

The West Loop

Want to experience the trendiest neighborhood in town? The West Loop, just blocks away from Chicago's Greektown and the United Center (home of the Chicago Bulls and Chicago Blackhawks), is defined by boutique shopping, public art and adventurous dining. Switch your camera on, because everything you eat, drink and do here will be Instagram-able. There are sights, sounds and tastes to enjoy.

Location

The West Loop is one of Chicago's fastest growing neighborhoods. It's located about 35 minutes from Chicago O'Hare International Airport and Midway Airport. Catch the CTA Blue line...or grab an Uber/Lyft from the airport to the West Loop for approximately \$35.

If you want to head to downtown Chicago from the West Loop, an Uber/Lyft gets you there in about 10-15 minutes and costs about \$10.

Where to Stay

On the border of the West Loop and the equally hip Fulton Market District, The Hoxton offers a complimentary breakfast featuring overnight oats. You'll find bookshelves curated by select Chicago creatives, locally sourced art and Bluetooth speakers in every room. You can also enjoy one of Chicago's best bars in the basement lounge—the Lazy Bird--available with reservations. And take advantage of their "flexy time" check-in/out to fit your schedule, a shared workspace, three bars, a full food menu and enough activities to tempt you to stay in.

For a truly unique experience, The Publishing House Bed & Breakfast--housed in the former Free Methodist Publishing House built in 1909--balances modern style and Midwest hospitality. The B&B hosts just 24 guests at a time across 11 private rooms, each with an en suite bathroom (complete with claw-foot tub), highly personalized service and fully customized breakfast options.

Enjoy a vibrant urban experience at Hampton by Hilton and Homewood Suites by Hilton, blending the industrial architecture of the West Loop with the modern glass high rises that now define the city skyline. Look out over Chicago's Fulton Market District from your poolside perch on the sky deck of Hyatt House Chicago. It's just steps from Randolph Street--Chicago's Restaurant Row--where chic eateries, wine bars and clubs line the avenues of this historic neighborhood.

Best Restaurants

The West Loop has attracted many of Chicago's greatest culinary talents, and rightfully acquired the "restaurant row" label. The neighborhood now houses more critically acclaimed restaurants and bars than any other part of the city, which means you'll need some help sorting out the *crème de la crème*.

Explore Aba's fresh spin on Mediterranean small plates, boasting big flavors and reimagined classics from Greece, Israel, Lebanon, and Turkey.

Rose Mary, a Croatian spot, have things like a refreshing and flavorful salad with tomato, farro, and asparagus, a delicious *crni rizot* that tasted like it was made with stock from the tears of a hundred lobsters (that's a compliment), and incredible pastas.

Au Cheval has an excellent burger. But, this casual spot has a lot of other fantastic things on the menu, too. Dishes like the chilaquiles, chicken wings, and foie gras with eggs should also be on the table. They don't take reservations, and waits can be a pain, but sometimes you just need to commit.

If you love meat and potatoes, Green Street Smoked Meats brings smokey, Texas BBQ. Rana says the pork belly is like eating a desert.

Trivoli Tavern is in Gin Alley, and from the same team as Au Cheval and Green Street Smoked Meats. This means they have a twinkly lit cobblestoned patio. Or you could sit inside, where it's dark and full of overstuffed leather furniture. They serve upscale bar food like fish and chips, handmade pastas, steaks, and a very good burger. This place works well for a date or dinner with a small group when you can't get a reservation at Bavette's or Gilt Bar.

Monteverde, has some of the best Italian food in the city. Every pasta dish here is fantastic, in particular the cacio e pepe.

Few Chicago restaurants possess the staying power that Girl & the Goat has been able to maintain since 2010, when it opened on Restaurant Row in the West Loop. It's still tough to nab a reservation at Top Chef Stephanie Izard's flagship spot, where diners can nosh on wood-grilled broccoli, smoked apple pierogies, duck tartare and wood-oven–roasted pig face. Don't forget to check out the Little Goat for brunch.

Avec is a staple in the neighborhood and you must order chorizo-stuffed bacon-wrapped dates and the taleggio flatbread!

Momotaro, designed by world-renowned restaurant and experience designers AvroKO, offers an elevated dining experience for lovers of Japanese cuisine. Downstairs the Izakaya bar and lounge transports guests back to the streets of old Tokyo.

Parlor Pizza Bar is a warm and inviting meeting place where everyone can share unique pizzas and enjoy craft beers/cocktails with an expansive patio and rooftop.

Bars and Nightlife

Drinking at The Darling is like falling down Alice's rabbit hole (the good parts, at least). Charming, intimate, and featuring a reservation-only library with hidden entrance and pop-up cabaret performances, the cocktail lounge serves a number of exquisitely balanced cocktails and food options while hosting some of the city's best DJs.

The Aviary offers an array of creative cocktails and intimate spaces that are bookable in advance online. They are part of Chicago's Alinea Group, a renowned collection of restaurants and cocktail lounges universally praised for their innovative approach to dining and crafting unique and memorable experiences for guests.