987). The flip side of Ferris Bueller — the dangers that await the suburbanite in the Loop at night, including memorable trips to lower Michigan Avenue and up close with the Chicago skyline.

*The Blues Brothers* (John Landis, 1980). Probably Chicago's favorite movie about itself: blues music, white men in black suits, a mission from God, the conscience that every Chicago hustler carries without question, and almost certainly the biggest car chase ever filmed.

*The Untouchables* (Brian De Palma, 1987). With a square-jawed screenplay by David Mamet, this is a retelling of Chicago's central fable of good vs. evil: Eliot Ness and the legendary takedown of Al Capone. No film (except perhaps *The Blues Brothers*) has made a better use of so many Chicago locations, especially Union Station (the baby carriage), the Chicago Cultural Center (the rooftop fight), and the LaSalle Street canyon.

*High Fidelity* (Stephen Frears, 2000). John Cusack reviews failed relationships from high school at Lane Tech to college in Lincoln Park and muses over them in trips through Uptown, River North, all over the city on the CTA, his record store in the rock snob environs of Wicker Park, and returning at last to his record-swamped apartment in Rogers Park.

*Batman Begins* (Christopher Nolan, 2005) and its sequel *The Dark Knight* (2008). Making spectacular use of the 'L', the Chicago Board of Trade Building, Chicago skyscrapers, the Loop at night, and lower Wacker Drive, the revived action series finally sets the imposing power and intractable corruption of Gotham City where it belongs, in Chicago.

Others include Harrison Ford vs. the one-armed man in *The Fugitive*, the CTA vs. true love in *While You Were Sleeping*, Autobots vs. Decepticons in *Transformers 3*, and the greatest Patrick Swayze hillbilly ninja vs. Italian mob film of all time, *Next of Kin*.

## Smoking

Smoking is prohibited by state law at all restaurants, bars, nightclubs, workplaces, and public buildings. It's also banned within fifteen feet of any entrance, window, or exit to a public place, and at CTA train stations. The fine for violating the ban can range from \$100 to \$250.

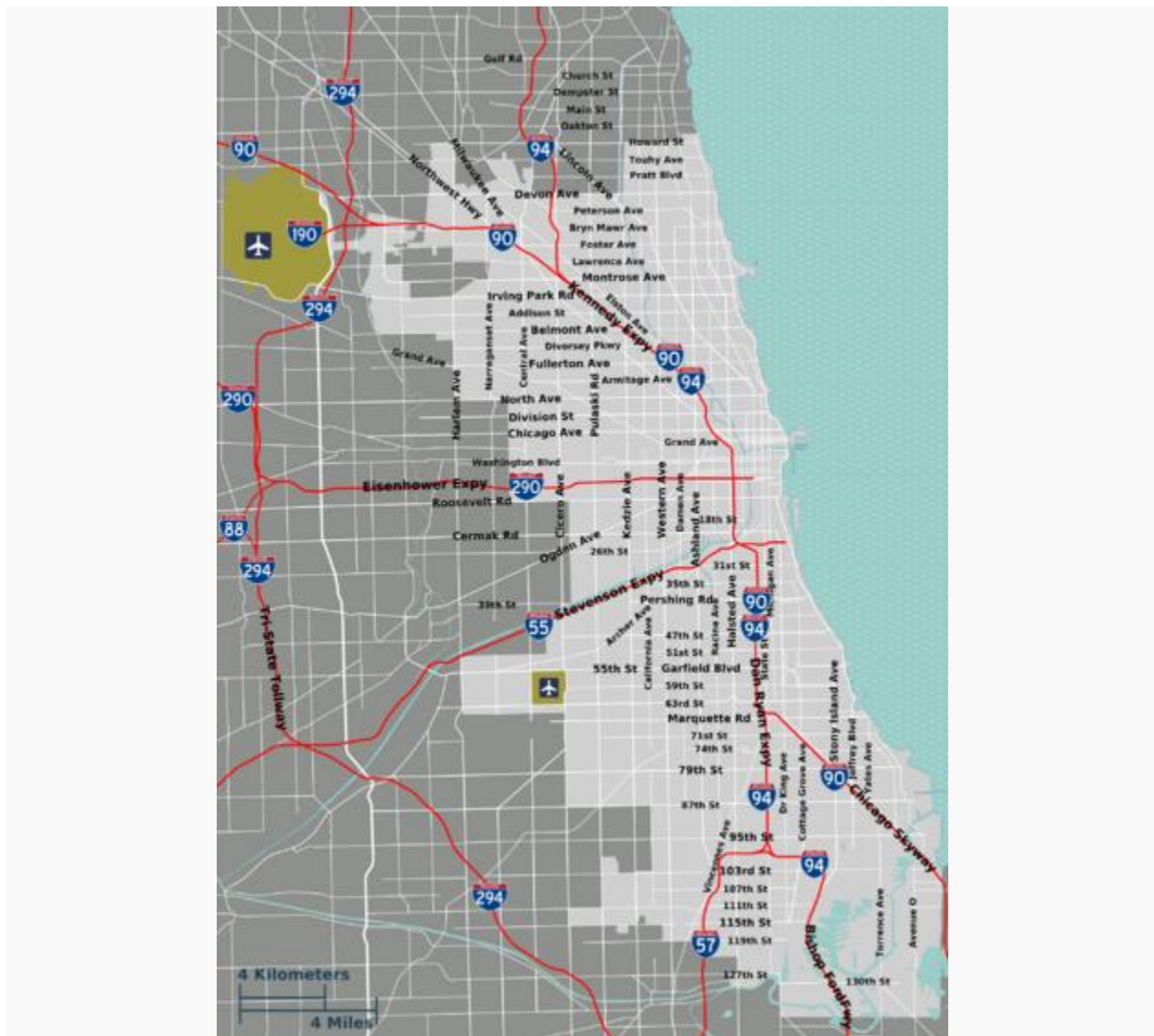
## Tourist Information

Chicago's visitor information centers offer maps, brochures and other information.

**Chicago Water Works Visitor Information Center**, 163 E Pearson Ave, ☎ +1 877 244-2246. M-Th 8AM-7PM, F 8AM-6PM, Sa 9AM-6PM, Su 10AM-6PM (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day). The city's main visitor information center is located on the Magnificent Mile in the historic Pumping Station, across the street from the Water Tower. In addition to extensive free visitor materials, there is a small cafe and a Hot Tix window for discount theater tickets.

**Chicago Cultural Center Visitor Information Center**, 77 E Randolph St, ☎ +1 312 744-8000. M-Th 8AM-7PM, F 8AM-6PM, Sa 9AM-6PM, Su 10AM-6PM (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day). A centrally located place to pick up a host of useful, free materials. The Cultural Center itself makes a good first stop on your tour, with free, worthwhile art and historical exhibits throughout the year.

# Get in



## By plane

Chicago (IATA: **CHI** for all airports) is served by two major airports: **O'Hare International Airport** and **Midway Airport**. There are plenty of taxis both to and from the city center, but they are quite expensive, especially during rush hours. Expect upwards of \$40 for O'Hare and \$30 for Midway. CTA trains provide direct service to both larger airports for \$2.25 from anywhere in the city — faster than a taxi during rush hour and a lot less expensive.

Many large hotels offer complimentary shuttle vans to one or both airports, or can arrange one for a charge (\$15-25) with advance notice.

## O'Hare

**O'Hare International Airport** (IATA: **ORD**, ICAO: **KORD**) is 17 miles northwest of downtown and serves many international and domestic carriers. **United Airlines** has the largest presence here (about 50%) followed by **American Airlines** with about 40%. Most connecting flights for smaller cities in the Midwest run through O'Hare. It's one of the biggest airports in the world, and it has always been notorious for delays and cancellations. Unfortunately, it's too far northwest for most travelers who get stuck overnight to head into the city. As a result, there are *plenty* of hotels in the O'Hare area. See the O'Hare article for listings.

The CTA Blue Line runs between the Loop and O'Hare every 15 minutes 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. A lot of repair work has been completed on the Blue line and the trip from O'Hare to the Loop now takes 35-50 minutes. The O'Hare station is the end of the line and is essentially in the basement of O'Hare airport. Walking from the platform to the ticket counters should take 5-10 minutes for Terminals 2 or 3, slightly more for Terminal 1, and a great deal longer for the International Terminal 5 (It is necessary to take the free people mover for transfer).

## Midway

**Midway International Airport** (IATA: **MDW**, ICAO: **KMDW**) is ten miles southwest of downtown. **Southwest Airlines** is the largest carrier here, followed by **AirTran**. If it's an option for your trip, Midway is more compact, less crowded, has fewer delays, and usually cheaper. And, of course, it's significantly closer to downtown.

The CTA Orange Line train runs between the Loop and Midway in around 25 minutes. Keep in mind that the CTA Midway Station is at the end of the Orange Line. There is an enclosed tunnel that links the station and airport but it takes approximately 10-15 minutes to walk from one to the other. There are a number of hotels clustered around Midway, too — see the Southwest Side article for listings.

## Others

**Chicago Executive Airport** (IATA: **PWK**, ICAO: **KPWK**) is nine miles north of O'Hare, serves the general and business aviation sector, and is the third busiest airport in Illinois. Approximately three hundred aircraft are based on the field and approximately 200,000 take-offs and landings occur annually. Air taxi and air charter companies such as **Jetset Charter** fly a variety of private charter aircraft and jets, from charter luxury Gulfstream's down to economical piston twins for small groups and individuals.

Milwaukee's **General Mitchell International Airport** (IATA: **MKE**, ICAO: **KMKE**) is served by 7 Amtrak trains per day (6 on Sunday), and the Hiawatha Service has a

95% on-time rating. The trip from Chicago Union Station to Mitchell Airport Station is about one hour and 15 minutes.

## By bus

**Greyhound**, 630 W Harrison St, ☎ +1 312 408-5800. 24 hours. America's largest bus carrier offers service to destinations throughout the Midwest. The main terminal is near the southwestern corner of the Loop. There are secondary terminals at the CTA Red Line station at 95th/Dan Ryan and the CTA transit building.

**Indian Trails**, (*at the Greyhound Station*). Frequent daily service to Michigan's Upper Peninsula via Wisconsin. Onward connections are available. Buses have Wi-Fi and power outlets.

**Megabus**, (*East across Canal St from Union Station*), ☎ +1 877 462-6342. Daily service across the Midwest with destinations from Memphis to Minneapolis. Buses have Wi-Fi and 110v outlets. Detroit \$1-50 / Milwaukee \$1-20 / Minneapolis \$1-52.

**Wisconsin Coach**, O'Hare Airport, ☎ +1 877-324-7767. Offers 14 buses daily, departing every hour, from O'Hare to Southeastern Wisconsin and Milwaukee, including Milwaukee Airport. ORD: \$26.

## By train



Three-level streets in the Loop

Chicago is historically the rail hub of the entire United States. Today, **Amtrak**, ☎ +1 800 872-7245, uses the magisterial **Union Station** (Canal St and Jackson Blvd) as the hub of its Midwestern routes, making Chicago one of the most convenient U.S. cities to visit by train, serving the majority of the passenger rail company's long-distance routes, with options from virtually every major US city. With its massive main hall, venerable history, and cinematic steps, Union Station is worth a visit even if you're not coming in by train.

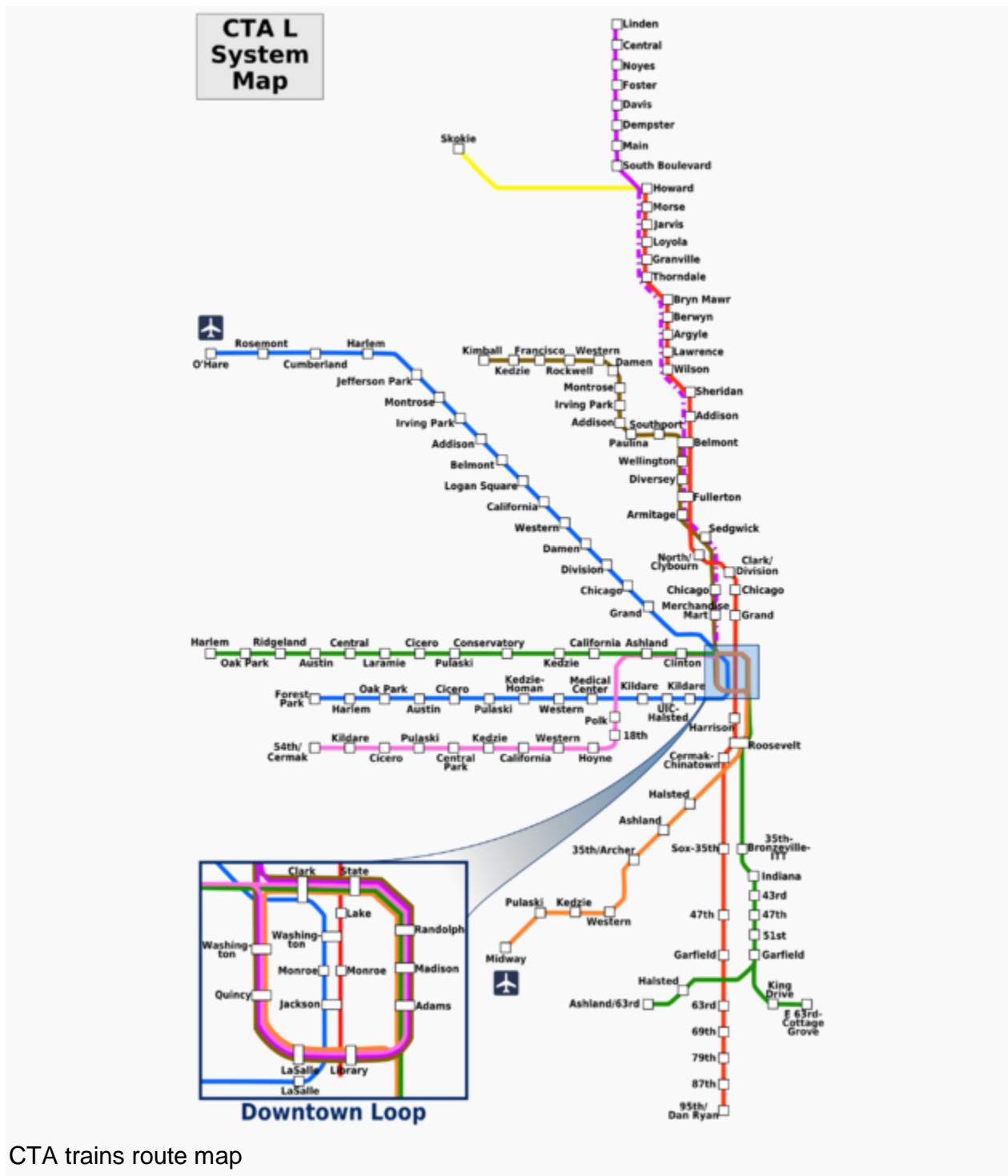
Most (but not all) Metra suburban trains run from Union Station and nearby **Ogilvie/Northwestern Station** (Canal St and Madison St), which are west of the Loop. Some southern lines run from stations on the east side of the Loop. The suburban trains run as far as Kenosha, Aurora, and Joliet, while the South Shore line runs through Indiana as far as South Bend. Several CTA buses converge upon the two stations, and the Loop CTA trains are within walking distance.

## By car

Chicagoans have a maddening habit of referring to some expressways by their names, not the numbers used to identify them on the signs you'll see posted on the U.S. interstate highway system, so you'll have to commit both name and number to memory. **I-55** (the **Stevenson Expressway**) will take you directly from St. Louis into downtown Chicago. **I-90/94** (**The Dan Ryan**) comes in from Indiana to the east (via the **Chicago Skyway** and **Bishop Ford Freeway**) and from central Illinois (via **I-57**). **I-90** (**The Kennedy**) comes in from Madison to the northwest. **I-94** (the **Edens Expressway**) comes in from Milwaukee to the north, but recent roadwork has slowed traffic considerably compared to I-90. **I-80** will get you to the city from Iowa which neighbors Illinois to the west.

If arriving downtown from Indiana, from the south on **I-94** or **I-90**, or from the north, Lake Shore Drive (**U.S. Highway 41**) provides a scenic introduction in both directions, day or night. If arriving on **I-55** from the southwest, or on **I-290** (the **Eisenhower Expressway**, formerly and sometimes still called **The Congress Expressway**) from the west, the skyline may also be visible from certain clear spots, but without the shore view. It should also be noted that I-55 from the southwest and I-90 through much of northwest Indiana are chock full of heavy industries with odors that'll knock your socks off, so plan your route downtown wisely.

# Get around



CTA trains route map

Navigating Chicago is easy. Block numbers are consistent across the whole city. Standard blocks, of 100 addresses each, are roughly 1/8th of a mile long. (Hence, a mile is equivalent to a street number difference of 800.) Each street is assigned a number based on its distance from the zero point of the address system, the

intersection of State Street and Madison Street. A street with a W (west) or E (east) number runs north-south, while a street with a N (north) or S (south) number runs east-west. A street's number is usually written on street signs at intersections, below the street name. Major thoroughfares are at each mile (multiples of 800) and secondary arteries at the half-mile marks. Thus, Western Ave at 2400 W is a north-south major thoroughfare, while Montrose Ave at 4400 N is an east-west secondary artery.

In general, "avenues" run north-south and "streets" run east-west, but there are numerous exceptions. (e.g., 48th Street may then be followed by 48th Place). In conversation, however, Chicagoans rarely distinguish between streets, avenues, boulevards, etc.

Several streets follow diagonal or meandering paths through the city such as Clark St, Lincoln Ave, Broadway, Milwaukee Ave, Ogden Ave, Archer Ave, Vincennes Ave, and South Chicago Ave.

## By public transit

The best way to see Chicago is by public transit. It is cheap (basically), efficient (at times), and safe (for the most part). The **Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)** oversees the various public transit agencies in the Chicagoland area. You can plan trips online with the RTA **trip planner** or get assistance by calling 836-7000 in any local area code between 5AM-1AM. The RTA also has an official partnership with Google Maps, which can provide routes with public transit.

## CTA

The **Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)** operates trains and buses in the city of Chicago and some of the suburbs. Put simply, the CTA *is* Chicago. It is a marvel and a beast, convenient, frustrating, and irreplaceable. Even if you have the option of driving while you're in town, no experience of Chicago is complete without a trip on the CTA.

Fares are paid with **transit cards**, which can be purchased and re-filled at kiosks in the lobby of every CTA station. All accept cash, and some accept credit cards. Many locals use the **Chicago Card**, which cannot be purchased at stations, but can be ordered online and also purchased at grocery stores and currency exchanges.

**Visitor passes** are sold for unlimited travel on the CTA and Pace: 1 Day (24 hours) for \$5.75; 3 Days for \$14; 7 Days for \$23 and 30 Days for \$86. These passes are on sale at certain train stations (notably, the O'Hare Blue Line station), currency exchanges and some convenience stores, and online. Transit cards for single rides or larger increments can also be purchased online.



Train rides of any length, from one side of the city to another or just one stop, cost \$2.25. At certain stations, you can transfer to other train lines at no extra cost. Once you have exited the turnstiles, entering another CTA station or boarding a CTA bus costs \$0.25, and doing it a third time is free, provided it is still within two hours of when you started the trip.

Locals refer to Chicago's public train system as the "L". (Most lines run on elevated tracks — get it?) All train lines radiate from the Loop to every corner of the city. The "Loop" name originally referred to a surface-level streetcar loop, which pre-dated the elevated tracks. That *any* form of transportation preceded the present one may come as a surprise, given how old some of the stations look, but they work.



A CTA bus - note the number/destination and symbol for wheelchair accessibility

CTA train lines are divided by colors: Red, Green, Brown, Blue, Purple, Yellow, Orange and Pink. All lines lead to the Loop except the Yellow Line, which is a nonstop shuttle between the suburb of Skokie and the northern border of Chicago. The Red and Blue lines run 24/7, making Chicago one of only two American cities with 24-hour rail service. Hours for the other lines vary somewhat by day, but as a general rule are from about 4:30AM-12:40AM, slightly later on weekends.

Before you travel, find out the name of the train stop closest to your destination, and the color of the train line on which it is located. Once you're on-board, you'll find route maps in each train car, above the door. The same map is also available online. The name signs on platforms often have the station's location in the street grid, e.g. "5900 N, 1200 W" for Thorndale.

There should be an attendant on duty at every train station. They cannot provide change or deal with money, but they can help you figure out where you need to go and guide you through using the machines.



A CTA bus stop: note the symbols for wheelchair accessibility and late-night hours.

**Buses** run on nearly every major street in the city. Look for the blue and white sign, which should give a map of the route taken by the bus and major streets/stops along the way. Once inside, watch the front of the bus, a red LED display will list the names of the streets as they pass, making it easy to stop exactly where you want, even a small side street. To request a stop, pull the cord hanging above the window and make sure you hear an audible 'ding'. Hollering at the bus driver will raise tempers but works in a pinch.

Rides of any length cost \$2 with a transit card or Chicago Card or \$2.25 in cash. Major bus routes run 7-15 minutes apart during daylight hours, depending on the route. Less-traveled routes or routes during off-peak hours may run less frequently. Check the sign to be sure the bus is still running. There are several bus routes that are 24/7; these are called OWL routes, and the signs usually have an owl to belabor that point. (See individual district articles for major bus routes through different parts of the city.)

If you have a web-enabled mobile device, the CTA runs a little godsend called the **CTA Bus Tracker** [23], which uses GPS to provide reliable, real-time tracking information for almost all bus routes. If your mobile phone doesn't have internet service, you can use **CTA By Text** to receive bus arrival times via text message.

CTA buses accept transit cards but do not sell them. They also accept cash but do not provide change. You must pay exact change.

In compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, all CTA buses and some train stations are accessible to wheelchairs. Wheelchair-accessible 'L' stations are indicated by the international wheelchair symbol and have elevators or are at ground level. If you are trying to get to a place with a non-accessible station, there will be alternate routes by bus so contact the CTA for more information.

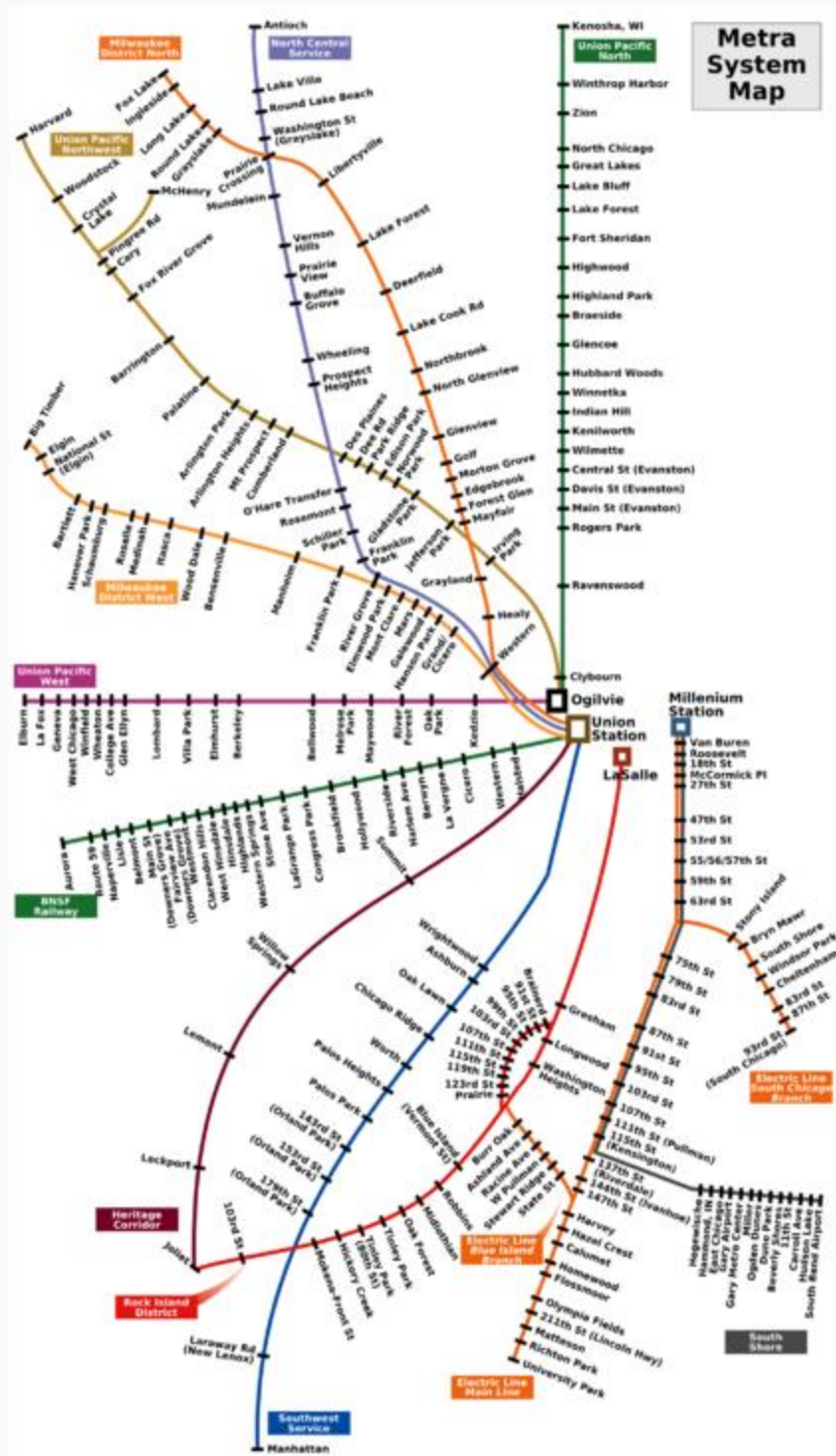
Crime on the CTA is low, but as with any other major urban area, travelers should be aware of their surroundings when traveling in the wee hours of the night, and sit

close to the driver if you feel uncomfortable for any reason. Buses are being equipped with video cameras as the fleet is upgraded. Some train cars have a button and speaker for emergency communication with the driver, located in the center aisle of the car on the wall next to the door. This is for emergencies only: do not press this just to chat, as the driver is required to halt the train until the situation has been confirmed as resolved, and your fellow passengers will not be amused.

## **Metra and South Shore**



Metra train on the way to the Loop



Metra system map

**Metra**, ☎ +1 312 322-6777, runs commuter trains for the suburbs, providing service within Illinois, to Kenosha, Wisconsin, out west, and to the South Shore railroad, which provides service to South Bend, Indiana. Metra trains are fast, clean, and

punctual, but unpleasantly crowded during rush hour. Generally, every car or every other car on the train has a bathroom.

Metra's **Electric Line** provides service to the convention center (McCormick Place), Hyde Park (Museum of Science and Industry, University of Chicago), and the Far Southeast Side's Pullman Historic District and Rainbow Beach. The Electric Line is *fast*, taking at most 15 minutes to reach Hyde Park from the Loop. Unfortunately, service outside of rush hours is infrequent (about once/hour), so be sure to check the schedules while planning your trip.

Although there are plans to change this in the future, none of the commuter trains currently accept CTA transit cards as payment. The fare to McCormick Place and Hyde Park, however, is only \$2. Buy your tickets before boarding the train at a window or one of the automated vending machines. You can buy a ticket on the train, but that comes with an extra \$2/ticket surcharge.

Ten-ride, weekly, and monthly passes are available. If you have a group of four or more people, it may be cheaper to purchase a ten-ride card and have all of your fares punched from that one card. If using Metra on Saturday and/or Sunday, you can purchase an unlimited ride weekend pass for just \$7. Keep in mind that Metra only accepts cash at this time.

## **Pace**

**Pace** [26] runs buses in the suburbs, although some routes do cross into the city, particularly in Rogers Park at the Howard (Red/Purple/Yellow Line) CTA station and the Far Northwest Side at the Jefferson Park (Blue Line) CTA station. Pace provides paratransit services should you need to go somewhere inconvenient via CTA.

## **By car**

Avoid driving in downtown Chicago if at all possible. Traffic is awful, pedestrians are constantly wandering into the street out of turn, and garages in the Loop can cost as much as \$40 per day. And although downtown streets are laid out on the grid, many have multiple levels which confuse even the most hardened city driver. Even outside of the city center, street parking may not be readily available. If you do find a spot, check street signs to make sure that a) no residential permit is required to park here and b) parking is not disallowed during certain hours for "street cleaning", rush hour or something along those lines. Parking restrictions are swiftly and mercilessly enforced in the form of tickets and towing — be especially wary during snowy weather.

Parking is handled by one-per-block kiosks, which will issue a slip for you to put in your front window. The kiosks will accept cash or credit cards. If the kiosk fails for any reason (such as the printer running out of paper), there should be a phone

number to call to report it and ensure you don't receive an undeserved ticket. As you do, any passing Chicagoan will be happy to commiserate about how badly the city bungled privatizing the parking meters.

Be advised: **talking on a handheld cell phone while driving is illegal** in Chicago, and the police are eager to write tickets for it. If you need to take a call, use a hands-free headset — or better yet, pull over.

The perpetual construction is bad enough, but drivers on the city expressways can be very aggressive. For those used to driving on expressways in the Northeast, this may be a welcome reminder of home. For everyone else, though, it can be intimidating.

## By taxi

### Your Name Here

Determined to shake off the burden of a world-class cultural heritage, Chicago has always found ways to undercut its own treasures in exchange for a quick buck. Of late, "naming rights" are all the rage; while official city tourism guides rush to comply, using the new names will earn an eye roll or an oblivious look from most Chicagoans (and cab drivers). A few of the worst offenders:

**Sears Tower** — 36 years after it was built, North America's tallest building was redubbed the "Willis Tower" for a bunch of junk bond traders; even more surprising than the renaming was how little the owners got for it.

**Comiskey Park** — Winning the city's first World Series in nearly a century helped earn some acceptance for the "U.S. Cellular Field" ("The Cell") moniker, but it's still regarded as profanity by the old-timers in Bridgeport,

where the first Comiskey Park was built in 1910.

**Hollywood Beach** — The favorite beach of Chicago's GLBT community was renamed "Kathy Osterman Beach" for one of the mayor's Edgewater based political cronies, but more than a decade later, only city signage knows it by that name.

Chicago has some of the cheapest taxi fares in the U.S. Taxis can be hailed from the street throughout the major tourist areas, and are strictly regulated by the city. Fares are standard and the initial charge ("flag pull") is \$2.25 for the first 1/9 mile, then \$0.20 for each additional 1/9 mile or \$0.20 for each elapsed 36 seconds. There is a \$1.00 fuel surcharge added to the initial charge. There is also a flat \$1.00 charge for the second passenger, and then a \$0.50 charge for each additional passenger after that (for example, if four people take a taxi together, there will be \$2.00 in additional flat fees). There is no additional charge for baggage or credit card use. Rides from O'Hare and Midway to outer suburbs cost an additional one half the metered fee. Give the driver the nearest major intersection to which you are heading (if you know it) and then the specific address.

Outside of the downtown, North Side, Near West and Near South neighborhoods, you will likely have greater difficulty hailing a taxi directly from the street. In these situations, you can call for a taxi to come pick you up. Taxis typically take 10-15 minutes from the time you call to arrive. The principal companies are:

**American-United Taxi**, ☎ +1 773 248-7600

**Checker Cab**, ☎ +1 312 243-2537

**Flash Cab**, ☎ +1 773 561-1444

**Yellow Cab**, ☎ +1 312 829-4222

The above applies only to Chicago taxis. Suburban taxi cabs have their own fares and rates, depending on the laws and regulations of the town in which they are based.

## By bicycle

Chicago has a bike path along the shores of Lake Michigan, making north-south travel very convenient as long as the weather is favorable by the lake. Most major

city streets have bike lanes, and the biking culture is established enough that cars tend to accommodate and (grudgingly) yield to bicycles. Bike trips can also be combined with rides on the CTA. See the bicycling section below for more details.

## By water taxi

In the summer, water taxis are sometimes more convenient than the CTA, if you are traveling around the fringes of downtown. They are also a relatively cheap way to take in some offshore views. Two private companies operate water taxi services around the Loop.

**Chicago Water Taxi** (*Wendella Boats*) ☎ +1 312 337-1446, uses yellow boats and has three stops (Michigan Ave, LaSalle/Clark, Madison St), plus Chinatown on weekends (\$2, \$4 Chinatown/all day pass). Taxis run roughly M-F 6:30AM-6:30PM, Sa-Su 10:30AM-6:30PM.

**Shoreline Sightseeing** ☎ +1 312 222-9328, has blue and white boats. It is more expensive (\$5-7), but it serves seven destinations including some on Lake Michigan (Union Station/Sears Tower, Wells & Wacker, Michigan Ave Bridge, Navy Pier-Ogden Slip, Navy Pier-Dock St, Buckingham Fountain, and Museum Campus). Shoreline taxis run 10AM-6PM every twenty minutes and 6PM-9PM every half hour Memorial Day–Labor Day, with occasional and less frequent service in the spring and fall.

## See

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### Itineraries

Along the Magnificent Mile — one day and night in Chicago, with skyscrapers, shopping, food, parks, and amazing views of the city from high and low.

Loop Art Tour — a 2-4 hour walking tour of downtown Chicago's magnificent collection of modern sculpture.



## Museums



Penguin triumphant, Lincoln Park Zoo

Chicago's set of museums and cultural institutions are among the best in the world. Three of them are located within a short walk of each other in the Near South, on what is known as the **Museum Campus**, in a beautiful spot along the lake: the **Adler Planetarium**, with all sorts of cool hands-on space exhibits and astronomy shows; the **Field Museum of Natural History**, which features **SUE**, the giant Tyrannosaurus Rex skeleton, and a plethora of Egyptian treasures; and the **Shedd Aquarium**, with dolphins, whales, sharks, and the best collection of marine life east of California. A short distance away, in Hyde Park, is the most fun of them all, the **Museum of Science and Industry** — or, as generations of Chicago-area grammar school students know it, the best field trip ever.

In the Loop, the **Art Institute of Chicago** has a handful of iconic household names among an unrivaled collection of Impressionism, modern and classical art, and tons of historical artifacts. And in Lincoln Park, a short trip from the Loop, the cheerful (and free) **Lincoln Park Zoo** welcomes visitors every day of the week, with plentiful highlights like the Regenstein Center for African Apes.

Also, Chicago has some knockout less well-known museums scattered throughout the city like the **International Museum of Surgical Science** in Gold Coast, **Chicago History Museum** in Lincoln Park, **DuSable Museum of African American History** in Washington Park, **National Museum of Mexican Art** in Pilsen, the **Polish Museum of America** in Wicker Park, and the **Museum of Photography** in the Loop. The University of Chicago, in Hyde Park, has several cool (and free) museums that are open to all visitors, showcasing a spectacular collection of antiquities and modern/contemporary art.

Discount packages like the **Chicago CityPASS** can be purchased before you arrive in town. They cover admission to some museums and other tourist attractions, allowing you to cut to the front of lines, and may include discounts for restaurants and shopping. Also, programs such as Bank of America's Museums to Go offer free admission at multiple Chicago museums for designated times which can save you a small fortune on admission fees.

## Architecture

See the *Chicago skyline guide* to find out more about the city's skyscrapers.



Prairie School Style Home, Oak Park

From the sternly classical to the space-age, from the Gothic to the coolly modern, Chicago is a place with an embarrassment of architectural riches. **Frank Lloyd Wright** fans will swoon to see his earliest buildings in Chicago, where he began his professional career and established the Prairie School architectural style, with numerous homes in Hyde Park/Kenwood, Oak Park, and Rogers Park — over 100 buildings in the Chicago metropolitan area! Frank Lloyd Wright learned his craft at the foot of the *lieber meister*, **Louis Sullivan**, whose ornate, awe-inspiring designs were once the jewels of the Loop, and whose few surviving buildings (Auditorium Theater, Carson Pirie Scott Building, one in the Ukrainian Village) still stand apart.

The 1871 Chicago Fire forced the city to rebuild. The ingenuity and ambition of Sullivan, his teacher **William Le Baron Jenney** (Manhattan Building), and contemporaries like **Burnham & Root** (Monadnock, Rookery) and **Holabird & Roche/Root** (Chicago Board of Trade) made Chicago the definitive city of their era. The world's first **skyscrapers** were built in the Loop as those architects received ever more demanding commissions. It was here that steel-frame construction was invented, allowing buildings to rise above the limits of load-bearing walls. Later, **Mies van der Rohe** would adapt Sullivan's ethos with landmark buildings in Bronzeville (Illinois Institute of Technology) and the Loop (Chicago Federal Center). Unfortunately, Chicago's world-class architectural heritage is almost evenly matched

by the world-class recklessness with which the city has treated it, and the list is long of masterpieces that have been needlessly demolished for bland new structures.

Today, Chicago boasts three out of America's five tallest buildings: the **Sears Tower** (1st), the Trump Tower (2nd), and the Aon Center (5th) (although the local favorite is actually #6: the John Hancock Center). For years, the Sears Tower was the tallest building in the world, but it has since lost the title. Various developers insist they're bringing the title back with proposed skyscrapers. Until they do, Chicago will have to settle for having the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere with the Sears Tower, although the Hancock has a better view and is quite frankly better-looking.

Chicago is particularly noted for its vast array of **sacred architecture**, as diverse theologically as it is artistically. There were more than two thousand churches in Chicago at the opening of the twenty-first century. Of particular note are the so-called *Polish Cathedrals* like **St. Mary of the Angels** in Bucktown and **St. Hyacinth Basilica** in Avondale, as well as several treasures in Ukrainian Village — beautifully crafted buildings with old world flourishes recognized for their unusually large size and impressive scope.

Architectural tours cover the landmarks on foot and by popular river boat tours, or by just standing awestruck on a downtown bridge over the Chicago River; see individual district articles for details. For a tour on the cheap, the short trip around the elevated Loop train circuit (Brown/Purple Lines) may be worth every penny of the \$2 fare.

## **African-American history**

Chicago's African-American history begins with the city's African-American founder, **Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable**. Born to a Haitian slave and a French pirate, he married a woman from the Potawatomi tribe, and built a house and trading post on the Chicago River on the spot of today's Pioneer Court (the square just south of the Tribune Tower in the Near North). Du Sable lived on the Chicago River with his family from the 1770s to 1800, when he sold his house to John Kinzie, whose family and friends would later claim to have founded the city.

Relative to other northern cities, African-Americans constituted a fairly large part of Chicago's early population because of Illinois' more tolerant culture, which was inherited from fervent anti-slavery Mormon settlers. As a non-slave state generally lacking official segregation laws, Illinois was an attractive place to live for black freedmen and fugitive slaves.

By the 1920s, Chicago had a thriving middle class African-American community based in the Bronzeville neighborhood, which at the time became known as "The Black Metropolis," home to a cultural renaissance comparable to the better-known Harlem Renaissance of New York. African-American literature of the time was

represented by local poetess **Gwendolyn Brooks** and novelist **Richard Wright**, most famous for his *Native Son*, nearly all of which takes place in Chicago's Bronzeville and Hyde Park/Kenwood. The Chicago school of African-American literature distinguished itself from the East Coast by its focus on the new realities of urban African-American life. Chicago became a *major* center of African-American jazz, and *the* center for the blues. Jazz great **Louis Armstrong** got his start there; other famous black Chicagoans of the day included Bessie Coleman — the world's first licensed black pilot, the hugely influential African-American and women's civil rights activist **Ida B. Wells**, the great pitcher/manager/executive of Negro League Baseball **Andrew "Rube" Foster**, and many more.

Both fueling and threatening Chicago's black renaissance was the single most influential part of Chicago's African-American history: **the Great Migration**. African-Americans from the rural South moved to the industrial cities of the North due to the post-WWI shortage of immigrant industrial labor, and to escape the Jim Crow Laws and racial violence of the South. The massive wave of migrants, most from Mississippi, increased Chicago's black population by more than 500,000. With it came southern food, Mississippi blues, and the challenges of establishing adequate housing for so many recent arrivals — a challenge that they would have to meet themselves, without help from a racist and neglectful city government.

Black Chicago's renaissance was brought to its knees by the Great Depression; its fate was sealed ironically by the 1937 creation of the Chicago Housing Authority, which sought to build affordable public housing for the city. However well-intentioned the project may have sounded, the results were disastrous. The largest housing projects by far were the 1940 Ida B. Wells projects, which were designed to "warehouse" Chicago's population of poor African-Americans in a district far away from white population centers, the Cabrini Green projects, which developed a reputation as the most violent housing projects in the nation, and the massive 1962 Robert Taylor Homes in Bronzeville, which were forced to house an additional 16,000 people beyond their intended 11,000 capacity. The Black Metropolis proved unable to cope with this massive influx of new, impoverished residents, and the urban blight that came from concentrating such a great number of them in one place.

Further damaging to Chicago's black population was the phenomenon of "white flight" that accompanied the introduction of African-Americans to Chicago neighborhoods. Unwilling to live beside black neighbors, many Chicagoans fled desegregation to the suburbs. This trend was accelerated by the practice of "blockbusting," where unsavory real estate agents would fan racist fears in order to buy homes on the cheap. As a result, Chicago neighborhoods (with the notable exceptions of Hyde Park/Kenwood, and Rogers Park) never truly integrated, and the social, educational, and economic networks that incoming African-Americans hoped to join disintegrated in the wake of fleeing white communities. During this period, Chicago experienced a huge population loss and large sections of the city became

covered with vacant lots, which in turn created the conditions for crime to flourish. A number of Chicago's major roads, most notably the Dan Ryan Expressway, were built in part to segregate these areas from more prosperous ones like the Loop.

In 1966, **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** decided to come north and chose Chicago as his first destination. However, from the moment of his arrival on the Southwest Side, King was utterly confounded. The death threats that followed his march through Marquette Park were challenge enough, but nowhere in the South was there a more expert player of politics than Chicago's Mayor Richard J. Daley. King left town frustrated and exhausted, but **Rev. Jesse Jackson** continued civil rights efforts in Chicago through his Operation PUSH. The 1983 election of **Mayor Harold Washington**, the first black mayor of Chicago, was a watershed event for Chicago's African-American population, and although long battles with obstructionist white politicians lay ahead, it marked the moment when African-American elected officials became major, independent forces in Chicago.

Today, comprising well over a third of the city, Chicago's black population is the country's second largest, after New York. The broader South Side is the cultural center of Chicago's black community; it constitutes the largest single African-American neighborhood in the country and boasts the nation's greatest concentration of black-owned businesses. Chicagoans ignorant of these areas may tell you that they are dangerous and crime-ridden, but the reality is much more complex. There are strong, middle and upper class black communities throughout the city, some of the more prominent of which include upper Bronzeville, Hyde Park/Kenwood, Chatham, South Shore, and Beverly.

Bronzeville is the obvious destination for those interested in African-American history, although Kenwood also boasts interesting recent history, as it has been (or is) home to championship boxer Muhammad Ali, Nation of Islam leaders Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan, and **President Barack Obama**. No one should miss the **DuSable Museum of African-American History** in Bronzeville, the first museum of African-American history in the United States. And if your interest is more precisely in African-American culture than history, head down to Chatham and South Shore to enter the heart of Chicago's black community.

## Ethnic neighborhoods



Wentworth Ave, Chinatown's main street

Chicago is among the most diverse cities in America, and many neighborhoods reflect the character and culture of the immigrants who established them. Some, however, do more than just reflect: they *absorb* you in a place that, for several blocks at a time, may as well be a chunk of another country, picked up and dropped near the shores of Lake Michigan. The best of Chicago's ethnic neighborhoods are completely uncompromised, and that makes them a real highlight for visitors.

Chicago's Chinatown is among the most active Chinatowns in the world. It even has its own stop on the CTA Red Line. It's on the South Side near Bridgeport, birthplace of the Irish political power-brokers who have run Chicago government for most of the last century. More Irish communities exist on the Far Southwest Side, where they even have an Irish castle to seal the deal. The Southwest Side houses enormous populations of Polish Highlanders and Mexicans, as well as reduced Lithuanian and Bohemian communities.

No serious Chicago gourmand would eat Indian food that didn't come from a restaurant on **Devon Avenue** in Rogers Park. It's paradise for spices, saris, and the latest Bollywood flicks. Lawrence Avenue in Albany Park is sometimes called **Seoul Drive** for the Korean community there, and the Persian food on Kedzie Avenue nearby is simply astonishing. At the **Argyle** Red Line stop, by the intersection of Argyle and Broadway in Uptown, you'd be forgiven for wondering if you were still in America; Vietnamese, Thais, and Laotians share space on a few blocks of restaurants, grocery stores, and even dentists. Neither the Swedish settlers who built Andersonville or the Germans from Lincoln Square are the dominant presence in those neighborhoods any more, but their identity is still present in restaurants, cultural centers, and other small discoveries to be made. Likewise, **Little Italy** and **Greektown** on the Near West Side survive only as restaurant strips.

A more contemporary experience awaits in Pilsen and Little Village, two neighborhoods on the Lower West Side where the Spanish signage outnumbers the

English; in fact, Chicago has the second largest Mexican and Puerto Rican populations outside of their respective home countries. Pilsen and its arts scene is an especially an exciting place to visit.

It's hard to imagine displacement being a concern for the Polish community on the city's Far Northwest and Southwest sides. The **Belmont-Central** business district is what you might consider the epicenter of Polish activity,. Bars, restaurants, and dozens of other types of Polish businesses thrive on this strip, and on a smaller section of Milwaukee Avenue (between Roscoe and Diversey) in the vicinity of *St. Hyacinth Basilica* which bears the Polish name of **Jackowo**- Chicago's Polish Village. Polish Highlanders, or Góral, on the other hand dominate the city's Southwest Side with a cuisine and culture that is decidedly Balkan. A host of restaurants and cultural institutions visibly display the rustic touch of their Carpathian craft such as the **Polish Highlanders Alliance of North America** at Archer Avenue just northeast of its intersection with Pulaski Road. **Taste of Polonia**, held over Labor Day weekend on the grounds of the Copernicus Foundation at the historic **Gateway Theatre**, draws an annual attendance of about 50,000 people and is touted as the city's largest ethnic fest.

## Do

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### Beaches

Chicago is not known as a beach destination, but Lake Michigan is the largest freshwater lake located entirely within the United States, and Chicagoans flock to its sandy shores. Anyone can show up and swim — there are no admission fees, miles of beaches are within walking distance of the Red Line, and almost none of the lakefront is spoiled by "private" beaches. Despite the latitude, the water is quite warm in the summer and early fall (check with the NOAA for temperature). The Chicago shore has been called the second cleanest urban waterfront *in the world*, although bacteria levels in the water do force occasional — but rare — beach closures (which are clearly posted at the beach, and online). Lifeguards will be posted (usually in a rowboat) if the beach is officially open.

Oak Street Beach and North Avenue Beach (in the Near North and Lincoln Park) are the fashionable places to sun-tan and be seen, but Rogers Park has mile after mile of less pretentious sand and surf. Hyde Park's Promontory Point is beautiful, and offers skyline views from its submerged beach by the rocks (although a swim there is *technically* against city rules). Hollywood Beach in Edgewater is the main gay beach.

## Parks



The Osaka Garden on Jackson Park's Wooded Isle

Where there are beaches, there are lakefront parks. During the summer months, the parks are a destination for organized and impromptu volleyball and soccer games, chess matches, and plenty more, with tennis and basketball courts dotted along the way.

There are also terrific parks further away from the lake. In the Loop, **Grant Park** hosts music festivals throughout the year, and **Millennium Park** is a fun destination for all ages, especially during the summer. In Hyde Park, **Midway Park** offers skating, and summer and winter gardens in the shadow of the academic giant, the University of Chicago, and **Jackson Park** has golf, more gardens and the legacy of the city's shining moment, the 1893 World's Colombian Exposition. In Bronzeville, **Washington Park** is one of the city's best places for community sports. And that's just a brief overview. Almost every neighborhood in Chicago has a beloved park.

## Events & Festivals

If you're *absolutely* determined and you plan carefully, you may be able to visit Chicago during a festival-less week. It's a challenge, though. Most neighborhoods, parishes, and service groups host their own annual festivals throughout the spring, summer, and fall [34]. There are a few can't-miss city-wide events, though. In the Loop, Grant Park hosts **Taste of Chicago** in July, and four major music festivals: **Blues Fest** and **Gospel Fest** in June, **Lollapalooza** in August, and **Jazz Fest** over Labor Day Weekend. All but Lollapalooza are free. The Chicago-based music website **Pitchfork Media** also hosts their own annual three day festival of rock, rap, and more in the summer.

## Sports

With entries in every major professional sports league and several universities in the area, Chicago sports fans have a lot to keep them occupied. The **Chicago Bears** play football at Soldier Field in the Near South from warm September to frigid January. Since the baseball teams split the city in half, nothing seizes the Chicago



sports consciousness like a playoff run from the Bears. Aspiring fans will be expected to be able to quote a minimum of two verses of the *Super Bowl Shuffle* from memory, tear up at the mention of Walter Payton, and provide arguments as to how Butkus, Singletary, and Urlacher represent stages in the evolution of the linebacker, with supporting evidence in the form of grunts, yells, and fists slammed on tables.

The **Chicago Bulls** play basketball at the United Center on the Near West Side. While quality of play and ticket prices may never again reach Jordan-era mania, they're still an exciting team to watch, led by young star Derrick Rose. The **Chicago Blackhawks** share quarters with the Bulls. As one of the "Original Six" teams in professional hockey, the Blackhawks have a long history in their sport, and the team is experiencing a renaissance after capturing the Stanley Cup in 2010 for the first time in 49 years. Home games for both teams tend to sell out, but tickets can usually be found if you check around. Both the Bulls and the Blackhawks play from the end of October to the beginning of April.

It's baseball, though, in which the tribal fury of Chicago sports is best expressed. The **Chicago Cubs** play at Wrigley Field on the North Side, in Lakeview, and the **Chicago White Sox** play at U.S. Cellular Field (Comiskey Park, underneath the corporate naming rights) on the South Side, in Bridgeport. Both franchises have more than a century's worth of history, and both teams play 81 home games from April to the beginning of October. Everything else is a matter of fiercely held opinion. The two three-game series when the teams play each other are the hottest sports tickets in Chicago during any given year. If someone offers you tickets to a game, pounce.

There are plenty of smaller leagues in the city as well, although some play their games in the suburbs. The **Chicago Fire** (Major League Soccer) and **Chicago Red Stars** (Women's Professional Soccer) play soccer in the suburb of Bridgeview, the **Chicago Sky** play women's professional basketball at the UIC Pavilion on the Near West Side, and the **Windy City Rollers** skate flat-track roller derby in neighboring Cicero. Minor league baseball teams dot the suburbs as well.

While college athletics are not one of Chicago's strong points, Northwestern football (in Evanston) and DePaul basketball (off-campus in Rosemont) show occasional signs of life. If you find yourself in Hyde Park, ask someone how the University of Chicago football team is doing — it's a surefire conversation starter.

## Theater



The Gateway Theatre in Jefferson Park, seat of the Copernicus Foundation. The theater's Baroque spire is a replica of the Royal Castle in Warsaw.

Modern American comedy — the good parts, at least — was born when a group of young actors from Hyde Park formed The Compass Players, fusing intelligence and a commitment to character with an improvisational spark. One strand of their topical, hyper-literate comedy led, directly or indirectly, to Shelly Berman, Mike Nichols & Elaine May, Lenny Bruce, *M\*A\*S\*H* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*; another strand, namely **The Second City**, led to *Saturday Night Live* and a pretty huge percentage of the funny movies and television of the last thirty years. Still in Chicago's Old Town (and few other places as well), still smart and still funny, Second City does two-act sketch revues followed by one act of improv. If you only see one show while you're in Chicago, Second City is a good choice.

Improvisational comedy as a performance art form is a big part of the Chicago theater scene. At Lakeview and Uptown theaters like **The Annoyance Theater**, **I.O.**, and **The Playground**, young actors take classes and perform shows that range from ragged to inspired throughout the week. Some are fueled by the dream of making the cast of *SNL* or Tina Fey's latest project, and some just enjoy doing good work on-stage, whether or not they're getting paid for it (and most aren't). There's no guarantee that you'll see something great on any given night, but improv tends to be cheaper than anything else in town, and it can definitely be worth the risk. Another popular theater experience is the comedy/drama hybrid **Too Much Light Makes**

**The Baby Go Blind**, offering 30 plays in 60 minutes every weekend in Andersonville.

**Steppenwolf**, in Lincoln Park, is Chicago's other landmark theater. Founded in 1976, they have a history of taking risks onstage, and they have the ensemble to back it up, with heavyweights like Joan Allen, John Malkovich, and Gary Sinise. Steppenwolf isn't cheap any more, but they mix good, young actors with their veteran ensemble and still choose interesting, emotionally-charged scripts. It's the best place in town to see modern, cutting-edge theater with a bit of "I went to..." name-drop value for the folks back home.

Most of the prestige theaters, including the **Broadway in Chicago** outlets, are located in the Loop or the Near North. Tickets are expensive and can be tough to get, but shows destined for Broadway like *The Producers* often make their debut here. For the cost-conscious, the **League of Chicago Theatres** operates **Hot Tix** [35], which offers short-notice half-price tickets to many Chicago shows.

One theater to see, regardless of the production, is **The Auditorium** in the Loop. It's a masterpiece of architecture and of performance space. Designed by Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan, who were on a commission from syndicate of local business magnates to bring some culture to the heathen city, it was the tallest building in Chicago and one of the tallest in the world at the time of its opening in 1889, and it's still an impressive sight, inside and out.

## Bicycles

Chicago has a strong, passionate bicycle culture, and riding opportunities abound. Pedaling your way around the city is one of the best ways to get to know Chicago. And the terrain is mostly flat — a boon for easy-going cyclists! If you don't have a bike, that's no problem. **Bobby's Bike Hike** has the official city concession, with a central bike rental location near Navy Pier, at the old North Pier at 465 N. McClurg Court.

The scenic **Lakefront Trail** runs for 18 continuous miles along the city's beautiful shoreline, from Hollywood Beach in Edgewater to the magnificent South Shore Cultural Center. Even while riding at a moderate pace, traveling downtown along the lakefront can be faster than driving or taking the CTA! If you're starting from downtown, you'll be at the approximate midpoint of the trail. Head south if you want a speed workout with fewer crowds, or north to see more of the locals at play.

Further inland, many streets have bike lanes, and signs direct riders to major bike routes. The City of Chicago maintains helpful **bicycle resources online**, including major civic bike events and (slow) interactive maps of major streets with bike lanes.

Bicyclists have to follow the same "rules of the road" as automobiles (stop at red lights and stop signs, etc). Bicycle riding is not allowed on sidewalks (except for

children under age 12). This rule is strictly enforced in higher density neighborhoods, mostly areas near the lake, and is considered a criminal misdemeanor offense. You must walk your bike on the sidewalk.

CTA buses are all equipped with front bike racks, which carry up to two bicycles, and 'L' trains permit two bicycles per car *except* during rush hour (roughly 7-9:30AM and 3:30-6:30PM weekdays, excluding major holidays on which the CTA is running on a Sunday schedule). With the buses, inspect the rack closely for wear or damage and be absolutely certain that the bike is secured before you go, lest it fall off in traffic (and be immediately flattened by the bus). The CTA will fight tooth and nail to avoid reimbursing you for the loss, and the driver might not stop to let you retrieve it.

Bikes may be rented from the North Avenue Beach House (Lincoln Park), Navy Pier, (Near North), the Millennium Park bike station (Loop), and from several bike shops in the city. Another option is to contact the terrific **Working Bikes Cooperative**, an all-volunteer group of bike lovers that collects and refurbishes bikes, and then sells a few in Chicago to support their larger project of shipping bikes to Africa and South America. You could buy a cheap bike and donate it back when you're done, or even spend a day or two working as a volunteer.

For an opportunity to connect with the local bike community and take a memorable trip through the city, don't miss the **Critical Mass** rides on the last Friday of every month, starting from Daley Plaza in the Loop (5:30PM). With numbers on their side, the hundreds or even thousands of bike riders wind up taking over entire streets along the way, with themed routes that are voted upon at the outset of the trip. Anyone is free to join or fall away wherever they like. Police are generally cooperative — take cues from more experienced riders.

## Learn

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Several major and minor universities call Chicago home. The **University of Chicago** and **Northwestern University** are undoubtedly the most prestigious among them. The University of Chicago's Gothic campus is in Hyde Park, which is, famously, "home to more Nobel Prizes per square kilometer than any other neighborhood on Earth." Further north, in the Bronzeville area, is the **Illinois Institute of Technology**, which has notable programs in engineering and architecture. **Northwestern University** has its main campus in Evanston, just north of Chicago, but it also has campuses in the Near North off Michigan Ave, including its medical, law, and business schools.

On the North Side, there are two major Catholic universities with over a hundred years in Chicago: **DePaul University**, in Lincoln Park, and **Loyola University**, in Rogers Park. Both schools also have campuses in the Loop. **Rush University Medical School**, on the Near West Side, traces its roots back even further, to 1837.

Dating back to 1891, **North Park University** serves as another fine private liberal arts university in Albany Park on the Northwest Side.

A handful of schools in the Loop attract students in the creative arts. **Columbia College** has an enviable location on Michigan Avenue, and its programs in film are continually noted as one of the top in the nation, along with its programs in creative writing and photography which are also well-regarded. The **School of the Art Institute** is generally regarded as one of the top three art and design schools in the country and is one of the few art schools that does not require its students to declare majors. The **Illinois Institute of Art** specializes in different fields of art and design, with a top-notch culinary program. The main campus of **Roosevelt University**, former home to Chicago heavyweights like Harold Washington and Ramsey Lewis, is in the Auditorium Theatre building.

To the west of the Loop, built over the remains of Little Italy and Maxwell Street neighborhoods is the brutalist Near West Side campus of the **University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)**, the second-largest member of the Illinois state university system.

The **City Colleges of Chicago** are scattered throughout the city. They include **Harold Washington College** (Loop), **Harry S. Truman College** (Uptown), **Malcolm X College** (Near West Side), **Wright College** (Humboldt Park), **Kennedy-King College** (Englewood), **Daley College** (Southwest Side), and **Olive-Harvey College** (Far Southeast Side).

## Work

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The L rumbling overhead in the Loop

Chicago still loves Carl Sandburg and his poems, but the city shucked off the hog butcher's apron a long time ago. In terms of industry, there's little that distinguishes Chicago from any other major city in America, save for size. The **Chicago Board of Trade** and **Chicago Mercantile Exchange** are among the biggest employers, with stables of traders and stock wizards. **Boeing** moved its headquarters to Chicago amid much fanfare a few years ago; **United Airlines** is another international company with headquarters in town. **Abbott Labs**, just outside city limits, is the biggest employer of foreign nationals in scientific fields. The Big Five consulting

firms all have one or more offices in the Loop. And there's always construction work in Chicago, but with a strong union presence in the city, it's not easy for a newcomer to break into without an introduction.

For younger workers, the museums in the Loop and the Near South are always looking for low-paid, high-enthusiasm guides, and the retail outlets on the Magnificent Mile also need seasonal help. And with so many colleges and universities in the city, study abroad opportunities abound.

In Chicago, business is politics, and there's one word in Chicago politics: **clout**. The principal measure of clout is how many jobs you can arrange for your friends. Hence, if you want to work in Chicago, start asking around — email someone from your country's embassy or consulate and see if they have any leads, or figure out if there is a cultural association that might be able to help you. It's no coincidence that the Mayor's Office employs scores of Irish workers every summer. If you happen to contact somebody who met the right person at a fundraiser a few days ago, you might fall into a cushy job or a dream internship; it's worth a try.

## Buy

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Whatever you need, you can buy it in Chicago, on a budget or in luxury. The most famous shopping street in Chicago is a stretch of Michigan Avenue known as **The Magnificent Mile**, in the Near North area. It includes many designer boutiques, and several multi-story malls anchored by large department stores like 900 N Michigan and Water Tower Place. Additional brands are available from off-strip shops to the south and west of Michigan.

**State Street** used to be a great street for department stores in the Loop, but it's now a shadow of its former self, with Carson Pirie Scott's landmark Louis Sullivan-designed building closed, and invading forces from New York holding the former Marshall Field's building hostage under the name Macy's. Discounts can still be found at places like Filene's Basement, though.

For a classic Chicago souvenir, pick up a box of **Frango Mints**, much-loved mint chocolates that were originally offered by Marshall Field's and are still available at Macy's stores. Although no longer made in the thirteenth-floor kitchen of the State Street store, the original recipe appears to still be in use, which pleases the loyal crowds fond of the flavor — and too bad for anyone looking to avoid trans-fats.

However, for a more unique shopping experience, check out the fun, eclectic stores in Lincoln Square, or the cutting-edge shops in Bucktown and Wicker Park, which is also the place to go for **music fiends** — although there are also key vinyl drops in other parts of the city as well. **Southport** in Lakeview and **Armitage** in Lincoln Park also have browser-friendly fashion boutiques.

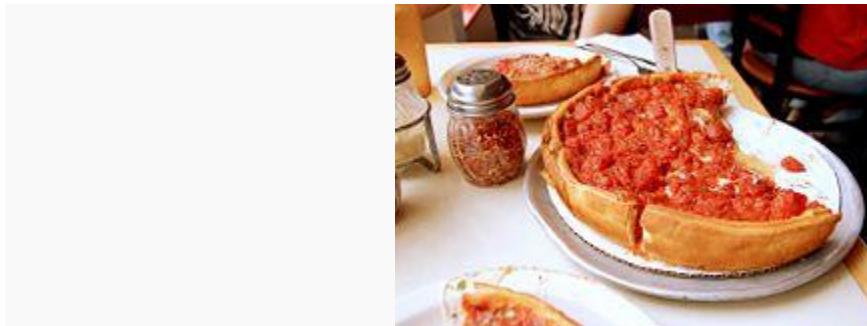
For **art** or **designer home goods**, River North is the place to go. Centered between the Merchandise Mart and the Chicago Avenue Brown Line "L" stop in the Near North, River North's gallery district boasts the largest arts and design district in North America outside of Manhattan. The entire area is walkable and makes for fun window-shopping.

Goods from around the world are available at the **import stores** in Chicago's many ethnic neighborhoods; check See for descriptions and district articles for directions.

If you are the type that loves to browse through **independent bookstores**, Hyde Park has a stunning assortment of dusty used bookstores selling beat-up-paperbacks to rare 17th century originals, and the world's largest academic bookstore. **Printer's Row** in the Near South is also a great stop for book lovers.

## Eat

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Chicago's deep dish pizza is incredible

Chicago is one of the great restaurant towns in America. If you're looking for a specific kind of cuisine, check out the neighborhoods. Greektown, the Devon Ave Desi corridor, Chinatown, and Chatham's soul food and barbecue are just the tip of the iceberg. Other areas are more eclectic: Lincoln Square and Albany Park have unrivaled Middle Eastern, German, and Korean food, while Uptown offers nearly the whole Southeast Asian continent with Ghanaian, Nigerian, contemporary American, stylish Japanese, and down-home Swedish a few blocks away.

If you're interested in celebrity chefs and unique creations, Lincoln Park and Wicker Park have plenty of award-winners. River North has several good upscale restaurants, but don't waste your time on tourist traps like Rainforest Cafe, Cheesecake Factory, or the Hard Rock Cafe. In fact, you should never submit to standing in line — there are always equally good restaurants nearby. No matter what you enjoy, you'll have a chance to eat well in Chicago, and you won't need to spend a lot of money doing it — unless you want to, of course.

But while Chicago has a world class dining scene downtown, it is the low-end where it truly distinguishes itself. No other city on earth takes fast food so seriously; for those who don't concern themselves with calorie counting, Chicago is cheap, greasy

heaven. Head northwest and you'll find sausage shops and old-style Polish restaurants that carry on as if health food and celebrity chefs never happened in **Jackowo**- Chicago's Polish Village, as well as at Belmont-Central- an Eastern European culinary heaven. Quite a few other local "culinary specialties" in particular deserve further description.

## Chicago pizza

Chicago's most prominent contribution to world cuisine might be the **deep dish pizza**. Delivery chains as far away as Kyoto market "Chicago-style pizza," but the only place to be sure you're getting the real thing is in Chicago. To make a deep dish pizza, a thin layer of dough is laid into a deep round pan and pulled up the sides, and then meats and vegetables — Italian sausage, onions, bell peppers, mozzarella cheese, and more — are lined on the crust. At last, tomato sauce goes on top, and the pizza is baked. It's gooey, messy, not recommended by doctors, and delicious. When you dine on deep dish pizza, don't wear anything you were hoping to wear again soon. Some nationally-known deep dish pizza hubs are Pizzeria UNO and DUE, Gino's East, Giordano's, and Lou Malnati's, but plenty of local favorites exist. Ask around — people won't be shy about giving you their opinion.

But deep dish is not the end of the line in a city that takes its pizza so seriously. Chicago also prides itself on its distinctive thin-crust pizza and stuffed pizzas. The Chicago **thin crust** has a thin, cracker-like, crunchy crust, which somehow remains soft and doughy on the top side. Toppings and a lot of a thin, spiced Italian tomato sauce go under the mozzarella cheese, and the pizza is sliced into squares. If you are incredulous that Chicago's pizza preeminence extends into the realm of the thin crust, head south of Midway to Vito and Nick's, which is widely regarded among local gourmands as the standard bearer for the city.

The **stuffed pizza** is a monster, enough to make an onlooker faint. Start with the idea of a deep dish, but then find a much deeper dish and stuff a *lot* more toppings under the cheese. Think deep-dish apple pie, but pizza. Allow 45 minutes to an hour for pizza places to make one of these and allow 3-4 extra notches on your belt for the ensuing weight gain. Arguably the best stuffed pizza in town is at Bella Bacino's in the Loop, which somehow is not greasy, but other excellent vendors include Giordano's, Gino's, and Edwardo's.



## The Chicago hot dog



A charred Chicago-style hot dog with all the trappings

This may come as a surprise to New Yorkers, but the Chicago hot dog is the king of all hot dogs — indeed, it is considered the **perfect hot dog**. Perhaps due to the city's history of Polish and German immigration, Chicago takes its dogs *way* more seriously than the rest of the country. A Chicago hot dog is always all-beef (usually Vienna beef), always served on a poppy-seed bun, and topped with what looks like a full salad of mustard, diced tomatoes, a dill pickle spear, sport (chili) peppers, a generous sprinkling of celery salt, diced onion, and a sweet-pickle relish endemic-to-Chicago that is dyed an odd, vibrant bright-green color. It's a full meal, folks.

Ketchup is regarded as an abomination on a proper Chicago-style hot dog. Self-respecting establishments will refuse orders to put the ketchup on the dog, and many have signs indicating that they don't serve it; truly serious hot dog joints don't even allow the condiment on the premises. The reason for Chicago's ketchup aversion is simple — ketchup contains sugar, which overwhelms the taste of the beef and prevents its proper enjoyment. Hence, ketchup's replacement with diced tomatoes. Similarly, Chicagoans eschew fancy mustards that would overwhelm the flavor of the meat in favor of simple yellow mustard. And for the hungry visiting New Yorkers, the same goes for sugary sauerkraut — *just no*.

At most hot dog places, you will have the option to try a **Maxwell Street Polish** instead. Born on the eponymous street of the Near West Side, the Polish is an all-beef sausage on a bun, with fewer condiments than the Chicago hot dog: usually just grilled onions, mustard, and a few chili peppers.

In a tragic, bizarre twist of fate, the areas of Chicago most visited by tourists (i.e., the Loop) lack proper Chicago hot dog establishments. If you are downtown and want to experience a Chicago hot dog done right, the nearest safe bet is Portillo's. Although, if you're up for a little hot dog adventure, you can eat one right at the source, at the Vienna Beef Factory deli. Sadly, both baseball parks botch their dogs, although the 2011 return of Vienna Beef as the official hot dog of Wrigley Field is a step in the right direction.

## Italian Beef

The Italian Beef sandwich completes the Chicago triumvirate of tasty greasy treats. The main focus of the sandwich is the beef, and serious vendors will serve meat of a surprisingly good quality, which is slow-roasted, and thinly shaved before being loaded generously onto chewy, white, Italian-style bread. Two sets of options will come flying at you, so prepare yourself: sweet peppers or hot, and dipped or not. The "sweet" peppers are sautéed bell peppers, while the hots are a mixed Chicago giardiniera. The dip, of course, is a sort of French dip of the sandwich back into the beef broth. (Warning: dipped Italian Beefs are sloppy!) If you are in the mood, you may be able to get an Italian Beef with cheese melted over the beef, although travelers looking for the "authentic Italian Beef" perhaps should not stray so far from tradition.

The Italian Beef probably was invented by Italian-American immigrants working in the Union Stockyards on the Southwest Side, who could only afford to take home the tough, lowest-quality meat and therefore had a need to slow-roast it, shave it into thin slices, and dip it just to get it in chewable form. But today the sandwich has found a lucrative home downtown, where it clogs the arteries and delights the taste buds of the Chicago workforce during lunch break. Some of the city's favorite downtown vendors include Luke's Italian Beef in the Loop and Mr. Beef in the Near North, while the Portillo's chain is another solid option.

### **Four fried chickens and a coke...**

With the Great Migration came much of what was best about the South: blues, jazz, barbecue — but following a legendary meal at which a young, hungry Harold Pierce saw the last piece of bird flee his grasp into the mouth of the local preacher, Harold made it his mission to add fried chicken to that prestigious list, and to ensure that no South Side Chicagoan ever run out.

Harold's Chicken Shack, a.k.a. the Fried Chicken King, is a South Side institution like no other. The Chicago-style fried chicken is considered by many connoisseurs to be some of the nation's best (certainly in the North), and it is fried in a home-style mix of beef tallow

and vegetable oil, then covered with sauce (hot or mild). Crucially, it is always cooked to order — ensuring that essential layer of grease between the skin and the meat. A half chicken meal can come as cheap as \$4 and includes coleslaw, white bread, and sauce-drenched fries — make like a local and wrap the fries in the bread.

Initially, the fried chicken chain spread throughout black neighborhoods, which were ignored by other fast food chains, but in later years the franchise has extended its greasy fingers to the West and North Sides, as well as downtown. While chances are you will not find better fried chicken outside of Harold's walls, the quality, pricing, and character vary between individual locations. Your safest bets are on the South Side — if you are served through bullet-proof glass under signs bearing a chef chasing a chicken with a hatchet, rest assured you are getting the best.

## Drink

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Chicago is a drinking town, and you can find bars and pubs in every part of the city. It is believed that Chicago has the second highest bars-per-capita in the U.S. (after San Francisco). Be prepared to be asked for identification to verify your age, even at neighborhood dive bars. **Smoking** is banned in Chicago bars (and restaurants).

The best places to drink for drinking's sake are Wicker Park and neighboring Logan Square and Bucktown, which have a world-class stock of quality dive bars and local craft breweries. North Center and Roscoe Village are also a great (and underrated) destination for the art of the beer garden. Beware the bars in Lakeview near Wrigley Field, though, which are packed on weekends, and jam-packed all day whenever the Cubs are playing. Just to the south, Lincoln Park has bars and beer gardens to indulge those who miss college, and some trendy clubs for the neighborhood's notorious high-spending Trixies.

Ill-informed tourists converge upon the nightclubs of Rush and Division St. The city's best DJs spin elsewhere, the best drinks are served elsewhere, and the cheapest beers are served elsewhere; the hottest of-the-moment clubs and in-the-know celebrities are usually elsewhere, too. For the last few years the West Loop's warehouse bars were the place to be, but more recently the River North neighborhood has been making a comeback. Still, the Rush/Division bars do huge business. This area includes the "Viagra Triangle," where Chicago's wealthy older men hang out with women in their early 20s. Streeterville, immediately adjacent, exchanges the dance floors for high-priced hotel bars and piano lounges.

Although good dance music can be found in Wicker Park and the surrounding area, the best places to dance in the city are the expensive see and be seen clubs in River North and the open-to-all (except perhaps bachelorette parties) clubs in gay-friendly Boystown, which are a lot of fun for people of any sexual orientation.

## Jazz and Blues

*See The Jazz Track for a wealth of information about current and historic jazz clubs in Chicago.*

The Lower Mississippi River Valley is known for its music; New Orleans has jazz, and Memphis has blues. Chicago, though located far away from the valley, has both. Former New Orleans and Memphis residents brought jazz and blues to Chicago as they came north for a variety of reasons: the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 brought a lot of itinerant musicians to town, and the city's booming economy kept them coming through the Great Migration. Chicago was the undisputed capital of early jazz between 1917-1928, with masters like Joe King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Jimmie Noone, Johnny Dodds, Earl Hines, and Jelly Roll Morton. Most of Chicago's historic jazz clubs are on the South Side, particularly in Bronzeville, but the North Side has the can't-miss **Green Mill** in Uptown.

The blues were in Chicago long before the car chase and the mission from God, but *The Blues Brothers* sealed Chicago as the home of the blues in the popular consciousness. Fortunately, the city has the chops to back that up. **Maxwell Street** (Near West Side) was the heart and soul of Chicago blues, but the wrecking ball, driven by the University of Illinois at Chicago, has taken a brutal toll. Residents have been fighting to save what remains. For blues history, it doesn't get much better than **Willie Dixon's Blues Heaven Foundation** (Near South), and Bronzeville, the former "Black Metropolis," is a key stop as well. Performance venues run the gamut from tiny, cheap blues bars all over the city to big, expensive places like **Buddy Guy's Legends** (Loop) and the original **House of Blues** (Near North).

But don't let yourself get *too* wrapped up in the past, because Chicago blues is anything but. No other city in the world can compete with Chicago's long list of blues-soaked neighborhood dives and lounges. The North Side's blues clubs favor

tradition in their music, and are usually the most accessible to visitors, but offer a slightly watered down experience from the funkier, more authentic blues bars on the South and Far West Sides, where most of Chicago's blues musicians live and hang. If one club could claim to be the home of the real Chicago blues, **Lee's Unleaded Blues** in Chatham-South Shore would probably win the title. But there are scores of worthy blues joints all around the city (many of which are a lot easier to visit via public transport). A visit to one of these off-the-beaten-path blues dives is considerably more adventurous than a visit to the touristy House of Blues, but the experiences born of such adventures have been known to reward visitors with a life-long passion for the blues.

Although playing second fiddle to the blues in the city's collective consciousness, jazz thrives in Chicago, too, thanks in no small part to members of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) and their residencies at clubs like **The Velvet Lounge** and **The Jazz Showcase** (both of which see regular national acts) (Near South), **The New Apartment Lounge** (Chatham-South Shore) and **The Hideout** (Bucktown), with more expensive national touring acts downtown at **The Chicago Theater** (Loop). If you are staying downtown, the Velvet Lounge will be your best bet, as it is an easy cab ride, and its high-profile performances will rarely disappoint.

Fans should time their visits to coincide with **Blues Fest** in June, and **Jazz Fest** over Labor Day Weekend. Both take place in Grant Park (Loop).

## Concerts

Wicker Park and Bucktown are the main place to go for indie rock shows: the **Double Door** and the **Empty Bottle** are the best-known venues, but there are plenty of smaller ones as well. In Lakeview, the **Metro** is a beloved concert hole, with **Schubas**, **Lincoln Hall**, **The Vic**, and the **Abbey Pub** nearby (the latter on the Far Northwest Side). Other mid-sized rock, hip-hop and R&B shows take place at the **Riviera** and the awesome **Aragon Ballroom** in Uptown. The Near South has become an underrated destination for great shows as well.



The legendary Chicago Theater

The **Park West** in Lincoln Park has light jazz, light rock, and other shows you'd sit down for; so does **Navy Pier** (Near North), particularly in the summer. The venerable **Chicago Theater** in the Loop is better-known for its sign than for anything else, but it has rock, jazz, gospel, and spoken-word performances by authors like David Sedaris. The world-renowned **Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO)** is the main bulwark in the city for classical and classy jazz, with occasional curve-balls like Björk. You'll find musicians from the CSO doing outreach all over the city, along with their counterparts at the **Lyric Opera**. Both are in the Loop.

A few big concerts are held at the **UIC Pavilion**, the **Congress Theater**, and the **United Center** on the Near West Side every year, and some *huge* concerts have taken place at **Soldier Field** (Near South). The **Petrillo Bandshell** in **Grant Park** and the **Pritzker Pavilion** in **Millennium Park**, both in the Loop, tend to host big, eclectic shows and festivals in the summer, which are sometimes free.

Otherwise, most big shows are out in the suburbs, primarily at the **Allstate Arena** and the **Rosemont Theater** in Rosemont, the **Sears Centre** in Hoffman Estates, the **First Midwest Bank Amphitheatre** in Tinley Park, **Star Plaza** in Indiana, and the **Alpine Valley Music Theater** over the Wisconsin border. You'll also have to head out to the suburbs for **Ravinia**, which features upscale classical, jazz, and blues outdoors throughout the summer. See Chicagoland for details on suburban venues.

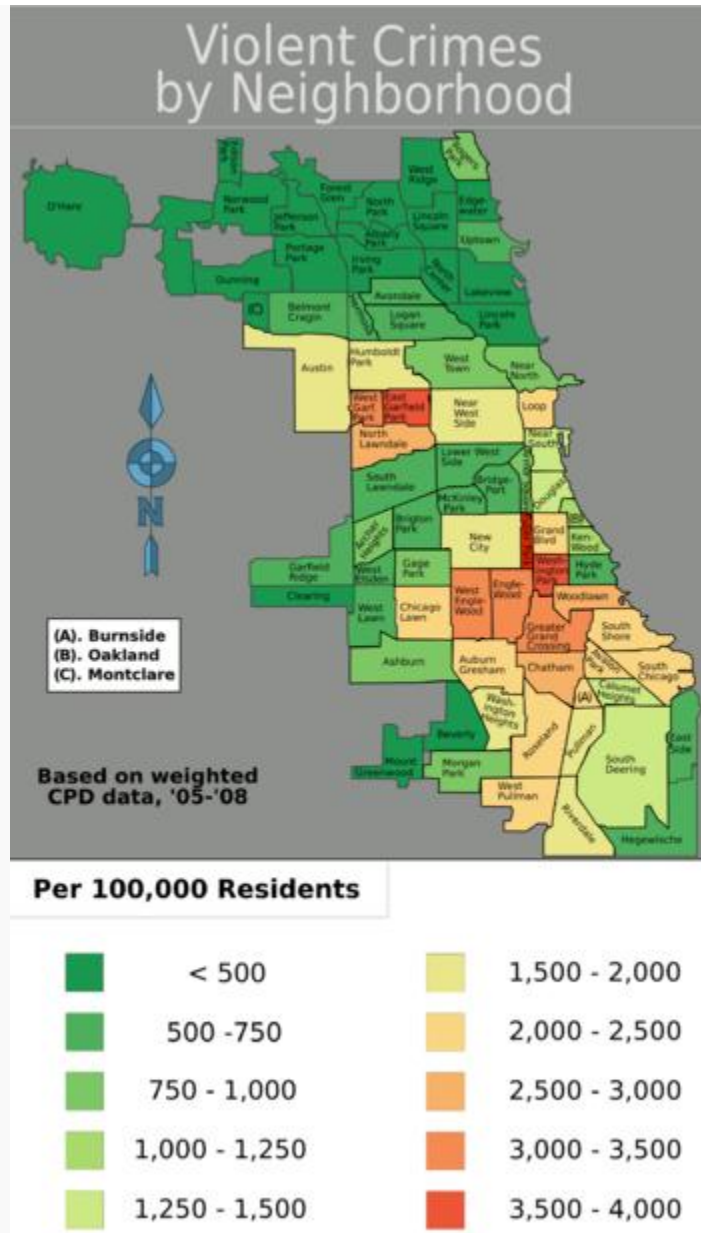
## Sleep

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Chicago hosts many major conventions each year and has plenty of places to stay. The majority are either at O'Hare Airport or downtown in the Loop and the Near North (near the Magnificent Mile). If you want to explore the city, aim for downtown — a hotel near O'Hare is good for visiting one thing and one thing only, and that's O'Hare. However, if you have a specific interest in mind, there are hotels throughout the city, and getting away from downtown will give you more of a sense of other neighborhoods. You'll appreciate that if you're in town for more than a couple of days. Make sure that where you're staying is within your comfort level before committing to stay there, though. More far flung transient hotels will be suitable for those seeking to relive Jack Kerouac's seedy adventures around the country, but may alarm and disgust the average traveler.

Budget-priced places are usually pretty far from the Loop, so when you're booking, remember that Chicago is vast. Travelers on a budget should consider accommodations away from the city center which can be easily reached via any of the several CTA train lines. There is a hostel in the Loop and two others near the universities in Lincoln Park and Rogers Park, all of which are interesting neighborhoods in their own right, and close to the L for access to the rest of the city. For deals on mid-range hotels, there are good options far out from the center by Midway and in North Lincoln.

# Stay safe



Violent crime rates by neighborhood

As in almost the entire United States, dial **911** to get emergency help. Dial **311** for all non-emergency situations in Chicago.

Despite a big decline in the crime rate from the 1970s and 1980s, Chicago is still a big city with big city problems. There are run-down areas within a few blocks of some well-traveled places such as near the United Center and US Cellular Field. The majority of the city's violent crimes occur within a relatively small number of neighborhoods well off the beaten path in the South and West Sides, but given the

chance nature of crime, you should exercise the usual precautions wherever you go. Even in a neighborhood with a bad reputation, though, you might still have a perfectly good time, as long as it falls within your comfort level.

Take caution in the Loop at night; after working hours, the Loop gets quiet and dark in a hurry west of State Street, but you'll be fine near hotels and close to Michigan Avenue and the lake. When disembarking a crowded CTA train, especially in the downtown-area subways, be wary of purse snatchers.

Beggars are common downtown. They are very unlikely to pose any kind of problem, though. Some sell a local newspaper called *Streetwise* to make a living.

In general, common sense will keep you safe in Chicago: avoid unfamiliar side streets at night, stay out of alleys at night, know where you're going when you set out, stick to crowded areas, and keep a \$20 bill on hand for cab fare as a bail-out option.

Dress appropriately for the weather. Chicago's winter is famously windy and cold, so cover exposed skin and wear layers in the winter, but heat exhaustion is an equal risk in the summer months, especially July and August. Stay off the road during a snowstorm. Chicago's streets and sanitation department generally does a good job clearing the major roads in the center of the city, but the neighborhoods can take longer, and the construction-littered expressways are anyone's guess.

## Contact

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### Internet

The first Internet cafe in the United States was opened in Chicago, but they never really caught on here. There are still a few, though; check individual district articles. If you have a computer with you, free wireless Internet access is now standard-issue at coffee shops throughout the city including major ones like Starbucks. Most hotels above the transient level offer free Wi-Fi, too.

The good news is that all branches of the **Chicago Public Library** system offer **free internet access**, via public terminals and free, password-free, public wireless. If you do not have a Chicago library card, but you have a photo ID that shows you do not live in Chicago, you can get a temporary permit from the library information desk. (If you *are* from Chicago and don't have a library card, though, all you can get is a stern look and a brief lecture on how Chicagoans need to support the library system.) The most centrally located branch is the giant **Harold Washington Library** in the Loop, but there are branch libraries in every part of the city — again, see individual district articles. Only Harold Washington and the two regional libraries (Sulzer and Woodson) are open on Sundays.



## Telephones

**312** was the area code for all of Chicago for a long time; it's still the code of choice for the Loop, and most of the Near North and Near South. **773** surrounds the center, covering everything else within city limits.

Suburban areas close to the city use **847** (north/northwest), **708** (south), **815** (southwest), and **630** (west).

## Cope

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### Publications

**The Chicago Tribune** (*The Trib*). The Tribune is Chicago's oldest daily, recently converted into a tabloid format for newsstand purchases. New ownership has shed much of the Trib's former prestige with a debt-leveraged purchase and forced bankruptcy, widespread staff layoffs, and an ill-advised redesign.

**The Chicago Sun-Times**. The Sun-Times is Chicago's other "major" newspaper. It has a long-standing reputation for aggressive (some might say "sensationalist") investigative journalism. It has also been teetering on the verge of oblivion for some time, but at least it has Roger Ebert.

**The Redeye**. Redeye is a free weekdays-only newspaper produced by the Tribune. Although its covers appear to report from some parallel universe where topics like sandwiches and being tired at work are the top stories of the day, it does have basic news coverage inside along with entertainment gossip.

**The Chicago Defender**. The Defender is Chicago's biggest African-American daily, and it played a major role in the city's African-American history. Its distribution network today is comparatively small, though.

**Hola Hoy**. Hola Hoy produces a free Spanish-language newspaper with wide distribution.

**The Chicago Reader**. The Reader is a free weekly newspaper distributed throughout the city each Wednesday. It includes extensive listings of arts, music, and events. Nobody knows more about Chicago than the Reader, but it's definitely oriented toward locals.

**Crain's Chicago Business**. Crain's is a long-standing weekly newspaper covering the Chicago area business community, with a dash of politics and lifestyle — definitely worth a look if you're in town on business.

**New City.** New City is a free weekly alternative arts and entertainment magazine, distributed every Wednesday. Event listings and local content are skimpy, but it is free.

**Time Out Chicago.** Time Out produces a weekly magazine available at most newsstands and bookstores. Its listings for events, bars, and restaurants are by far the most comprehensive and easiest to use for visitors to the city.

**Windy City Times.** Free weekly LGBT newspaper.

## Religious services



The spectacular Bahá'í Temple

There are places of worship all over the city; the front desk of your hotel will almost certainly be able to direct you to one nearby. If not, though, the following are centrally located in either the Loop or the Near North, unless otherwise noted.

For churches of specific Orthodoxies, check in neighborhoods that feature communities with ties to that region. There's a majestic Orthodox church in Ukrainian Village, for example. Evangelical Christian ministries are mostly on the South Side, with some historic churches in Bronzeville. For the Baha'i faith, visit the **Baha'i Temple** in Wilmette, easily accessible by the CTA Purple Line.

**Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel**, 540 W Melrose St (*Belmont Red Line*), ☎ +1 773 248-9200. Modern Orthodox Judaism. In a remarkably beautiful building by the lake. Shacharit Su 8:30AM, M,Th 6:45AM, Tu,W,F 7AM; Mincha Su-Th 7:45PM.

**Armitage Baptist Church**, 2451 N Kedzie Blvd. (*Logan Square Blue Line*), ☎ +1 773 384-4673. Sunday worship 9:30, 11AM, and 6PM.

**BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir**, 4N739 IL Route 59, Bartlett, 📞 +1 630 213 2277, [60]. Everyday worship 11:30 AM Aarti. Free.

**Chicago's Central Synagogue**, 15 W Delaware Place (*Chicago Red Line*), 📞 +1 312 787-0450. Conservative Judaism. Shabbat services Sa 9:15AM.

**Chicago Loop Synagogue**, 16 S Clark St (*Madison/Wabash Brown/Purple/Green/Orange/Pink Line*), 📞 +1 312 346-7370. Traditional Judaism. Shachris Sa 9AM, Su 9:30AM; Mincha Sa 3:45PM, Su 4:15PM, M-F 1:05PM; Maariv 4:45PM.

**Chicago Sinai Congregation**, 15 W Delaware Pl (*Chicago Red Line*), 📞 +1 312 867-7000. Liberal Reform Judaism. Torah study Sa 10:30AM; Shabbat Eve service F 6:15PM, Sunday service 11AM.

**Downtown Islamic Center**, 231 S State St (*Jackson Red Line*), 📞 +1 312 939-9095. Open M-F 10:30AM-5:30PM. Friday prayers: Khutba 1:05PM / Aqama 1:30PM (1st Friday Jamaa), Khutba 2:05PM / Aqama 2:30PM (2nd Friday Jamaa).















**Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago**, 10915 Lemont Rd, Lemont, IL, 📞 +1 630 972-0300. M-F 10AM-8PM. 25 miles southwest of Chicago. Call temple to schedule priest services.

**Holy Name Cathedral**, 735 N State St (*Chicago Red Line*). Open for private prayer or reflection from 5:30AM-7PM. Flagship of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. Sunday Masses at 7:00, 8:15, 9:30 (incl. sign language), 11:00 AM, and 12:30, 5:15 PM. See website for Saturday, weekdays, and Holy Days schedules, as well as other sacraments.

**Saint James Cathedral**, 65 E Huron St (*Chicago Red Line*), 📞 +1 312 787-7360. Episcopalian services. Office hours M-F 9AM-4PM. Eucharist Su 8AM,10:30AM, W 5:30PM, Th,F 12:10PM

## Foreign consulates

Here's a quick list of foreign consulates in Chicago:

-  **Argentina**, 205 N Michigan Ave, #4208/9, ☎ +1 312 819-2610 (*hrgcchic@aol.com*, fax: +1 312 312 280-0430-819-2612).
-  **Australia**, 123 N Wacker Dr, ☎ +1 312 419-1480 (*chicago@dfat.gov.au*, fax: +1 312 419-1499).
-  **Austria**, 400 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 222-1516.
-  **Bahamas**, 8600 W Bryn Mawr Ave, ☎ +1 312 693-1500.
-  **Belgium (Honorary)**, 1703 N Randall Rd, Elgin, ☎ +1 847 214-4670 (*paulvanhalteren@sbcglobal.net*, fax: +1 847 787-5486).
-  **Bolivia**, 1111 Superior St, #309, ☎ +1 708 343-1234. (Melrose Park)
-  **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, 151 E Chicago Ave, ☎ +1 951-1245.
-  **Brazil**, 401 N Michigan Ave, #1850, ☎ +1 312 464-0244 (*central@brazilconsulatechicago.org*, fax: +1 312 464-0299).
-  **Bulgaria**, 737 N Michigan Ave, #2105, ☎ +1 312 867-1904.
-  **Canada**, Two Prudential Plaza, 180 N Stetson Ave, #2400, ☎ +1 312 616-1860 (*chcgo@international.gc.ca*, fax: +1 312 616-1878).
-  **Chile**, 875 N Michigan Ave, #3352, ☎ +1 312 654-8780.
-  **China**, 100 E Erie St, #500, ☎ +1 312 803-
-  **Japan**, 737 N Michigan Ave, #1100, ☎ +1 312 280-0430.
-  **Jordan**, 12559 S Holiday Dr, ☎ +1 708 272-6666. (Alsip)
-  **Republic of Korea**, 455 N Cityfront Plaza Dr, #2700, ☎ +1 312 822-9485.
-  **Latvia**, 3239 Arnold Ln, ☎ +1 847 498-6880. (Northbrook)
-  **Lithuania**, 211 E Ontario St, #1500, ☎ +1 312 397-0382.
-  **Luxembourg**, 1417 Braeborn Ct, ☎ +1 847 520-5995. (Wheeling)
-  **Malaysia**, 875 N Michigan Ave, #4101, ☎ +1 312 280-9632.
-  **Mexico**, 204 S Ashland Ave, ☎ +1 312 738-2531.
-  **Montenegro**, 201 E Ohio St, ☎ +1 312 670-6707.
-  **Nepal**, 100 W Monroe St, #500, ☎ +1 312 263-1250.
-  **Netherlands**, 303 E Wacker Dr Ste 2600, ☎ +1 312 856-0110 (toll free: +1 877-DUTCHHELP, *chi@minbuza.nl*, fax: +1 312 856-9218).
-  **New Zealand (Honorary)**, 8600 W Bryn Mawr Ave, ☎ +1 773 714-9461 (fax: +1 773 714-9483).
-  **Norway**, 900 Lively Blvd, ☎ +1 847 364-7374. (Elk Grove)
-  **Pakistan**, 333 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 781-1831.
-  **Panama**, 9048 S Commercial Ave, ☎ +1 773

0095.

 **Colombia**, 500 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 923-1196.


 **Costa Rica**, 203 N Wabash Ave, ☎ +1 312 263-2772.

 **Croatia**, 737 N Michigan Ave, #1030, ☎ +1 312 482-9902.

 **Czech Republic**, 205 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 861-1037.

 **Denmark**, 875 N Michigan Ave Ste 3950, ☎ +1 312 787-8780 (*ordhkt@um.dk*, fax: +1 312 787-8744), [74].


 **Dominican Republic**, 3228 W N Ave, ☎ +1 312 236-2447.


 **Ecuador**, 30 S Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 338-1002.

 **Egypt**, 500 N Michigan Ave, #1900, ☎ +1 312 828-9162.

 **El Salvador**, 104 S Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 332-1393.

 **Estonia**, 410 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 595-2527.


 **Finland**, 2246 West Homer Street, ☎ +1 708 442-0635.

 **France**, 737 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 787-5359.

 **Germany**, 676 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 202-0480.


 **Greece**, 650 N Saint Clair St, ☎ +1 312 335-3915 (*chicago@greekembassy.org*, fax: +1 312 335-3958), [75].

 **Guatemala**, 205 N Michigan Ave #2350, ☎ +1 312 332 1587.

 **Haiti**, 220 S State St, #2110, ☎ +1 312 922-933-0395.

 **Philippines**, 30 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 332-6458 (*chicagopcgsbcglobal.net*, fax: +1 312 332-3657), [81].

 **Peru**, 180 N Michigan Ave, #1800, ☎ +1 312 782-1599.


 **Poland**, 820 N Orleans St, #335, ☎ +1 312 337-8166.

 **Portugal (Honorary)**, 1955 N New England Ave, ☎ +1 773 889-7405 (fax: +1 312 493-2433), [82].


 **Romania**, 737 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 573-1315.

 **Serbia**, 201 E Ohio St, ☎ +1 312 670-6707.


[edit](#)

 **Singapore**, 10 South Dearborn St, #4800, ☎ +1 312 853-7555.

 **South Africa**, 200 S Michigan Ave, #600, ☎ +1 312 939-7929 (fax: +1 312 939-2588).

 **Spain**, 180 N Michigan Ave, #1500, ☎ +1 312 782-4588.


 **Sweden**, 150 N Michigan Ave, #1951, ☎ +1 312 781-6262.

 **Switzerland**, 737 N Michigan Ave, #2301, ☎ +1 312 915-0061 (+1 312 915-0061, *chi.vertretung@eda.admin.ch*, fax: +1 312 915-0388), [84].


 **Taiwan**, 180 N Stetson Ave, ☎ +1 312 616-0100.


 **Thailand**, 700 N Rush St, ☎ +1 312 644-3129.


 **Turkey**, 360 N Michigan Ave, #1405, ☎ +1 312 621-3340.


 **Ukraine**, 10 E Huron St, ☎ +1 312 642-3129.


4004.


 **Honduras**, 4506 W Fullerton Ave, ☎ +1 773 342-8281.


 **Hungary**, 500 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 670-4079.


 **India**, 455 N Cityfront Plaza Dr, NBC Tower Bldg Ste 850, ☎ +1 312 595-0405 (+1 312 595-0409).


 **Indonesia**, 211 W Wacker Dr, ☎ +1 312 920-1880.


 **Ireland**, 400 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 337-1868 (fax: +1 312 337-1954).


 **Israel**, 111 E Wacker Dr, #1308, ☎ +1 312 297-4800.

 **Italy**, 500 N Michigan Ave, ☎ +1 312 467-1550.

 **Jamaica**, 4655 S Martin Luther King Dr, ☎ +1 773 373-8988.

 **United Kingdom**, 400 N Michigan Ave, #1300, ☎ +1 312 970-3800.

 **Uruguay**, 875 N Michigan Ave, #1422, ☎ +1 312 642-3430.

 **Venezuela**, 20 N Wacker Dr, #750, ☎ +1 312 236-9655.

## Getting settled

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### Federal/State offices

Social Security Agency  
 Illinois Government  
 City Government  
 City of Chicago  
 Chicago Chamber of Commerce  
 Andersonville Chamber of Commerce  
 Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce  
 Automobile Registration  
 Illinois Department of Motor Vehicles  
 AAA

## **Banks and credit unions**

Find a Better Bank Directory

Access Credit Union

Bank of America

## **Grocery stores and organic markets**

Bari Foods

Chicago Food Corp

Chicago Green City Market

Essence of India

Family Fruit Market

Fox and Obel

Greener Grocer

House of Glunz

Jewel-Osco

Newleaf Natural Grocery

Olivia's Market

Provenance Food and Wine

Spice House

Trader Joe's

Whole Foods Market

## **Neighborhoods and statistics**

Illinois

Illinois U.S. Census Demographics

Chicago Demographics

Chicago Interactive Neighborhood Directory

Chicago Neighborhood Development

Chicago Neighborhood Guide

Chicago Neighborhood Interactive Map

Chicago Neighborhood Map

Chicago Neighborhood Profile

Chicago U.S. Census Demographics

## **Pet services**

Chicago Pet Services

Illinois Pet Service Directory

Pet Product, Service & Information Directory

Pet Sitter Services

Pet Veterinarian and Business Services

Veterinarians

## **Chicago doctors**

Chicago Physicians Directory

Find a Local Doctor

Find a Physician

Health Plan Ratings

## **Elder care**

Bethesda Home and Retirement Center

Breakers at Edgewater Beach



## **Emergency & safety information**

9-1-1 for Emergency

Chicago Fire Department

Chicago Police Department

Hospitals

Chicago Lakeshore Hospital

Children's Memorial Hospital

Comer Children's Hospital

Holy Cross Hospital

John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital Cook County

Mercy Hospital

## **Utilities: gas, electric, water, phone**

Online Utilities Connection

AT&T

Bluestar Energy Services

Chicago Utilities Guide

Comcast

ComEd

Hudson Energy Service

Integritys Energy Service

Nicor Gas Company

## **Child care and preschools**

Babysitter Directory

Illinois Day Care Information and Requirements

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services  
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
Chicago Children and Youth Services  
Chicago Day Care and Preschool Directory  
Chicago Day Care Providers  
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services  
Chicago Department of Health and Human Services  
Chicago Early Steps Program  
Child Day Care Directory  
Prekonline  
Preschools

## **Higher education**

Benedictine University  
Career Colleges of Chicago  
Chicago State University  
City Colleges of Chicago  
City Colleges of Chicago  
College of DuPage  
College of Lake County  
Local Schools  
US Department of Education  
Illinois Department of Education  
Chicago Early Care and Education Program  
Area Schools K-12

Local Private and Parochial Schools

Local School Directory

School Guides, Ratings and Reviews

Chicago Districts

Aslip – Hazelgreen – Oak lawn School District 126

Atwood Heights School District 125

Burnham School District 154-5

Calumet Public School District 132

Central Stickney District 110

Cicero Public School District 99

Chicago Public School District 299

Cook County School District 130

Dolton Riverdale School District 148

Elmwood Park Community School District 401

Lincolnwood School District 74

Norridge School District 80

Riverdale District 133

Union Ridge School District 86

## **State guides**

Guide to Illinois

Illinois Route Map Guide

## **Gym and fitness**

Bally Total Fitness

Fitness Formula Clubs

Chicago Fitness Centers and Gyms

YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

## **Parks and recreation**

63<sup>rd</sup> Street Beach

Calumet Beach

Chicago Parks and Recreation

Chicago Park District

Chicago Riverwalk

Fargo Beach

Lakefront Trail

Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

## **Sports**

Chicago Bears NFL

Chicago Blackhawks NHL

Chicago Bulls NBA

Chicago Cubs MLB

Chicago Fire MLS

Chicago Sky WNBA

Chicago White Sox MLB

## **Shopping malls**

900 North Michigan Shops

Bucktown Shopping District

Gurnee Mills

Hawthorn Center

Illinois Artisan Shop  
Lincoln Park Shopping District  
Magnificent Mile  
Northbrook Court  
Oak Brook Center  
Old Town Shopping District  
Old Orchard  
Shops at North Bridge  
Southport / Lakeview Corridor Shopping District  
State Street  
Water Tower Place  
Wicker Park Shopping District  
Woodfield Mall  
Walking Distance  
Walk Score

## Getting out

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### Illinois

There are forest preserves in the far north, northwest, and southwest sides, and into the nearby Chicagoland suburbs. They are excellent for biking, jogging, and picnics.

Evanston is over the northern border of Chicago, approximately 45 minutes from downtown on the CTA, or half an hour via car (during light traffic). It has shops, restaurants, bars and Northwestern University, as well as some historic homes and lovely lakefront. Just beyond that is Wilmette, with the fascinating **Baha'i Temple**.

Ravinia is the summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Metra's UP-North line stops at the park gates, and the return train waits for late-ending concerts. The

arts and crafts style architecture coupled with a dazzling array of acts make this a classic summer destination for Chicagoans and tourists. Bring food, a blanket, wine, and a citronella candle; buy anything you forgot on-site.

Brookfield is home to the Chicagoland area's other world-class zoo, the **Brookfield Zoo**.

Historic Galena, three hours west-northwest of Chicago via I-90 and US-20, is great for hiking, sightseeing, and antiquing.

**Six Flags Great America**, in Gurnee (40 miles north on I-94), has the biggest and wildest roller coasters in Illinois.

Peoria, in some ways a miniature Chicago, is a little over three hours away.

The Quad Cities — about 2.5–3 hours away via I-55 to I-80 or I-90 to I-74 — bridge the Mississippi River forming a unique metropolitan area on the border of Iowa and Illinois.

## Indiana

The Indiana Dunes are a moderate drive away, and are also accessible via the South Shore commuter rail. If you've enjoyed the beaches in Chicago, you owe the Indiana Dunes a stop — that's where all the sand came from.

Gary is just over the border on the Skyway, with a skyline that rivals Chicago's for strength of effect — industrial monstrosity, in this case — with casinos, urban ruins, and a few entries by Prairie School architects Frank Lloyd Wright and George Maher.

Also just over the Skyway (before you reach Gary) is East Chicago's bizarre 19th century planned community, **Marktown**, which looks like a small English village totally incongruous with the gigantic steel mills and the world's largest oil refinery which surround it.

## Michigan

Further along the lake from the Indiana Dunes are Michigan's dunes and summer resorts in Harbor Country. Keep your eyes open: Mayor Daley, University of Chicago President Robert Zimmer, and other notables summer here.

Detroit has many of Chicago's most hated sports rivals, and although fallen on hard times, it also has a musical and architectural heritage to compare with the Windy City.

## Wisconsin

Lake Geneva, across the Wisconsin border, is the other big summer getaway. Nearby are the Kettle Moraine state parks, with good mountain biking.

Madison is located about two and half hours from Chicago on I-90 and via Van Galder buses. It is a vibrant city home to the giant University of Wisconsin and is known for its lively downtown, thriving culture, and beautiful scenery.

Milwaukee and its venerable breweries are less than two hours from Chicago on I-94, via Amtrak, and by intercity bus services.








Spring Green is an easy weekend trip from Chicago, about three and a half hours from town on I-90. It's the home of two unique architectural wonders: Frank Lloyd Wright's magnificent estate **Taliesin**, and Alex Jordan's mysterious museum **The House on the Rock**.

The Wisconsin Dells are another (wet) summer fun destination, just three hours north of the city by car (I-90/94), also accessible by Amtrak train.

Cedarburg is a popular festival town with a charming downtown featured on the National Register of Historic Places. It is located 20 miles north of downtown Milwaukee. Take I-94 to Milwaukee and continue north on I-43.

Routes through Chicago



<b>END</b> ←		→ Blue Island → <b>Kankakee</b>
<b>Rockford</b> ← Rosemont ←		→ Hammond → <b>Gary</b>
<b>Milwaukee</b> ← Skokie ←		→ Lansing → <b>Gary</b>
<b>Schaumburg</b> ← Oak Park ←		→ <b>END</b>
<b>Lake Geneva</b> ← Hillside ←		→ Hammond → <b>Gary</b>
<b>Rockford</b> ← Hillside ←		→ Hammond → <b>Gary</b>
<b>Milwaukee</b> ← Skokie ←		→ Hammond → <b>Terre Haute</b>
<b>Bloomington-Normal</b> ← Joliet ←	