



**nileGUIDE**

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Mike

# Romantic Chicago: Keep each other cozy in the Windy City

## Chicago, 1 Day

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** The Windy City can be harsh, but there are many warm and cozy places to snuggle up with your best bud. Spend the day enjoying each other's company in Chicago's northern neighborhoods without too time out in the cold. Good food, good movies, good music, and good surroundings are sure to make this day reap some good love.

# Itinerary Overview

## Day 1 - Chicago

**DAY NOTE:** Laze around with coffee and each other in the comfy rooms of the adorable Ardmore House B & B. When you're able to pry yourselves up and out, take a short walk south and west to the Fireside Restaurant for long lunch next to the roaring fire. Treat yourselves to a taxi ride down to the Music Box Theatre for a matinee full of hand-holding and cuddling. If you're in the mood, pop into a few of the cute boutiques south of the theatre on Southport Ave. Stop into Coobah (<http://www.coobah.com/index.html>) for a warming happy hour sangria and then make your way by taxi to the Violet Hour (<http://www.theviolethour.com/>). Snuggle up in a private nook and order a hot toddy and a few scrumptious small plates to share. After a few more toddys, take a very short walk north on Damen to Hot Chorolate (<http://www.hotchocolatechicago.com/>) for dessert of mind-blowing decadence. The sensual ambiance and rich treats will have you eating off of each others forks and loving every moment. If you're still up for more, hail a taxi up north to the Green Mill for some swanky jazz tunes in a dark and intimate setting. If you close the joint, consider grabbing early morning coffee from your B & B and cuddling on Hollywood Beach to be the first to see the sun rise over Lake Michigan.



### Fireside Restaurant and Lounge

Home-cooked food under the sun



### Music Box Theatre

Historic movie house



### Green Mill

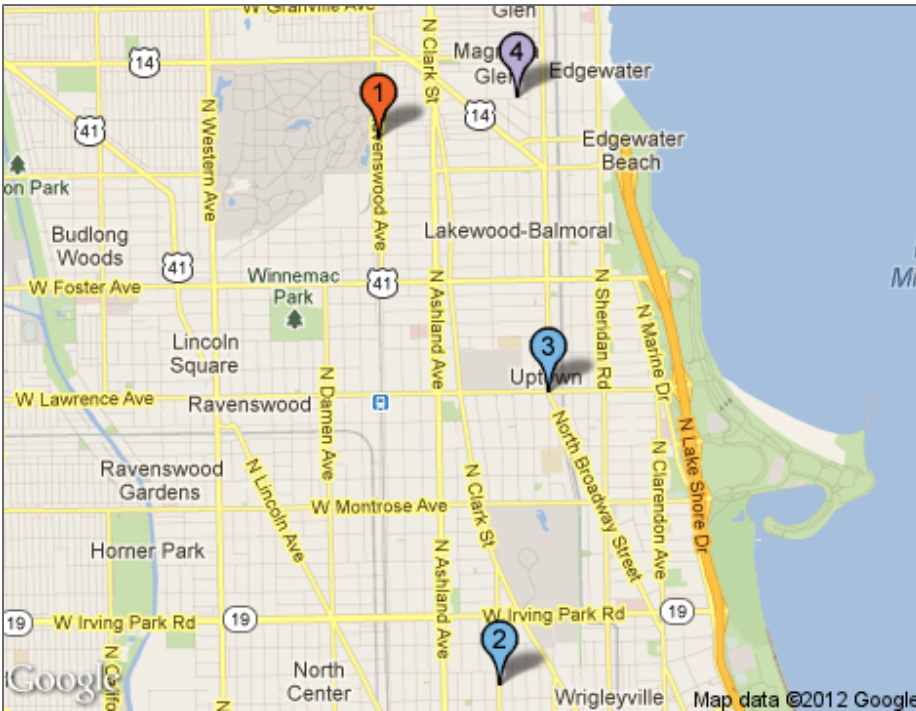
Swinging former speakeasy



### The Ardmore House

Restored Victorian Home

# Day 1 - Chicago



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** Laze around with coffee and each other in the comfy rooms of the adorable Ardmore House B & B. When you're able to pry yourselves up and out, take a short walk south and west to the Fireside Restaurant for long lunch next to the roaring fire. Treat yourselves to a taxi ride down to the Music Box Theatre for a matinee full of hand-holding and cuddling. If you're in the mood, pop into a few of the cute boutiques south of the theatre on Southport Ave. Stop into Coobah (<http://www.coobah.com/index.html>) for a warming happy hour sangria and then make your way by taxi to the Violet Hour (<http://www.theviolethour.com/>). Snuggle up in a private nook and order a hot toddy and a few scrumptious small plates to share. After a few more toddys, take a very short walk north on Damen to Hot Chorolate (<http://www.hotchocolatechicago.com/>) for dessert of mind-blowing decadence. The sensual ambiance and rich treats will have you eating off of each others forks and loving every moment. If you're still up for more, hail a taxi up north to the Green Mill for some swanky jazz tunes in a dark and intimate setting. If you close the joint, consider grabbing early early morning coffee from your B & B and cuddling on Hollywood Beach to be the first to see the sun rise over Lake Michigan.

### contact:

tel: 1 773 561-7433  
fax: 1 877 878-7433  
<http://www.firesidechicago.com>

### location:

5739 N Ravenswood Avenue  
Chicago IL 60660

### hours:

M-F 11a-4a, Sa, 11a-5a, Su  
10a-4a (Su brunch 10a-3p)

## 1 Fireside Restaurant and Lounge

**DESCRIPTION:** During the winter months, you'll want a table near to the roaring fire. But in the summertime, when the retractable awning has been opened, any seat's a good one under the warm sun. Great salads and sandwiches are available at this neighborhood restaurant and lounge. Some outstanding choices on the menu include the goat cheese and marinara appetizer and the ribs, an entree for which they're famous. (So messy, yet so worth it.) Be sure to save a little room for dessert—the chocolate kahlua mousse pie is an excellent way to end your meal. For those who like to brunch, you'll want to stop by Fireside on Sunday for their Build Your



citysearch

Own Bloody Mary bar, a perfect cure for any overindulgence on Saturday night. © wcities.com

**contact:**

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

**location:**

3733 North Southport Avenue  
Chicago IL 60613

## 2 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: +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

## 3 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 Qunitet on Saturday and Sunday after 1am, and even a Poetry Slam on Sundays.  
© NileGuide



citysearch

**contact:**

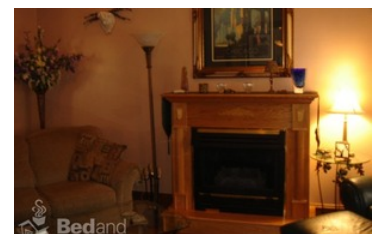
<http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/illinois-chicago-the-ardmore-house.html>

**location:**

1248 W. Ardmore Avenue  
Chicago IL 60660

## 4 The Ardmore House

**DESCRIPTION:** This 109 year old newly restored Victorian Home is located four short blocks from fabulous Lake Shore Drive and Chicago's gay Hollywood Beach, and offers all the comforts of home. North of Boystown and east of the gay nightlife on Clark, the Ardmore House is the destination of choice for travelers from all over the world. "Wonderful! The ONLY place to stay in Chicago... It's the cleanest and nicest place to stay in the Midwest," say GayTravelers@aol. We are just a ten minute "L" ride to the Gay district on Halsted, walking distance to the gay nightlife on Clark and easy access to Chicago's Magnificent Mile, the Museum of Science & Industry, the Field Museum, the Art Institute, the Shedd Aquarium, and the downtown Loop. This north Lake Shore area of the city is known for its beautiful beach, great restaurants and exhilarating



more at BedandBreakfast.com

nightlife. So, if you're in town to attend a convention, to shop, to take in one of the many gay sponsored events, or just to get away for the weekend, we at The Ardmore House are here to make your visit to the Windy City a memorable one.

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# 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.

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