

— THE —

# NEIGHBORHOOD<sup>®</sup>

|| LITTLE ITALY ||

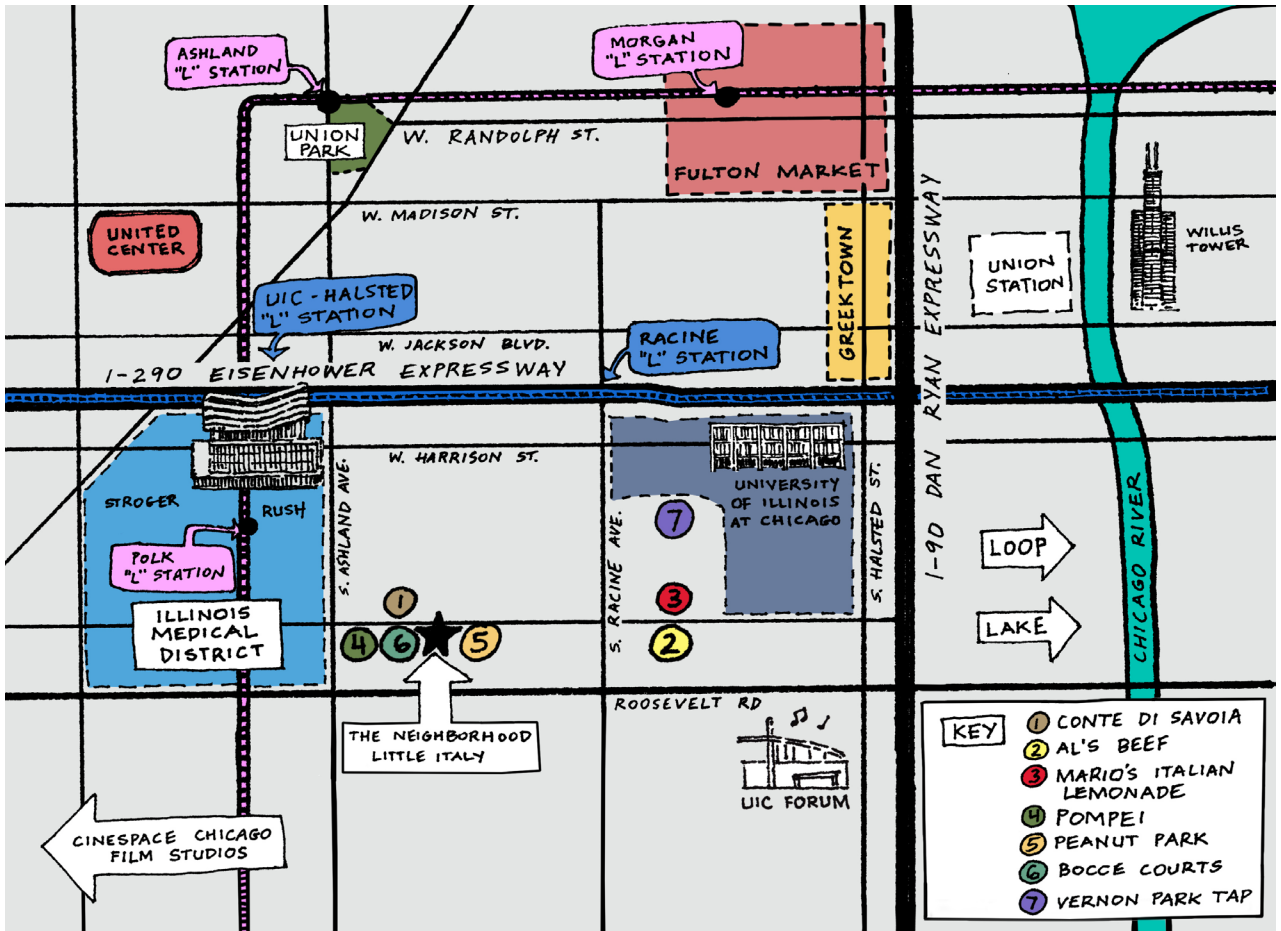
1431 W Taylor St, Chicago, IL, 60607 • [theneighborhoodhotel.com](http://theneighborhoodhotel.com)

Where thoughtful design meets genuine comfort.

# **THE LITTLE ITALY FIELD GUIDE**

**just stay.** we've got you.

Welcome!



## CIAO!

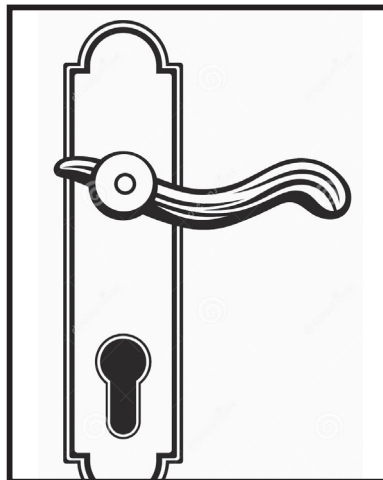
Welcome to your peaceful nest in the middle of downtown Chicago. Hopefully you're feeling the genuine warmth, bellezza and history that radiates in this part of town. Here in Little Italy, you're nestled in a neighborhood with an old world feel that seamlessly welcomes the new and modern.

The Neighborhood Hotel's team is comprised of history buffs, design nerds and experts/insiders on all things Chicago. We love this community and covet our local partners and neighbors. In fact, most of the information in this guide book was sourced directly from people who have lived in Little Italy for decades.

In this book, you'll find the nitty-gritty — everything from basic operations, city logistics/highlights and food advice. We want you to love this city as much as we do! Our on-site staff is minimal but we're just a call or email away if you need us!

*Most importantly: enjoy. La vita è bella.*

**STAY**



# THE (NOT SO BASIC) BASICS

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**CHECK-IN:** 3PM

**CHECK-OUT:** 11AM

\*\*We're here for you and love being flexible when we can - let us know what's up if these times are tricky.

**DOOR CODES:**

The 4-digit entry code (that was sent to your email/text) is your individual + secret code for the main entry + your suite.

**TV:**

We've got YouTube TV with all of the local channels (you're already logged in)!

**PARKING:**

Street parking or Apps like ParqEx + SpotHero + ParkWhiz can come in handy. Download the PARK CHICAGO app to easily pay the meter. Often, you'll find metered street parking on Taylor Street. **However, most of the side streets are permit parking only.** Please reach out with questions - we're happy to help.

**PS:**

Please feel free to spread the word about The Neighborhood Hotel - a tag on social media would mean a lot! @the.neighborhood.hotel

# CONCIERGE IN THE CLOUD

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Need anything? Email [info@nbhdhotels.com](mailto:info@nbhdhotels.com) - this is your way to directly communicate with us, anytime.

... **Also, check out the following apps to make your life *just easy*.**

- Tock + OpenTable (reservations, sorted by neighborhood)
- Grubhub (easy food delivery)
- GoPuff + Foxtrot (easy grocery delivery)

## **Nearby Grocery Stores + Marts**

- **Jewel:** Traditional store w/ all of the name brands. (1/2 a mile away on Ashland Ave.)
- **Pete's:** A little bit of a walk, but a great selection of fresh produce and a deli. (2 Miles away on Madison St.)
- **Whole Foods:** Two close by - one in Greek Town (on Halsted St.) and one very close on Canal St.. (1.5 Miles to either Canal or Halsted locations)
- **Mariano's:** Great prepared food + slightly more affordable than Whole Foods. (1.5 miles on Halsted St.)
- **Trader Joe's:** Little bit of a walk, but still convenient. (2 Miles on Wabash Ave.)
- **Target:** Multiple nearby - closest one is on Jackson (has a CVS Pharmacy in the store). (1 Mile on Jackson Blvd.)
- **Campus Market Grocery:** Specializes in Indian food and it's about 1 minute away on Taylor St.
- **Pete's:** A little bit of a walk - best to drive or Uber. Great selection of fresh produce and a deli. (2 Miles away on Madison St.)

*\*\*Not official grocery stores, but Conte da Savoia (directly across the street from the hotel) has frozen things - like a delicious lasagna and other delicacies (in addition to their fresh prepared food). Fontano's (a few minutes walk) also has a small grocery section in addition to their delicious subs.*

## **Farmers Markets**

- **Green City Market Lincoln Park (1817 N. Clark St.)**  
Wednesdays + Saturdays, May 4-October 6th, 7am-1pm
- **Daley Plaza City Market - Downtown, Loop (50 W. Washington St.)**  
Thursdays, May 12-October 27, 7am-2pm
- **South Loop Farmers Market @ Grant Park**  
Thursdays, June 2-October 13th, 4-8pm
- **Green City Market West Loop @ Mary Bartelme Park (115 S. Sagamon)**

Saturdays, May 7-November 19, 8am-1pm

- South Loop Printers Row Farmers Market (632 S. Dearborn St.)  
Saturdays, May 28-October 15, 9am-1pm

*\*\*Fun fact: this used to be the printing hub of the Midwest many years ago!*

- Bronzeville City Market (4700 S. King Dr.)  
Sundays, July 10-October 16, 10am-2pm
- Maxwell Street Market (800 S. Desplaines St.)  
Sundays, April 3 - December 18, 9am-3pm
- Pilsen Community Market (1811-1825 S. Blue Island Ave.)  
Sundays, May 29-September 4, 9am-3pm

### **House Details + Accessories**

- Washer/Dryer in every unit (laundry detergent provided)
- Hairdryers: In the bathroom's gear basket
- Kitchen Appliances: Please let us know if you have any operating questions + help yourself to staples (salt/pepper, oil, etc.)!
- Yoga Mats: Closet
- Steam Iron: Closet
- Heat + A/C
- Smart TV

### **Transportation Options**

*There are many public transit options nearby!*

#### **Bus:**

- Taylor St. (#157) takes you right downtown. It runs directly east down Taylor and then down Michigan Ave.  
*\*\*Stops running @ 7pm on weekdays and doesn't run on the weekends.*
- Racine St. (#60) This also takes you downtown.

#### **Train:**

- Blue Line (easy way to get to/from O'Hare) has a UIC-Halsted stop and a Racine Stop that are very convenient. You can also connect to other lines from the blue line.

#### **Bike:**

- Divvy is Chicago's Bike share program. A Divvy dock is very close on Taylor St/Throop St. There are tons of dock stations throughout the city.

#### **Car:**

- Uber/Lyft/Taxi: Easy, usually plenty in the area.

# WALK (OR RUN) IT OUT

(and other ways to stay active)

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*Chicago is a very walkable/run-able/bike-able city. The path along the lake might be the best thing about this city. But, if you need something extra, here are a few gym options.*

## Nearby Gyms

- **Sheridan (Philip Henry) Park:** The field house has an indoor swimming pool + fitness center. Outside, the park offers multiple fields, a playground, splash pad, tennis courts + artificial turf. (1/2 a mile from the hotel on Aberdeen St.)  
*A pool pass is \$40 for 3 months. // Fitness Center is \$15 per month.  
\*\*call before going as the city has reduced the hours.*
- **LA Fitness:** Offers day passes for \$20 (1.3 Miles from the hotel on Canal St.)

## Nearby Parks:

- **Arrigo Park (known to locals as Peanut Park):** Short walk from the hotel (under a 1/2 mile) on Loomis St. This park is a big community gathering spot in the neighborhood - really nice space to hang out/stroll.
- **Garibaldi Park + Playground:** Short walk from the hotel (under a 1/2 mile) on Polk St.
- **Skinner Park + Playground:** Less than a mile from the hotel on Adams St., Skinner is another great park — checkout the community garden! Plus, very nice baseball fields & basketball courts.
- **Sheridan (Philip Henry) Park + Playground:** A short walk — roughly a 1/2 mile from the hotel on Aberdeen St. Here you'll find multiple fields, a playground, tennis courts + artificial turf.
- **Bocce Courts on Taylor St.:** Really nice courts a few steps west of the hotel (we have bocce balls for you to bring over!)

## The Urban Outdoors 11 Picturesque Trails Guide

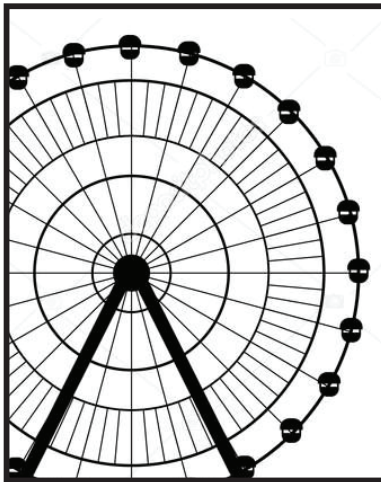
- **Lakefront Trail** - Location: Lake Michigan, Route Length: Up to 18 miles, Trail Type: Paved
- **The Riverwalk** - Location: The Loop, Route Length: 3.4 miles, Trail Type: Paved
- **Grant Park & Millennium Park** - Location: The Loop, Route Length: 3-5 miles, Trail Type: Paved
- **Magnificent Mile** - Location: The Loop, Route Length: 1-2 miles, Trail Type: Urban/Paved
- **Milwaukee Avenue** - Location: North Side, Route Length: Varies, Trail Type: Paved
- **Hyde Park** - Location: Hyde Park, Route Length: 5-7 miles,



Trail Type: Paved

- **Lincoln Park** - Location: Lincoln Park, Route Length: Up to 5.5 miles, Trail Type: Gravel
- **North Shore Channel Trail** - Location: North Chicago, Route Length: 6.7 miles, Trail Type: Paved
- **The 606** - Location: Bloomingdale, Route Length: 2.7 miles, Trail Type: Paved
- **Humboldt Park** - Location: NW Chicago, Route Length: 2+ miles, Trail Type: Gravel
- **Busse Woods** - Location: NW Chicago, Route Length: 8 mile loop, Trail Type: Paved

# EXPLORE



# HISTORY LESSONS, FUN FACTS + MUST SEES

## PLUS, THE FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF GUIDE TO CHICAGO

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*Our buildings have stories ingrained in the walls (in a non-creepy way) — stories that are meant to be told and shared. The Neighborhood Hotel Little Italy was formerly the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame which honored the greatest Italian-American athletes, broadcasters and sports workers to benefit athletics in the United States.*

*Rebel House Design looked to mid-century Italian design as natural inspiration for the renovation. The marriage of form and function peppered with pops of color compliment the open floor plan. Traditional materials like ceramics, glass, wood, and marble bring a sense of warmth and modernity to the vibrant space while sleek lines and simple geometric patterns flow seamlessly. Vast windows blur the line between indoor and outdoor space, adding to the airy yet intimate energy.*

### Building History + Reno Process

- **Late 1800's:** An influx of Italians landed in Little Italy making this area a living legacy of Chicago's Italian-American past. Other ethnic groups vacated the area in the early 1900's leaving the area predominantly Italian-American.
- **1889:** Jane Addams (an American settlement activist and social worker) co-founded one of America's most famous settlement houses: Hull-House. Hull-House still stands today (open to visitors) and is just a short walk from the hotel. One of the first newspaper articles ever written about Hull-House acknowledges an invitation sent to Little Italy residents. It begins with the salutation: "Mio Carissimo Amico," and is signed, "Le Signorine, Jane Addams and Ellen Starr."
- **1921-25:** The Genna crime family operated in prohibition-era Little Italy. The family was headed by the six Genna brothers, known as "The Terrible Gennas." After a bloody war led to their demise in the 1920s, the gang was eventually absorbed by the Chicago Outfit.
- **1955:** The Eisenhower Expressway was created which shrunk the area of Little Italy.
- **1950s & 1960s:** The Italian population of Little Italy peaked during these decades with the heaviest concentration settling on or near Taylor Street.

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

# HISTORY LESSONS, FUN FACTS + MUST SEES

## ***CONTINUED.***

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- **1963:** The decision to build the University of Illinois was finalized. Some say that the construction of the university decimated the neighborhood as many of Little Italy's residents were against the idea. Florence Scala, Chicago's legendary Taylor Street activist and longtime Hull-House cohort, blamed the Hull-House board of directors for betraying the thriving, tight knit neighborhood. In 1963, the trustees of Hull-House accepted an offer of \$875,000 for the settlement building. Jessie Binford and Scala took the case to the Supreme Court. The court ruled in favor of the University and the settlement was closed on March 28, 1963.
- **2000-2019:** In 2000, the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame moved from Elmwood Park to the building that is now The Neighborhood Hotel Little Italy.
- **Present Day:** This community is diverse while an Italian presence remains (especially in the food + restaurants as many have been family owned for generations)!

### **Little Italy Landmarks + Institutions**

- **The Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii:** Built in the early 1920's, this is the oldest continuing Italian American church in Chicago.
- **St. Ignatius Parish:** The parish was founded in 1907 with the school following a few years later. It's a gorgeous property + landmark to checkout.
- **Our Lady of the Holy Family Catholic Church :** This is Chicago's only example of pre-Civil War Victorian Gothic architecture. Built in 1860, this church survived The Great Chicago Fire, which began a few blocks away on October 8, 1871. FYI: Occasionally, local parishioners have reported seeing a white apparition.  
*\*\*call ahead for tours of the churches*
- **Little Italy Guided Walking Tour:** If you'd like one, we'll find you a tour guide! Just give us a heads up :)
- **Hull-House Museum:** Chicago's first social settlement was not only the private home of Jane Addams and other Hull-House residents, but also a place where immigrants of diverse communities gathered to learn, eat, debate and acquire the tools necessary to put down roots in their new country. The Museum is comprised of two of the settlement complex's

original thirteen buildings: the Hull-Home and the Residents' Dining Hall. These spaces were used in various ways over the years,— i.e. as a nursery school, a library and a salon for social and political dialogue.

Reservations required, closed Saturdays + Mondays

- **Pillar of Fire Statue:** The site of Mr. and Mrs. O'Leary's former property and the alleged starting point of the Chicago fire is now occupied by the Robert J. Quinn Fire Academy. One can still view the "Pillar of Fire," a bronze sculpture by Egon Weiner commemorating the event outside the fire academy.
- **Ralph's Cigars:** You'll find cigars for the mild, medium, or full-bodied smoker + nice lounges to hang out, watch TV or read! The outdoor patio is great in the summer.
- **Festa Italiana:** This is Little Italy's annual street festival on Taylor St. with great food and music! If you're staying at the hotel over the third weekend in August, you'll catch it!

### **...More Cool Stuff (close, but not in Little Italy)**

- **The Old Chicago Post Office:** After sitting vacant for nearly two decades, this stately building from the 1920's has just completed an \$800 million renovation — the largest historic redevelopment in the country. Checkout the cool, old building, 3.5-acre urban rooftop oasis—the largest of its kind in the city—and a food hall with some awesome dining options!
- **Maxwell Street Market:** This outdoor market is a Chicago tradition where you'll find tons of interesting handmade crafts, resale housewares, clothing, live music and some of the best street food in Chicago!  
*Open Season: April - December // Sundays, 9am - 3pm*
- **National Public Housing Museum:** The National Public Housing Museum is the only cultural institution devoted to telling the story of public housing in the United States. Its mission is to preserve, promote, and propel the right of all people to a place where they can live and prosper — a place to call home. The museum just moved to the last remaining building of the Jane Addams Homes of ABLA Homes. There is an oral history archive, public programming, and an entrepreneurship hub. Exhibitions will include the restored apartment of three families who lived in the Jane Addams homes. Check hours before you visit — might not be open yet.
- **Chicago Architecture Center:** Checkout their tour schedules for incredible tours along the river (by boat) or walking tours throughout the city.
- **Chicago Crime Tours:** Escape into Chicago's underworld on a crime and

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

mob tour with stops on-and-off the climate-controlled bus. Walking tour paths explore historic crime scenes w/ great photo opps!

- **Chicago Water Taxi:** This is a great way to see the city from the river. The taxi only runs in the spring/summer months — checkout their schedule and buy tickets online. It's super fun to take the taxi to China Town!

### **Sports + Concerts Venues:**

Wrigley Field (Northside, home of the Cubs) + **Comiskey Park** (Southside, home of the White Sox) + **Soldier Field** (home of the Bears + Concerts) + **United Center** (close to the hotel + home of the Bulls/Blackhawks + Concerts). There are lots of great music venues throughout the city. **Thalia Hall** is in Pilsen (about a mile from the hotel) and has a great lineup of concerts plus an excellent restaurant downstairs called Dusek's. If you're looking to hear some classic Chicago Blues, checkout: **Kingston Mines** in Lincoln Park, for jazz: **The Green Mill** in Uptown and just a cool, under the radar spot, **Constellation Chicago** on the northwest side.

### **Theater:**

There are several great theaters in Chicago. Just to name a few: **Steppenwolf**, **The Goodman Theater**, **The Chicago Theater**, **Broadway in Chicago** (performances happen at a few theaters), **Chicago Shakespeare Theater**, **Harris Theater**. For dance, checkout **Chicago's Joffrey Ballet**. And the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** + **Lyric Opera House** are beautiful!

### **Museums:**

- **Art:** MCA, The Art Institute, Hyde Park Arts Center

### **Everything else:**

- **The Children's Museum** (@ Navy Pier which is fun and touristy - known for the Ferris Wheel)
- **The Museum of Science + Industry**
- **The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum + Lincoln Park Zoo** (free): Both in Lincoln Park
- **Museum Campus** is comprised of: The Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium (fyi: they're known for having good coffee), and The Adler Planetarium. Checkout gorgeous views of the city and lake from these museums.

### **Close together, Downtown:**

- **Millennium Park** (home of The Bean + Face Fountains!)
- **Maggie Daley Park** (incredible playground)
- **The Chicago Cultural Center** (Beautiful and free - great Chicago history)

# FERRIS BUELLER'S CHICAGO

Chicago isn't just a backdrop for this 1986 John Hughes film. Places like Willis Tower, Wrigley Field, the Art Institute, and Lake Shore Drive all play their own role in the movie.

For Hughes, Ferris Bueller's Day Off was a "love letter" to Chicago. He said, "I really wanted to capture as much of Chicago as I could. Not just in the architecture and landscape, but the spirit."

The director filmed the city's skyscrapers, landmarks, and streets which allowed Midwesterners to claim a piece of Hollywood for themselves. The sites featured in the movie were meaningful to Hughes. For example, the director often escaped through the halls of the Art Institute as a high schooler.

Here are the most iconic filming locations in the '80s classic.

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## 1. CAMERON'S HOUSE

*370 Beech Street*

*Highland Park, IL 60035*

Ferris' sidekick Cameron Frye lives in a modernist home designed by architect A. James Speyer located in Highland Park. The glass-encased garage plays an important role in the movie, it's the site of where the precious 1961 Ferrari plummets down into the ravine. The North Shore property was on the market for five years before it finally sold in 2014.

## 2. 333 WEST WACKER

*333 West Upper Wacker Drive*

*Chicago, IL 60606*

Just before the scene at Ferris' dad's office, the film focuses on the then-new

333 West Wacker Drive. The movie was shot in 1985, and the curved glass tower designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates was completed just two years prior. The glassy tower was the epitome of cutting edge design at the time.

## 3. GLENBROOK NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

*2300 Shermer Road*

*Northbrook, IL 60062*

In the movie, Ferris and Cameron speed over to Glenbrook North in the collectible Ferrari to bust Ferris' girlfriend Sloane Peterson out of school. The concrete stairs Sloane walks down are still mostly the same

today, and students even recreate scenes from the movie on the steps. Glenbrook North was also Hughes's own alma mater.

## 4. GRANT PARK

*5 South Columbus Drive*

*Chicago, IL 60601*

In 1986, Millennium Park wasn't a thing yet. Construction for the sprawling downtown park began in 1998. But, aerial shots in the film show the vacant area that would later have gardens, play-grounds, art sculptures, and a concert venue.

## 5. LAKE SHORE DRIVE

*1114 North Lake Shore Drive*

*Chicago, IL 60611*

If you steal your dad's

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

Ferrari, how can you not cruise down Lake Shore Drive in the warm weather? It's perfectly Chicago: Skyscrapers and high-rises on one side, and a clear blue lake on the other. The movie shows Ferris, Cameron, and Sloane heading south with the John Hancock Center visible in front of them.

## 6. ITALIAN VILLAGE

71 West Monroe Street  
Chicago, IL 60603

Italian Village on Monroe Street opened in 1927—it still serves up Tuscan fare today and represents one of the last old school Chicago dining rooms. After the trio exit Lake



shot of them driving past the restaurant's iconic neon sign.

## 7. PARKING GARAGE

172 West Madison Street  
Chicago, IL 60602

The parking garage

where the teens drop off the Ferrari (and the attendant can't help but take the convertible for a spin) is on Madison Street.

## 8. WELLS STREET

West Madison Street & South Wells Street Chicago, IL 60602

As soon as Ferris leaves the parking garage, the parking attendant and his buddy hightail it out on the road. Hughes shot the beginning of their joyride on Wells Street—the hot red Ferrari framed by the familiar elevated CTA tracks.

## 9. WILLIS TOWER

233 South Wacker Drive  
Chicago, IL 60606

The first stop downtown? The Sears Tower observation deck—now named the Willis Tower Skydeck. In the movie, Ferris mentions it's the tallest building in the world which was true through the '80s and into the '90s. When the Petronas Towers in Malaysia were completed in 1996, the 1,451-foot tower lost its title.

## 10. CHICAGO BOARD OF TRADE

141 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604

The Board of Trade shown in Ferris Bueller's Day



Off looks quite different. In the '80s, traders wore yellow and red jackets, completed sales on paper, and yelled across the pit. Now, that same room is filled with digital screens, computers, and electronic trading.

## 11. CHEZ QUIZ

22 West Schiller Street  
Chicago, IL 60610

Wondering how you can get reservations? Welp, you won't be able to even if you're Abe Froman the sausage king of Chicago because the fancy French restaurant doesn't exist. The exterior shots are someone's private home in Gold Coast—it's since been remodeled and doesn't feature the ivy-covered wall anymore. And, the interior shots were filmed in Los Angeles.

**TO BE CONTINUED.**



## 12. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

111 South Michigan Avenue

Chicago, IL 60603

Hughes planned a montage at the Art Institute, one of his favorite places in the city growing up. The three protagonists enter behind a group of school children, and then proceed to be goofballs through-out the massive museum. Then, Cameron comes face to face with Georges Seurat's A Sunday on La Grande Jatte and has a moment. Meanwhile, Ferris and Sloane find themselves in front of Marc Chagall's "America Windows."

## 12. WRIGLEY FIELD

1060 West Addison Street

Chicago, IL 60613

What did generations of Chicagoans learn from Ferris? If you play hooky, go to a Cubs game. Of course, Hughes couldn't resist adding in a scene set at



one of the most beloved ballparks in the country.

## 14. DALEY PLAZA

50 West Washington Street

Chicago, IL 60602

An impromptu musical number at the Von Steuben Day Parade shows the best of downtown Chicago. Hughes shot the Picasso sculpture at Daley Plaza and Dearborn Street. The scene brought the people of Chicago into the film—it re-quired nearly 10,000 extras—and was Hughes's favorite part of the entire movie.

## 15. FEDERAL CENTER

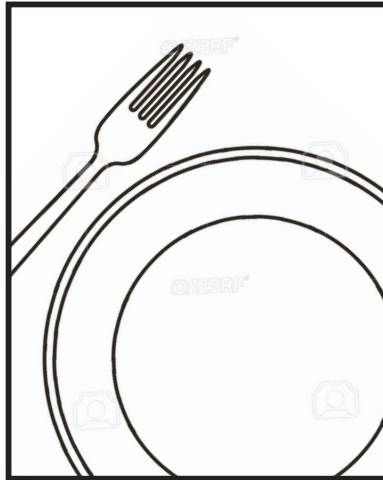
230 South Dearborn Street

Chicago, IL 60604

While Ferris is serenading the Germans on a parade float, Cameron and Sloane take a walk through the plaza at the Mies van der Rohe designed Federal Building and Post Office to talk about what hap-pens after they graduate from high school.

*For an interactive map version of this article, visit <https://chicago.curbed.com/maps/ferris-buellers-day-off-filming-locations-chicago>*

# EAT + DRINK



# FOOD: A CITY THAT KNOWS WHAT'S UP

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This list was created with the most local options in mind – all within a 10-ish minute walk and even shorter drive/bike ride. Chicago is a food town - great bites are everywhere. Pilsen is a neighborhood that's very close to Little Italy - about a mile away. Pilsen has great Mexican food and more (i.e. S.K.Y, Hai Sous and Dusek's) plus some cool art galleries. Happy to steer you to other awesome dining experiences outside of the immediate 'hood + check out the Eater HOT LIST later in the book.

## **Breakfast + Brunch + Bakeries**

- **Starbucks:** Right across the street!
- **2 Shades Cafe:** A local favorite for coffee (they have good sandwiches too).
- **Sweet Maple Cafe:** Classic Breakfast spot! Locals say to go for the: homemade biscuits, grits + pancakes! [Closed Monday/Tuesday]
- **Stax:** A fun spot for brunch! Lots of tasty treats — everything from classic pancakes to cinnamon roll waffles (with some savory egg options along the way).
- **Demitasse Cafe:** Locals say, go for the: excellent scones, omelettes and wraps! [Closed Monday]
- **The Embassy:** This is the bar right next door. Why is this in the breakfast section? Well, fun fact: On Saturdays/Sundays they open early for a traditional Irish breakfast + lunch — awesome fish + chips.
- **Ferrara's Bakery:** Family owned for generations! Here you'll find some incredible baked goods and excellent lunch options. Locals say: go for the sweets but don't miss the homemade soup and lasagna. [Closed Sundays]
- **Scafuri Bakery:** Another great, family owned bakery. Outstanding pastries — especially known for their Italian cookies and lemon ricotta loaf. FYI: They stuff their canolli on the spot (keeps the shell crisp). [Closed Mondays]
- **Lou Mitchell's:** A classic Chicago diner. Lou's father started the diner in 1923 specializing in breakfast, brunch, and lunch dishes. The family restaurant was later turned over to his son, Lou Mitchell — and here we are! [Closed Monday/Tuesday]

## **Lunch + Dinner**

- **Conte di Savoia:** Italian deli + market known (opened in the 1940's!) for their sub sandwiches (locals say: get the Italian)! Great Italian cookies and other goodies. Their frozen lasagna is supposed to be excellent. If it's a beautiful day, dine al fresco in Piazza Italia right next door. [Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner]

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

- **Rosebud on Taylor:** Upscale Italian with huge portions! Locals say: start the meal with their signature roasted garlic, oil + bread. Great salads. Bill Clinton loved this place (according to insiders)!  
*[Dinner only. Closed Monday]*
- **Fontano's Subs:** Another spot-on Italian sandwich. They also have a small grocery section with Italian delicacies and staples. *[Lunch + Dinner]*
- **Carm's Little Italy:** Known for: hot dogs, beef, sausage, and lemonade/Italian Ice. Local tip: go here for the Italian ice/lemonade if the line at Mario's is too long. *[Closed Sunday. Lunch/ Early Dinner — closes @ 4pm on Saturdays, 7pm other days]*
- **Peanut Park Trattoria:** This is a fantastic, traditional Italian joint with classic dishes and handmade pastas. Highlights: Linguine Vongole + Tiramisu. FYI: same owners as Coalfire pizza - YUM. *[Closed Monday. Dinner Only. Open for Brunch on Saturday/Sunday. Happy Hour specials from 4pm-6pm Tuesday - Friday.]*
- **Tufano's Vernon Park Tap:** Chalkboard menu, casual, delicious, family owned. Just a few words to describe this legendary place that has been around for decades! Don't miss the chef statue near the bar - it has been there since the 50's. And check out the photos hanging on the wall - lots of people you'll recognize. It's usually easy to get a table (except on Blackhawk's home game nights)! Standout dishes: Eggplant or Chicken Parm, Garlic Shells and Broccoli, Lemon Chicken & Potatoes, Porkchops w/ Peas + Fettuccine Alfredo! Closed Monday. *[Lunch/Dinner — Dinner only on Saturday/Sunday. No reservations + cash only.]*
- **Chez Joel:** This is a great treat-yourself kind of place! Excellent French food. Highly recommend the steak frites! *[Dinner Only. Closed Sunday]*
- **Pompei:** Delicious + inexpensive Italian food that has been family owned since 1909! This place is casual - ideal for everyone. They're known for their rectangular pizza, beef angelo strudel, fresh pastas (that you can often watch them make), lemon knot cookies - the list goes on. Be sure to check out the daily specials. And don't miss the Pepper & Egg sandwiches. Final thought: Marie's Salad has the best [family secret] dressing! *[Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner]*
- **Tuscany on Taylor:** This place has been a Chicago institution for over a quarter century serving with food that will transport you to Northern Italy. Can't go wrong with any/all of the homemade pastas. Also, the patio is quite beautiful. *[Dinner Only, Happy Hour Wed/Thurs/Sun, 4pm-7pm. Closed Monday/Tuesday]*
- **County BBQ:** Casual bbq with a nice backyard patio. *[Lunch/Dinner — only dinner service on Monday]*
- **Al's #1 Beef:** A famous spot in Chicago, known for their Chicago style beef sandwiches - order them dry or dipped! Not fancy - some would consider it a 'hole in the wall,' but the beef is delicious. *[Lunch/Dinner]*
- **Busy Burger** - Family owned — they serve a wonderful burger. *[Lunch/Dinner — Open until midnight]*
- **The Patio:** A true greasy spoon, fast food spot. Some say they have the

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

best Italian beef in town (plus hot dogs and burgers) *[Lunch/Dinner + Open late]*

- **Manny's Deli:** Little bit of a walk (or short car ride) but this place is a classic Chicago spot (family owned)! The corned beef and pastrami are out of this world. *[Open Breakfast/Lunch/Early Dinner — closes @ 8pm]*
- **ML Kitchen** - Sweet outdoor space + great Thai food that is a little more upscale than other Thai places in the area. *[Lunch/Dinner]*
- **Hanna Sushi + Thai:** Locals rave: they have the best shrimp fried rice ever! They only have a few tables, but good for carry out. *[Closed Monday. Lunch/Dinner]*
- **De Pasada:** Quick and simple, great Mexican food. *[Lunch/Dinner]*
- **Yummy Thai:** Locals say that this is the spot for solid Thai food! *[Lunch/Dinner]*
- **Chilango:** Traditional Mexican food with cool twists! Locals say: Go for the fish tacos! *[Lunch + Dinner]*
- **Adda:** Delicious Indian food directly across the street (on the corner). *[Closed Tuesdays]*
- **Taylor's Tacos:** A very lucky, new addition right down the street! These tacos have a celeb following + the shop is owned by Chicago natives + spouses, Taylor and Maya Mason. Try the Mexican street tacos: grilled meats with salsa, cilantro, and onion in a corn tortilla; and "Black tacos," Mason's term for seasoned, usually ground meat topped with lettuce, tomato, cheese, and sour cream in a flour tortilla — the tacos she grew up eating on Chicago's West Side!

**\*\*Insert a plug for what is possibly the best hot dog in the city: The Wiener's Circle in Lincoln Park.** This is a 7 mile journey from the hotel but (we think) worth it. Local tip: don't ask for ketchup on your dog. *[Lunch/Dinner. Open late - things get a little wild]*

**\*\*One more note:** The pizza found in Little Italy is the best around. However, we do need to mention our top choices for some true, Chicago deep dish found throughout the city: Lou Malnati's, Giordano's, Pizano's, Chicago Pizza & Oven Grinder + Pequod's.

## **Bars**

- **The Embassy:** This is the bar right next door - an EASY place to watch a game or two. They have a nice patio in back with TVs and some darts. *Happy Hour Monday - Friday, 3pm-6pm*
- **Vintage Bar + Grill:** Cool vibe, good food + a great back patio that's open year round! Rotating specials almost everyday. *[Open everyday]*
- **Hawkeye's Bar + Grill:** Classic sports bar, good happy hour + they have a bus that takes you to the United Center on most game days! Daily specials. *[Open everyday]*
- **Taylor Street Tap:** Nice, easy + never crowded. Check the website as they

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

often have live music or comedy shows. Cash Only. *[Open everyday]*

- **Little Joe's:** Classic, neighborhood dive bar. \$3 PBR always! *[HappyHour Monday - Friday, 4-6pm. Open everyday, kitchen is closed on Monday]*

## Breweries

- **Marz Community Brewing Company** [Closed Monday]
- **District Brew Yards** [Nice patio. Closed Monday]
- **Metropolitan Brewing** [They have a beautiful patio that overlooks the river. You can also rent electric boats from Chicago Electric Boat Company downstairs and ride north or south along the river].
- **Forbidden Root Restaurant + Brewery** [Happy Hour Monday - Thursday, 3pm-6pm]
- **Revolution Brewery + Tap Room** [Hours sometimes change, check before you go. Closed Monday/Tuesday]
- **Eris Brewery + Cider House** [Reservations recommended, Closed Monday]

## Italian Ice

- **Mario's Italian Lemonade:** People come from all over the city for Mario's lemonade (Italian ice). Which means that it lives up to the hype BUT lines can be long. Fun fact: John Belushi worked there when he was in high school. One local fondly remembers going on the first warm spring days in the 1950's! It's family run and has not changed since opening day. *[Open season: May 1 - mid-September. Open Everyday.]*
- **Carm's:** When too many tourists takeover Mario's, the locals hit nearby Carm's. Their Italian ice is supreme (and they also have solid burgers, beef and hot dogs). *[Closed Sunday.]*

The following is **NOT** a restaurant or carry out place, just a cool food related thing in the area that you should know about.

**Nea Agora Packing** is a long-time family owned butcher that sells lamb and only lamb. Every morning a big truck delivers full bodies of lamb. This is THE place to go for custom cut lamb of any kind - very old time butcher feel.

\*\*Raw meat only, there is no cooking onsite. *[Closed Sunday.]*

## THE 38 ESSENTIAL RESTAURANTS IN CHICAGO

This collection of Chicago's best restaurants provides answers for the classic question: "Where would you dine if you had one night in the city?" The list recognizes some all-time greats and restaurants that have pushed culinary boundaries. This list is for locals who want to make the most out of their nights. It's also for visitors unfamiliar with the city.

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### **SUPERDAWG DRIVE-IN**

*6363 N Milwaukee Ave*

*Chicago, IL 60646*

Avatars of Superdawg founders Maurie and Flaurie Berman stand guard over this venerable Chicago drive-in at the intersection of Devon, Nagle, and Milwaukee; customers can spot those giant hot dog statues bearing the Bermans' likenesses from blocks away. Superdawg is a throwback dining experience where customers park their cars and talk to staff through crackling drive-in speakers and carhops bring out trays of food. Superdawg's offering isn't a traditional Chicago-style dog. Rather than a Vienna Beef frank, Superdawg uses a thick, proprietary all-beef sausage that comes with mustard, pickled green tomato, and chopped Spanish onions. This is all

cradled in a box of crinkle fries. There's a second suburban location in Wheeling.

### **LUELLA'S SOUTHERN KITCHEN**

*4609 N Lincoln Ave*

*Chicago, IL 60625*

While chef Darnell Reed toiled in hotel kitchens in downtown Chicago, he imagined opening a restaurant that honored his great-grandmother Luella, who arrived in Chicago from Mississippi in 1943. Now, his tiny Lincoln Square restaurant serves some of the city's best Southern food, including cream shrimp and grits, chicken gumbo, and a mighty platter of fried chicken and waffles. This Black-owned restaurant on the North Side is also a popular brunch destination. It's a casual spot with counter ordering, but it brings a serious menu where everyone can find

something hearty and delectable.

### **BAYAN KO**

*1810 W Montrose Ave*

*Chicago, IL 60613*

Bayan Ko is the only place in Chicago where diners can find lumpia, empanadas, and fried rice with shrimp and Cuban-style mojo pork. With Cuban and Filipino owners, the restaurant dips into both countries with impressive results. The focus isn't fusion, but taking dishes from both cultures that complement each other. The sandwiches, like the Pinoy burger (made with beef and longanisa), stand out. The Adobo wings are addicting and the pancit is worth a detour. The restaurant is BYO and reservations of recommended for the weekend.

## **COMMUNITY TAVERN**

*4038 N Milwaukee Ave*

*Chicago, IL 60641*

Since Joey and Brenna Beato took over Community Tavern, the Portage Park restaurant has expanded its menu, setting itself apart from its origins as a neighborhood steakhouse. But,

fortunately, the neighborhood aspect remains. The bar program is robust and kids ages 12 and younger eat free on certain days. The menu offers is diverse; it might be off-putting to those who demand cohesion or some sort of menu narrative, but for those who enjoy delicious food it makes sense. There's a section of Asian-style dumplings, including one stuffed with mushroom butter. A white prawn carbonara is as much Thai as Italian, and the bimbimbap can be supercharged with skirt steak (a nod to the old steakhouse).

## **SMOQUE BBQ**

*3800 N Pulaski Rd*

*Chicago, IL 60641*

With two smokers to prep meaty St. Louis-style and baby-back ribs, tender brisket, apple-and-oak-smoked pulled pork, and more, this destination on the Northwest Side neighborhood of Irving

Park delivers barbecue in the style of Kansas City and Memphis. During the pandemic, owner Barry Sorkin expanded takeout and outdoor dining options, including a patio in the former parking lot.

## **SUPERKHANA INTERNATIONAL**

*3059 W Diversey Ave*

*Chicago, IL 60647*

Want to find a great burger and delicious pizza topped with the freshest veggies of the season? Superkhana International isn't want diners expect. The restaurant's backbone is Indian cooking, and diners will detect the familiar spices that make subcontinental cuisine unique. But this isn't Tata's Indian American restaurant. The pork vindaloo is sublime, almost a deconstructed version of the dish. The brunch might be the best in town with appam, the Indian griddle cakes, spiked with fresh produce such as spring peas. It's a classic veggie option than can be brokered toward carnivores by adding bacon. The Hakka noodles are fresh — the best version of the Indo-Chinese classic Chicagoans will be able to find. The chefs at Superkhana are just

finding their groove. The novelties remain — butter chicken calzones are glorious. But the restaurant offers much more than shock and awe. Indian food is about more than heat.

## **PAT'S PIZZA AND RISTORANTE**

*2679 N Lincoln Ave*

*Chicago, IL 60614*

Chicago thin-crust pizza is having a moment, with the city's pizza makers eager to defy the notion that this is only a deep-dish town. (Settle down, deep-dish fans. The thick slices are still awesome.) Pat's Pizza in Lakeview has a storied history of popularizing tavern-style pies. This family-owned spot sports some of the crispiest, thinnest pizzas around. Pat's uses its own sausage blend for the pizza, which also helps set this place apart. Pies are available for carryout, delivery, patio, and indoor dining.

## **MI TOCAYA ANTOJERÍA**

*2800 W Logan Blvd*

*Chicago, IL 60647*

Few chefs share the talent and drive that Diana Dávila exhibits while showcasing a dazzling display of small Mexican dishes in Logan Square. Dávila isn't shy about taking risks: she isn't pandering to the

**TO BE CONTINUED.**



typical American diner. This isn't a place to fill up on chips and salsa with a pitcher of margaritas; Dávila left her previous job after owners tried to force those expectations on her. That's not to say there's not a taste of the familiar — the guacamole, steak burrito, and fried oyster tacos are all stellar. But customers should dive into unique items like peanut butter lengua and tlacoyo de nopalitos, the latter of which represents Dávila's obsession with pre-Hispanic Mexico.

### **LULA CAFE**

*2537 N Kedzie Blvd  
Chicago, IL 606347*

Chef and owner Jason Hammel continues to keep the community at the forefront of the operations at Lula Cafe, which has, since 1999, endeared itself to many in Logan Square as a welcoming space for New American cuisine. This is an all-day cafe with fresh-baked pastries and a stellar breakfast burrito. At night, the wine list goes deep to accompany dishes like roast chicken, beet bruschetta, and summer squash with Santa Rosa plums, tropea onions, and basil. Find a seat at the bar and enjoy oysters and snacks like chicken liver mousse.

### **DAISIES**

*2523 N Milwaukee Ave  
Chicago, IL 60647*

Daisies has evolved to be more than just a spot for beautifully made pastas. Chef Joe Frillman and family have met every challenge that pandemic has posed with creativity. They converted the back dining room to a market for local vendors when the state suspended indoor dining. They've been working the farmers market every week with gusto. During this time, Daisies has started to offer a lunch menu where weekday diners can score a decadent wagyu cheesesteak (the beef and cheddar) or nosh on the best homemade sour cream and onion dip around. It's the little touches that make Daisies one of unique, with a casual and welcoming feel. But then it comes back to those pastas, all full of Midwestern farm-to-table pride (the produce comes from Frillman's farmer brother).

### **PEQUOD'S PIZZA**

*2207 N Clybourn Ave  
Elmwood Park, IL 60614*

Chicago-style deep-dish pizza is a polarizing topic for locals that has bred resentment in recent years, as national media consistently use

it in an ongoing struggle to understand Chicago. It's not that deep dish pizza isn't delicious; it's just that Chicagoans don't want the city to be defined by the dish alone. Though Pequod's version isn't exactly the deep dish that tourists expect — it's thinner than the stuffed pizza many travel magazines feature — it's still the premier take on the style. The crust features a chewy rim of caramelized cheese that may appear burnt, but that chew adds a special texture that sets it apart. There are locations in Lincoln Park and suburban Morton Grove. Be prepared to wait on weekends.

### **TAQUERIA CHINGON**

*2234 N Western Ave  
Elmwood Park, IL 60647*

Chicago has plenty of taquerias, but this Logan Square entry (right across the street from Bucktown), has quickly ascended to the head of the class. From a trio of Mexican chefs who worked at acclaimed French restaurants La Sardine and Le Bouchon, Taqueria Chingon offers delicate top-notch street-style tacos. The pork and veggie pastos off the trompo offer masterclasses in texture.

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This is also a great place to try out organ meats and other treats for the uninitiated. The weekly specials are worthy of repeat eating. You never know what the chefs will scheme. They recently debuted a patio.

### **KYŌTEN**

*2507 W Armitage Ave  
Chicago, IL 60647*

This reservation-only sushi restaurant resides in a quaint space off the Milwaukee, Western, and Armitage intersection in Logan Square. Chef Otto Phan is a character, and he believes he serves one of the best meals in the country, and at \$440 to \$490 per person, it better be. Phan sources from the best fish in Japan, and diners can tell he leaves nothing for granted — the grains of rice, soy sauce, and other ingredients are premium. This is one of the most unforgettable meals in Chicago and a must for lovers of sushi.

### **REDHOT RANCH**

*2449 W Armitage Ave  
Chicago, IL 60647*

It's hard for hot dog stands to differentiate themselves from the pack in Chicago as all of them, for the most part, use the same product: dependable Vienna Beef. But Red Hot Ranch has

managed. First, the stand uses sausage with natural casings. This provides the dogs with a unique bite, snappier than the Oscar Mayers that many Americans grew up eating. The stand also serves Depression Dogs, the Chicago variant that comes with french fries in the bun. The griddle burgers are also of note. There are few meals as satisfying late at night. Red Hot Ranch has locations in Lakeview and Bucktown, and 35th Street Red Hots, near Sox Park in Bridgeport, is from the same owners and has an identical menu.

### **HERMOSA RESTAURANT**

*4356 W Armitage Ave  
Chicago, IL 60639*

Hermosa may look similar to a neighborhood hot dog or beef stand that many Chicagoans grew up with, but chef and owner Ethan Lim, who had a stint at Alinea Group's Next Restaurant and Aviary, uses his culinary talent to take Chicago classics to the next evolutionary level, incorporating Asian flavors to create a Cambodian fried chicken sandwich and an Italian beef banh mi. But for those who want a composed meal more sophisticated than a fast-casual sandwich, Lim also

offers a popular "Family Meal," essentially a chance to buy out the entire room for dinner. The chef acts as a one-man show, loading the table up with delicious pan-Asian plates (noodles, Cambodian beef dishes) meant to be shared.

### **ALINEA**

*1723 N Halstead St  
Chicago, IL 60614*

Chef Grant Achatz and Nick Kokonas's fine dining institution is not only the city's only restaurant to have three Michelin stars, it's also considered one of the world's best. Inside the luxurious Lincoln Park dining room, expect a sensory overload. Achatz uses heavily scented citrus, smoke, and other smells to provide diners with a theatrical experience: servers present dishes as though they were works of art. As dinner for two can run close to \$1,000 for two, including wine pairings, Alinea is the restaurant that appears most frequently on Chicagoans' bucket lists.

### **JOHNNIE'S BEEF**

*7500 W North Ave  
Chicago, IL 60707*

The best example of Chicago's iconic Italian beef sandwiches exists outside of the city at the

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

two suburban locations of Johnnie's Beef. The original space in Elmwood Park is a relic that first opened in 1961 (there's also a second location in Arlington Heights). The menu is simple: beefs (the monosyllabic term locals use for Italian beef sandwiches), charcoal-grilled Italian sausages, and hot dogs. The thin-cut beef is moist and perfectly seasoned with hints of oregano. The hot peppers deliver plenty of heat but don't overwhelm the meat. Don't sleep on the beef-sausage sandwich, which combines tender slices of Italian beef with a robust sausage. Pepper-and-egg sandwiches are also available daily; they're mostly aimed at Catholic customers who need a meat-free option on Lent Fridays. For dessert, there's a stellar lemon Italian ice. While the city has plenty of beef options, Johnnie's is worth the drive to the 'burbs.

### **ADALINA**

*912 N State St  
Chicago, IL 60610*

The thought of a loud and crowded dining room doesn't appeal to everyone, especially during the pandemic. But the staff at Adalina have created something special

with careful attention to service and a thoughtful Italian American menu that betrays downtown tourist trap stereotypes. This is a throwback to those fancy-free years of dining before 2020, before vaccines. And it's done with such joy thanks to wonderful mafaldine, ravioli, and lumache. For more robust hungers, the chops are on par with most upscale steakhouses. But the atmosphere is much better than the stuffy old guard.

### **KASAMA**

*1001 N Winchester Ave  
Chicago, IL 60622*

2020 was a challenging time to open a restaurant, but the pandemic couldn't stop the husband-and-wife team of Tim Flores and Genie Kwon. Kasama was one of the year's true bright spots: it was named one of Eater's 11 Best New Restaurants in America. Kwon handles the amazing pastries, like an éclair-shaped croissant topped with Serrano ham or salmon, while Flores prepares Filipino dishes for breakfast and brunch, including spins on lumpia and rice plates with tocino (roasted char siu-like pork) and longaniza (charred sausage). This past fall, Kasama introduced a fine-dining

dinner tasting menu, one of the few Filipino tasting menus in the country, that immediately became one of the hottest tickets in town.

### **SOULÉ**

*1931 W Chicago Ave  
Chicago, IL 60622*

Soulé amps up soul food classics like nourishing shrimp and grits, jerk chicken wings, and blackened catfish. The attention to small details in the food has made the restaurant a favorite in the neighborhood and has also drawn many visiting celebrities, particularly musicians and athletes, including former Chicago Bull Bobby Portis, and NBA legend Scottie Pippen.

### **FRONTERA GRILL, TOPOLOBAMPO, AND BAR SOTANO**

*445 N Clark St  
Chicago, IL 60654*

Rick Bayless is the Oklahoma-born chef who obsessed over Mexican cuisine, appearing on TV and creating his own grocery food empire, and his restaurants still remain landmarks in River North for their inventive Mexican cuisine. His flagship, Frontera, which opened in 1987, provides a more casual dining experience, while

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sibling Topolobampo, which opened two years later, was one of the first restaurants in the U.S. to present Mexican food in a fine dining atmosphere. Bar Sótano is the baby of the group, a basement tavern that serves as an experimental space with pop-ups and creative cocktails. Bayless's name often prompts emotional responses when it comes to discussion about cultural appropriation, but there's no question that he's raised appreciation for Mexican food in America. (Fast-casual Xoco, which has been spun out into the Tortazo chain, is in the same building).

### **ROSE MARY**

*932 W Fulton St  
Chicago, IL 60607*

Chef Joe Flamm and his partners went big in Fulton Market, opening a meticulously designed restaurant that's become a destination for out of towners who know the chef from his Top Chef win. But Rose Mary, described as "Adriatic drinking food," is a love letter to locals with European notes by fusing Italian, Croatian, and Midwestern sensibilities. The pastas would be at home at Spiaggia, one of the best Italian restaurants in

Chicago before it closed and where Flamm cut his teeth. The ribs have a sticky addicting sauce that breeds a familiarity to those who grew up in both the Southwest or Northwest sides. They serve cevapi, a Balkan-style sausage. The octopus, cooked over a wood grill, is perfect. There's a great energy in the restaurant which also offers a seasonal tasting table over the warmer months. Reservations are a must for the latter.

### **EVER RESTAURANT**

*1340 W Fulton St  
Chicago, IL 60607*

Chef Curtis Duffy became a superstar when he opened his first award-winning restaurant, Grace, on Randolph Street, and he's brought that energy a few blocks west to Fulton Market, where Ever opened in 2020. Duffy is offering only one tasting menu (vegetarians will be accommodated), but he remains committed to showing off precise techniques with playful execution. Case in point: artfully cut ribbons of freeze-dried hamachi. Fine dining tends to be polarizing, but for folks who want a meal with a dash of theatrics, Ever fulfills that niche better than any Chicago

restaurant. Just note that this is one of the most expensive meals in Chicago.

### **ORIOLE**

*661 W Walnut St  
Chicago, IL 60661*

Oriole could have sat on its laurels when it reopened last July for the first time since March 2020. The Michelin-star recipient was already known for pushing the boundaries of fine dining without pretension. But instead, management gutted the space and gave chef Noah Sandoval a new kitchen to play with. The chef doesn't disappoint in his new workplace and has created a fantastic tasting menu. The foie gras course — with pink peppercorn and anise hyssop — is one of the best in memory. This is one of the best places to celebrate in Chicago.

### **SMYTH**

*177 N Ada St #101  
Chicago, IL 60607*

Both two-Michelin-starred and with James Beard-nominated chefs, Smyth takes great pains to please diners with a creative tasting menu that pushes boundaries. This is a restaurant for great celebrations. The tasting menu is \$265 and a seat at the chef's table costs

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\$325. The basement bar, Loyalist, features dive bar vibes but with a delicious menu highlighted by two of the best burgers in the city.

### **ROOH**

*736 W Randolph St  
Chicago, IL 60661*

Chicagoans have few choices for upscale Indian food downtown. Rooh's 2019 arrival is noteworthy not only because it fills that void, but because it also gives the West Loop some sorely needed variety. Patrons will be more than impressed with familiar classics such as butter chicken, but jackfruit kofta, scallops dusted with gunpowder pepper, and achari monkfish offer a better taste of modern Indian cooking. The restaurant also has a heated and tented patio.

### **MONTEVERDE**

*1020 W Madison St  
Chicago, IL 60607*

The first restaurant from former Top Chef and Spiaggia chef Sarah Grueneberg has quickly cemented itself as one of Chicago's top Italian destinations. The pastas are the stars at this West Loop hotspot, and customers can see cooks hard at work behind the counter rolling out

dough and creating the delectable noodles they will soon consume. The restaurant's takeout menu from the pandemic remains, but the dining room offers lively options like whole-bird chicken parm. There's also a notable gluten-free menu.

### **MANNY'S CAFETERIA & DELICATESSEN**

*1141 S Jefferson St  
Chicago, IL 60607*

The torchbearer for a dying breed of Jewish delis and diners in Chicago, Manny's has endured for more than half a century in the South Loop, thanks to its massive and delicious pastrami sandwiches, an array of hot homestyle dishes on steam tables, and a family-friendly atmosphere cultivated over generations. The cafeteria-style setting is plastered with decades-old newspaper clippings and letters from Chicago luminaries. The space also now houses a new wing for bagels, sweets, coffee, and food to go. In its heyday, Manny's was where Chicago politicians were often seen brokering deals.

### **HAI SOUS VIETNAMESE KITCHEN**

*1800 S Carpenter St  
Chicago, IL 60608*

HaiSous in Pilsen is a remarkable comeback story for Thai and Danielle Dang after they survived financial fraud at their previous restaurant, Embeya. Now, without worrying about working with a criminal, they're free to focus on food and hospitality. Thai Dang, a native of Vietnam, uses a number of techniques from back home, including claypot cooking, to create a menu that's as ambitious as it is unpretentious with dishes like grilled wild boar with lemongrass. Danielle Dang's expertise with cocktails should be better recognized, as she pairs drinks to compliment her husband's two tasting menus. Customers can also order a la carte.

### **CARNITAS URUAPAN RESTAURANT**

*1725 W 18th St  
Chicago, IL 60608*

Chicago's Mexican community and food enthusiasts worldwide flock to this longtime family-owned, counter-service institution in Pilsen that celebrates all parts of the pig. Order carnitas by the pound at the front counter and settle into a table — if one is available — to craft your own individual tacos with a mix of salsas, tortillas, and

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

beans; or order tacos, soup, and cactus salad ready-made. Prepare for lines and waits during peak weekend hours.

### **88 MARKETPLACE**

*2105 S Jefferson St Floor 2  
Chicago, IL 60616*

Chicago has many food halls, but none offer the same type of experience as 88 Marketplace, the Chinese grocer in East Pilsen. The grocery store stocks tons of pan Asian ingredients not readily available at chain supermarkets. That alone makes it a destination, but the second-floor food court offers wonders, headlined by 312 Fish Market, a sit-down restaurant with one of the most creative sushi menus in town at affordable prices. Find dumplings and other delights from A Place in Northeast, barbecue duck and more from BBQ King 88, and an outlet of Chiu Quon Bakery. On the first floor, there's Holu Steakhouse, where diners can find rare, pricey, and delectable cuts of beef along with top-notch cocktails. No stuffy River North steakhouse can compare. Then find Qiao Lin Hotpot, possibly the best place for hot pot in Chicago. Finally, get

something sweet at Pure Tea. It took a while for 88 Marketplace to get going, but it's now chugging on all cylinders.

### **LA CHAPARRITA TAQUERIA**

*2500 S Whipple St #4138  
Chicago, IL 60628*

Chicago doesn't get enough love for its tacos, but this charming little grocery store in Little Village produces some of the finest in the city. From carne asada to crispy tripe, these tacos fit delicately in customers' hands, and are best enjoyed with tiny bites to savor the mix of textures and flavors. This restaurant, on a quiet residential street, is a true Chicago original. Carryout only.

### **PIZZA FRIED CHICKEN ICE CREAM/MARIA'S/ KIMSKI**

*964 W 31st St  
Chicago, IL 60608*

These three businesses in one space make up a love letter to Chicago. "Tavern-style pizza" is a marketing term that's only gained steam in recent memory, a reference to the thin-crust, square-cut pizza that's found all over the city; the slices are convenient to snack on while holding a

beer in the other hand. Pizza Fried Chicken Ice Cream's razor-thin version, preferably topped with Makowski sausage, is the real deal and worth reheating in your home oven if you live far from Bridgeport. PFIC also serves bars from Pretty Cool Ice Cream and ace fried chicken and mushrooms from Kimski chef Won Kim. Kimski, meanwhile, is the city's only Korean-Polish restaurant, where Kim gets to make chicken wings and stuff pierogi with Korean ingredients. They're all owned by the same family behind Maria's Community Bar, one of the city's most beloved packaged good stores (also known as a "slashie"), a bar and liquor store hybrid.

### **BIRRIERIA ZARAGOZA**

*4852 S Pulaski Rd  
Chicago, IL 60632*

Feeling the quesabirria mania? Head to the Southwest Side near Midway International Airport for goat that isn't labeled as the latest food trend. There's a simple menu packed with deep flavors here. The handmade tortillas and accouterments form the foundation of a signature Chicago meal. This family-run restaurant is

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

takeout-only. Get there early, as it often closes by early evening.

### **JADE COURT**

*1516 E Harper Ct  
Chicago, IL 60615*

Family is at the heart of Jade Court, a unique Cantonese restaurant in the University of Chicago's Harper Court development. Carol Cheung has taken the torch from her father, the late Eddy Cheung, who originally opened the restaurant in University Village. The Cheungs push boundaries with their renditions of Cantonese classics. For example, elitists might laugh at the sight of egg foo young, a staple at Chinese-American fast food restaurants, but Jade Court cooks treat the dish as precious cargo, pumping out the best version of the dish they can. Customers would be wise to trust Carol Cheung's recommendations: she has an uncanny understanding of which dishes to suggest to customers, running the gamut from seafood to beef. The bar program is also noteworthy, with unique collaborations and tropical-style drinks. It's tiki without the baggage through a Chinese-American lens.

### **VIRTUE RESTAURANT**

*1462 E 53rd St  
Chicago, IL 60615*

Chicago restaurant veteran Erick Williams has finally launched the restaurant he's been dreaming of opening. In his new space, Williams is intent on smashing all expectations for Southern food and hopes to give diners a new perspective on Black cuisine. If customers want lighter fare, there are dishes like the cauliflower with cashew dukkah and root cellar vegetables. For richer appetites, the beef short ribs with creamed spinach and crushed potatoes satisfy. Williams won the James Beard award in 2022 for Best Chef: Great Lakes.

### **LEM'S BAR-B-Q**

*311 E 75th St  
Chicago, IL 60619*

Chicago's legendary aquarium-style smokers are on display at Lem's, underneath a giant lighted sign off 75th Street. This small shack specializes in sauced baby-back ribs and giant hot links. Chicago is credited with creating the practice of serving rib tips slathered with sauce, and this is the place to give newbies an introduction.

### **HAROLD'S CHICKEN SHACK**

*12700 S Halstead St  
Chicago, IL 60628*

Not all Harold's Chicken Shacks are created equal, as a few writers have found. This isn't news for any Chicagoan, but it bears repeating, as Harold's has become a nationally-known brand thanks to celebrity fans like Chance the Rapper. This particular Harold's, on the corner of 127th and Halsted, is known not for customer service, but for its crisp chicken (fried in beef fat) and its own take on mild sauce, the must-have condiment that's become a cult favorite. Still, not everyone will agree: Harold's fans are passionate and really enjoy arguing about which location is best.

For an interactive map version of this article, visit [chicago.eater.com/maps/38-best-restaurants-in-chicago](https://chicago.eater.com/maps/38-best-restaurants-in-chicago)

BIG thank you to Little Italy locals, especially Breanne Abo, for the excellent insight and guidance while creating this field guide.  
**Grazie mille!**

# WELCOME HOME



FULTON MARKET



LINCOLN PARK



LITTLE ITALY



GRAND BEACH



NEW BUFFALO