

Insider's Guide to

CHICAGO

It's called the Windy City...and the Second City.

But the nickname we like best for Chi-town is the City of Big Shoulders. This is a city that works...and works hard. It's also a place that plays hard, which is why there are so many fun things to see and do here. We've put together the Sonnhalter Insider's Guide to Chicago. It's our way of helping you cut through the clutter to find the city's best restaurants, shows and sights.

We asked some of our Chicagoland friends for their recommendations on the best places to sample some of the city's cuisine – and not just Chicago-style pizza and hot dogs. We wanted those secret locales that only the locals know about. Because at Sonnhalter, we not only like to get our hands dirty...we also like to get them greasy!

So, when you're not convening at the convention center, make sure you get out and get a real taste of Chicago.

Loop/Magnificent Mile/River North

Bandera Restaurant

American
(312) 644-3524
www.banderarestaurants.com

Perched above Michigan Avenue and serving many local favorites like the slow roasted rotisserie chicken and Macho Salad with roasted chicken, dates, avocado and goat cheese.

Bavette's

French Steak House
(312) 624-8154
www.bavetteschicago.com

Part of Brendan Sodikoff's growing empire, this "cool," "trendy" chophouse is home to extravagant New American and Euro-inspired fare.

Billy Goat Tavern

Burger and Greasy Spoon Joint
(312) 222-1525
www.billygoattavern.com

Made famous by Saturday Night Live "Cheezborger! Cheezborger! No fries, cheeps! No Pepsi, Coke!?" The "original" location (on lower Michigan) is where newspaper reporters still hang out today.

Cafe Iberico

Spanish Tapas
(312) 573-1510
www.cafeiberico.com

Café Iberico prides itself on exquisite Spanish food, offering a variety of cold and hot tapas, dinners, desserts, sangria and more.

City Social

Multi-Cultural
(312) 888-2968
www.citysocialchicago.com

A hip, urban gathering place in the heart of downtown, with a full bar, and a menu featuring something for everyone; charcuterie, tacos, burgers, salads and steaks.

Coco Pazzo

Italian
(312) 836-0900
www.cocopazzochicago.com

Seasonal Tuscan menu abundant with both traditional and contemporary dishes and a 200-bottle all-Italian wine list that boasts a unique selection of popular and small production wines.

Doughnut Vault

Gourmet Donuts
401 ½ N. Franklin St.
www.doughnutvault.com

The Doughnut Vault serves up drool-inducing doughnuts.

GT Oyster

Seafood
(312) 929-3501
www.gtoyster.com

GT Oyster presents a seasonal menu comprised of both traditional and non-traditional fish-centric dishes.

Gene & Georgetti's Restaurant

Italian Steakhouse
(312) 527-3718
www.geneandgeorgetti.com

The steaks here are unseasoned and cooked in an 1,100-degree Vulcan broiler where the heavy, heavy charring draws out the bloody flavor!

La Scarola

Italian
(312) 243-1740
www.lascarola.com

"You feel like Grandma is going to walk out of the kitchen and pinch your cheeks."

Mercadito

Mexican
(312) 329-9555
www.mercaditorivernorth.com

This New York import's taco-and-tequila combination has proved a success...ceviche and guacamole have never been this gourmet.

Nonnina

Italian
(312) 822-0077
www.nonninachicago.com

Named in honor of the 4 partners' nonnas (Grandmother in Italian) dishes echo classic Italian-American fare with an upscale dining room and a grab-and-go counter.

Loop/Magnificent Mile/River North (cont.)

Portillos

Hot Dogs
(312) 587-8910
www.portillos.com/portillos

The first Portillo's hot dog stand known as "The Dog House" opened in 1963 and today there are 46 locations in the Chicago-area. Make sure to get the "hot peppers" with the Italian beef.

Quartino

Italian
(312) 698-5000
www.quartinochicago.com

Menu features Italy's regional specialties including artisanal salumi, Neapolitan thin-crust pizza, house-made pasta and seasonal dishes.

Roka Akor

Japanese/Sushi
(312) 477-7652
www.rokaakor.com

Roka Akor's menu features prime cuts of steaks, seafood, and vegetables with unique Japanese-inspired marinades and sauces, along with sushi, sashimi, tempura and extraordinary desserts.

Revival Food Hall

Gourmet Food Court & Bar
(773) 999-9411
www.revivalfoodhall.com

24,000 square feet in a historic building and 15 fast casual food stalls make this all-local dining concept truly unique. BBQ to bakery, gelato to tacos, there's something for everyone.

Shaw's Crab House

Seafood
(312) 527-2722
www.shawscrabhouse.com/chicago

Where crab is always in season... plus live music in their Oyster Bar (Sun-Thurs) and close to the jazz clubs on Hubbard.

Spiaggia Restaurant

Italian
(312) 280-2750
www.spiaggiarestaurant.com

Spiaggia, Chicago's premier Italian restaurant, is known for innovative Italian cuisine, elevating beloved traditional recipes to unparalleled heights.

Sunda

Asian
(312) 644-0500
www.sundachicago.com

Contemporary setting with a unique take on Asian fusion fare that's long on style.

The Purple Pig

Mediterranean
(312) 464-1744
www.thepurplepigchicago.com

Featuring housemade charcuterie, cheeses and classic Mediterranean fare plus an extensive yet accessible wine list.

Topolobampo

Mexican
(312) 661-1434
www.rickbayless.com/restaurants/topolobampo/

"Possibly the most elegant and serious Mexican restaurant in the country."

Tortoise Supper Club

American Fare
(312) 755-1700
www.tortoiseclub.com

Traditional American offerings served in an upscale setting featuring a grand piano and fireplace.

Vermilion

Indian/Latin Fusion
(312) 527-4060
www.thevermilionrestaurant.com

A selection of untamed regional Indian fare "Heat" – tapas, signature entrees, boutique latin & global wines, "herb & spice" cocktails.



Old Town/Gold Coast/Lincoln Park

Alinea

Progressive American
(312) 867-0110
http://alinearestaurant.com

Named one of the world's Top 50 restaurants, you don't come here if you want a quick meal. The double-digit course menu will take you a few hours to complete!

Boka

American
(312) 337-6070
www.bokachicago.com

Offering a swank atmosphere and an ambitious, Mediterranean-influenced contemporary American menu created by award-winning executive chef Giuseppe Tentori.

Burger Bar

(312) 255-0055
www.burgerbarchicago.com

Fried pickles, stacked burgers, hand spun shakes, cold beer...we are talking the motherload of taste explosion.

Demera Ethiopian Restaurant

Ethiopian
(773) 334-8787
www.demeraethiopian.com

Tradition served daily at this Michelin recommended restaurant.

Gibsons Bar & Steakhouse

Steakhouse
(312) 266-8999
www.gibsonssteakhouse.com/

The iconic Chicago Steakhouse. For 27 years, a fixture in Chicago. The ONLY steakhouse to be awarded its own USDA Prime Certification.

Kamehachi

Sushi
(312) 664-3663
www.kamehachi.com

The classic, casual sushi bar offers a friendly, neighborhood ambiance, and an impressive sushi selection.

Le Colonial

French/Vietnamese
(312) 255-0088
www.lecolonialchicago.com

Upscale French-Vietnamese that captures the beauty and spirit of the French colonial period from the 1920s.

Nico Osteria

Italian/Seafood
(312) 994-7100
www.nicoosteria.com

An Italian-inspired seafood restaurant at the all-new Thompson Chicago brings rustic simplicity to the heart of Chicago's Gold Coast.

Penny's Noodle Shop

Noodles
(773) 281-8448
www.pennynoodleshop.com

Locals flock to this pan-Asian noodle & plates restaurant because the food is delicious, inexpensive and the service is consistently great.

Old Town/Gold Coast/Lincoln Park (cont.)

Pequod's

Pizza
(773) 327-1512
www.pequodspizza.com

Serving its version of crispy thin-crust pies and pan pizza (and more) since 1970 with their caramelized crust!

Riccardo Trattoria

Italian
(773) 549-0038
www.riccardotrattoria.com
Chicago's creamiest panna cotta.

Summer House Santa Monica

Fresh Fare
(773) 634-4100
www.summerhousesm.com/chicago
The California-influenced, American restaurant features a wood-fire grill as its centerpiece and will dish out an ever-changing menu that spotlights locally-sourced produce and ingredients. Also features Chef Mahin's signature artisanal bread program, an extensive wine list, fresh-squeezed juices and a wide array of pastry and sweets.

The Angry Crab

Cajun
(773) 784-6848
www.theangrycrabchicago.com

Seafood served by the pound, with delicious sauces and a Cajun flair.

Toast

Brunch/Breakfast
(773) 935-5600
www.chicago-toast.com
Great spot for brunch with a kick... offering a wasabi Bloody Mary, a variety of mimosas, select craft beers and spiked hot chocolate.

Topo Gigio

Italian
(312) 266-9355
www.topogigiochicago.com

Yes, the mouse from the Ed Sullivan show...great spot, especially in the summer. Reservations (and sometimes patience) are required.

Twin Anchors

BBQ
(312) 266-1616
www.twinanchorsribs.com

Known for their famous ribs by locals, this small neighborhood bar is a must to dine at while visiting Chicago.

CHICAGO

West Loop/River West

Athena

Greek
(312) 655-0000
www.athenarestaurantchicago.com

Great outdoor patio serving some of the best food in Greektown!

Au Cheval

Casual Bar/Eatery
(312) 929-4580
www.auchevalchicago.com
"Best burger in the city."

Avec

Small plates
(312) 377-2002
www.avecrestaurant.com

Avec's cuisine reflects the aromas, flavors and colors of the Mediterranean, while its moderately priced wine list focuses on the boutique vineyards of southwestern Europe.

Carnivale

Latin
(312) 850-5005
www.carnivalechicago.com

The kaleidoscope of bright colors, salsa music and playful décor ignites the sense of being in a Latin house party, all in a unique Kleineresque setting.

Girl & The Goat

American
(312) 492-6262
www.girlandthegoat.com

Menu is divided into three categories: vegetable, fish and meat and appeals to all tastes and gastronomical creeds.

Greek Island Restaurant

Greek
(312) 782-9855
www.greekislands.net

Greek Islands is proud to import its own extra virgin olive oil, wine, cheeses, seafood, olives, herbs and spices directly from Greece.

Jerk.

Jamaican Barbecue
(312) 763-2870
www.jerkgrill.com

At Jerk, they've taken their love for Jamaican street food and summer backyard barbecues to create a new casual dining experience.

Monteverde

Italian
(312) 888-3041
www.monteverdechicago.com

Blending traditional Italian dishes with chef Sarah Greunberg's influences and world flavors.

Piccolo Sogno

Italian
(312) 421-0077
www.piccolosognorestaurant.com

Piccolo Sogno, which translates to "little dream" in Italian, features fresh, seasonal rustic Italian cuisine and an all-Italian wine program.

Tanoshi Sushi

Sushi
(312) 207-8894
www.tanoshisushi.com

Steeped in the tradition of omakase, its chefs craft dishes according to individual tastes.



South Loop

Acadia

Contemporary American
(312) 360-9500
<http://www.acadiachicago.com/>

An open kitchen and wine room set the tone for this restaurant. Attention to detail, quality ingredients and a contemporary take on classic American cuisine.

Cafe Bionda

Italian
(312) 326-9800
www.cafebionda.com

Café Bionda has a great selection of old-school Italian dishes and features a large selection of liquor, including a signature martini list, and an impressive wine list.

Flo & Santos

Pizza and Pierogi
(312) 566-9817
www.floandsantos.com

Featuring "Tavern Style" pizza and Polish classics such as pierogies, kielbasa, potato pancakes along with tasty appetizers like pork wings.

Manny's Cafeteria & Delicatessen

Deli & Diner
(312) 939-2855
www.mannysdeli.com

For more than a half century, Manny's has served simple, delicious deli favorites in a family atmosphere.

The Berghoff

German
(312) 427-3170
www.theberghoff.com

Carlyn Berghoff (the founder's granddaughter) is at the helm and still offers those German specialties, as well as contemporary dishes for those who don't want a schnitzel for lunch/dinner.

The Gage

Upscale Comfort Food
(312) 372-4243
www.thegagechicago.com

Think of this handsome spot across from Millennium Park as an Irish pub that went to culinary school.

Wicker Park/Bucktown/Logan Square

Big Star

Tacos
(773) 680-7740
www.bigstarchicago.com

À la carte honky-tonk where the bartenders spin old time country and western music and make great margaritas.

Bongo Room

Brunch/Breakfast
(773) 489-0690
www.thebongoroom.com

Serving fresh, seasonal breakfast & brunch food in a unique way...like the smoked duck breast benedict or the banana oreo hotcakes!

Bristol

New American
(773) 862-5555
www.thebristolchicago.com

The diverse menu includes bar snacks, daily specials, a rotating chalkboard menu featuring nose-to-tail cooking, charcuterie and handcrafted cocktails.

Fat Rice

Macau
(773) 661-9170
www.eatfatrice.com

Best described as Portuguese-Chinese fusion, meals at Fat Rice have to be tried to be believed.

Las Palmas

Mexican
(773) 289-4991
www.laspalmaschicago.com

One of Bucktown's best-kept secrets, Las Palmas serves spirited Mexican cuisine in an upscale, but refreshingly unpretentious environment.

Lillie's Q

BBQ
(773) 772-5500
www.lilliesq.com

Decorated with meat hook light fixtures with Edison bulbs, reclaimed wooden tables and a four-foot copper moonshine still, Lillie's Q is a perfect blend of southern tradition and Bucktown personality.

Mindy's HotChocolate

Restaurant & Dessert Bar
(773) 489-1747
www.hotchocolatechicago.com

Mirai Sushi

Sushi
(773) 862-8500
www.miraisushi.com

This Wicker Park place has the best sushi in town.

Osteria Langhe

Northern Italian
(773) 661-1582
www.osterialanghe.com

Brings an authentic Italian dining experience to Logan Square with a menu and wine list inspired by the Piemonte region.

Owen & Engine

British Gastropub
(773) 235-2930
www.owenandengine.com

Everything you'd expect in a traditional British Pub, plus small plates, local produce and delicious spins on pub fare. The best fish & chips this side of the Atlantic.

Piece Pizza

Pizza
(773) 772-4422
www.piecechicago.com

Piece unites classic New Haven-style thin crust pizza with award-winning microbrews in a spacious loft setting.



North Central/Irving Park

Smoque BBQ

BBQ
(773) 545-7427
www.smoquebbq.com

A true destination BBQ joint. BYOB

The Bad Apple

Burgers/Sandwiches
(773) 360-8406
www.badapplebar.com

Known for unique/great burgers
and wide selection of brews.

Pilsen Neighborhood

Dusek's

Gastropub
(312) 526-3851
www.dusekschicago.com

Located in a historic Czech tavern, this eclectic location sports inventive food, a live venue, a carriage house turned cozy cocktail bar and a basement rec room late night bar.

West Rogers Park

Taste of Peru

Peruvian/Latin
(773) 381-4540
www.tasteofperu.com

Peruvian food is the French Cuisine of South America. In the Peruvian food you will find Spanish and African influences, Asiatic cultures and ingredients, and flavors of spices similar to India.

Bars

AceBounce – www.acebounce.com/

Baptiste & Bottle – www.baptisteandbottle.com/

Boiler Room – www.boilerroomlogansquare.com

Butch McGuire's – www.butchmcguires.com

Delilah's – www.delilahschicago.com/

Estereo – www.estereochicago.com/

Green Mill Cocktail Lounge – www.greenmilljazz.com/

Hop Cat – www.hopcat.com/chicago

Hopleaf Bar – www.hopleafbar.com/

Local Option – www.localoptionbier.com

Lux Bar – www.luxbar.com

Maude's Liquors – www.maudesliquorbar.com

Map Room – www.maproom.com

Moneygun – www.moneygunchicago.com/

Murasaki – www.murasakichicago.com

Peninsula Bar – chicago.peninsula.com/en/fine-dining

Pepper Canister – www.thepeppercanister.com

Publican – www.thepublicanrestaurant.com

Redhead Piano Bar – www.redheadpianobar.com/

Revolution Brewing – www.revbrew.com

Roof – www.roofonthewit.com

Schubas Tavern – www.lh-st.com/

Small Bar – www.thsmallbar.com

Southport Lanes – www.southportlanes.com/

Spilt Milk – www.facebook.com/spiltmilktaVERN/

State – www.state-chicago.com

The Hideout – <http://www.hideoutchicago.com/>

The Signature Room at the 95th – www.signatureroom.com

Twisted Spoke – www.twistedspoke.com

Violet Hour – www.theviolethour.com

Vol. 39 – www.vol39.com/

Webster's Wine Bar – www.websterwinebar.com

Zebra Lounge – www.thezebralounge.net

Chicago Sightseeing

360 Chicago – www.360chicago.com

Adler Planetarium – www.adlerplanetarium.org

Architectural River Tours – www.cruisechicago.com/architecture-tours

Art Institute of Chicago – www.artic.edu

Botanic Garden – www.chicagobotanic.org

Chicago Bears at Soldier Field – www.chicagobears.com

Chicago Blackhawks at The United Center – www.nhl.com/blackhawks

Chicago Bulls at United Center – www.nba.com/bulls

Chicago Cubs at Wrigley Field – chicago.cubs.mlb.com/index.jsp?c_id=chc

Chicago Cultural Center – www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/chicago_culturalcenter.html

Chicago History Museum – www.chicagohs.org

Chicago Symphony Orchestra – www.cso.org

Chicago White Sox at U.S. Cellular Field – chicago.whitesox.mlb.com/index.jsp?c_id=cws

Field Museum of Natural History – www.fieldmuseum.org

Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio – www.flwright.org/

Lincoln Park Zoo – www.lpzoo.org

Millennium Park – www.millenniumpark.org

Morton Arboretum – www.mortonarb.org

Museum of Contemporary Art – www.mcachicago.org

Navy Pier – www.navypier.com

Old Town School of Folk Music – www.oldtownschool.org/

Second City – www.secondcity.com

Shedd Aquarium – www.sheddaquarium.org

Weird Chicago Tours – www.weirdchicago.com/

Willis Tower Skydeck – www.theskydeck.com

Taxis and Ground Transportation

Chicago Airport Car Service – (312) 804-1310
Chicago Carriage Cab – (312) 326-2221
Chicago City Taxi Cab Services – (773) 262-1103
Chicago Limo Express – (773) 443-2093
Chicago Signature Limousine Services – (312) 804-1310

Choose Chicago Limo – (773) 735-2200
Expedite Limo Service – (773) 237-5466
Flash Cab – (773) 561-4444
Shoreline Water Taxi – (312) 379-8530
Taxi Affiliation Services – (312) 881-3330
Uber – www.uber.com
Yellow Cab – (312) 829-4222

Rosemont Area Restaurants

Buona Beef

Italian Beef
(847) 803-2333
www.buona.com/

Chicago's authentic Italian Beef sandwiches and thin crust pizza.

Carlucci

(847) 518-0990
www.carluccirosemont.com
Traditional Northern Italian fare with a great wine list.

Edelweiss

(708) 452-6040
www.edelweissdining.com
German neighborhood favorite with great "schnitzel and wurst" plus liter of brews.

Gale Street Inn

(773) 725-1300
www.galestreet.com
Some of the best ribs outside the city!

Gene & Jude's Red Hot Stand

(708) 452-7634
www.geneandjudes.com
2720 River Rd. in River Grove
Voted best hot dogs in Chicago, but don't ask for ketchup!!!!

Kings

American
(847) 233-0099
www.kingsbowlamerica.com/rosemont/
Retro bowling atmosphere (with 20 lanes) and executive chef-designed menu come together for a unique and family friendly entertainment and dining experience

Maharaja Restaurant

Indian
(847) 720-4971
www.maharajachicago.com/
Chef owned & operated, this authentic Indian restaurant offers authentic dishes and unparalleled service.

Bars

Bub City – www.bub-city.com/rosemont/

Cube – www.riverscasino.com/desplaines/dining/cube

Five Roses - <http://www.fiverosespub.com/>

Hala Kahiki Tiki Bar
www.chicagotikibar.com

Ram Brewery

www.theram.com/illinois/rosemont.shtml

Shoeless Joe's Sports Bar
www.shoelessjoesrosemont.com

Zanies – www.zanies.com/rosemont

FOR INSIDER'S GUIDES TO OTHER CITIES:

sonnhalter.com/insiders-guides

