

PSEUDOSTOOPS' MINI-GUIDE TO CHICAGO FOR BLOGHER TYPES

Hardly comprehensive, and highly subjective, but look: if you come to Chicago for three days and only eat within a one-block radius of the Sheraton, it will be a tragedy. Consider this a starting point. Questions? Want customized recs? Email me! pseudostoops@gmail.com

BASICS:

Orientation: Chicago is helpfully oriented on a grid. (Thank you fire!) There are 8 city blocks per mile, and a standard block has 100 address numbers, meaning there are 800 numbers per mile. Chicago address numbering begins downtown at State Street and Madison Street, State Street is 0 east and west, and Madison Street is 0 north and south. The major streets a mile apart have address numbers which are multiples of 800. (The address of the hotel is a hot mess, but 301 East North Water St means its 3 blocks East of State.)

Closest el stops: Grand (red line);

Randolph/Wabash (green, orange, brown, purple, pink lines); State/Lake (blue line)- All of these are a short hike from the hotel;

Cost of El/Bus: \$2.25 per ride/ .25 1st transfer (w/in 2 hours); free 2nd transfer. (Can pay cash on bus, no change; need to buy a card for train)

STUFF TO DO

There are many great guides/walking tours out there, which I won't try to duplicate here. But a few things of note this weekend:

- The [Art Institute](#) has Free Admission 5-9 Th/Fr; check out the new modern wing!
- Thursday, there's free music galore: [Party in the Park](#) at Millennium Park Grill at 4:00 and another [free concert](#) on the Millennium park lawn from 6:30-8:30
- Want to sneak in a baseball game? The Sox play the Rays at 1:05 on Thursday, and if you stay through Sunday the Cubs are at home for a 1:20 game v. the Reds.
- [Taste of Lincoln Ave.](#) is also going on this weekend- a fun way to check out a different neighborhood if you've got time on Sunday

FOOD: WALKING DISTANCE (<1 MILE)

Takeout/quick:

Intelligentsia (55 E Randolph): Need coffee? GOOD coffee? Come here. Amazing.

Pastoral (53 E Lake St): Fab. sandwiches, cheese, cured meats, wine. Perfect, really.

Oasis (21 N. Wabash): Delicious felafel. In the back of a jewelry mart. (I have no explanation.) Walk all the way to the back.

Illinois Center Pedway (under the hotel): the Pedway protects Chicagoans from aboveground travel during harsh winters; it's also home to a HUGE number of restaurants, concentrated below 233 N. Michigan. The sandwiches at **Hannah's Bretzel** are particularly luscious.

Macy's (Corner of Wabash and Randolph): There's a food court in a basement with deli, custom salads, grill, etc, and on the 7th floor there's a nicer food court with an outpost of *Frontera grill*- not quite as awesome as the original, but with WAY shorter waits.

Berry Chill (635 N. State): Chicago's answer to the Pinkberry tart yogurt craze.

WowBao: If you're shopping on Michigan Ave., stop on the 1st floor of Watertower Place for these cheap faux-Chinese steamed buns.

Dinner spots:

Quartino (626 N. State): Delicious, affordable Italian small plates with *cheap* wine; takes reservations (including for big groups)

Friends Sushi (710 N. Rush): Nicely off Mich. Ave tourist track, but still close and yum

Café Iberico (739 N. LaSalle): Tasty Tapas; loud and crowded, but the sangria will make you forget the wait

The Gage (24 S. Michigan): Irish pub with above-average food, and the bar is lively. Across from Millennium Park

Drinks

Terrace at Conrad Hotel (521 N. Rush): If you're going to meet for drinks in a hotel bar, it might as well be a gorgeous rooftop deck.

Worth leaving the Sheraton for, I promise.

17 West/The Berghoff (17 W. Adams): house-brewed German-style beers, old-school bar.

Bin 36 (339 N Dearborn): So it's wine you want? This is your place. Unusual wines, cheese flights, tempura green beans to die for.

Whisky Sky (644 N. Lake Shore Drive): for scenesters who don't want to take a cab to hot spots, a swank bar in the W Lakeshore hotel.

Pops for Champagne (601 N. State):

Celebrate your newly-inked sponsorship deal at this swank bubbly spot.

The best typical Chicago...

...hotdog: **Gold Coast Dogs**, 159 N. Wabash
...pizza: **Giordano's**, 130 E. Randolph
...popcorn: **Garrett's**, 26 W. Randolph
...atmosphere, per SNL: **Billy Goat Tavern** ("cheezborger cheezborger cheezborger!")
430 N. Michigan (lower level)

FURTHER AFIELD

There hundreds of places in Chicago worth checking out, but here are some standouts:

Violet Hour (1520 N. Damen): Amazing classic cocktails. Look for the building with no sign that looks boarded up.

Hot Doug's (3324 N. California) How can you not love a place that calls itself an "encased meat emporium?"

Hop Leaf (5148 N. Clark): Belgian beer, mussels, fries. Perfect.

Al's and Mario's (1079 and 1068 W. Taylor): Italian Beef at Al's, then Italian Ice at Mario's, in the heart of Chicago's old Little Italy.

☞ = Vegetarian/vegan friendly

A Google map labeling all of this, plus additional details like phone numbers, is available at <http://bit.ly/4eekSG>