



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Mike

Best Chicago nightlife

Chicago, 1 Day

Table of contents:

Guide Description 2

Itinerary Overview 3

Daily Itineraries 4

Chicago Snapshot 9

Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: What better way to end a long day of sight-seeing or business meetings than with some good old-fashioned fun. Chicago is chock full of clubs and hot spots for cutting loose and kicking back into the wee hours. Whether you're in the mood to get your drink on, your dance on, or even throw a few bowling balls, there are some solid picks on this list. And for those less inclined toward conversation or shakin' it, Chicago, home of comedy, offers some choice late-night shows. Photo: Allison Felus

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Chicago



The Hideout

The best performance bar in the land



Hopleaf

Belgian beer lovers unite



Neo-Futurists

Too much light is a good thing



Green Mill

Swinging former speakeasy



Second City

Famous theater and improv group



Schubas Tavern

Eclectic Local Dance and Drink



Music Box Theatre

Historic movie house



Southport Lanes and Billiards

Live pin-setters on some old-fashioned bowling lanes



Funky Buddha Lounge

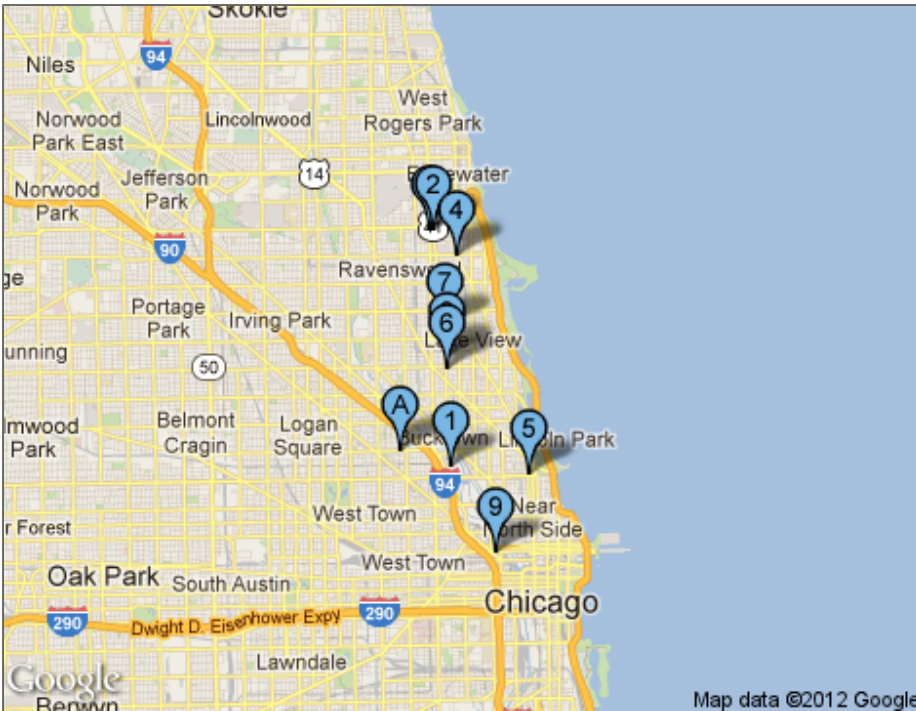
Diverse and funky club



The Map Room

Tavern and coffee bar

Day 1 - Chicago



QUICK NOTE

contact:

tel: 773 227 4433

fax: +1 773 227 3650

<http://www.hideoutchicago.com/>

location:

1354 West Wabansia Avenue
Chicago IL 60622-1519

hours:

8p-2a M, 4p-2a Tu-F, 7p-3a Sa

1 The Hideout

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The bar is very hard to find, and is hidden among factory warehouses. Take a cab.

DESCRIPTION: This friendly tavern's OLD STYLE BEER sign shines like a beacon, guiding roots-music fans through the grimy industrial neighborhood that surrounds it. The owners' beer-can collection and some "celebrity" memorabilia are on display in the front room. In back, local musicians play country, rock, and bluesy tunes on a small stage backed by an impressive stuffed sailfish. It's no-frills, all right, but the Hideout also books some of the best lineups of folk and "alt country" bands in the city, including Jeff Tweedy (of Wilco), Kelly Hogan, and the New Duncan Imperials. © Frommer's



Hideout

contact:

tel: 773 334 9851

<http://www.hopleaf.com>

location:

5148 N Clark Street
Chicago IL 60640

hours:

2 Hopleaf

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

This very popular bar is packed most nights, so arrive early to claim a booth or table.

DESCRIPTION: If you don't know your Farmhouse from your Trappist or your Abbey-style ales, or perhaps, more importantly, if you do, then Hopleaf should be your next destination for a



citysearch

Bar: M-Fr, 3p-2a, Sa 12p-3a,
Su 12p-2a; Kitchen: Su-Th
5p-11p, Fr-Sa, 5p-12a

goblet or two. In addition to an extensive list of Belgian beers available on tap (over 15) or by the bottle (over 100), this tavern also features beers from all over North America and Europe. If beer isn't your thing (gasp!) then check out the wine list; Hopleaf features a number of wines available by the glass or bottle. Of course, with all this drinking you'll probably want to do a little eating. A few standout features on the menu include the mussels (white-wine steamed or white-ale steamed, your choice) and the frites with aioli. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 773 275 5255
fax: 773 878 4514
<http://www.neofuturists.org/>

location:

5153 North Ashland Avenue
Chicago IL 60640

hours:

11:30p F & Sa, 7p Su

3 Neo-Futurists

DESCRIPTION: A fixture on Chicago's late-night theater scene, the Neo-Futurists have been doing their hit *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind* since 1988 (it's now the longest-running show in Chicago). The setting -- a cramped room above a funeral home -- isn't much, but the gimmick is irresistible: Every night the performers stage a new collection of "30 plays in 60 minutes." The "plays" vary from a 3-minute comedy sketch to a lightning-quick wordless tableau; the mood veers from laugh-out-loud silly to emotionally touching. The show starts at 11:30pm on weekends; get there about an hour ahead, because seats are first-come, first-served, and they do sell out. The late-night curtain attracts a younger crowd, but I've taken 60-something relatives who have had a great time (unlike many improv comedy troupes, the Neo-Futurists don't rely on raunchy or gross-out humor). Admission is random: Theatergoers pay \$9 plus the roll of a six-sided die. If you want to feel that you've experienced edgy, low-budget theater -- but still want to be entertained -- this is the place to go. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Neo-Futurists

contact:

tel: +1 773 878 5552
<http://www.greenmilljazz.com/>

location:

4802 North Broadway Avenue
Chicago IL 60640

hours:

Su to Fr from 12:00 PM to
04:00 AM, Sa from 12:00 PM
to 05:00 AM

4 Green Mill

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Located in a seedy neighborhood, be prepared to take a cab for late night shows.

DESCRIPTION: This is the absolute best place to see jazz in Chicago! The Green Mill is a former speakeasy from days of Prohibition, where it was the headquarters Chicago gangsters, including the infamous Al Capone. Also famous for being the location where Joe E. Lewis was attacked with a knife. The ornate, sophisticated, and dark atmosphere has not changed much from the old days, and neither has the music. It has definitely upheld its mission to uphold a "mix of down-to-earth friendliness and class." There are different regular acts every night, with Big Band swing on Thursdays, Sabertooth Jazz Quintet on Saturday and Sunday after 1am, and even a Poetry Slam on Sundays.
© NileGuide



citysearch

contact:
tel: 312 664
4032 /3123373992
fax: 312 664 9837
<http://www.secondcity.com/>

location:
1616 North Wells Street
Chicago IL 60614

5 Second City

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Try to book tickets in advance, shows tend to sell out especially on the weekends.

DESCRIPTION: Chicago is famous for comedy, and it has Second City to thank for that. Almost every famous comic to come out of Chicago spent time at Second City before they "hit it big." A few famous alumni include Stephen Colbert, Tina Fey, and Steve Carell. Don't miss the revue on the mainstage (does not play on Mondays), sure to skewer politicians local and national in the most hilarious way possible. As a general rule, Chicago politics equals comedy gold. Be sure to get to the theater about 30 minutes ahead of showtime, as seating is first come, first seated. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Second City

contact:
tel: 773 525 2508
fax: 773 525 4573
<http://www.schubas.com/>

location:
3159 North Southport Avenue
Chicago IL 60657

hours:
2p-2a M-F, 11a-3a Sa, 11a-2a Sun

6 Schubas Tavern

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Make sure to use the photo booth, which has been around for many years and the jukebox, which some claim is the best in the city!

DESCRIPTION: This tavern is housed in one of the former Schlitz bars, but the Schlitz is gone. Instead, you will find a good collection of beer and a wonderfully eclectic variety of live music on a stage in an adjoining room. You can drink at the bar for no extra charge, but to hear the music, you have to pay a cover fee. Both parts of the tavern, performance and bar areas, tend to host a mix of locals from the Lakeview neighborhood and others from throughout the city who have come to check out this week's jazz, rock or folk act. If you get hungry, you can sneak away to the Harmony Grill, which is owned by the same person and attached to the bar. © wcities.com



citysearch

contact:
tel: 773 871 6604
fax: 773 871 0602
<http://www.musicboxtheatre.com/>

location:
3733 North Southport Avenue
Chicago IL 60613

7 Music Box Theatre

DESCRIPTION: From the music played before the show starts, to the live organ music played on the weekends, to the twinkling stars and wispy clouds projected overhead, a trip to this theater can be a romantic trip through time. Every month, the schedule is crowded with a huge variety of films, including foreign films, American art films and classics. The theater has been known to show such outlandish things as a 1970s 3-D adult film for the midnight and cult crowd. See website for show times, event calendar and more. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 773 472 6600
fax: 773 472 1601
<http://sparetimechicago.com/index.php>

location:

3325 North Southport Avenue
Chicago IL 60657

hours:

4p-1a M-F, noon-2a Sa,
noon-1a Su

8 Southport Lanes and Billiards

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Lane reservations are popular on the weekend, avoid the wait by making a week day reservation.

DESCRIPTION: This might seem like an average bar, but look a little further and find the night's best activity: bowling! Located just off the Southport Brown line stop in lively West Lakeview since 1922, Southport Lanes is a small and fun local bowling alley, which uses real pin-setters! There are only four lanes, so it may be difficult to find a spot on the weekends, but enjoy a game of pool and a few beers while you wait. Even if you don't want to bowl, this is a fun hangout any night of the week.
© NileGuide



Samuelalove/Flickr

contact:

tel: +1 312 666 1695
fax: 312 666 1985
<http://www.funkybuddha.com/>

location:

728 West Grand Avenue
Chicago IL 60610

hours:

9p-2a Su-F, 9p-3a Sa

9 Funky Buddha Lounge

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The \$20 cover can be a bit steep, so be ready to commit to a night of dancing! Public transportation is available, but a cab is the best option for late nights.

DESCRIPTION: If you are looking for an eclectic and diverse environment to get your groove on, then this is the place to be. It is a bit off the beaten path located in an industrial River North neighborhood, but this adds to its unique and rusty charm. The stylized interior creates a whimsical ambiance with leopard-skin couches, antique lighting, colored murals, and private booths. Here you can have the intimacy of a small venue and the feel of a dance club all in one place. The DJ's are some of the best in the city, spinning an array of beats including hip hop, African, house, soul, and funk that draw a wide-range of patrons that come from all backgrounds. Popular Thursday nights bring in a younger crowd, and Saturday and Sunday draw a hip urban crowd for hip hop and soul. © NileGuide



flickr

contact:

tel: 773 2527636
<http://www.maproom.com/>

location:

1949 N Hoyne
Chicago IL 60647

hours:

M-F 6:30a-2a, Sa7:30a-3a,
Su 11a-2a

A The Map Room

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Great place to go if you are looking for something a little quieter and away from the hubbub.

DESCRIPTION: Owners Mark and Laura Blasingame have made this place into an expression of their love for world travel, and the free buffet every Tuesday night, served to reflect the cuisine of a different country every week, is only the first indication of that love. The walls are lined with bookshelves



map room

housing a variety of atlases and travel guides, Internet connections are available to help plan your next world voyage, and perhaps most importantly, the draught beer list includes a variety of exciting imports (including Belgians like St. Feuillien, Achouffe and Urthel). On Fridays, enjoy live blues and on Saturday, live jazz. There is no cover charge for either night. See website for details on the quarterly "Cafe Scientifique" lecture/discussion series. © wcities.com

Chicago Snapshot

Local Info

Chicago is "The City that Works" and "The City of Big Shoulders." It boasts North America's tallest building and one of the world's largest office buildings. With the ubiquitous elevated trains creating a continuous clatter, the city looks, feels and, in fact is, big.

At first glance, Chicago can be overwhelming. But, like any city, it is the sum of its parts, and its parts are diverse. Also known as "The City of Neighborhoods," Chicago comprises more than 75 official neighborhoods. Each features its own distinct quality and character.

So, when trying to digest Chicago, don't try to take it all in with one big bite. Break it up into manageable portions.

The Loop

This area takes its name from the elevated train, the "El," that loops around the city's central core. While the downtown area stretches beyond these boundaries, much of the lifeblood that invigorates the rest of the city also pumps through the Loop. The Sears Tower, North America's tallest building, is here, as is the Chicago Board of Trade, one of the biggest options and futures trading floors in the world. City government offices are based here, as well as the home offices of several major corporations.

When it's time for the city that works to relax, the Loop does not disappoint. The city's magnificent Harold Washington Library, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Cultural Center are all here. While not as ritzy as the city's Magnificent Mile where State Street is a shopping mecca.

Thanks to a burgeoning theater district, the Loop is increasingly becoming a place to visit when the workday ends. The restored Ford Center for the Performing Arts-Oriental Theatre hosts lavish Broadway productions while the Chicago Theatre has several musical concerts. The landmark Auditorium Theatre, considered by some the most beautiful theater in America, hosts musicals, concerts and other performances in the South Loop area. The renowned Goodman Theatre also offers several performances throughout the year. This North Loop site includes dining and retail options.

Many restaurants, such as The Original Heaven on Seven, Italian Village and Berghoff, vie to whet every Loop-goer's appetite. Boutique Hotels such as the Hotel Allegro, Hotel Burnham Chicago and Hotel Monaco compete for guests with the more traditional Palmer House and Chicago Hilton Plaza and Towers.

While technically just outside the Loop's borders, Grant Park should not be missed. Hugging Lake Michigan, this park is often referred to as "Chicago's Front Yard." The majestic Buckingham Fountain is here, as is a plush rose garden and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's outdoor home, the Petrillo Music Shell. The park is immense, with the capacity to hold up to three million people, as is tested annually by the Taste of Chicago festival. Grant Park also plays host to many music and arts festivals during the summer, including Jazz Fest and Blues Fest.

Near North Side

Just to the north of the Loop, bordered by the Chicago River on the south, the Lake on the east and North Avenue on the north, is Chicago's Near North Side neighborhood. This area is in turn made up of several other smaller districts.

The city's "Magnificent Mile" (known as the "Mag Mile" to locals) is one of the Near North's most famous offerings. Stretching along Michigan Avenue from the Chicago River to Oak Street, this shoppers' paradise is home to high-scale chains like Neiman Marcus and Bloomingdale's at the 900 North Michigan Avenue Shops, as well as the lavish boutiques of Marilyn Miglin and Room & Board. The city's early monument to modernity, the John Hancock Center, is just a few blocks from the city's links to its past, the Water Tower and the Chicago Water Works, two of the few buildings that survived the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Water Tower Place, an upscale indoor shopping mall, houses numerous other chain stores. You can enjoy RL Restaurant or Ralph Lauren's, the designer's largest retail store and its hip adjoining restaurant. Nordstrom, Crate & Barrel and Saks Fifth Avenue can be found a few blocks south on Michigan Avenue.

If you are wondering where the people who can afford to shop at the more expensive stores on Michigan Avenue live, head east

to Streeterville, or the adjoining Gold Coast neighborhood. Theoretically, the Gold Coast is named for the African coast of the same name, but the moniker also describes the area's opulence. The neighborhood is the nation's second wealthiest, surpassed only by New York City's Central Park East.

Just north of the Chicago River and a few blocks west of the Mag Mile is River North, home to an eclectic mix of swanky galleries, trendy cafes and theme restaurants like the Hard Rock Café. While many of the city's residents pretend they have never been to these restaurants, they most likely have — so go and enjoy with a clear conscience.

South Loop

In stark contrast to the garish designs of the chain restaurants, the South Loop offers a quaint, Old World charm, neighborhood bars and smaller restaurants. Once home to one of the largest publishing centers in the Midwest, the warehouses left behind have been renovated and taken over by young, affluent professionals who wish to walk to their jobs in the Loop. The area's focal point, Dearborn Station, sets the tone for the neighborhood. The former rail transportation hub's façade has been lavishly restored.

Beyond Downtown

Lake Shore Drive, one of the city's major north-south arteries, runs along the picturesque lakefront. While the Drive will take you to many of the city's attractions, do not forget that this boulevard is an attraction in itself. The lake view, the bold skyline and even the Drive's own tree-lined medians offer some of the most breathtaking views in the city. However, Chicagoans have little patience for "Sunday drivers" gawking at the sites. So when you get on Lake Shore Drive, have a destination in mind.

Lincoln Park

Once you pass North Avenue, you will enter Lincoln Park, one of the city's more gentrified areas. Tree-lined Fullerton Avenue, with its brownstones converted into condos, gives you a feel for the neighborhood residents. Lincoln Park also surrounds the DePaul University neighborhood. A variety of bars, dance spots and inexpensive restaurants cater to the college and just-out-of-college crowd.

Chicago Snapshot continued

Not all of Lincoln Park hustles and bustles. In fact, the park from which the neighborhood takes its name is one of the city's largest and most pastoral. Designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, who also drew up the blueprints for New York's Central Park and Lincoln Park encompasses more than 1,000 acres. It includes a Zoo, the Lincoln Park Conservatory, a driving range, dozens of ball fields and several biking and running paths connecting it to lakefront beaches. You'll find many pickup games of soccer and ultimate Frisbee here on warm summer days.

Lakeview

Heading further north brings you to Lakeview, a neighborhood that serves as a popular nightlife center for both the straight and gay communities. These groups tend to party separately, with the standout exception being Berlin, a late-night dance club where hipsters of every orientation party together.

Halsted Street between Belmont Avenue and Irving Park Road serves as the headquarters for gay nightlife. The area is not hard to find; just look for the gigantic rainbow-colored pylons that line the streets. For dancing, head to Roscoe's Tavern or Spin.

If partying is not your thing, don't despair. The area also offers its share of restaurants, from Angelina Ristorante and Yoshi's Cafe to the 24-hour Melrose Restaurant.

For the straight set, head a few blocks west to Wrigleyville, a bar area that gets its name from the nearby Wrigley Field, home of the Chicago Cubs. The numerous taverns here make for excellent bar-hopping, so stop in the Cubby Bear or The Metro, a bar that features live music and up-and-coming rock bands like the Smashing Pumpkins, who

played here before they made it big and returned for their final two shows.

Diners can satisfy a variety of tastes in Wrigleyville, including Asian, Cajun, Italian and Mexican. Those who prefer to stick with the bar scene can eat well at Bar Louie, John Barleycorn Memorial Pub or Sluggers.

Uptown

For more live music, head farther north, where you'll find the Aragon Ballroom, the Riviera and the prohibition-era jazz bar, Green Mill. When you're strolling through this area, a word of caution is in order. As the once grand, now deteriorating buildings that house the Aragon and the Riviera suggest, this formerly posh neighborhood has changed drastically over the years. Still, some of the best music in the city (be it jazz, rock, or something in between) can be found here.

Wicker Park/Bucktown

A hot spot for artisans and heavy drinkers alike is the Wicker Park/Bucktown area. Hang out at bars like the Blue Note and Holiday Club or restaurants like Northside Bar & Grill and Beat Kitchen and it won't be long before some hipster starts talking to you about gentrification.

The South Side

If you are visiting the city, do not make the mistake many North Siders do by forgetting that Lake Shore Drive also runs south of downtown.

As you cruise south on Lake Shore Drive, admire the Museum Campus where the Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium and the Field Museum converge. If you have the time, you could easily spend a day in each museum, but it's also well worth a stop just to enjoy the lake views and watch sailboats go by.

Just south, you will pass Soldier Field, home of the Chicago Bears. Immediately

after gazing at Soldier Field you will need to guard against whiplash as you turn to stare at the sprawling McCormick Place, one of the largest convention centers in North America and home to numerous annual trade shows, like the Boat & RV Show and Auto Show. The space includes more than 2.2 million square feet of exhibition space, Chicago's largest ballroom and the Arie Crown Theater.

Comiskey Park, home of the Chicago White Sox, lies on the west side of Lake Shore Drive. The modern stadium features an exploding scoreboard that sets off fireworks along with a Sony Jumbo Screen.

Further south, the charming Hyde Park neighborhood has a quaint, old-world look to it. Home to the world-famous University of Chicago, the area boasts interesting restaurants like the Dixie Kitchen and Medici, great used book stores like O'Gara & Wilson's (the oldest used bookstore in the country), and the quaint 57th Street Art Fair. Hyde Park is also home to the gigantic 350,000 square-foot Museum of Science and Industry. This monument to 20th century technology houses a replica coal mine, a German U-Boat and a Zephyr train all under one roof.

After visiting the museum, push away thoughts of industriousness long enough to take a leisurely stroll through Jackson Park. Like its sister to the north, Lincoln Park, Jackson Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmstead. It features a Japanese garden, a bird sanctuary, a reflecting pond and a golf course.

All in all, do not be overwhelmed by Chicago's size or grit. Just find a corner of this city that suits you and celebrate its diversity.

©