Chicago has earned itself plenty of nicknames: the “City of Broad Shoulders” (coined by Carl Sandburg in 1916); the “Second City” (originally a slur in the New Yorker, but positively appropriated by a comedy improv club that gave us the Belushi brothers, Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray, Eugene Levy, Mike Myers, Steve Carell, Stephen Colbert, and Tina Fey); and, perhaps most famously, the “Windy City.” In fact, this last moniker, contrary to popular thought, may not derive from uniquely adverse meteorological conditions at all but to the blustering of self-important local politicians in the late nineteenth century. Which is not to say that the January weather in Chicago cannot be bracing… Although this year’s APA program offers a rich feast of lectures, panel discussions, and colloquia, we hope that you’ll be able to find some time to discover what the city has to offer. In the following pages, you will find a few suggestions for things to do and places to eat, as well as tips on navigating the city. Welcome to Chicago!

BRIEF HISTORY

Chicago's strategic position on the waterways connecting the Great Lakes with the Mississippi River was discovered in 1673 by the French Jesuit missionary Jacques Marquette and the explorer Louis Jolliet. Chicago's first permanent resident, however, was the Francophone black trader Jean Baptiste Point Du Sable, who, around 1780, established a trading post on the north bank of the Chicago River from where he secured furs from the Native American population in exchange for iron and textiles.

In 1803, the United States garrisoned Fort Dearborn on the southern bank of the Chicago River (its outline can still be traced today just south of the Michigan Avenue Bridge). Despite the sack of Fort Dearborn and the massacre of its garrison by the Potawatomi in 1812, soldiers and trappers continued to flock to the settlement around the military base and, in August 1833, one year after the defeat of Chief Black Hawk, the city of Chicago was officially incorporated.

Over the next four decades, the population of Chicago increased from a little over 300 to 300,000 with rapid industrialization, the opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and the arrival of the railway. The Civil War brought a new period of prosperity as the city was called upon to supply the Union
Army with timber, tents, uniforms, horses, bread, and especially meat (the Union Stock Yard opened on Christmas Day, 1865).

Overcrowding, uncontrolled development, and substandard construction were all contributing factors to the severity of the Great Fire, which broke out on October 8, 1871. By the time it had burnt itself out, 36 hours later, more than 17,000 buildings had been destroyed in an area bounded by Fullerton to the north, Halsted to the west, Roosevelt to the south, and Lake Michigan to the east (about one third of the city). Although there were only 300 fatalities, 90,000 people were left homeless. One of the few surviving pre-conflagration structures is the Water Tower, towards the northern end of the "Magnificent Mile" (Michigan Avenue).

The city rose from the ashes, however (which explains the ubiquity of the Phoenix logo). Architects such as Daniel Burnham and Louis Sullivan gave vision to what was termed "Paris on the Prairie" – a new city of broad avenues, parks, and a stunning lakefront. In 1893, Chicago hosted the World Columbian Exposition (the backdrop to Erik Larson's The Devil in the White City), celebrating the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. The fairground site, with its temporary pavilions, artificial canals (still visible in the Midway Plaisance), and the world's first Ferris wheel, was built in Hyde Park; today, the only surviving remnant of the Exposition is the neo-classical Museum of Science and Industry.

Away from the glitz and glamor of the lakefront, however, conditions were decidedly less rosy for the more than one million inhabitants who called Chicago home in 1890. Rampant poverty and racial discrimination in the city's residential slums prompted reformers such as Jane Addams to develop models for social welfare programs while appalling conditions in the industry sector (at its peak, the Union Stock Yard employed more than 30,000 workers) guaranteed that Chicago would become a national center for organized labor and workers' rights – often with bloody consequences. On May 4, 1886, a bomb blast during a labor rally in Haymarket Square killed ten people while the response to a strike by workers at the Pullman plant in 1894 was to call in the National Guard.

Widespread corruption in local politics, fueled further by Prohibition, meant that 1920s Chicago was a safe haven for organized crime. From his headquarters in the Lexington Hotel, just east of Chinatown, Alphonse "Scarface" Capone ruled his crime empire through a combination of largesse and violence. In 1927, he declared an astonishing gross annual income of $105 million; four years later, he was sentenced to 11 years in prison for tax evasion.

World War II offered Chicago the stimulus it needed to recover from the Great Depression. One of the more notorious milestones in this regard occurred in December 1942, when Enrico Fermi and his colleagues initiated the first self-sustaining, controlled nuclear chain reaction in a squash court beneath the University of Chicago's football field (now the site of the Regenstein Library).

From 1955 until his death in 1976, Chicago knew only one mayor – Richard
J. Daley, whose influence was as profound as it continues to be controversial. Many of the skyscrapers in the downtown "Loop" area date to his incumbency, as do the region's expressways, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the McCormick Place Convention Center, and O'Hare airport. Often credited with delivering the 1960 election to Kennedy, he was harshly criticized after police attacked anti-war demonstrators outside the Hilton Hotel in Grant Park in 1968.

As elsewhere in the United States, the 1970s and 1980s saw a decline in manufacture (the Union Stock Yard closed in 1971) and the flight of middle-class families to the suburbs, leaving a decaying urban core. In the 1990s, however, the growth of a service-oriented economy and a marked increase in domestic and foreign tourism, as well as business traffic, helped reverse the city's fortunes. In 2001, Boeing shifted its headquarters from Seattle to Chicago and young professionals began colonizing new residential high-rises downtown. Inevitably, the city took a hit during the most recent financial crisis – plans to build the “Chicago Spire,” which, at 2,000 feet, would have been the tallest building in the western hemisphere, were put on indefinite hold in 2010 – but downtown Chicago still remains a vibrant and exciting magnet for business, entertainment, and culture.

ORIENTATION

The Hyatt Regency Chicago (151, E. Wacker Drive) is situated on the south bank of the Chicago River, one block east of N. Michigan Avenue. The Chicago River is the easternmost extension of a system of rivers and canals that used to connect the Mississippi River with Lake Michigan. In 1900, following numerous public health crises and a typhoid outbreak, engineers constructed a series of locks that reversed the flow of the river, flushing sewage and other effluents southwards and away from the city (sorry, St Louis...). From Michigan Avenue Bridge or Columbus Avenue, you can take steps down to the River Walk.

If you cross the Michigan Avenue Bridge (for aficionados, a double-leaf trunnion bascule bridge, built in 1920) and head north, you'll find yourself on a stretch of Michigan Avenue known as "The Magnificent Mile." This hosts high-end shops (including malls such as North Bridge and Water Tower Place) and numerous not-so-high-end restaurants. To the west of Michigan Avenue is the River North neighborhood
while, to the east, is Streeterville (also known as the Platinum Coast). The north end of the Magnificent Mile leads you to a wealthy area of the city known as the Gold Coast, while Lincoln Park (with its free zoo) lies further to the north.

If you head south on Michigan Avenue, away from the bridge, and then walk a couple of blocks west, you will enter the "Loop," Chicago's financial center and theater district, originally named after the cable car lines which encircled this part of downtown. Today, the core of the Loop is still framed by the elevated train lines (the "El"), which run above Wabash, Lake, Wells, and Van Buren Streets. Indeed, in January, one of the best ways of seeing the Loop is to board a Brown Line train at State/Lake and make a circular tour by changing tracks (and direction) at Merchandise Mart. To the east of Michigan Avenue is Grant Park where, on November 4, 2008, almost a quarter of a million people flocked to celebrate the election victory of Barack Obama. Grant Park extends south to the Museum Campus (Field Museum; Shedd Aquarium; Adler Planetarium) and to Soldier Field, home to the Chicago Bears.

Chicago is laid out on a grid system, with point zero lying at the intersection of State and Madison Streets. Hence, traveling south, North Michigan Avenue becomes South Michigan Avenue as soon as it crosses Madison (just before the Art Institute). Similarly, East Wacker Drive, on which the Hyatt Regency is situated, becomes West Wacker Drive as soon as it crosses State Street.

**TRANSPORTATION**

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) operates a train system of elevated ("El") and subway tracks as well as the city's buses. See www.transitchicago.com

You can pay by cash (no change given) at train stations and on buses, in which case the regular one-way fare is $2.25 with a transfer (giving two additional rides within a two-hour period) costing 25c. Please note, however, that the one-way train fare from O'Hare Airport is $5.00. The CTA is phasing out its 1-day and 3-day CTA passes and transitioning to the Ventra Card. A 1-day, unlimited ride Ventra paper ticket is available but is currently sold only at CTA train stations.

The closest CTA train station to the Hyatt Regency is at the intersection of State St and Lake St. From here, you can take the Brown Line (circular tour of the Loop); the Purple Line (for Evanston and Northwestern University); the Orange Line (for Midway Airport); or, a half-block away, the Red Line (for Chinatown). The nearest Blue Line station (for either O'Hare International Airport or Oak Park, where you can visit Frank Lloyd Wright's home and studio) is at Clark and Lake.
From Michigan Avenue Bridge, Buses 146 (Inner Drive/Michigan Express), 147 (Outer Drive Express), and 151 (Sheridan) run north up the Magnificent Mile; the 151 will also take you to Lincoln Park Zoo. If you prefer not to walk the six blocks to the Art Institute, you can take Buses 3 (King Drive), 147 (Outer Drive Express), and 151 (Sheridan) southbound on Michigan Avenue. From the NW corner of Michigan and Wacker, Bus 146 (Inner Drive/Michigan Express) runs south on State Street to the Museum Campus (Field Museum; Shedd Aquarium; Adler Planetarium) and Soldier Field.

For the Museum of Science and Industry, board Bus 10 at the NW corner of Michigan and Wacker; the journey takes about 25 minutes. For Hyde Park and the University of Chicago, Bus 6 (Jackson Park Express) leaves directly opposite the Hyatt hotel on Wacker and takes 30 to 40 minutes; disembark at 57th St and walk 8 blocks west.

A faster, if less frequent, option for visiting the Museum of Science and Industry and Hyde Park is the Metra Electric Line, whose city terminus is Millennium Station, situated at the corner of Michigan and Randolph. Get off at 55th/56th/57th St Station (a 15-minute ride) and walk east for the Museum and west for the University campus. Tickets are sold from vending machines at every station. www.metrarail.com

Taxis are plentiful in Chicago. The base fare is $3.25, with a charge of $1.80 per mile and $0.20 for every 36 seconds of time elapsed. The first additional passenger is charged $1.00, with a $0.50 supplement for each additional passenger after that, though there are no charges for baggage. A $2.00 tax is levied for journeys to or from the airports. Flat rates are available for shared-ride journeys between the airports and downtown: $18 per person from Midway and $24 per person from O’Hare.

**THINGS TO DO**

**CityPass**
The Chicago CityPass offers nearly 50% off the combined ticket prices to five of the city’s main attractions, with VIP tickets to most and almost no ticket lines included in the package. It’s a great way to save money and see the sights in a short amount of time; it lasts for 9 days after its first use and can be ordered online or bought at a participating location.

www.citypass.com/chicago

**GoChicago Card**
Similar to the CityPass, the GoChicago Card offers free admission to any one of 25 participating locations (including most of the places listed below) for one low price. They can only be bought online and have to be geared toward a specific number of consecutive days (up to 5), which changes the price. Comes with a free guidebook.

www.smartdestinations.com/Chicago

*Advance registration is not necessary for any of these activities; however, it will*
save a lot of time and allow you to skip long ticket lines. All transportation times are approximate and depend on traffic.

Art Institute of Chicago
Features family-friendly activities and tours, as well as masterpieces for the adults. www.artic.edu
Visit the recent installation of ancient art: Of Gods and Glamour: The Mary and Michael Jaharis Galleries of Greek, Roman and Byzantine Art:
Special exhibit: When the Greeks Ruled Egypt: www.artic.edu/exhibition/when-greeks-ruled-egypt
Hours: Daily, 10:30-5 (Thursdays till 8). 111 S. Michigan Ave (2 min car/taxi; 10 min CTA; 5 min bike, 12 min walk).

Chicago Architecture Foundation
For boat, bus, and walking Tours
www.architecture.org
224 S. Michigan Ave
312-922-3432

Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio
cal.flwright.org/tours/homeandstudio
951 Chicago Ave., Oak Park

Jane Addams Hull-House Museum
A museum commemorating the work of America’s first female Nobel Peace Prize laureate.
www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull
800 S. Halsted St/UIC Campus
312-413-5353

Museum of Contemporary Art
www.mcachicago.org
220 E. Chicago Ave
312-280-2660

Oriental Institute Museum
oi.uchicago.edu/museum
Special Exhibit: Catastrophe! Ten Years Later: The Looting and Destruction of Iraq’s Past. This exhibit of photographs and didactic panels commemorates the tenth anniversary of the looting of the Iraq National Museum in Baghdad and the large-scale looting of archaeological sites throughout Iraq and serves as a reminder that Iraq’s cultural heritage is still under threat:
oi.uchicago.edu/museum/special/catastropheyears later
Special exhibit: Power and Legacy: The Cyrus Cylinder and Persian Expressions of Kingship. This mini-exhibit presents a modern copy of the Cyrus Cylinder recently donated to the Oriental Institute by the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America. The original cylinder is in the collections of the British Museum (on a US tour until December 2, 2013). The display shows how Cyrus projected his kingship in a Babylonian setting and presented himself as a legitimate ruler of Babylon. Other objects, such as coins and seals, show how Persian rulers used words and images to portray their rule across the Persian empire:
oi.uchicago.edu/museum/special/cyrus
Special Exhibit: Our Work: Modern Jobs - Ancient Origins. This exhibition of photographic portraits, explores how cultural achievements of the ancient Middle East have created or contributed to much of modern life. To show the connections between the past and today, artifacts that document the origins or development of professions such as baker, farmer, manicurist, brewer, writer, astronomer, or judge in the ancient world are paired with a person who is the modern “face” of that profession.
Robie House
A restored Frank Lloyd Wright house on the University of Chicago's campus
5757 S. Woodlawn Ave/Hyde Park

Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership
www.spertus.edu
610 S. Michigan Ave
312-322-1700

See also: Adler Planetarium, Field Museum, and Museum of Science and Industry in the "For the Family" section

FOR THE FAMILY

See further:
www.chicagokids.com/places

Adler Planetarium
Includes incredible sky shows, exhibits and a guided tour at 2:05 for an additional fee. Special holiday programs end January 5.
www.adlerplanetarium.org
Special exhibit: Astronomy and Culture explores how some ancient societies have engaged in the timeless quest to understand their place in the Universe – from ancient Egypt and South America to medieval Europe and the Middle East.
www.adlerplanetarium.org/exhibits/astonomy-and-culture
Hours: Daily, 9:30-4.
1300 S. Lake Shore Dr/Museum Campus (10 min car/taxi; 25 min CTA; 13 min bike; 44 min walk).

American Girl Doll Store
For the child who loves dolls! Features shops themed for each doll, a Doll Hair Salon, a café and a photo studio. Special Girl of the Year-themed events taking place in early January, see:
www.americangirl.com/stores/location_chi.php
Hours: Mon-Thurs, 10-8; Fri-Sat, 9-9; Sun, 9-6 (special hours in January: see website)
835 N. Michigan Ave (5 min car/taxi; 11-14 min CTA; 14 min bike; 20 min walk).

Field Museum
A very family-friendly natural history museum, featuring the famous dinosaur Sue as well as many kid-oriented activities.
www.fieldmuseum.org/visit/kids
Special Exhibit: Opening The Vaults: Wonders Of The 1893 World's Fair
www.fieldmuseum.org/happening/exhibits/opening-vaults-wonders-1893-worlds-fair
Hours: Daily, 9-5.
1400 S. Lake Shore Dr/Museum Campus (10 min car/taxi; 20-30 min CTA; 14 min bike; 35 min walk).

Lincoln Park Zoo
A free zoo that hosts family-friendly events, including ice skating during the winter. Holiday lights and activities are up through January 5.
www. lpzoo.org
Hours: Daily, 10–4:30 (skating, noon–9).
2001 N. Clark St (10+ min car/taxi; 30 min CTA; 15 min bike; 40 min walk).

**Millennium Park**
Millennium Park showcases architecture, gardens and cultural events, and its skating rink is one of the most popular winter destinations in Chicago. Admission to the park itself is free, but attractions within the park are priced separately.
www.millenniumpark.org
Hours: Daily, 6–11.
201 E. Randolph St (3-5 min car/taxi; 5-10 min CTA; 3-5 min bike; 8 min walk).

**Museum of Science and Industry**
A museum devoted to technologies new and old, with interactive exhibits and live demonstrations, including flight simulators, the coal mine, and the U-505 submarine. The exhibit “Christmas Around the World and Holidays of Light” is open until January 5.
www.msichicago.org
Special Exhibit: *Treasures of the Walt Disney Archives*.
5700 S. Lake Shore Dr/Hyde Park (15-20 min car/taxi; 30-45 min CTA; 45 min bike; 2.5 hour walk).

**Navy Pier & Chicago Children’s Museum**
Besides the Children’s Museum, Navy Pier includes a ferris wheel open year-round, indoor funhouse mazes and games, a stained glass museum, an IMAX theater, dining cruises and much more!
www.navypier.com
Hours: Mon-Thurs, 10-8; Fri-Sat, 10-10; Sun, 10-7 (Children’s Museum: Fri-Wed, 10-5; Thurs, 10-8, with free admission 5-8).
600 E. Grand Ave (4 min car/taxi; 15 min CTA; 7 min bike; 20 min walk).

**Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum**
Known for its butterfly garden and top-notch science education programs, the Nature Museum is fun for the whole family.
www.naturemuseum.org
Hours: Mon-Fri, 9-5; Sat-Sun, 10-5.
2430 N. Cannon Dr (10 min car/taxi; 30 min CTA; 25 min bike; 1 hour walk).

**Shedd Aquarium**
Holds aquatic shows and dives daily as well as the usual exhibits.
www.shedd aquarium.org
Hours: Weekdays, 9-5; weekends and holidays, 9-6.
1200 S. Lake Shore Dr/Museum Campus (10 min car/taxi; 20-30 min CTA; 14 min bike; 35 min walk).

**Willis Tower Skydeck**
Experience the view from the 1,353-foot tall Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower)! Also includes interactive exhibits and the Ledge, a glass balcony outside the 103rd floor.
www.theskydeck.com
Hours: Daily, 10-8.
233 S. Wacker Dr, entrance on Jackson Blvd (12 min car/taxi; 20 min CTA; 10 min bike; 27 min walk).

See also Art Institute (in the "Things to Do" section)
RESTAURANTS

Yes, there is more to Chicago dining than deep-dish pizzas and hotdogs. Even if the holidays have left you a little short of cash to splurge at Grant Achatz’s 3-starred “Alinea,” Graham Elliot’s homonymous 2-starred eatery, or any of the other 17 restaurants that earned Michelin stars in 2013, the city offers a choice of around 6,000 places to eat, catering for every palate and every pocket. We offer just a few recommendations here. For further information and reviews, see: www.chicagoreader.com www.timeoutchicago.com www.chicagomag.com

Approximate price guide:
* = under $30  
** = $30–$50  
*** = $50–$80  
**** = above $80

We also recommend calling ahead in case different hours of operation are in effect due to the New Year holiday.

CLOSE AT HAND
The following restaurants are within approximately six blocks of the Hyatt Regency

Billy Goat Tavern* (Burgers) Loud and gritty burger joint, entombed on the lower level of Michigan Avenue, whose main claim to fame is that it inspired the Murray-Belushi-Aykroyd "cheezborger" skit on Saturday Night Live. 430 N. Lower Michigan Ave (Illinois) 312-222-1525

Bin 36** (New American) A modern American take on an enoteca. The dinner menu, which is more ambitious than that for lunch, pairs tasting plates of cheese, charcuterie, and other small bites with glasses or flights of wine. 339 N. Dearborn St (just north of the river) 312-755-9463

Cantina Laredo** (Mexican) Good reports of the guacamole, made table-side, and the Chile Relleno, as well as the fish of the day – all washed down with a Tequila flight. Mixed reviews about the "modernist" décor. 508 N. State St (Illinois) 312-955-0014

Harry Caray's** (Italian/Steak) Good quality but unexceptional American and Italian-American staples, named after the distinctive baseball broadcaster who commented on both the hapless White Sox and the ill-starred Chicago Cubs. Plenty of memorabilia for baseball buffs. 33 W. Kinzie St (State) 312-828-0966

Heaven on Seven* (Cajun/Creole) On the floor below the 600 N. Michigan Cinema, it always seems to be Mardi
Gras here. Gumbo, Jambalaya, and shrimp any which way.
600 N. Michigan Avenue (Ohio)
312-280-7774

**Joe's Seafood, Prime Steak & Stone Crab*** (Seafood/Steak) A similar menu to Shaw's, though also geared towards committed carnivores. Best accessible via the North Bridge mall on Michigan (take the elevator or stairs to the lower level on Grand)
60 E. Grand Ave (Rush)
312-379-5637

**Niu** (Japanese/Asian Fusion) A variety of sushi as well as Chinese, Korean, and Thai dishes. Especially convenient if you also want to take in a film at the AMC multiplex next door. One of the waiters (Thomas) has a keen interest in Roman history…
323 E. Illinois St (Columbus)
312-527-2888

**Pizano's Pizza and Pasta*** (Italian) Top-rated Chicago deep dish pizzas appealing to a younger crowd; close to the Art Institute.
61 E. Madison St (Michigan)
312-236-1777

**The Purple Pig**
(Mediterranean/New American)
Although not the place for a quiet or intimate evening, this "hip" cross between a salumeria, tapas bar, and mezedhopolio serves up innovative and tasty dishes and has an impressive stock of wines, many of them available by the glass and half-bottle. The "JLT" (with pork jowel and a duck's egg) is the perfect antidote to those late-night parties. Reservations are not accepted, which can sometimes result in long waits, although you may leave your name and enjoy a pre-prandial in the bar of the Hotel Intercontinental opposite.
500 N. Michigan Ave (Illinois)
312-464-1744

**Russian Tea Time** (Russian)
Convenient for the Art Institute and the Symphony, the menu offers an assortment of delicately spiced and cooked vegetables and meats creating colorful sides and entrees. Dishes originated in the different countries that comprised the former Soviet Union.
77 E. Adams St (Michigan)
312-360-0000

**Sayat Nova** (Armenian)
Cheap and tasty dishes with kebabs, eggplants, and tahini galore. If you've never paired an Armenian brandy (available in four "grades") with a cardamom-infused coffee, now's your chance.
157 E. Ohio St (Michigan)
312-644-9159

**Shaw's Crab House*** (Seafood) A Chicago institution. There's more of a buzz in the oyster bar than in the dining room. Order sushi, oysters, or one of the fresh daily specials, sip a Martini, and forget that you're 700 miles from the ocean.
21 E Hubbard St (State)
312-527-2722

**Smith & Wollensky*** (Steak) Old style steak and chop house, with a view over the Chicago River, serving high quality – if somewhat predictable – favorites. The lunch menu probably offers a better deal.
318 N. State St (Kinzie)
312-670-9900

**Star of Siam** (Thai) This friendly and dependable River North Thai has, for
almost 30 years, seen off most of the opposition – including the much lamented Vong. The Mussaman Curry is especially popular.
11 E. Illinois St (State)
312-670-0100

**Terzo Piano** **(Italian)** Situated in the Modern Wing of the Art Institute, this restaurant showcases fresh, locally-sourced lunch dishes under the meticulous direction of chef Tony Mantuano (of Spiaggia). Dinners are offered on Thursdays (when the Art Institute is open late).
159 E. Monroe St (Michigan)
312-443-8650

**Vermilion** **(Indian/Nuevo Latino)** If you can get your head around a culinary concept that fuses South Asian and Latin American cuisines, you'll discover some mouthwatering dishes and subtler flavors than you might have expected. Alternatively, you can order off the "tapas," "core Indian," or vegetarian menus.
10 W. Hubbard St (State)
312-527-4060

**Yolk** **(Breakfast/Diner)** Waffles, crepes, sandwiches, and eggs any way you want them. A good place for a late breakfast or brunch.
355 E. Ohio St (Fairbanks)
312-822-9655

**WORTH THE TRIP**
Expensive but unique dining experiences that will make the taxi fare seem like a drop in the lake…

**The Grant Achatz Experience**
Like Graham Elliott (see below), Grant Achatz is a former student of the late Charlie Trotter, widely credited with putting Chicago on the international culinary map. In 2005, Achatz opened **Alinea** **(1723 N. Halsted)**, which is currently the only Chicago restaurant with 3 Michelin stars and was ranked 15th in the 2013 World's 50 Best Restaurants. There is no à la carte menu: the tasting menu starts at $210 for an 18-course culinary extravaganza that will launch a full-frontal assault on at least four of your five senses. The only problem (apart from securing that second mortgage) is getting a reservation: fixed-price tickets, costed according to day and time, are sold well in advance on Alinea's website, although a handful of same-day or same-week available tables are sometimes posted on their facebook page.

In 2011, Achatz and business partner Nick Kokonas opened **Next** **(953 W. Fulton Mkt)**, which reinvents itself three times a year. Previous themes include Escoffier, El Bulli, Sicily, Kyoto, and Bocuse d'Or. The reservation system is the same as for Alinea and prices are
comparable. Dinner for two with wine pairings, tax, and service charge will run in excess of $800.

**Girl and the Goat*** (New American)
One of the “happening” spots in Chicago right now, with inventive small plates accompanied by craft ales and wines by the glass and bottle. One of the most vegetarian-friendly of the non-pasta-oriented downtown restaurants, though it can sometimes be difficult to hear yourself think.
809 W. Randolph St
312-492-6262

**Graham Elliot Bistro*** (New American)
Elliot is the “jocular” one of the three *Masterchef* judges and that devil-may-care attitude to the waistband translates onto the menu, though the dishes are modestly proportioned, creative, well executed, and tasty. G.E.B. is the more casual– and economical– sibling to Elliot's flagship restaurant, which has been awarded 2 Michelin stars.
841 W. Randolph St
312-888-2258

**L2O**** (Seafood)** Described as the "apothecosis of small plates…exquisite, balanced, and robust." The geoduck clam, crab, dorade, and foie gras get high ratings.
2300 N. Lincoln Park W.
773-868-0002

**NoMi*** (New American) On the seventh floor of the Park Hyatt Hotel; try to get a window seat with a panoramic view over Michigan Avenue and the Water Tower. Seasonal menu with good seafood and charcuterie.
800 N. Michigan Ave
312-239-4030

**Schwa**** (New American)** Genius and anarchy rule in equal measure at this tiny and otherwise unassuming Wicker Park dining room. The chef's tasting menu (there is no other option available) runs to about $110 for ten courses, but you'll need to bring your own wine. Reservations are required but difficult to secure: you need to leave a message and, if you're lucky, they may call you back…
1466 N. Ashland Ave
773-252-1466

**Spiaggia****/Café Spiaggia*** (Italian) Tony Mantuano and Sarah Grueneberg (a runner up on *Top Chef*) give a whole new take on Italian cuisine with dishes that could easily compete with some of the finest *ristoranti* in Rome. Café Spiaggia offers a smaller menu that is more economically priced but with equally delicious offerings.
980 N. Michigan Ave
312-280-2750

**Taxim** (Greek) Although Chicago is the third largest Greek city in the world, Hellenic cuisine here has generally failed to keep pace with the more innovative restaurants opening up in Athens. Taxim is very much a cut above the rest, specializing in fresh and inventive dishes that hark back to Greek Asia Minor, such as wood-smoked *melitzanasalata* and tender slow-braised lamb shanks.
1558 N. Milwaukee Ave
773-252-1558

**Topolobampo***/Frontera Grill***/Xoco* (Mexican) Celebrity chef Rick Bayless conducted extensive research trips to convince the world that there is more to Mexican cuisine than enchiladas. Topolobampo is the most
formal of the trio, with tasting menus and à la carte. Frontera Grill has more of a vibe to it though, since only limited reservations are accepted, there can often be a wait to get a table. Xoco offers take-out Mexican street food which can be ordered in advance online.

445–449 N. Clark St
312-661-1434

Native Foods Café* A branch of a well-known chain with well-prepared versions of rather traditional vegetarian foods: wraps, salad bowls, grilled seitan.
218 S. Clark St
312-332-6332

See also Vermilion in the "Close at Hand" section and Girl and the Goat in the "Worth the Trip" section

VEGETARIAN/VEGAN

Chicago Diner* A local favorite, perhaps because it's devoted to preparing meat-like dishes (cheesesteaks and reubens from seitan, and so forth).
3411 N. Halsted St
773-935-6696

Green Zebra** Upscale, creative vegetarian food. One of the best of its kind in the US.
1460 W. Chicago Ave
312-243-7100

Karyn's on Green** Very reasonable prices and wide-ranging menu (with somewhat heavy food) in a very airy space.
130 S. Green St
312-226-6155

Mana Food Bar** A very small restaurant with a wide range of small plates, producing vegetarian dishes from many different cuisines.

1742 W. Division St
773-342-1742

ENTERTAINMENT

THEATRE

Many of Chicago's theatres are closed in early January; the following should be open. See also www.chicagoreader.com For discounted theatre tickets: http://www.hottix.org

Briar Street Theatre
The Blue Man Group. How do they get around so much?
3133 N. Halsted St
773-348-4000

Chicago Shakespeare Theatre
The Merry Wives of Windsor, directed by Barbara Gaines.
800 E. Grand (Navy Pier)
312-595-5600
Lookingglass Theatre
The Little Prince, directed by David Catlin.
821 N. Michigan Ave
312-337-0665

The Second City
1616 N. Wells St
312-337-3992

Steppenwolf Theatre
Tribes, directed by Austin Pendleton.
1650 N. Halsted St
312-335-1650

CINEMA

For what's playing: www.chicagoreader.com

AMC River East 21
322 E. Illinois St
888-262-4386

AMC 600 N. Michigan (formerly Loews)
600 N. Michigan Ave
888-262-4386

MUSIC

House of Blues
For performances on Jan 2, 3, and 4, see: www.houseofblues.com
329 N. Dearborn St
312-923-2000

Chicago Symphony Hall
Salute to Vienna, Sunday Jan 5, 2:30.
The Strauss Symphony of America, featuring the Chicago Philharmonic. Director, Christian Shulz.
220 S. Michigan Ave
312-294-3000

Information prepared by the 2014 APA Local Arrangements Committee: Jonathan Hall, Marianne Hopman, Jonathan Mannering, and Jennifer Tobin. The committee would like to thank Clifford Ando and Paul Keyser for their additional contributions.