

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
NEWS RELEASE
CHICAGO OFFICE OF TOURISM

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DON'T BREAK THE BANK! CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND WITH FREE FAMILY FUN IN CHICAGO!

Find great value and discover something new with a visit to Chicago this Fourth of July weekend! Celebrate the summer's biggest holiday by visiting lakefront beaches, enjoying magnificent fireworks, experiencing the Taste of Chicago or attending a Major League baseball game. Learn about Chicago's exquisite cuisine, incredible sights, and affordable options for a fun-filled weekend getaway on a budget.

Plus, don't miss this chance to explore Chicago's many unique and charming neighborhoods. From Albany Park to Beverly Hills, discover the many ways you can embrace the history, culture, and people of the Chicago's 75-plus neighborhoods as you uncover the world in our backyard.

Begin your adventure at the Chicago Cultural Center's Visitor Information Center, 77 E. Randolph Street, or, for more information, visit www.explorechicago.org or call 877-CHICAGO.

FREE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Fourth of July Celebration in Millennium Park

Start your holiday with a picnic on Millennium Park's Great Lawn on Saturday, July 4th, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Grant Park Music Festival's first-ever Independence Day concert in Millennium Park follows at 1:30 p.m. at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion. The free concert features a program of traditional and patriotic favorites performed by the Grant Park Orchestra, along with a very special guest—Chicago tap dance master Lane Alexander. Other events on the Fourth of July in Millennium Park include workouts in Tai Chi, Yoga, Pilates and Capoeira on the Great Lawn from 7 a.m. through 11 a.m. The Family Fun Festival opens at 10 a.m., full of interactive activities and musical games for kids of all ages.

Downtown Fireworks

Nothing says Independence Day like fireworks! Enjoy free world-class fireworks displays all weekend long in downtown Chicago! The festivities begin Friday, July 3rd with the 29th Annual Independence Eve Concert (part of the annual Taste of Chicago celebration). The concert takes place at 7:30 p.m. in the Petrillo Music Shell in Grant Park with a performance by the renowned 85th Army Band. The award-winning fireworks display begins at 9 p.m. and last for 20 minutes. On Saturday, July 4th, Navy Pier hosts a dazzling patriotic fireworks display at 9 p.m.

Neighborhood Festivals

Visit diverse neighborhoods of Chicago this Independence Day weekend. On July 3rd through 5th visit Washington Park for the 17th annual African-Caribbean International Festival of Life. The festival includes live music, including reggae, calypso, and gospel, plus food vendors, arts and crafts, games, kids' activities and exhibits. For information on additional neighborhood festivals taking place in Chicago this summer, please visit www.explorechicago.org.

Taste of Chicago

Savor Chicago delicacies in Grant Park at the 29th annual Taste of Chicago from June 26th through July 5th. The Taste of Chicago is the world's largest outdoor food and entertainment festival, attracting more than 3 million people per year. The 10-day food festival serves more than 250 menu items (108 of these items are priced at \$2 or less) from over 70 restaurants and food vendors, offering delicious cuisine from around the globe as well as local Chicago fare. Taking place in Grant Park on Chicago's lakefront, the

Taste of Chicago also features a free concert series including performances by Counting Crows, The Wallflowers, Ne-Yo, Keri Hilson, Buddy Guy, Guster and more.

Chicago SummerDance Festival

Feel the beat at the 13th Annual Chicago SummerDance festival. The celebration features one-hour dance lessons by professional instructors, followed by two hours of live music and dancing on a 4,600 square foot open-air dance floor in the Spirit of Music Garden in Grant Park. Events occur Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons, weather-permitting. On Friday, July 3rd join Tommye Giacchino and Gregory Day of Chicago Dance for free East Coast Swing dance lessons along with music by Lesley Byers & The Jazz Cats from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Live music by Steve Cooper Orchestra compliments free Rumba dance lessons by Bob & Penny Urbon of Chicago Ballroom Dance Co. on Sunday, July 5th, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. For a complete schedule of all SummerDance events, please visit www.ChicagoSummerDance.org.

Hyde Park Instagreeter

Pay a visit to Hyde Park, President Obama's long-time home, this July 4th! Explore a presidential neighborhood with the new Hyde Park InstaGreeter program offered by the Chicago Office of Tourism. Drop by Hyde Park Art Center anytime between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. for a free one-hour guided walking visit of Hyde Park with a friendly, knowledgeable volunteer Chicago Greeter. Visits are given on a first-come, first-served basis and no reservations are needed.

Farmers Markets

Over 70 vendors offer fresh fruits, vegetables, plants and flowers throughout Chicago at local Farmers Markets that sell to over 20 neighborhoods throughout the city. On Saturday, July 4th the Division Street Farmers Market at 50 W. Division Street will be open as well as the Lincoln Park Farmers Market in the Lincoln Park High School parking lot from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. On July 5th visit the Erie Street Farmers Market at 500 W. Erie Street.

Chicago's Lakefront Beaches

The Chicago Park District manages the city's 29 lakefront beaches for the enjoyment of Chicago families and visitors. Chicago's lakefront is also home to the lakefront trail, volleyball, soccer, concessions, golf courses, harbors, bird sanctuaries, and natural areas. Admission to Chicago's beaches is free and open to the public. Lifeguards are on duty all weekend long.

CHICAGO FAVORITES (these Chicago favorites charge a fee for admission.)

Museum Exhibits

Escape into a whole new world at Chicago's renowned museums. Step into the magical universe of Harry Potter at the Museum of Science and Industry this summer. This world-premiere exhibit, "Harry Potter: The Exhibition," holds more than 200 authentic artifacts from the Harry Potter films, displayed in settings inspired by the film sets. Determine why "x" marks the spot at The Field Museum. Their "Real Pirates" exhibit centers on the story of the *Whydah*, a pirate ship that sank off the coast of Cape Cod almost 300 years ago. It allows visitors to view more than 200 artifacts including a treasure chest filled with looted gold coins, and real weaponry such as cannons and swords. Modernize your world at the newly opened Modern Wing at the Art Institute of Chicago. Summer exhibits include Cy Twombly: The Natural World, Selected Works 2000–2007, Judith Turner: Framing the Modern, and Beyond Golden Clouds: Japanese Screens from the Art Institute of Chicago and the St. Louis Art Museum.

Chicago Neighborhood Tours

Venture out of the loop and into some of Chicago's most fascinating neighborhoods. Take a summertime sampler tour on July 2nd and visit Chinatown, Little Italy, and Greektown. The tour leaves at 10 a.m. from the Chicago Cultural Center (77 E. Randolph Street) and lasts approximately three hours. Admission is \$20 per person. For more information, including a complete schedule of Chicago Neighborhood Tours, please visit www.ChicagoNeighborhoodTours.com.

The Ledge at the Sears Tower Skydeck

Experience never-before-seen views of Chicago at "The Ledge" at Sears Tower. The newly opened Ledge features all glass boxes set 1,353 feet up, and extending out 4.3 feet from the 103rd floor Skydeck.

The famed Sears Tower Skydeck also offers additional attractions including new interactive and educational museum-quality exhibits that celebrate the City of Chicago.

Chicago Cubs Baseball

Perfect your all-American a weekend with a trip to Wrigley Field on Chicago's North Side. The Chicago Cubs kick off a four day series hosting the Milwaukee Brewers on Thursday, July 2nd. Wrigley Field is easily accessible by car or on Chicago's rapid transit system. For tickets, please visit www.chicago.cubs.mlb.com.

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.cityofchicago.org/tourism. 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. For those calling from outside the United States, Mexico and Canada, please call 1-312-201-8847. 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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