

CITY BREAK GUIDE CHICAGO

STAYING ON THE MAGNIFICENT MILE, RIDING THE FERRIS WHEEL AT NAVY PIER AND FEASTING ON DEEP DISH PIZZA. RACHEL WALKER UNCOVERS 'THE CITY THAT WORKS'

DON'T MISS...

- Take a bike ride along the 26 miles of Chicago's lakefront. The city's *Divy* bike sharing system allows you to easily pick up and drop off a bike from one of 300 stations. Buy a 24-hour pass for \$7 from any Divy station and take unlimited 30-minute trips.



- The term 'jazz' was first coined in Chicago. Pay tribute to the city's heritage by whiling away a night enjoying music or spoken word at the historic *Green Mill Cocktail Lounge*, where mobster Al Capone once had a booth.
- Sip a cocktail at the *Signature Lounge* on the 96th floor of The John Hancock Tower. You're a few feet beneath the *Willis Tower Skydeck*, but you'll only have to pay for your drink while enjoying stunning views of Downtown and beyond.

Recommended hotels

- State and Grand Apartments 4★**
These spacious serviced apartments are set in the trendy River North neighbourhood and offer access to an indoor swimming pool and fitness centre.
- Westin Michigan Avenue 4★**
Located across the street from Oak Street Beach and overlooking a beautiful stretch of Lake Michigan, this 752-room hotel is set on the famed Magnificent Mile.
- Fairmont Chicago, Millennium Park 4★**
Following a five-year \$60 million transformation, this downtown Chicago hotel near Grant Park offers a high standard of luxury and amenity.



Going green:
The Chicago River is dyed green annually in honour of St Patrick's Day

Lou Malnati's Cheese Deep Dish isn't your regular pizza. The legendary slice is drenched in cheese and pools of sauce, and baked in pans deeper than cake tins. Typically, diners' faces take on a sportsman-like grimace as they tackle the last piece, filling them with more than just pizza – but a real sense of victory. A Margherita looks like a bar snack in comparison. But in Chicago, the rule is to take the standard then up it some, and this world famous pizza is no exception.

It's easy to be awestruck by this city. Chicago edges on to *Lake Michigan* which, at 307 miles long, makes any British equivalent seem like a puddle. The 108-storey *Willis Tower* dwarfs even The Shard. The streets are spotless, the public transport is functional. To improve sanitation, engineers made the *Chicago River* flow backwards. No wonder it's often referred to as 'the city that works'.

Hit the beach

To suggest that the design of Chicago is purely functional would be a mistake, though. After the city became home to the world's first skyscraper in 1885, it has been a mecca for architects. Even its *Bloomingdale's* is housed in the *Medinah Temple* – a Moorish Revival building built in 1912 and replete with tiled doorways and pointed domes. The '*Bloomingdale's temple*' is on the 13-block-long stretch known as the *Magnificent Mile* where you'll find Chanel alongside Louis Vuitton and Bvlgari. A stroll down Magnificent Mile makes for an opulent afternoon when finished with a hot fudge sundae at premium chocolatiers *Ghirardelli*, or a cocktail in *Signature Lounge* on the 96th floor of *The John Hancock Tower*.

For those more interested in cotton candy than couture, *Navy Pier* is just a few blocks east. The lakefront playground has all the fun of the fair with a 45m Ferris wheel, mazes, boat

trips and firework displays throughout the summer.

The garden city

Though the city revels in being a buzzing metropolis, it's flanked by lakes and mountains. The first sign of snow signals an exodus to nearby pistes at *Raging Buffalo* or *Villa Olivia*. And the first sunshine of the year sees the 15 miles of sandy beaches awash with bathers. The lake is open for swimming from May to September, which are also the best months to enjoy any of Chicago's 580 parks. The most famous is *Millennium Park* – a 25-acre garden in the centre.

If Chicago's parkland isn't quite green enough, there's always the option to wait for St Patrick's Day, when the *Chicago River* is dyed fluorescent green. Like pizza, like skyscrapers, shopping districts and urban gardens, it's just another example of the city taking a global standard... and then stepping things up a notch.



Getting there

Book a 3 night city break to Chicago and experience everything this city has to offer. Or why not make it a longer holiday and hire a car to explore the famous Route 66, which starts in Chicago?
3 night city breaks including return scheduled flights start from **£599 pp**

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