

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
NEWS RELEASE
CHICAGO OFFICE OF TOURISM

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DISCOVER CHICAGO'S FASHION AND SHOPPING SCENES!

Chicago is a leading center for fashion and design, home to more than 250 fashion designers and 400 independently owned retail boutiques. The city is also an international shopping capital, with a vibrant retail scene that caters to the needs of every shopper, including major department stores, chic designer boutiques, and unique ethnic stores.

FASHION

Chicago's fashion scene is in the midst of a much-celebrated renaissance. In 2006, Mayor Richard M. Daley created the Fashion Advisory Council and appointed Melissa Gamble as the Director of Fashion Arts and Events to lead the effort in supporting and promoting Chicago designers. Now in its fourth year, Fashion Focus Chicago, the city-sponsored fashion week, showcases the work of more than 100 sought-after Chicago-based designers during runway shows, shopping experiences, and industry events.

The City and Macy's have also partnered to open the Chicago Fashion Incubator, a program that helps six emerging Chicago-based designers learn the business of fashion through support and mentorship. The program provides the designers with office space and technology, a workshop, and a showroom in Macy's flagship State Street location.

SHOPPING

With 77 distinct communities, Chicago is famously known as the "City of Neighborhoods." Unique and interesting shops await visitors in many of these diverse neighborhoods. Division Street and the Southport Corridor are home to specialty shops that carry the work of independent and Chicago-based designers. In the Lincoln Park neighborhood, savvy shoppers head to Lincoln Avenue, Clark Street, Armitage Avenue, or Halsted Street or venture further north to the Lakeview neighborhood for a wide variety of shopping alternatives along Clark Street, Belmont Avenue or Broadway. Clothing boutiques, antique shops, and unique home accessory stores are among the selections that shoppers will find in these two north-side locales. In recent years, cutting-edge national stores like Anthropologie, Mark Jacobs, and Cynthia Rowley have opened Chicago outposts in these locations.

Many Chicago neighborhoods, including Pilsen and Little Village (Hispanic), North Park (Korean,) and Andersonville (Swedish), retain their ethnic flavor, making them excellent destinations for shopping excursions, with shops that sell everything from African baskets and Swedish glass to Indian textiles and Lithuanian tree ornaments.

Chicago's downtown area is home to several high-profile shopping destinations. State Street, often called the "Great Street", is Chicago's oldest retail district. One of the city's first major retail outlets, the flagship

Marshall Field's State Street store, now Macy's, has been a Chicago icon and world-class shopping destination for more than 150 years. The store is an architectural and historical marvel, offering ten selling floors of premier ready-to-wear and home lines and collections by Chicago-based designers. Today, State Street boasts a changing retail mix, reflecting the area's growing student and residential populations. Popular stores include Urban Outfitters, H&M, Nordstrom Rack, Loehmann's, and more. In late 2008, the eagerly anticipated 108 North State Street building is scheduled to open, featuring an eclectic mix of shopping, entertaining and dining.

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Any Chicago shopping spree must include a visit to the famed "Magnificent Mile" which runs along Michigan Avenue

from the Chicago River to Oak Street. Located on the Mile are department store giants Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Nordstrom, and Bloomingdale's, plus hundreds of specialty shops and boutiques such as Crate & Barrel, the Apple Store, the Disney Store, American Girl Place, Niketown, Tiffany & Co. and Ralph Lauren. The Magnificent Mile hosts seasonal celebrations throughout the year, including the spring "Tulip Days", and a holiday "Festival of Lights", making it a great destination for visitors throughout the year.

The upscale Oak Street shopping district, just north of the Loop, is a high-end, super-luxe boulevard, featuring intimate buildings and shops offering unique, upscale clothing, shoes, jewelry, home furnishings, art, linens and music. Among the shops located in this chic Gold Coast destination are Jil Sander, Hermès, Jimmy Choo, Graff Jewelers, Vera Wang, Ultimo, Nicole Miller and more.

In the River North neighborhood, some of the country's best home, bath and decorative accessory shopping awaits visitors at the Merchandise Mart. With four million square feet, the Mart is the second largest building in the United States (after the Pentagon) and, since 1930, has played a major role in centralizing Chicago's wholesale goods business. The Mart is now a resource for design and retail professionals, as well as consumers, offering year-round shops and annual shopping events such as the One-of-A-Kind Show and Sale, Art Chicago, Chicago Antiques Fair and a spring sample sale.

For authentic Chicago memorabilia and gifts, including CTA signage and work by local artists, visit the City of Chicago Store at the Chicago Water Works Visitor Center at 163 E. Pearson Street at Michigan Avenue. Other unique shopping stops for Chicago gifts include the Illinois Artisans Shop in the Thompson Center at 100 W. Randolph Street, the Shop at the Cultural Center at 77 E. Randolph Street, and the Gallery 37 Store at 66 E. Randolph Street. These stores offer a unique variety of distinctive Chicago and local artisan gifts.

Visitors and Chicagoans planning to entertain out-of-town guests can receive Chicago brochures, reserve hotel accommodations and receive trip-planning assistance by calling toll-free 1.877.CHICAGO (1.877.244.2246), or visiting www.explorechicago.org. Brochures and information on Chicago's exciting events and activities are also available at the Visitor Information Centers. The centers are located at Chicago Water Works, 163 East Pearson Street at Michigan Avenue and the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 East Randolph Street. The TTY toll-free number for the hearing impaired is 1.866.710.0294.

The Chicago Office of Tourism, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the official City agency dedicated to promoting Chicago to domestic and international visitors and to providing innovative visitor programs and services.

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