

Food and drink

Taste of Chicago

To outsiders, Chicago's food scene is known for a few things: gargantuan deep-dish pizzas, hot dogs decked out with tomatoes and pickles (anything but ketchup) and, on the flip side, a highly regarded fine-dining culture. To Chicagoans, the city's food scene is all that and so much more.

It's a city that offers delicious dining at every price point, where cheeseburgers are as highly sought after as brown butter-basted rib-eye steaks. The city has a large Mexican population and, as such, tacos are an art form. Chefs from elsewhere have contributed global dishes such as Roman pizza, Louisiana fried chicken and Vietnamese coffee and banh mi.

Much of Chicago's dining scene is centred around the two hubs of the West Loop and Logan Square, where you'll find a mix of restaurants along with excellent coffee shops and cocktail bars – so they're great places to start your culinary explorations. But to truly eat like a Chicagoan, all you need to do is arrive with an open mind and an empty stomach – then dig in.

Dinner Top tables



1 Table, Donkey and Stick, Logan Square
Alpine state

The sparing tagline for this restaurant is “Crusty Bread, Brandy, Fire” and it sums up the place perfectly. “The seasonal menu is built around old-world traditions of bread-baking, charcuterie and preservation, applied to products of the Midwest,” says proprietor and sommelier Matt Sussman, who has assembled an excellent wine list drawn from the Alpine regions. On the menu are dishes such as potato latkes with horseradish aioli, duck-liver mousse, and a burger with fontina and cranberry *mostarda* (an Italian condiment) tucked into a pretzel bun.

2728 West Armitage Avenue,
60647
+1 773 486 8525
tabledonkeystick.com



2 Pacific Standard Time, River North
California dreaming

California is chef Erling Wu-Bower's major source of inspiration and he transports it to Pacific Standard Time by emulating the state's free-spirited vibe and vegetable-focused food. The design of the light-filled space – with terrazzo and wooden floors, lots of foliage, and white walls – completes the West Coast feel. This place is equally suited to a lively dinner with friends as a business lunch with clients.

Two wood-burning ovens turn out fluffy pitta served with hummus or marinated ahi tuna, as well as blistered pizzas such as a margherita accented with preserved *giardiniera* (a zingy Italian relish). Fresh salads and perfectly cooked seafood and meat dishes round off the menu, enhanced by a wine list that leans toward the Golden State and Old World tipples.
141 West Erie Street, 60654
+1 312 736 1778
pstchicago.com





3
Elske, West Loop
Scandi crush

Elske means “love” in Danish and Denmark is at the root of chefs Anna (pictured) and David Posey’s West Loop restaurant. Complete with exposed brick walls and mid-century modern furniture, it’s a lovely minimalist spot for lingering over a meal that draws from both Scandinavian and Midwest traditions.

Whether you choose the tasting menu or order à la carte, the dishes are seasonal and beautifully presented – from the slice of duck-liver tart served with salted ramps (wild garlic) to the soft-scrambled eggs with mushrooms and kale, and the sunflower-seed parfait drizzled with sour honey. Toast your meal with a glass of homemade schnapps, which comes in flavours such as dill or black raspberry.

1350 West Randolph Street,
60607
+1 312 733 1314
elskerestaurant.com

4
Proxi, West Loop
World tour

Chef Andrew Zimmerman made his name at the excellent West Loop restaurant Sepia; next door is Proxi, his second restaurant and a visual stunner with flavours to match. “Proxi’s menu was inspired by both my travels abroad and my time right here in Chicago,” he says. “I’ve always been drawn to bold, vibrant flavours, and regularly find new dish ideas while exploring Chicago’s rich culinary scene.”

The menu includes Asian, Middle Eastern and Mexican influences in dishes such as tempura *elotes* (grilled corn) and black-pepper pork, and Sarah Mispagel’s tempting desserts are equally inventive. The design is sleek, with floor-to-ceiling windows, antique mirrors, leather booths and vibrant tiles. One for a must-impress meeting or sealing that business deal.

565 West Randolph Street, 60661
+1 312 466 1950
proxichicago.com



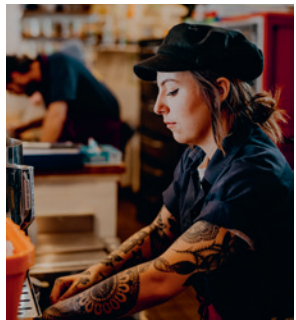
5
BoeufHaus, Humboldt Park
Steak a claim

Chicago is a steak town and no one does the job quite like chef Brian Ahern (pictured). His intimate BoeufHaus takes cues from traditional French and German recipes for dishes such as short-rib beignets or the beef tartare stirred up with capers, shallots and Dijon, and served with brioche.

The 55-day, dry-aged ribeye comes with Bordelaise, béarnaise or au poivre sauces; pescatarians, meanwhile, have options such as celery-cured Arctic char and Alaskan halibut with chanterelles, mussels and ginger. Be sure to grab a seat at the cosy copper-topped bar for a pre-dinner martini or German draft beer.

1012 North Western Avenue,
60622
+1 773 661 2116
boeufhaus.com





⑥ **Fat Rice, Logan Square**
Ticket to Macau

If you haven't tried Macanese cuisine – which fuses Chinese, Portuguese, African and other influences – Fat Rice is a great place to start. Chef Abe Conlon serves dishes such as chilli prawns with garlic and fermented black beans, pork-and-ginger dumplings with sweet soy and chilli oil, and *arroz gordo* (the eponymous fat rice, which comes packed with curried chicken, barbecued pork, linguica and more).

Fat Rice also has an adjacent bakery – try the snickerdoodle (a cookie) with salted-yolk custard filling – and a bar, Ladies' Room, where globally inspired cocktails are created with homemade ingredients.

2957 West Diversey Avenue,
60647
+1 773 661 9170
eafatrice.com



⑦ **Parachute, Avondale**
Korea highlight

At Parachute, Beverly Kim and Johnny Clark put a satisfying spin on traditional Korean food, with plates such as bibimbap with yellowfin tuna or kale-and-beef stew with sweet potatoes. The seasonal menu changes regularly but the baked-potato *bing* bread – stuffed with spring onions, cheddar and bacon, and served with sour-cream butter – is a firm fixture.

A communal table runs down the middle of the long and slender space, which is lined on one side with exposed bricks. The drinks list is stellar, with wines, ciders, sakés and more helping to make a night at Parachute a convivial one.

3500 North Elston Avenue,
60618
+1 773 654 1460
parachuterestaurant.com



⑧ **Daisies, Logan Square**
Fresh from the farm

The succinct menu at Daisies comprises handmade pastas (think beetroot agnolotti with dill), daily-changing starters and crowd-pleasers such as crispy fried mushrooms and cheese curds with buttermilk-tarragon dipping sauce.

Owner and executive chef Joe Frillman (pictured, on left) sources much of the produce for his vegetable-focused dishes from his family farm, and adheres to what he calls the "Italian philosophy" of using what's in season in a simple way. "Our daily inspiration is derived from the question: If the Midwest were a region in Italy, what would the food look like?" he says.

2523 North Milwaukee Avenue,
60647
+1 773 661 1671
daisieschicago.com



Pizza perfection

01 **Pizzeria Bebu, Goose Island:** The crust at Pizzeria Bebu is a work of art; crispy on the bottom with a chewy edge, it's the perfect vessel for toppings that range from classic (a pitch-perfect margherita) to creative (an everything-bagel crust pie with caramelised onion, house-cured pancetta and an egg). Can't decide? Try a half-and-half option with two different toppings.

bebu.pizza

02 **Spacca Napoli Pizzeria, Uptown:** With an oven straight from Naples, the pizzas at Spacca Napoli are a worthy ode to the Neapolitan style: thin pies with soft centres and restrained toppings that are all about quality. The cheeseless marinara puts tomatoes front and centre while the puttanesca gets some salty funk from anchovies, black olives and capers.

spaccanapolipizzeria.com

03 **Bonci Pizzeria, West Loop:** Roman *pizzaiolo* Gabriele Bonci opened his first US outpost in Chicago in 2017 and serves his Roman-style pizzas *al taglio* (by weight). Choose from the 20 pizza options regularly on offer – with toppings such as *nduja* and *burrata* or spicy aubergine – and a pizza-maker will snip a slice for you with scissors. You can select the size so it's easy to try a number of different-flavoured slices in one sitting.

bonciusa.com



10
Pequod's Pizza, Lincoln Park
Dive into deep dish

This Lincoln Park staple has been serving its thick-pan pizzas for more than 25 years. The secret to the continued success (and the long wait for a table) is in the caramelised crust: a thin layer of cheese along the exterior gives the pie a chewy edge and extra flavour.

For toppings, sausage and pepperoni are classic Chicago. Or you can cut down on the wait by sneaking in for the \$4.95 weekday cheese-pizza lunch special.

2207 North Clybourn Avenue,
60614
+1 773 327 1512
pequodspizza.com



12
Lula Café, Logan Square
Firm favourite

Since opening in 1999, Lula Café has anchored Logan Square's dining scene with its ever-changing all-day menu, thoughtful drinks list and cult-favourite brunch. "Lula is built on the foundation of the farm-to-table movement but we consistently challenge ourselves to push the boundaries of what that philosophy can mean," says owner Jason Hammel.

That means dishes such as fried Jerusalem artichokes with charred Chinese broccoli and lamb meatballs with Parisienne gnocchi and grapes. If you're only in town for one night, we suggest you head here – oh, and on Mondays there's a \$45 prix-fixe dinner.
2537 North Kedzie Boulevard,
60647
+1 773 489 9554
lulacafe.com

11
Blackbird, West Loop
Top flight

Executive chef Paul Kahan's Midwestern food is bursting with fresh produce and brilliant flavour combinations. Dishes are offered à la carte or as part of a 10-course tasting menu and include roasted lamb saddle with red grapefruit and Brussels sprouts; grilled sturgeon with ramp kimchi and mustard greens; and barbecued pork belly with black garlic, mushrooms and smoked trout roe.

The pared-back design – with muted tones, white tablecloths and monochrome artwork by Chicago-based Lonney White – leaves room for the food to shine.
619 West Randolph Street, 60661
+1 312 715 0708
blackbirdrestaurant.com



9
Band of Bohemia,
Lincoln Square
Brewing up a storm

The decor in this softly lit former Oreo factory may be a tad eccentric (velvet chairs and elephant-print curtains) but the brewery-cum-coffee-shop-cum-restaurant is popular with visitors and residents alike.

Band of Bohemia offers a smart five-course tasting menu along with mainstays such as carrot lasagne or kurobuta pork with smoked heirloom grits, Brussels sprouts kraut, fermented rye and *umi* (sea urchin) butter. The drinks list caters to all tastes and features in-house beers, excellent cocktails (alcoholic and non) and a top-notch wine list.

4710 North Ravenswood Avenue,
60640
+1 773 271 4710
bandofbohemia.com



Must-try
Chorizo-stuffed medjool
dates from Avec, West Loop

The stuffed dates on Avec's Mediterranean-focused menu are a cult favourite for a reason. Stuffed with spicy fresh chorizo, wrapped in crispy bacon and served on a piquillo pepper-tomato sauce, the dates are salty, sweet, tangy and meaty.
avecrestaurant.com



Lunch
Perfect pit-stops



1 Cà Phê Đá, Pilsen
Vietnam café culture

Located next to sister restaurant HaiSous, Cà Phê Đá is a celebration of Vietnamese coffee and street food (such as banh mi and *pho gà*, a chicken and rice noodle soup), as well as delectable pastries such as the pandan brioche with coconut jam.

“Vietnam is the second-largest coffee producer after Brazil and my extended family is one of those roasters,” says chef Thai Dang, who co-owns the space with his wife, Danielle. “We wanted not only to educate Chicago on Vietnam’s coffee and roadside street-food culture but also to create a welcoming communal space for the neighbourhood.”
1800 1/2 South Carpenter Street, 60608
+1 773 999 1800
caphedachi.com



Must-try

Cheeseburger from Au Cheval, West Loop

With two thin patties, melted American cheese, a slather of Dijonnaise and homemade pickles, the cheeseburger at Au Cheval is perfection in a toasted bun. Add a fried egg or bacon if you want to take it one step further.

auchevalchicago.com

2 Same Day Café, Logan Square
Nice and cheesy

This airy all-day café is ideal for a quick lunch, with in-house sodas and made-to-order sandwiches to enjoy either at your table or the plant-peppered counter. The city’s best grilled cheese comprises cheddar and smoked gouda served in rosemary bread; you can add bacon, roasted cherry tomatoes or rocket but you hardly need it.

Other sandwiches include a BLT with Sriracha bacon, a scrambled-egg biscuit with red chimichurri and a curried chicken-salad sandwich with almonds and dates. The homemade sodas range from coffee to Michigan tart cherry.
2651 North Kedzie Avenue, 60647
+1 773 342 7040
samedaycafe.com

3 Dove’s Luncheonette, Wicker Park
Tex-Mex with a twist

Mexican and Southern food converge at Dove’s Luncheonette, which turns out plates such as a sweetcorn tamale with country ham and a chicken-fried chicken dish (yes, you heard that right) with chorizo verde gravy. All set to a soundtrack of 1960s and 1970s Chicago blues and soul.

The diner setting makes Dove’s an easy spot in which to side in solo and grab a cocktail from the tequila and mezcal-centric drinks list during happy hour. The jukebox and vintage photos give it an old-school vibe but the food is decidedly modern.
1545 North Damen Avenue, 60622
+1 773 645 4060
doveschicago.com





4 Lost Larson, Andersonville
Swede success

Bobby Schaffer (pictured) honours his Swedish heritage and the history of the Andersonville neighbourhood with this light-filled bakery-cum-café. Lost Larson is devoted to Swedish-inflected dishes such as open-faced sandwiches stacked with pickled herring and lingonberry jam or smoked ham with dill havarti (a Danish cheese), lingonberry-almond cake dusted with powdered sugar, and limpa (a kind of rye) bread with fennel and star anise.

The pastry counter is a wonder, with croissants laced with cardamom, lemon tarts with crowns of toasted meringue and crumbly savoury scones. Take home a loaf of bread made with grains milled on-site – the flavours range from traditional wholewheat to pumpkin seed and kelp.
5318 North Clark Street, 60640
+1 773 944 0587
lostlarson.com



5 Manny's Deli, South Loop
No-frills classic

When you arrive at this legendary South Loop deli and restaurant, grab a tray and load it up with whatever old-school dish takes your fancy: hearty meatloaf, chicken potpie or a hot turkey dinner. Next, head to any free table in the cafeteria-style dining room and tuck in.

Since 1942, the family-owned Manny's has been serving homely dishes alongside Jewish favourites such as pastrami sandwiches overflowing with meat, melty Reubens, crispy potato pancakes and chopped liver – and the crowds keep on coming.

1141 South Jefferson Street, 60607
+1 312 939 2855
manny'sdeli.com

6 Marisol, Streeterville
Artful eating

Housed in the Museum of Contemporary Art (see page 91), Marisol is a restaurant from chef Jason Hammel of Lula Café (see page 33). “The restaurant reimagines the relationship between food, art and design in an immersive art environment,” he says. “We’ve created a menu that rotates with the seasons, filled with imaginative and contemporary flavours inspired by artistic surroundings.”

Marisol serves lunch and dinner and also features a coffee shop and bar. A great place to refuel over oysters with grilled lemon or fried quail with cashew butter and smoked-date honey.
205 East Pearson Street, 60611
+1 312 799 3599
marisolchicago.com



Fried-chicken feasts

- Honey Butter Fried Chicken, Avondale:** Slathering the honey butter directly onto the fried chicken at Josh Kulp and Christine Cikowski's fried-chicken temple gives it a rich salty-sweet flavour that melts into the crispy skin. The menu includes whole pieces, chicken strips and towering sandwiches such as the OG, with slaw and candied jalapeño mayo.
honeybutter.com
- The Roost Carolina Kitchen, various locations:** For Southern-style fried-chicken sandwiches – yes, that includes the fiery hot Nashville – you can't beat The Roost, where juicy fried chicken with a perfectly crunchy coating comes on buttery biscuits with toppings such as pickles, 'slaw or sharp cheddar. Alternatively, try the fried-chicken tacos or classic bone-in chicken with sides.
theroostcarolinakitchen.com
- Ina Mae Tavern & Packaged Goods, Wicker Park:** New Orleans native Brian Jupiter is Chicago's go-to guy for Southern classics and those include his fried chicken, available in white or dark meat and served with a flaky biscuit and honey. The coating is craggy, crispy and perfectly seasoned, shattering satisfyingly when you take a bite.
inamaetavern.com

Top tacos

- 01 **Mi Tocaya Antojeria, Logan Square:** Acclaimed chef Diana Dávila draws on her Mexican heritage to create tacos including the vegetarian *milpa*, with charred butternut squash, chillies, beans and corn crema. The meaty *campechano*, with *cochinita* (slow-roasted pork), chorizo and *carne asada* (grilled and sliced beef), brings the heat. mitocaya.com
- 02 **Carnitas Uruapan, Lower West Side:** As the name implies, the family-owned Carnitas Uruapan is all about the *carnitas* (luscious slow-cooked pork), which you order by the taco or the pound. Pair a taco with a side of crispy *chicharrones* (fried pork skin). carnitasuruapanchi.com
- 03 **Antique Taco, various locations:** There are three locations of Rick Ortiz's Antique Taco: Wicker Park, Bridgeport and the Loop. Visit them all to try the different fillings, from mushrooms with *guajillo* (chilli) purée to smoked brisket with onions. antiquetaco.com
- 04 **Cruz Blanca Brewery & Taqueria, West Loop:** Celebrity chef Rick Bayless focuses on tacos at his lively brewery, where you can order build-your-own taco plates with meats, salsas and sides, or composed tacos such as chopped lamb with crispy cheese and caramelised onion. rickbayless.com/restaurants/cerveceria-cruz-blanca

Brunch
Places to linger



Pie's the limit
When pie cravings strike, Bang Bang Pie & Biscuits delivers sweet and savoury options such as a Buffalo chicken potpie. Bonus: the buttery biscuit sandwiches, with fillings such as candied bacon and pimento cheese, are some of the city's best breakfast fare. bangbangpie.com

1 Baker Miller, Lincoln Square
Morning munchies

Baked goods are the name of the game at Baker Miller, the café where Dave (pictured) and Megan Miller offer their delicious takes on morning favourites. Biscuits stuffed with egg custard, avocado toast adorned with radishes and sourdough French toast accented with seasonal jams sit on the menu alongside grits and grain bowls. The "famous" oatmeal earns that often overstated moniker: it's the creamiest version you'll have ever had and comes with cultured cream, cinnamon-sugar pecans and a dollop of jam. Grab a bag of pastries (in particular the gooey cinnamon buns) on the way out. [4655 North Lincoln Avenue, 60625](http://4655NorthLincolnAvenue.com)
[+1 773 654 3610](http://+17736543610)
bakermillerchicago.com

2 Bad Hunter, West Loop
Light and bright

This is the place to come if you fancy a lighter brunch. The space is bright and airy, much like chef Dan Snowden's vegetable-focused dishes. Expect to find a freekeh bowl with grilled market vegetables, za'atar and a soft-boiled egg; tempura sweet potato with coconut yoghurt, harissa and pistachio dukkah; and a vegetarian burger in a brioche bun with cheddar, mustard aioli and tomato jam. The wine list is natural and Emily Spurlin's whimsical pastries include everything from carrot-and-coconut cinnamon rolls to parsnip cake with poached pears and hazelnut. [802 West Randolph Street, 60607](http://802WestRandolphStreet.com)
[+1 312 265 1745](http://+13122651745)
badhunter.com

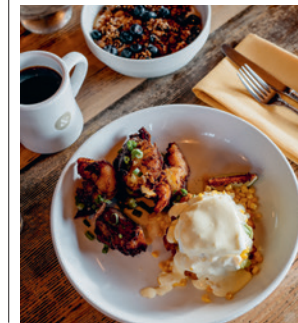


3 Lou Mitchell's, West Loop
Start the day the old school way

Not much has changed at Lou Mitchell's over the years – and that's a good thing, since the busy diner has been churning out classic dishes since 1923. The restaurant is open for both breakfast and lunch, with fluffy pancakes and waffles with whipped butter, freshly made hash browns and stuffed omelettes anchoring the morning menu. Come lunch, there's a variety of burgers and sandwiches, plus daily specials such as turkey dinners, all in hearty portions. If there's a wait (and there likely will be), don't worry – staff will greet you with doughnut holes and Milk Duds. [565 West Jackson Boulevard, 60661](http://565WestJacksonBoulevard.com)
[+1 312 939 3111](http://+13129393111)
loumitchells.com

4 Longman & Eagle, Logan Square
Rise and imbibe

Part cosy hotel (see page 22), part lively tavern, Longman & Eagle is a popular Logan Square haunt that opens daily for breakfast. Chef Maxwell Robbins' morning menu ranges from the simple and satisfying (potato-and-egg breakfast burrito or French omelette) to the more elaborate (*elotes* Benedict with sour-cream hollandaise or challah French toast with whipped hot-chocolate butter.) On the weekend there's a changing list of fresh doughnuts and, if you have a leisurely day ahead, you should try the Bloody Mary or extensive whiskey offerings. [2657 North Kedzie Avenue, 60647](http://2657NorthKedzieAvenue.com)
[+1 773 276 7110](http://+17732767110)
longmanandeagle.com





5
The Allis, West Loop
House special

The soaring ceilings and glittering chandeliers create a striking backdrop at this all-day restaurant at Soho House (see page 18), which is open to non-members. Choose between classic western dishes such as homemade granola with Greek yoghurt and berries; the smoked-salmon bagel with tomato, cucumber, capers and cream cheese; or the avocado toast topped with hard-boiled eggs, basil, lemon and a sprinkling of chilli.

Sink into a sofa for a leisurely bite or join the freelancers at the communal table, tapping away at their keyboards over coffee. There are magazines and newspapers on offer, the people-watching is prime and the walls are hung with artwork by the likes of Damien Hirst.

113-125 North Green Street,
60607
+1 312 521 8000
theallis.com

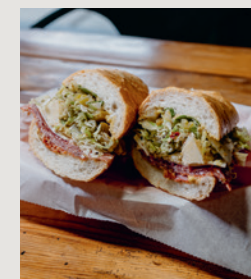


6
Big Jones, Andersonville
Southern hospitality

A visit to Big Jones is akin to taking a quick jaunt to the southern states. Chef and co-owner Paul Fehribach (pictured) offers a taste of the region's finest cuisine and ingredients, from a Louisiana crayfish omelette to Alabama catfish and grits.

He also draws from historic recipes, with the brunch menu including a colonial-era cornbread and a Big Jones Benedict with house-cured and smoked ham cooked gently in cream. The cocktails too take inspiration from the rich drinking traditions of New Orleans, Savannah and Charleston: we recommend the Sazerac or the Chatham Artillery Punch.

5347 North Clark Street, 60640
+1 773 275 5725
bigjoneschicago.com



Must-try
Mr G from JP Graziano Grocery Co, West Loop
The speciality sandwich at this Italian grocery has a lot going on (layers of provolone, hot soppressata, prosciutto and salami accented with truffle mustard, balsamic vinaigrette, hot oil, red-wine vinegar and more) but it's a beautifully balanced construction.
jpgraziano.com

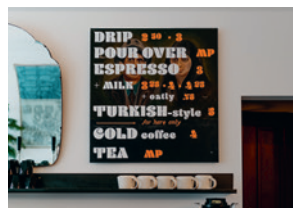
Coffee and sweet treats
Brews and bites



1 Four Letter Word,
Logan Square
Swear by it

This single-origin-focused coffee shop and roaster opened on Burgazada island (off the coast of Istanbul) in 2014 and two years later, with two of the three owners based in Chicago, began roasting beans stateside at The Plant (see page 45). In 2018, it added this outpost in Logan Square.

Served alongside pour-overs, espresso, drip and Turkish coffee are pastries baked at the neighbouring Cellar Door Provisions. The light-filled, airy space has just a handful of tables, a long brick coffee bar and a clear focus on design, with distinctive light fixtures and art books for your perusal.
3022 West Diversey Avenue, 60647
+1 773 360 8932
4kcoffee.com



2 Metric Coffee, Near West Side
Serious about beans

There's just a handful of seats at Metric Coffee, established in 2013 by Darko Arandjelovic (founder of Caffe Streets in Wicker Park) and Xavier Alexander (former roasting manager at nearby Intelligentsia). Together the pair roast beans – sourced from the likes of Ethiopia, Kenya, Peru and Honduras – on-site with a 1960s German machine.

Swing by the Fulton Market café for a cup of coffee, cold-pressed juices and pastries from Chicago bakeries Hewn and Spilt Milk – or simply to pick up a pack of ground beans to go. There are also coffee-brewing workshops; register online in advance.
2021 West Fulton Street, Suite K-101B, 60612
+1 312 982 2196
metriccoffee.com

Ice, ice, baby

Pretty Cool Ice Cream will remind you why you chased after the ice-cream van as a child. Pastry chef Dana Cree serves creative ice lollies such as coffee pretzel toffee and banana horchata (a creamy rice-and-almond concoction).
prettycooлицream.com



3 Loba Pastry + Coffee,
Lakeview
In for a treat

Valeria Taylor (pictured) has a knack for flavour combinations, which means her squeeze of a coffee shop in Lakeview is packed with sweet and savoury treats. The ever-changing menu features delights such as a pepita crunch bar topped with honey-caramelised nuts and caramel-cherry monkey bread.

The coffees include a latte sweetened with violet-flower syrup and an Arcadian latte, Taylor's take on a Turkish coffee. You can also go simple with a single-origin espresso and a sourdough muffin (crunchy on the outside, fluffy in the middle).

3422 North Lincoln Avenue, 60657
+1 773 456 9266
lobapastry.com





4
Doughnut Vault, River North
The hole game

Chicago's tastiest doughnuts come from a tiny shopfront inside a former bank vault. There's no seating, just trays lined with delectable doughnuts. Choose between daily offerings such as the vanilla, the chestnut-glazed and the buttermilk old-fashioned, as well as specials including the Mexican hot-chocolate cake.

Doughnut Vault used to command hours-long lines but thankfully its sugary snacks can now be found at other cafés around town. Having said that, it's well worth the wait. Bear in mind it opens at 08.00 and closes when stock sells out (sometimes by 10.00).
401 North Franklin Street, 60654
+1 312 285 2830
doughnutvault.com



5
Sawada Coffee, West Loop
Artist at work

Japanese barista and latte-art champion (really) Hiroshi Sawada opened his first US coffee shop in 2015 in Chicago's former meatpacking district. Behind the graffiti-covered façade is an industrial space dotted with ping-pong tables and pinball.

Sawada's signature military latte mimics camouflage – with matcha, vanilla, cocoa powder and espresso – and a matching doughnut from Doughnut Vault (see left) is available. The short menu also includes teas and boozy steamers – spiked drinks such as a milk-based Scotch and a honey drink laced with almond.

112 North Green Street, 60607
+1 312 754 0431
sawadacoffee.com

Get buzzed

Coffee roaster Intelligentsia is spreading across the country but it was born in Chicago, where it offers its brews at six cafés. The industrial design of the Millennium Park location echoes the nearby sculptures.
intelligentsiacoffee.com



6
Gaslight Coffee Roasters, Logan Square
A good roasting

With metal chairs straight out of an old-school classroom and taxidermy hanging on walls lined with baroque wallpaper, the long-standing Gaslight Coffee Roasters is a fine spot in which to linger over a silky latte. On weekdays freelancer types abound while on the weekend Logan Square residents catch up with friends over egg sandwiches, bowls of spiced tomato soup and other homely fare.

Coffee is roasted on-site with beans sourced from Guatemala, Ethiopia and further afield. If you like what you sip, grab a bag of beans to go.
2385 North Milwaukee Avenue, 60647
gaslightcoffeeroasters.com

Markets
Stall order

1
Green City Market, Lincoln Park
Food fest

Held outside between May and October and indoors at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum throughout the rest of the year, the Lincoln Park location of Green City Market draws devoted food lovers and chefs seeking the best vegetables, fruit and other products for their kitchens. Satellite locations of the market are sprouting around the city but the Saturday iteration remains the biggest farmers' market.

Weave your way between stands offering maple syrup, charcuterie, cheese and more – even wood-fired pizzas – all from Illinois and nearby Michigan and Wisconsin. Weekly chef demos invite you to see how the city's top chefs are using the seasonal produce.
Corner of North Clark Street and North Lincoln Avenue
+1 773 880 1266
greencitymarket.org



Go green

On the first Saturday of each month, urban farm and sustainable food business centre The Plant hosts a farmers' market. Drop by to peruse produce grown both by the tenants and other Chicagoans.
plantchicago.org/farmers-market



Drinks
Fine imbibing



①
Lost Lake, Logan Square
Paradise found

This vibrant bar is all about the tropical decor and tiki cocktails. Bartender Paul McGee and co-owner Shelby Allison have created a beautiful den with banana leaf-print wallpaper, bamboo decor and a smiling team of bartenders in Hawaiian shirts.

Hop on a stool and ask for one of their perfectly balanced cocktails. The banana daiquiri – featuring Jamaican, Trinidadian and spiced rum – has a banana dolphin leaping out of the glass.

3154 West Diversey Avenue,
60647
+1 773 293 6048
lostlaketiki.com

②
Sportsman's Club,
Humboldt Park
Drinking den

Sportsman's Club is a bar for all seasons. The taxidermy deer heads lining the slender space and the comfortable booths contribute to a cosy feeling, while the back windows open out onto a big patio that hosts summer barbecues with some of the best chefs in town.

Four cocktails are offered each day, along with wine and craft beer. Or you can order a round of house amaro shots, served in chilled shot glasses.

948 North Western Avenue,
60622
+1 872 206 8054
drinkingandgathering.com



③
Income Tax, Edgewater
Wine and dine

Located in the northern neighbourhood of Edgewater, this sharply designed, low-lit bar and restaurant features a wine list that's geared towards Old World producers.

Pull up a seat at the marble bar and ask for a glass of red or peruse the menu of lesser-known cocktails (try the cider-based Stone Fence, spiked with armagnac), plus the vermouth, brandy, cider and beer lists. A European-focused dinner menu from chef Ellison Park will keep you sated.

5959 North Broadway, 60660
+1 773 897 9165
incometaxbar.com



④
Red & White Wine Bar,
Bucktown
Glass act

In 2018, a decade after Red & White Wines opened in Bucktown, the sharp little shop opened an equally sharp bar next door. It offers the same natural wines by the glass or bottle, as well as a concise menu of cheese and charcuterie plus a few small plates and mains.

The by-the-glass list is short and sweet and the staff will talk and taste you through as many as you want until you find the perfect glass.

1861 North Milwaukee Avenue,
60647
+1 773 486 4769
redandwhitewineschicago.com



⑤
Parson's Chicken & Fish,
Logan Square
The great outdoors

Chicagoans love a good patio and Parson's has one of the best in the city. With a sea of picnic tables, bench seating and a ping-pong table, this is somewhere to spend a low-key summer evening.

There are also plenty of tables indoors come winter and the Negroni slushy is delicious whatever the season. Local beers and crowd-pleasing cocktails work well with grilled or fried chicken or a fried-fish sandwich.

2952 West Armitage Avenue,
60647
+1 773 384 3333
parsonschickenandfish.com



7
Estereo, Logan Square
Night and day

As the neon sign on the wall proclaims, Estereo is an all-day bar. Drop by in the afternoon for a coffee or come in the evening for drinks made with Latin spirits such as mezcal, tequila, cachaça and pisco. When night falls, live DJs set up in the corner.

Bartender Michael Rubel has assembled an impressive spirits list and the cocktails are indebted to local produce. In summer the windows roll up to let in the breeze.

2450 North Milwaukee Avenue,
60647
+1 773 360 8363
estereochicago.com

6
The Loyalist, West Loop
Classy cocktails

Tucked underneath John and Karen Shields' fine-dining restaurant Smyth is The Loyalist, known for its well-made cocktails and killer burger. The bar's Old Fashioned is an elegant variation on the classic, with maple and a dash of amaro for a hint of bitterness, while other cocktails feature seasonal ingredients such as birch, charred apples and gooseberry.

A couple of beers clock in at \$4 here so you can drink on the cheap while indulging in devilled eggs with smoked salmon, an aged rib eye drizzled with brown butter or the Loyalist cheeseburger, topped with a mass of onions, pickles and American cheese.
177 North Ada Street, 60607
+1 773 913 3774
smythandtheloyalist.com



Late-night eats

After a night out, swing by The Wiener's Circle for char (grilled) dogs, burgers and freshly cut fries with tangy cheese. Place your order with the staff at the counter and snag a picnic table – it's not fancy but it's a classic late-night Chicago custom.
wienercircle.net



9
Scofflaw, Logan Square
Cocktails and cookies

Gin is the main focus at this dark and broody cocktail bar where the drinks menu changes every three months but always includes a swizzler that matches the season. Sample gins from around the world or try one in a tiny "Tini, a miniature martini.

The drinks list includes a glossary of cocktails and there's a menu of small plates. At midnight fresh-baked chocolate-chip cookies are handed out – a reason to stay.

3201 West Armitage Avenue,
60647
+1 773 252 9700
scofflawchicago.com



8
Cindy's, The Loop
High life

The sweeping views from the outdoor patio at Cindy's, the rooftop bar on the 13th floor of the Chicago Athletic Association Hotel (see page 25), take in Millennium Park, Lake Michigan, Cloud Gate and a whole load of dazzling architecture in the Loop. But crowds aren't queuing up for the vista alone: the cocktails are exceptional, biodynamic wines and Midwest beers are available and the comfort food is designed for sharing. Also open for brunch and lunch.
12 South Michigan Avenue,
60603
+1 312 792 3502
cindysrooftop.com

