Chicago

Introduction
Out of the flat prairies of the Midwest and stretching along the shores of the broad blue expanse of Lake Michigan rises up one of the brashest and most beautiful of all American cities. Nicknamed the “Windy City” by a visiting reporter because of all the boasting the locals did about their town, Chicago certainly has its bragging points. This is a city that, like the fabled phoenix rising from the ashes, rebuilt itself after the Great Fire of 1871 in record time, and in the process created a mosaic of modern architecture that is unrivaled anywhere in the world. The Illini Indians called the settlement upon which the city was founded che-cau-gou, meaning “strong and great.” It’s a town with a wild past and a pioneering spirit; a city that saw the machine-gun massacres of Al Capone’s days, and a culture that gave rise to the soul-stirring Chicago blues. Chicago is Wrigley Field, the Magnificent Mile, deep-dish pizza and the Sears Tower. Chicagoans are perhaps proudest of their vibrant neighborhoods and ethnic diversity. No longer regarded as a meat-and-potatoes kind of town, Chicago has become a major player in the culinary stakes. Take a walk along the neighborhood sidewalks of Chicago and you’ll discover a collage of sights, sounds and tastes that together make up one of the most interesting cities you’ll likely ever have the pleasure of visiting and exploring. Read on to chart your course and learn what Chicago’s diverse neighborhoods, restaurants and nightlife have to offer.

Neighborhoods

The Loop
The Loop is the area of downtown Chicago surrounded by the El (elevated train) tracks, which really do form a “loop.” It is the heart of the city’s business, financial, political and cultural institutions and striking skyline. Points of interest include: Sears Tower, Chicago Board of Trade, the Mercantile Exchange, the State of Illinois Building, Jeweler’s Row, State Street — which contains retail giants Carson Pirie Scott and Marshall Field’s. Stop by the Walnut Room at Marshall Field’s for lunch or afternoon tea. “Skate on State” — a large outdoor ice rink on the corner of State and Washington from December to February. Free art lessons Saturday mornings during the summer. Art Institute of Chicago, a must see.

Magnificent Mile
The North Michigan Avenue area of Chicago, bounded by the Loop, Oak Street, the lake and Dearborn Street, contains many of the city’s ritziest hotels, finest restaurants, and high-class shops. The area boasts four outstanding shopping malls: One Magnificent Mile (Chanel, Polo Ralph Lauren and several other shops); Chicago Place (Saks Fifth Avenue, Ann Taylor and over 55 other shops); 900 N. Michigan Avenue (Bloomingdale’s, Gucci, and 80 other shops); and Water Tower Place (Marshall Field’s, Lord & Taylor and 125 other shops). The upper portion of the Magnificent Mile features several fine men’s clothing stores, including Mark Shale, Baskin, Cignal, Mark Cross, Cole Haan, Brooks Brothers, etc. Right around the corner is Oak Street, the premier street for
designer boutiques such as Jil Sander and Sulka. Across from Water Tower Place, you will find FAO Schwarz, Banana Republic, Pottery Barn and to the south are Niketown and Crate & Barrel. The newest addition to the North Michigan Avenue shopping area is Plaza Escada, at 840 N. Michigan Avenue. The 15,000-square-foot Escada store features exclusive Escada apparel collections, a shoe salon, accessories, and a private café.

Other points of interest:
- John Hancock Center (See Top Ten Things To Do in Chicago)
- The Museum of Contemporary Art
- The newly renovated Navy Pier Complex
- The prominent limestone water tower, one of the few buildings that survived the 1871 Chicago fire.

This area also holds the variety of restaurants you would expect in a major urban center. Whatever you’re looking for, from a 5-star break-the-bank evening to inexpensive, ethnic spots, downtown Chicago has it all.

Chinatown

A small community located near the intersection of Cermak and Wentworth Avenues, almost two miles south of the Loop, Chinatown is best known for its Cantonese restaurants. Some open until the wee hours. The action is along two main drags – Cermak Road and Wentworth Avenue. A multitude of exotic grocery stores and small shops line Wentworth Avenue. Stock up on almond cookies and fried noodles. For a real taste of Asian culture, Chinese New Year parades, complete with dragons and dancing, are held each year in February.

Directions: Chinatown is located about 20 blocks south of the Loop, just west of the massive McCormick Complex that you can’t miss when driving down Lake Shore Drive.

River North

Located just west of the Magnificent Mile and bounded by the Chicago River on the west is the River North district. This area is full of a variety of art galleries, auction houses, residential lofts and restaurants. Other points of interest:
- Merchandise Mart
- The Apparel Center
- Rock and Roll McDonald's
- Hard Rock Café
- Planet Hollywood
- Ed Debevic’s
- America’s Bar
- Harry Caray’s
- Excalibur.

Gold Coast

The Gold Coast, which runs along the lakefront, north of the Magnificent Mile and south of Lincoln Park, is one of Chicago's most desirable residential addresses. Across from Oak Street Beach, luxurious highrises line Lake Shore Drive, while elegant town homes fill the tree-lined streets behind.

Points of interest include: The Pump Room and Morton's, two of Chicago's famous restaurants (wait for that fat signing bonus check), and Rush and Division Streets, the center of singles bars and night clubs overrun on weekends with suburbanites flooding to the city.

Lincoln Park

Chicago’s model (read as yuppie) neighborhood is a mix of busy commercial streets, urban college campuses, and cozy tree-lined residential blocks. If your budget can accommodate it, try the original boutiques or award-winning restaurants, such as Charlie Trotter’s and Ambria, along Lincoln Park W., Clark Street, Fullerton, Armitage and Lincoln avenues. Lincoln Park is heavily populated with great night spots, such as Kingston Mines and B.L.U.E.S, or the trendy and often student-infested bars along Lincoln and Sheffield. Finish the evening with a stroll along one of the peaceful side streets on your way home. Other points of interest:
- Steppenwolf Theater
Lincoln Park Zoo
Chicago Historical Society
Chicago Academy of Sciences.

Directions: Belmont, Fullerton, and North Avenue exits off of Lake Shore Drive.

Lake View/Wrigleyville
Located just north of Lincoln Park, this neighborhood has been described as a flat San Francisco. While being home to Wrigley Field, one of the nation’s oldest baseball parks, and the Chicago Cubs, this is as Bohemian as Chicago gets. A diverse population resides here, including young single professionals, working-class families, affluent retirees and the city’s largest gay population. Eclectic shops, restaurants and clubs abound and tend to keep later hours, offering excitement into the wee hours. Located along Clark Street is a dizzying array of Mexican, Thai, Japanese, Chinese, Ethiopian, and Moroccan food.

Old Town
This area, from Division Street on the south, Armitage Avenue on the north, LaSalle Street on the east and Orleans Street on the west is best known for Second City, the comedy club where many great comics have honed their skills. Wells Street is the center of the nightlife in this area, and many artists have studios tucked away among the side streets. The surrounding residential areas are being renovated after a period of decline, giving this neighborhood a classic charm.

Bucktown
Bucktown and Wicker Park are two of Chicago’s "hottest" and most up-and-coming neighborhoods, full of cultural development and urban renewal. Located just west of Lincoln Park, Bucktown is home to an eclectic mix of artists, young families, and "creative types." The many restaurants, bars, cafes and small galleries reflect their style. Directions: Take I-90 south to exit 47A.

Wicker Park
Just west of Bucktown, and bounded by North Avenue and Division, is where the starving artists and cool working class Chicagoans moved when Bucktown became mainstream. This neighborhood has assumed an edgy but hip aura, with a diverse bar and café scene fronting a sometimes sketchy street scene. Milwaukee Avenue's boutiques and home stores provide inspiration that is sadly lacking among Chicago's otherwise homogenized shopping experience. This could be the last great escape from the Kellogg mainstream, and there are many hidden gems in the rough.

Greektown
Greektown is not a true neighborhood, but an area populated by Greek restaurants and shops on a short stretch of Halsted Street south of Monroe Street, within walking distance of the west Loop. The area provides a great afternoon or evening of entertainment. The restaurants tend to be large, noisy and lots of fun. Directions: Greektown is located just across the Chicago River from the Loop, along Halsted Avenue between Adams Street and Monroe.

Little Italy
Follow the scent of garlic and Mama’s cooking to this haven for hearty appetites. The area is difficult to access (from Evanston) via public transportation, but the many terrific restaurants and gourmet grocery stores make Little Italy well worth the trip. Directions: Little Italy is located south of the Loop, along Taylor Street from Morgan to Western. Specifically, take Lake Shore Drive south and exit at Michigan Avenue. Take a right at the end of the ramp, take a right onto Ontario and stay on Ontario (pass Ed Debevic’s on the left), go onto feeder ramp to Dan Ryan Expressway. While on the Dan Ryan, stay in the right-hand lane. Exit at Taylor Street, and take a right at the end of the ramp.
Hyde Park

Hyde Park is an academic utopia surrounded by a tough neighborhood. The gargoyle, gothic and green quadrangles of the University of Chicago highlight Hyde Park, but don’t forget the Museum of Science and Industry with its Omnimax Theater, the Oriental Institute Museum (ancient Middle Eastern archaeology) and the Robie House (the ultimate Prairie School statement by Frank Lloyd Wright). Bookworms will want to visit the many bookstores in the Hyde Park neighborhood near the University of Chicago. From text books and best sellers to children’s literature and used books, the shelves of Hyde Park are stocked with a wonderfully wide selection of reading material.

Albany Park

Albany Park, a former Jewish area, is now populated mostly by Koreans. Hundreds of import shops, wholesale outlets, restaurants and churches can be found along Lawrence, particularly between Kedzie and Kimball. The name New Chinatown is given to the area just east of here, Edgewater/Uptown. More traditionally known as “Andersonville,” it is headquarters of Chicago’s Swedish-American community and home to the Swedish American Museum and the Swedish Historical Society.

Ukrainian Village

Along Chicago Avenue, just west of the Kennedy Expressway, you’ll find the Ukrainian Village and what was the center of Chicago’s Polish community. St. Nicholas Ukrainian Church, Sts. Volodymyr and Olha Church, and the Polish St. Stanislaus Kostka Church form the majestic backdrop against which you’ll find ethnic food, bookstores and shops. The Ukrainian National Museum and the Polish Museum of America both are located here.

Pilsen

Take Halsted further south to 22nd Street and turn left into the Pilsen neighborhood, a center of Chicago’s burgeoning Hispanic community, and possibly home to more outdoor murals than any other spot in the city. The Mexican-American Fine Arts Center Museum is in the Pilsen area, along with the East Pilsen Artists Colony and lots of Mexican restaurants. An old Italian enclave around Oakley continues to support several Italian eating establishments.

Little India

Usually just referred to as “Devon” by Chicagoans. Closer to Evanston than downtown, Chicago’s most diverse north side neighborhood is on Devon Street, between 2300 and 2900 West. The predominant theme of the shopping area is Indian (straight off the streets of Bombay or Delhi), and the 60 plus restaurants include Indian, Thai, Jewish and Assyrian cuisine.
Top Five Restaurants

Introduction
Tired of eating at all the places listed in the Evanston section or maybe you just feel like going to the Windy City to take a break from the familiar faces you see everyday in Evanston. Check out the following 'Top 5s' for a variety of cuisines but make sure to make a reservation as these joints are extremely popular. Also, it might help to get an idea of the average damage per person that you would incur while eating at these restaurants. Once you have exhausted this listing, we recommend you visit www.citysearch.com, www.metromix.com or www.zagat.com for detailed reviews of all Chicago's other restaurants. Bon appetit!

Best Pizzas

Lou Malnati's Pizzeria
439 N. Wells St
(312) 828-9800
It's not the biggest name in Chicago pizza, but it's one of the best.

Gino's East
633 N. Wells St
(312) 943-1124
Graffiti-covered walls and to-die-for deep dish make odd-but-definitely-welcome bed-fellows at this pizzeria.

Adorno's Restaurant
925 N. Ashland Ave
(773) 292-9248
Everything's homemade at this Wicker Park family pizza parlor and Italian eatery.

Giordano’s
730 N. Rush St
(312) 951-0747
The stuffed pies here reign supreme, but thin is still in.

Pizzeria Uno
29 E Ohio St
(312) 321-1000
This traditional deep dish pizza is worth the wait.

Best fine dining

Charlie Trotters
816 W Armitage Ave
(773) 248-6228
One of the world's finest restaurants.

Red Light
820 W Randolph St
(312) 733-8880
Fun pan-Asian cuisine in a sexy environment.

Morton's of Chicago
1050 N State St
(312) 266-4820
Waiters dress up while steak dresses down for a belt-busting, meat-loving meal.

Tru
676 N St Clair St
(312) 202-0001
Fine dining jumps into the 21st century at this stylish culinary mecca.

Lawry’s the Prime Rib
100 E Ontario St
(312) 787-5000
If you're not into trendy, you'll enjoy the nostalgic opulence of this special-occasion steak place.

Best Sushi

Sushi Wabi
842 W Randolph
(312) 563-1224
Style edges out substance at this funky-chic Randolph Street sushi spot.
Kamehachi
1400 N Wells
(312) 664-3663
Before it was hip to eat sushi, this place was already happening.

Sai Café
2010 N Sheffield Ave
(773) 472-8080
Hard-core raw fish lovers come for the food, not the frills.

Mirai Sushi
2020 W Division St
(773) 862-8500
Hipsters scarf sushi at this upscale Wicker Park lounge.

Ron of Japan
633 Skokie Blvd
Northbrook, IL 60062-2860

Best Italian

Mia Francesca
3311 N Clark St
(773) 281-3310
Double whammy--one of the city's best Italian restaurants is also one of its best bargains.

Buca di Beppo
2941 N Clark St
(773) 348-7673
It's like sharing a meal with Hollywood's version of a big Italian family.

Maggiano's Little Italy
516 N Clark St
(312) 644-7700
Top-notch service and reliable food make for a pleasant dinner in this pasta palace.

Rosebud Café
1500 W Taylor St
(312) 942-1117
This restaurant group's original location is a Little Italy legend.

Spiaggia
980 N Michigan Ave
(312) 280-2750
Italian food doesn't get any better (or pricier) than this.

Best French

Marche
833 W Randolph St
(312) 226-8399
Excellent French bistro fare with a pumping nightclub ambience--c'est magnifique!

Le Francais
269 S Milwaukee Ave
(847) 541-7470
Bye bye, Banchet: The legendary chef has left, but this French institution hasn't skipped a beat.

Mon Ami Gabi
2300 N Lincoln Park W
(773) 348-8886
Bustling, convivial brasserie serves French classics to a casual Lincoln Park crowd.

Le Bouchon
1958 N Damen Ave
(773) 862-6600
Classic French cuisine at great prices make this bistro one of Bucktown's best restaurants.

Le Titi de Paris
1015 W Dundee Rd, Arlington Hts
(847) 506-0222
Ah, the pleasure of a fine restaurant that lives up to its billing.

Best Chinese

Ben Pao
52 W Illinois St
(312) 222-1888
Chinatown could use a restaurant like this: dark, urban and sophisticated

The Phoenix Restaurant
2131 S Archer Ave
(312) 328-0848
One of Chinatown's biggest and best restaurants has dim sum to die for.

B.F.Chang's China Bistro
530 N Wabash Ave
Americanized Chinese food comes to the city, as the P.F. Chang's chain opens an outpost in River North.

**Big Bowl**
159 W Erie St
(312) 787-8297
Whether you opt for chopsticks or a fork, this popular spot offers Asian cuisines in the best American style.

**Dee's Mandarin Restaurant**
1114 W Armitage Ave
(773) 477-1500
This traditional Chinese dining spot serves all the classic dishes.

**Best Vegetarian**

**Rose Angelis**
1314 W Wrightwood Ave
(773) 296-0081
This Wrightwood Italian restaurant has a mostly vegetarian menu that even carnivores will die for.

**Heartland Café**
7000 N Glenwood Ave
(773) 465-8005
There's something for everyone at this cheerful Rogers Park eatery.

**Blind Faith Café**
525 Dempster St, Evanston
(847) 328-6875
Despite its '70s decor, this vegetarian restaurant isn't dated in the least.

**Chicago Diner**
3411 N Halsted St
(773) 935-6696
This eatery with a conscience will change the way you think about vegetarian cuisine.

**Jane's**
1655 W Cortland St
(773) 862-5263
Great for dates, this intimate Bucktown favorite serves up reliable global fare.

**Best Barbecue**

**Bone Daddy**
551 N Ogden Ave
(312) 226-6666
The Twisted Spoke folks strike again, bringing barbecue to River West.

**Carson's the place for ribs**
612 N Wells St
(312) 280-9200
It's rumored that President Clinton once had ribs from this Windy City favorite shipped to him.

**Weber Grill Restaurant**
2331 Fountain Square Dr, Lombard
(630) 953-8880
This three-ring meat circus draws carnivores by the carload.

**Twin Anchors Restaurant**
1655 N Sedgwick Ave
(312) 266-1616
A string of pink piggy lights epitomizes the scene here, where ribs are devoured by the rack-full.

**Famous Dave's BBQ Shack**
1126 E Ogden Ave, Naperville
(630) 428-3500

**Best Cheap Eats**

**Penny's Noodle Shop**
3400 N Sheffield Ave
(773) 281-8222
This inexpensive Lakeview Thai restaurant should be next on your to-go-to list.

**Silver Cloud Bar and Grill**
1700 N Damen Ave
(773) 489-6212
Good, comfortable food and atmosphere make for cozy Bucktown dining.

**Twisted Spoke**
501 N Ogden Ave
(312) 666-1500
Decorated with piles of wrecked bikes, this River West bar/restaurant is heavy on attitude and pub grub.
Café ba-ba reeba
2024 N Halsted St
(773) 935-5000
This bustling Lincoln Park tapas spot fills up with a young, sangria-guzzling crowd.

Zoom Kitchen
1646 N Damen Ave
(773) 278-7000
Made-to-order comfort food makes this casual spot a hot spot for eating in, takeout and delivery.

Best Indian

Tiffin
2536 W. Devon Ave. (Maplewood Ave.)
(773) 338-2143
Light and fresh cooking, gracious service and pretty décor.

Indian Garden
2548 W. Devon Ave. (Rockwell Ave.)
(773) 338-2929
The noon buffet is a lunchtime treasure.

Gaylord India
678 N. Clark St. (Huron St.)
(312) 664-1700
"Spicy food and plenty of it" draws tandoori connoisseurs to this restaurant. Good lunch buffet.

Klay Oven
414 N. Orleans St. (Hubbard St.)
(312) 527-3999
Slightly expensive but has rich and elegant authentic Indian dishes.

Viceroy of India
2520 W. Devon Ave. (bet. California & Western Aves.)
(773) 743-4100
Offering the ‘most consistent Indian food in town’, this place serves many selections of tasty traditional fare, especially at the bargain lunch buffet.

Best Thai

Arun’s
4156 N. Kedzie Ave. (bet. Belle Plaine & Berteau Aves.)
(773) 539-1909
Master chef Arun Sampanthavivat offers a fixed $75 menu but go for it as aficionados agree there’s no better Thai anywhere in Chicago.

Vong’s Thai Chicken
6 W. Hubbard St. (State St.)
(312) 644-8664
Thai-French fusion concept and an elegant symphony of hot and mild tastes, especially the five-and-seven-course menu. Portions are small though.

Penny’s Noodle Shop
950 W. Diversey Pkwy. (Sheffield Ave.)
(773) 281-8445
3400 N. Sheffield Ave. (Roscoe St.)
(773) 281-8222
Great value for money, the best Thai for a cheap price. The Diversey location serves beer and wine.

P.S. Bangkok
3345 N. Clark St. (bet. Addison St. & Belmont Ave.)
2521 N. Halsted St. (Fullerton Pkwy.)
(773) 871-7777
(773) 348-0072
Exhaustive menu and a magnificent Sunday brunch at a very affordable price.

Star of Siam
11 E. Illinois St. (State St.)
(312) 670-0100
Very efficient service. Spring rolls are a hot favorite with the regular visitors.
Best of Nightlife

**Best Bars**

**Webster's Wine Bar**
1480 W Webster Ave, Chicago  
(773) 868-0608
A dark, charming, European-style wine bar where you can comfortably lounge in cushy couches and enjoy a glass of one of the more than 40 boutique wines available by the glass. Or choose from one of the 400 wines available by the bottle. Wine-friendly food and an absence of wine snobbism.

**Signature Room**
875 N Michigan Ave, Chicago  
(312) 787-9596
Sink into a soft booth, sip a cocktail and enjoy the best sky-high views of Chicago from the 96th floor of the John Hancock Building. Pricey as you’d expect, but totally worth it.

**Joe’s (on Weed)**
940 W Weed St, Chicago  
(312) 337-3486
A warehouse-turned-TV-loaded sports bar and good place to hear live music. Three rooms of big bar space with an outdoor beer garden that seats 200 and a VIP section upstairs in the back room. The food is average, but the beer’s ice cold and that’s what counts.

**Kendall’s Pub**
2263 N Lincoln Ave, Chicago  
(773) 348-7200
Sports bar with seven large-screen TVs and countless monitors. Multiple satellite and cable hookups mean several games are often showing at once. Friendly service, basic bar fare and 16 brews on tap will keep you satisfied all night.

**Danny’s Tavern**
1951 W Dickens Ave, Chicago  
(773) 489-6457
Super hip neighborhood bar in Bucktown. No obnoxious types allowed. Most nights you’ll hear a mellow mix of electronic, hip-hop, jazz and soul sounds.

**Best Dance Clubs**

**Crobar Nightclub**
1543 N Kingsbury St, Chicago  
(312) 413-7000
Don’t bother going if you’re not prepared to party hard and enjoy sensory overload. The gothic, cathedral-like setting, banging sound system and elaborate lighting guarantee a fabulous night out. Friday nights showcase a smart line-up of A-list local and big name international talent. Sunday night is GLEE club, one of the nation’s most popular gay nights.

**Rednofive**
440 N Halsted St, Chicago  
(312) 733-6699
Techno, industrial, electronica. Redno maintains an underground feel downstairs - the crowd is there to dance rather than be chic. Upstairs though is all about lounging. Redno reigns supreme on Thursday and Saturday nights when it features U.S. and global industry heavy hitters in collaboration with PURE, one of the top nightlife promoters in town.

**Funky Buddha Lounge**
728 W Grand Ave, Chicago  
(312) 666-1695
The Buddha’s reputation has been built on featuring different genres every night including funk, hip-hop, rap, DJ and Latin jazz. The club’s first room has a dimly lit bar with comfy chairs and couches built for lounging. Venture into the second room where you’ll always find funky people on the mid-sized dance floor.

**White Star Lounge**
225 W Ontario St, Chicago  
(312) 440-3223
Cool tones of blue and silver dominate the decor, with a massive rectangular bar in the corner. The dance floor consumes the rest of the club, overflowing with bodies packed sardine-style, grooving to powerful progressive beats. Not a place to go if you are averse to being hit on.

**Kustom**
1997 N Clybourn Avenue, Chicago  
(773) 528-3400
A spacious and sophisticated dance club to rival the newcomers in the meatpacking district, Kustom is all about the scene. Glitz and glam galore and don’t bother checking your attitude at the door. A cross between industrial and plush but the tunes are resolutely top 40 techno.

**Best Live Music**

**Park West**
322 W Armitage, Chicago  
(773) 929-5959
Bookings are diverse and this club accommodates all in its cavernous darkness. Balconies, booths and a small dance floor which can be transformed into intimate table settings depending on the act. Phenomenal sound system, good service and moody atmosphere override an expensive bar experience.

**Metro**
3730 N Clark St, Chicago  
(312) 549-3604
Best place to see the show is on the center of the main floor, back against the wall of the sound booth. Metro is best known for booking both lesser known rock/punk/indie bands before they break, as well as established superstars.

**House of Blues**
329 N Dearborn St, Chicago  
(312) 527-2583 or (312) 923-2000
Don’t let the name fool you. Booking to a younger crowd, HOB hosts a wide mix of blues, jazz, rap, hip-hop and world musicians of varying popularity. Lush setting, excellent acoustics and sightlines complement the stellar bookings.

**Vic Theatre**
3145 N Sheffield Ave, Chicago  
(773) 472-0366
It’s a concert hall, a (rowdy) movie theater and, when the Bulls reach the NBA playoffs, a big sports bar. Top notch acoustics accommodate a wide range of musical acts from Jackson Browne to Concrete Blonde and Ben Folds.

**Riviera Theater**
4746 N Racine Ave, Chicago  
(773) 275-6800
This giant, 1920s-era hall boasts great acoustics and, thanks to its owner’s near monopoly on Chicago rock bookings, an impressive band lineup. Spacious main floor and balconies accommodate 2,300 promising, as with any Chicago live music venue, a raw, hot and sweaty experience.

**Best Blues and Jazz Clubs**

**Buddy Guy’s Legends**
754 S Wabash Ave, Chicago  
(312) 427-0333
Arguably Chicago’s leading blues venue for the past few years, the club’s dynamic bossman and spacious layout draw big name acts. Smoky air, steamy windows, and music that’s loud and gritty – all that you would want from an authentic Chicago blues club.

**Kingston Mines**
2545 N Halsted St, Chicago  
(773) 472-2031
A prime place to hear the blues in Chicago. Two bands play on two stages and the owner books almost exclusively local musicians. Open till 4 a.m. or 5 a.m. most nights means this joint is the place artists with gigs at other venues come when they’re off duty.
**Green Mill**  
4802 N Broadway St, Chicago  
(773) 878-5552  
This joint is almost always jumping, with top Chicago jazz bands during the week, local stars and visiting dignitaries for the weekend showcases, followed by jam sessions that run till 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. (Friday and Saturday, respectively). Despite the seedy neighborhood, consistently filled with trendy young things, with true jazz lovers squeezed in between.

**B.L.U.E.S.**  
2519 N Halsted St, Chicago  
(773) 525-8371  
The name says it all. Devoted to just the blues, this club is intimate and delightfully relaxed. You’ll find a crowd of all different types and ages, great service and a surprisingly inexpensive bar and cover charge.

**Checkerboard**  
423 E 43rd St, Chicago  
(773) 624-3240  
For a completely different "classic era" blues experience, venture down to the South Side of Chicago to Checkerboard. It could stand an upgrade of facilities, but it retains the energy that defines the neighborhood clubs from the more homogenized downtown venues. Top-notch bands attract a young crowd that like to get up and boogie.