

50 BEST RESTAURANTS, RANKED

# CHICAGO

AUGUST 2024



*Best phenom*  
*Shota Imanaga*

## BEST of CHICAGO

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- Perch for judging tourists
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# Skating through the ages

## Chicago's 50+ roll back the years at thriving local rinks

While the rest of the world zooms full speed into the modern with cybertrucks and AI and same-day deliveries, the more amazing discoveries these days may be from the past.

Consider Chicago's thriving roller skating scene.

Some of the area's most storied rinks have closed in recent decades. But a steadfast few still bring in thousands of skaters each week for exercise, for lessons, for competition, for breaks from caregiving, for social connection, for love.

AARP Chicago was happy to discover that roller skating is alive and well in the area and that many of the people gliding through the rinks are in their 60s, 70s, 80s, even 90s.

"Too many older people, they say, 'well, I can't do that anymore or I shouldn't,'" says Roger Wampach, 80. "I taught my mother-in-law how to skate when she was 84."

For more stories and video of them in action, visit: [chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters](https://chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters)

Story by Vikki Ortiz  
Photography by  
Monika Wnuk

**Calvin Small, 67**, one of the founders of Chicago-born "JB (James Brown) Skating," teaches classes at The Rink on Chicago's Southside. Known worldwide for his mastery of spinning, Small says he is constantly creating new moves and keeping his skating sharp to be an instructor younger generations can look up to.



There's a few that really love to skate and then there's a few like me, they're a little crazy. This is my love."

— Roger Wampach



Aurora Skate Center skaters pictured from left to right: Tom Peeler, Karri Peronto, Dean and Lorrie Becker,



**Lorrie and Dean Becker, 71 and 68** met at Aurora Skate Center 25 years ago, and have returned to waltz, foxtrot and tango there nearly every Monday night since. Read more at: [chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters](https://chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters)

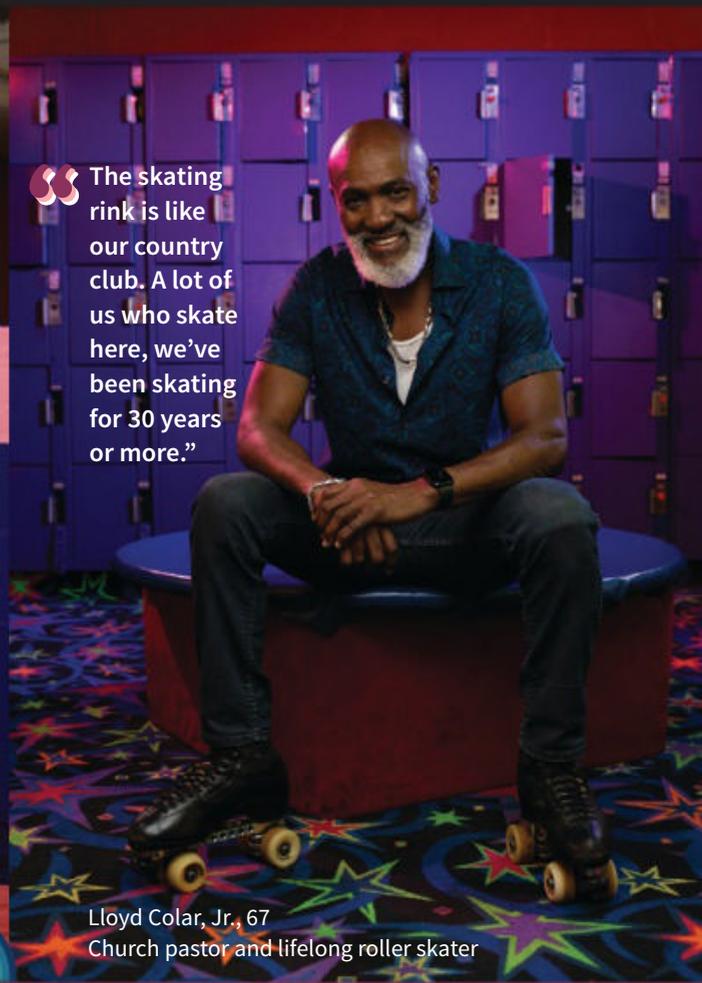


Roger Wampach, Alice May, Diane and Norm Radford, Laura and Ralph Taylor.



“So many people have told us that this skating rink has saved their lives,” says Ramona Pouncy. “We felt like we needed to save it for this community.”

Ramona Pouncy, 63  
Co-owner of The Rink



“The skating rink is like our country club. A lot of us who skate here, we’ve been skating for 30 years or more.”

Lloyd Colar, Jr., 67  
Church pastor and lifelong roller skater



“You’re never too old to learn it right or get better.”  
— Dean Becker



“I didn’t start skating until I was 68. If you have confidence in yourself, you can do anything,”  
— Lepoleon Swopes, 90

Adrian Boyd, 56



“I had both knees replaced. It took less than a year to get back on skates.”

Emma Brunson, 70  
Retired police officer and avid skater



As a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to improving the lives of older adults, AARP Chicago is proud to share this collection of photos and stories.

These inspiring, everyday people who are 50+ embody AARP's belief that nothing is a foregone conclusion when it comes to aging.

Like all of us, these skaters have faced the hardships that come with the years. They have cared for sick family members, lost loved ones, suffered injuries and struggled with being alone. But through the skate community, they have managed to take breaks from the challenges, make new friends and keep gliding along.

AARP Chicago is here to provide you with resources, events and volunteer opportunities to help you find your community as you age. Find us at [aarp.org/IL](http://aarp.org/IL)

## The Rink

Five years ago, when The Rink on Chicago's South Side was set to be torn down, Curtis and Ramona Pouncy rewrote their retirement plans. The couple bought and renovated the skate center on E. 87th Street — backdrop for countless memories over the last five decades for Chicagoans like the Pouncy's, Chance the Rapper and the Obama's. Today, thousands of skaters are grateful to visit the beloved community gathering place each week. "The Rink is synonymous with Chicago," says Pouncy. "We skated here when we were younger, so many people did. It's an icon in the community."

Read the remarkable story at [chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters](http://chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters)

← featured on the opposite page



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“Skating has kept me in shape to be able to do anything. And it’s the skating, really, that has kept me feeling young.”

— Alice May

“I raised my kids. I went to all their sporting events,” says Peronto. “It’s my turn now to do what I want to do.”

— Karri Peronto

There’s committing to trying something new, and then there’s what **Karri Peronto, 63** and **Tom Peeler, 61** do — traveling 220 miles every week across state lines to train for competitions.

The skating pair, who started competing in their 60s, say skating brings them a sense of accomplishment they’ve always wanted.

Read about what it takes to compete at [chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters](http://chicagomag.com/promotion/aarpskaters)

To read more of these inspirational stories and share your own with us, follow us on Instagram at [@aarpillinoisjoy](https://www.instagram.com/aarpillinoisjoy).

Alice May, 81 or “roller skating grandma,” as her grandkids affectionately call her, has been skating in Aurora since she was a teenager and can be seen gliding across the floor of the rink every week in one of the dozens of skating outfits she makes herself.

Karri Peronto  
and Tom Peeler  
Aurora Skate Center





# WHY BLUE?

**This is what our Parachrom hairspring looks like.** It is an essential guardian of the watch's chronometric precision. Unveiled in 2005, entirely designed and manufactured in house, it nears the apex of what metal alloy hairsprings can offer. The scale of the image might throw you off, though. Its edge is thinner than a single strand of hair and its weight is merely a fraction of a pearl's. Moreover, once coiled, its diameter does not exceed a few millimeters. It is shielded from outside aggressions by a case so hermetic it was aptly named "Oyster." Needless to say, it is a rare occurrence for any eyes to be laid on the Parachrom. So why

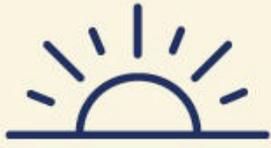
would we be concerned by its color? Because this hue of blue is true to our tradition of watchmaking excellence. It is the exact color taken by our unique alloy of niobium, zirconium and oxygen when it has been anodized to stop the process of oxidation. This blue is essential to us, because it symbolizes the long-lasting performances which we hold ourselves to. This hairspring is insensitive to magnetic fields, unwavering in the face of temperature variations, and resistant to shocks as to corrosion. Therefore, each Rolex equipped with a Parachrom hairspring will tick at a most regular and perpetual beat.

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Locals love the outdoors as much as visitors and are eager to share it. Captain Dylan Hubbard, a fourth-generation owner and operator of the renowned Hubbard's Marina, located at John's Pass Village in Madeira Beach, says he's still taken by the splendor of his home: "It is really just absolutely breathtaking around here." He seeks to share that local beauty and his love of being on the water with guests. "I'm blessed to be an owner-operator of Hubbard's Marina," he says. "It's one of the most famous fishing villages along the west coast of Florida, and



**Fort De Soto Park**



**Snorkeling, Egmont Key**



## Hubbard's Marina, John's Pass Village

we're actually considered the grouper capital of the world. We land more grouper out of our port than anywhere else in the Gulf. Not only can you catch grouper on one of our boats, but our family's neighboring restaurant will cook it for you as well. When you go out fishing with us you can walk right up to the Friendly Fisherman and we'll cook what you caught. It's the freshest way to eat fish."

Hubbard is confident he can help guests craft the perfect outdoor getaway: "We do everything. We're kind of a one-stop shop when it comes to water activities, from deep-sea fishing to near-shore fishing, in-shore fishing, island trips, shelling, snorkeling, sunset cruises and private charters." The variety of options, combined with a warm local welcome, keeps visitors coming back for more, and Hubbard and his family wouldn't have it any other way. "Families have been coming down and fishing with us for generations," he says. "It's unique to see and it's because we have so much packed in a coastal town."

“

**FAMILIES  
HAVE BEEN  
COMING DOWN  
AND FISHING  
WITH US FOR  
GENERATIONS**

”

**CAPT. DYLAN HUBBARD**

OWNER, HUBBARD'S MARINA



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# CHICAGO

## 50 Best of Chicago

Whether you are in town for a certain convention or have lived here forever, we've got you covered with top picks for shopping, eating, drinking, and more.

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### HELMUT JAHN WOULD HAVE WANTED THIS

With Google reviving the Thompson Center, we dug up three unpublished interviews with the late architect on his greatest—and most divisive—Chicago building.

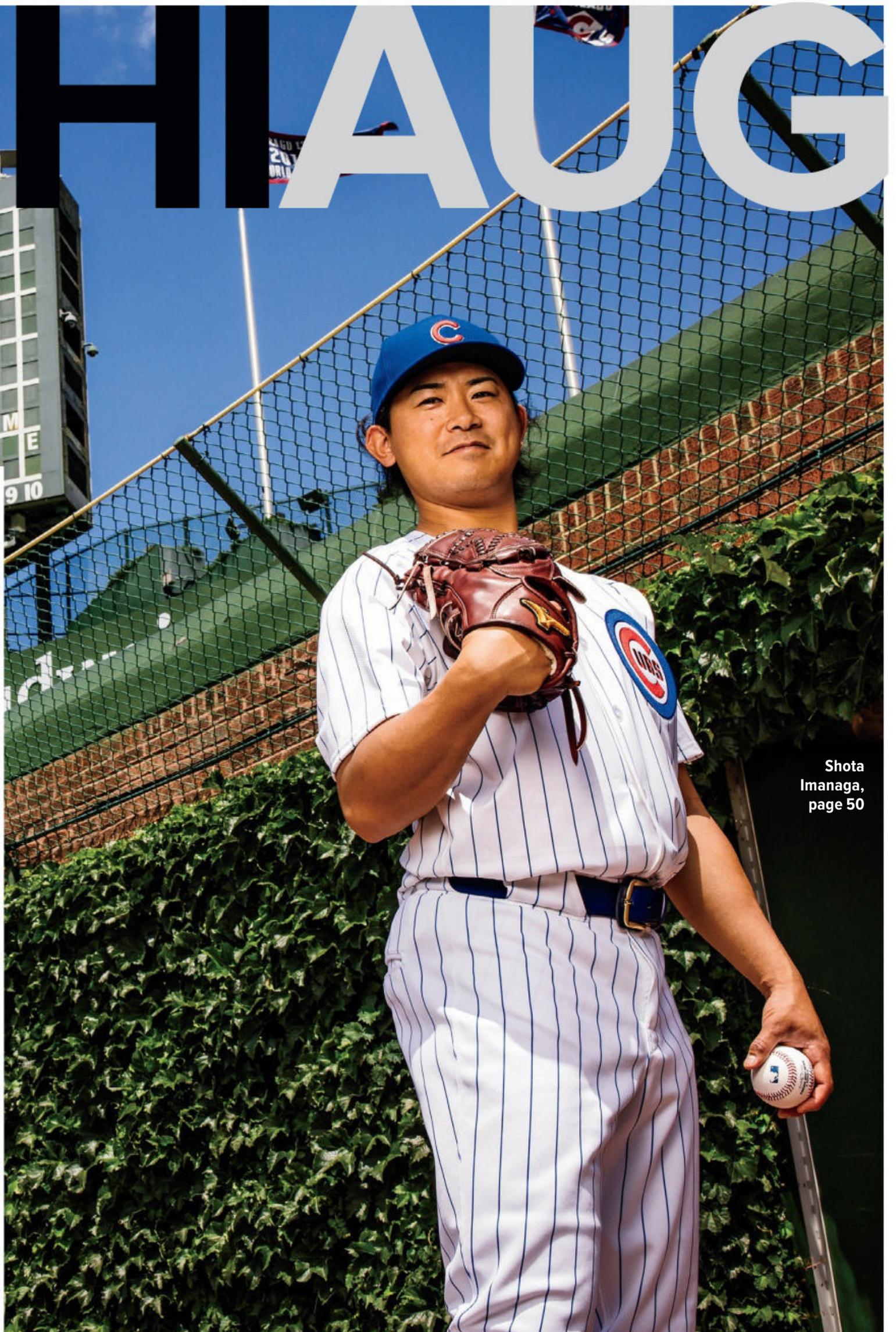
By AJ LaTrace and Jake Malooley

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### THE 50 BEST RESTAURANTS

In a city of great places to eat, these are our favorites, ranked.

By Amy Cavanaugh and John Kessler



Shota Imanaga, page 50

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Samara Joy,  
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ON THE COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY CLAYTON HAUCK | LETTERING BY SARAH COLEMAN

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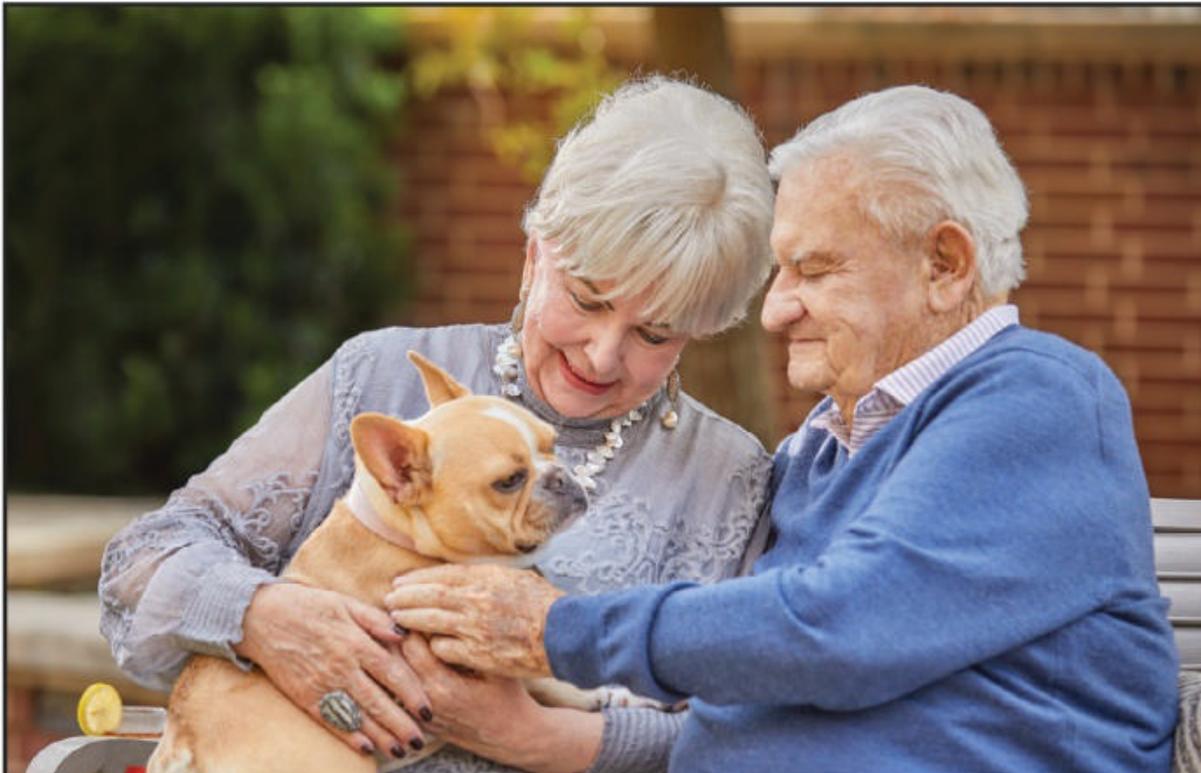
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FROM THE EDITOR

# Value Meals



**Y**OU WILL FIND A WIDE RANGE OF PLACES TO EAT IN OUR rankings of the 50 best restaurants in town (page 78). But conspicuously absent are Chicago’s only three-Michelin-starred spots: Alinea and Smyth. Alinea’s Grant Achatz “paved the way for a lot of folks in the industry,” says dining editor Amy Cavanaugh, who compiled the list with dining critic John Kessler, “but I think the torch has been passed. If you really want to see the best of fine dining in this city right now, you’re going to find it at restaurants like Oriole and Kyoten, not at some of the places that have been around for a while.”

That’s not the only realization she came to in putting together the rankings: “Maybe it’s because of the pandemic and people opening less expensive places, but it feels like the most exciting cooking these days is happening at the middle and lower levels.” She cites Lilac Tiger and, at an even lower price point, JT’s Sandwich Shop as examples. Of the latter, she says: “There’s nothing fancy about it, but it feels like a gourmet experience.”

So how did she and Kessler make their picks? “First of all, the food had to be delicious,” Cavanaugh says. “We also considered service and hospitality. We wanted it to add up to feeling like you’re getting some value. And with all of them, it’s like, Do I want to go back?”

**Terrance Noland**  
*Editor in Chief*

INSIDE PEEK



Hauck photographing the Cubs ace

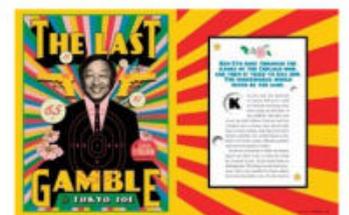
## Strong Armed

**WHEN PHOTOGRAPHER CLAYTON** Hauck shot Cubs rookie sensation Shota Imanaga at Wrigley Field for this issue’s “Best of Chicago” cover (the story starts on page 50), he had to guide the ace into the perfect pitching position – perfect for the camera, that is, not for throwing strikes. “We had to get him to sort of change his delivery a little so we could see the ball better,” explains Hauck, a lifelong Cubs fan. “I was joking with his translator that I didn’t want to ruin his mechanics, because pitchers spend a lot of time mastering their motions.” A few days after the shoot, as luck would have it, Imanaga had his worst outing of the season, giving up 10 runs to the Mets in less than four innings. Says Hauck: “I had to tell myself I wasn’t responsible for his bad game.”

–AMY CAVANAUGH AND AMINA SERGAZINA

### A “GAMBLE” PAYS OFF

“The Last Gamble of Tokyo Joe,” Dan O’Sullivan’s May 2023 story for *Chicago* on the epic life of mobster Ken Eto, from Japanese internment camp to six shots in the head to redemption, was named best feature in the City and Regional Magazine Association’s annual contest. “O’Sullivan’s sprawling saga is replete with rich reporting and unforgettable characters,” opined the judges.



PHOTOGRAPHY: (NOLAND) MICHAEL ZAJAKOWSKI; (HAUCK) DAVID SYREK

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TALK TO US



I don't know how there can be a top 10 Chicago burger list without the Loyalist.  
@jeannieandresen\_ via Instagram

## Burger Bonanza

Ragadan should be higher on this list, except I don't want the place to get overly mobbed ["The Great Chicago Burger Quest," May]. Also, I got the sads when I thought about how good the Bad Apple and Kuma's used to be.

Da4 via Reddit

Big fan of [photographer] Nick Murway. Been following his career and great work for over a decade.  
@heidih2pr via Instagram

**MAYORAL ASSESSMENT**  
A must-read for understanding the challenges at the heart of Chicago's political landscape ["Grading the Mayor," May]. This is the most accurate reality of Mayor Johnson's tenure: ambition clashing with inefficacy.  
@SuperChilligan via X

C- is generous. He is a train wreck.  
@BigJohnTrainor via X

Ouch! Firm but fair.  
@CoachV\_Friars via X

Are any progressives actually mad at this or do conservatives just think we would be?  
@pat\_chi\_ via X

Brandon is the [biggest] disaster to hit Chicago since the fire.  
@RedWaveSurfer99 via X

**A BIKE TREK NORTH**  
We just rode it ["A Two-Wheel Trip to Milwaukee," May]! Fantastic, and the bike paths are amazing. Beer everywhere.  
**The Ramble Project**  
via Facebook

You can take Amtrak home as well. No need to box your bike for the train!  
**Robbie Webber**  
via Facebook

**WHITE SOX WONDER**  
John Schriffen is great ["The Sox's New Voice," May]. Best addition the team made all off-season.  
@mimosox2005 via X

He makes watching the games bearable.  
@Latinchiguy via X

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## Is it true that the term “smoke-filled room” originated in Chicago?



CITY OF  
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ANSWERED BY  
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MCCLELLAND

Four days into the 1920 Republican National Convention in Chicago, voting was deadlocked among six candidates, none of them close to a majority. That night, party chairman Will Hays

invited to his Blackstone Hotel suite “senators and party leaders [who] wandered in and out at random, poured themselves drinks, and talked indecisively through the perfect smoke,” according to Francis Russell’s 1968 book, *The Shadow of Blooming Grove*.

The GOP pooh-bahs settled on Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio. He had finished no higher than third in the balloting but had no enemies, looked presidential, and came from a state that had voted for every Republican president. The next day, after Harding was nominated at the convention, a United Press reporter wrote that he had actually been chosen in a “smoke-filled room.” The term has since come to describe decisions made by political insiders outside of public view – fitting for something originating in Chicago.

The 9th floor suite, now referred to as the Smoke-Filled Suite, “remains one of the hotel’s most popular accommodations,” according to a publicist – though, ironically, the Blackstone is smoke-free these days.

Send your questions about the Chicago area to [emcclelland@chicagomag.com](mailto:emcclelland@chicagomag.com).

ILLUSTRATION: GREG CLARKE

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Born and raised in the Hinsdale area, Casselyn returned to raise her family, embracing the small community feel while being close to everything. Passionate about real estate, Casselyn loves connecting with diverse people and lifestyles. A Top Producer and part of Compass' Legends Society, Casselyn balances a successful career with family time and community involvement, embodying a dedication to serving the real estate needs of the area.



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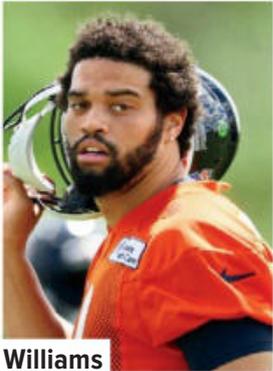
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# THE 312



Williams

## Talking Points

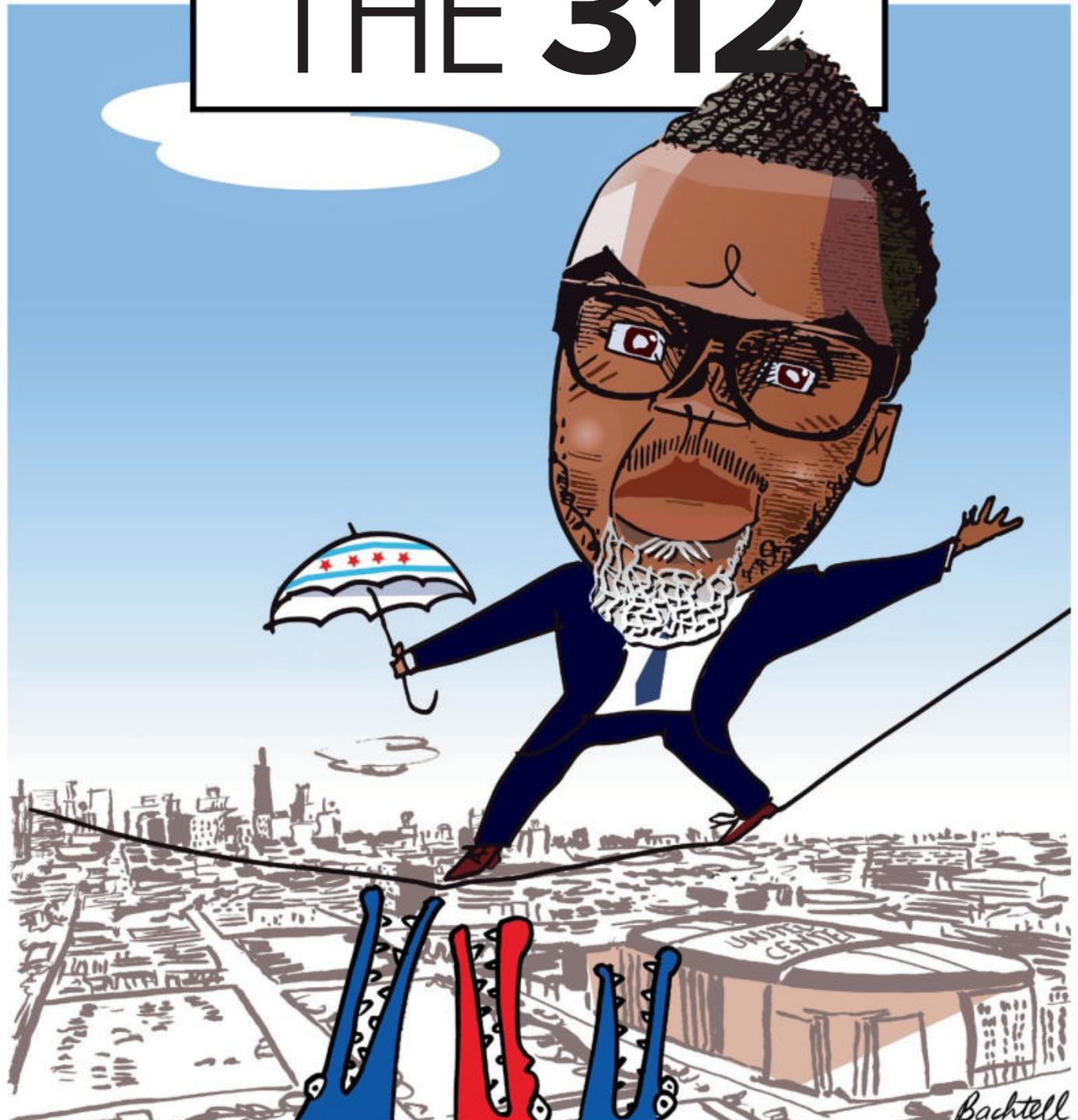
This month's conversation starters

**1** Bears training camp will get Liev Schreiber's voice-of-God treatment on **HBO's *Hard Knocks***, debuting Aug. 6. Don't be surprised if Caleb Williams's passions for nail polish and Topgolf see airtime.

**2** The **Chicago Air and Water Show**, usually the third weekend in August, has been shifted up, to the 10th and 11th, to avoid the Aug. 19–22 Democratic National Convention. If the delegates heard that racket, they might think Chicago really is a war zone.

**3** **Chicago Public Schools** is pushing back its first day by a week, to Aug. 26, so students can "attend, volunteer, and participate in hosting" the DNC.

**4** Stephen Colbert is bringing ***The Late Show*** to the Auditorium Theatre for the convention. Colbert lived here for 11 years, attending Northwestern and performing with Second City, so count on seeing every Chicago stereotype.



## The Mayor's Big Test

**Brandon Johnson's reputation — and the city's — will be on the line during the DNC. Can he keep the peace?** By EDWARD McCLELLAND

**A**T 93, POLITICAL STRATEGIST DON ROSE IS OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER THE 1968 Democratic National Convention. In fact, he participated in the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations that famously accompanied it. He also recalls how Mayor Richard J. Daley's reputation in the national Democratic Party never recovered after his police officers clubbed and gassed protesters. Chicago's image, too, took a hit that tarnished it for years.

So Rose knows there's much at stake for current mayor Brandon Johnson during this August's DNC, particularly when it comes to handling the Gaza war protesters who are expected to show up in force. And the potential downsides far outweigh the upsides, Rose says: "I am not a believer that the conventions do that much for any particular city, unless something very bad happens. If it goes along without any significant problems, it'll be fine, and [Johnson] will probably be credited. But certainly, if something goes wrong, he's going to share in the blame. If he continues along his path now of not yielding any permits and having people march miles away from the

event, that could lead to serious trouble because of the rebellion against that.”

Johnson may find himself torn between his antiestablishment roots and his current position as a member of the Democratic Party establishment. As a former union organizer, he’s a veteran of protest movements. To prevent clashes between law enforcement and demonstrators, his administration has promised to practice “constitutional policing,” respecting protesters’ rights but drawing the line at lawbreaking. That will likely be put to the test. Behind Enemy Lines, an outfit opposing Israel’s war in Gaza, has called to “Make 2024 as Great as 1968. Come to Chicago and Shut Down the DNC!”

The Secret Service is in charge of securing the convention, designated a “national special security event,” but Chicago police are responsible for areas outside the United Center. The city promises to set up Pollyannaishly dubbed First Amendment Zones for demonstrators in view of delegates. Expect protesters to challenge the rules. One coalition is vowing to march from Union Park to the United Center without a permit; however, the American Civil Liberties Union reached a deal with the city allowing abortion rights advocates to march down Michigan Avenue in view of delegates’ hotels.

“You have a man who has participated in First Amendment expressions and actions,” John Roberson, the city’s chief operating officer, says of the mayor. “He’s saying that anyone who wants to come to our city to engage in constitutionally protected expressions of their First Amendment rights will have the opportunity to do so safely. We are not going to allow things to devolve into aggressive, violent criminal behavior that results in the destruction of property or physical harm of people.”

What would happen then? During the 2020 social justice demonstrations, Chicago police dispersed crowds with pepper spray and called in the Illinois National Guard for backup. To avoid a repeat of those confrontations, police have been trained in de-escalation tactics and handling unruly protesters without

resorting to arrests. Additionally, police superintendent Larry Snelling told representatives of Choose Chicago in May that the city will bring in 500 officers from around the state as reinforcements, but that Chicago officers will handle the area near the convention.

Johnson’s second challenge is to leverage the DNC to burnish the image of a city that, fairly or not, has a national reputation for violent crime. After Chicago was announced as the convention site in April 2023, a spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee snarked, “What’s the bigger concern: sirens drowning out nominating speeches or what items attendees must leave at home to make room for their bulletproof vest in their suitcase?”

In 1996, Mayor Richard M. Daley successfully used the DNC to soften memories of 1968 and to show delegates that “the old frontier town had become a world-class city, cosmopolitan in its architecture, renowned for its natural beauty, and secure in its commercial connections,” in the words of *Inside the Wigwam: Chicago Presidential Conventions, 1860–1996*, by R. Craig Sautter and Edward M. Burke. It was an era of domestic tranquility, so the younger Daley didn’t have to worry about clashes with demonstrators. That convention is best remembered for delegates dancing the Macarena and the installation of colorful wrought-iron fences with the Chicago star design overlooking the Dan Ryan.

Sautter, for one, hopes delegates will leave this convention talking about the “festive feel of the city” rather than its crime. “The only danger would be if some delegate was randomly shot, but the downtown will be so blanketed

with security that’s unlikely,” he says. (Another worry: Republican governors will try to embarrass the city by increasing shipments of migrants that week.)

Organizers want the DNC to show off the entire city, not just downtown and the Near West Side. Last September, party officials in town for a convention preview had lunch at Bronzeville Winery. In February, Chicago Host Committee members toured Chinatown. During a May media walk-through, journalists from around the world were taken to Garfield Park Conservatory. Also that month, state party chairs ate at the Little

Village restaurant Mi Tierra. “We looked at the ’96 convention and saw the efforts they made to incorporate local businesses, and we basically did that on steroids,” says Christy George, executive director of the Chicago Host Committee, which is working closely with the mayor’s office. Among the 12,000 convention volunteers will be “neighborhood ambassadors” from all 77 Chicago community areas and 23 suburbs, George says.

Minyon Moore, the D.C. political strategist and Chicago native who is chairing the DNC, says that showcasing the city’s diversity delivers a powerful message: “Conventions are a great backdrop for the world to see a city that is thriving. There are so many beautiful stories about Chicago that are written and not written. That, to me, is putting Chicago front and center of what the world really looks like, whether it’s Black, white, brown, Hispanic, Jew, Asian, whatever. Chicago is a reflection of a national convention.”

That’s the Chicago that Johnson wants to show off. His reputation depends on a watching world seeing unity and diversity, not conflict and chaos. ■

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**“We looked at the ’96 convention and saw the efforts they made to incorporate local businesses, and we basically did that on steroids.”**

—Christy George, executive director of the DNC’s Chicago Host Committee

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# Barack Slept Here

Obamaphiles in town for the DNC can get their fix by visiting these sites linked to POTUS 44, who lived on the South Side from 1985 to 2008. By JOANNA MARSZAŁEK

**> THE OBAMAS' HOUSE**  
5046 S. Greenwood Ave.

It may be Chicago's best-guarded house without permanent residents. The good news: Concrete barriers have been partially removed and you can now walk (but not drive) on this public street (though not on the sidewalk), right in front of the Georgian Revival mansion the Obamas bought in 2005. It's a secret how often the former first family stays here, but it's often enough that the tree out front has been cicada-proofed.

**> THE OBAMAS' FIRST-KISS ROCK**  
Corner of 53rd Street and Dorchester Avenue

No one knows what powers this spot holds, but the Obamas' first-date lip embrace, in 1989, must have been special to earn a plaque, attached to a boulder in front of this strip mall. The Baskin-Robbins where Barack treated Michelle to ice cream has been replaced by a Subway, but the mall now has another one in a different spot.

**> FORMER HOLY ROSARY CHURCH RECTORY**  
351 E. 113th St.

Though no signs announce it, Obama's first office for his first Chicago job, as a community organizer in the mid-'80s, was here in Roseland, on the first floor of the rectory behind a former Catholic church, now Greater Tabernacle Cathedral.

**> HYDE PARK HAIR SALON**  
5234 S. Blackstone Ave.

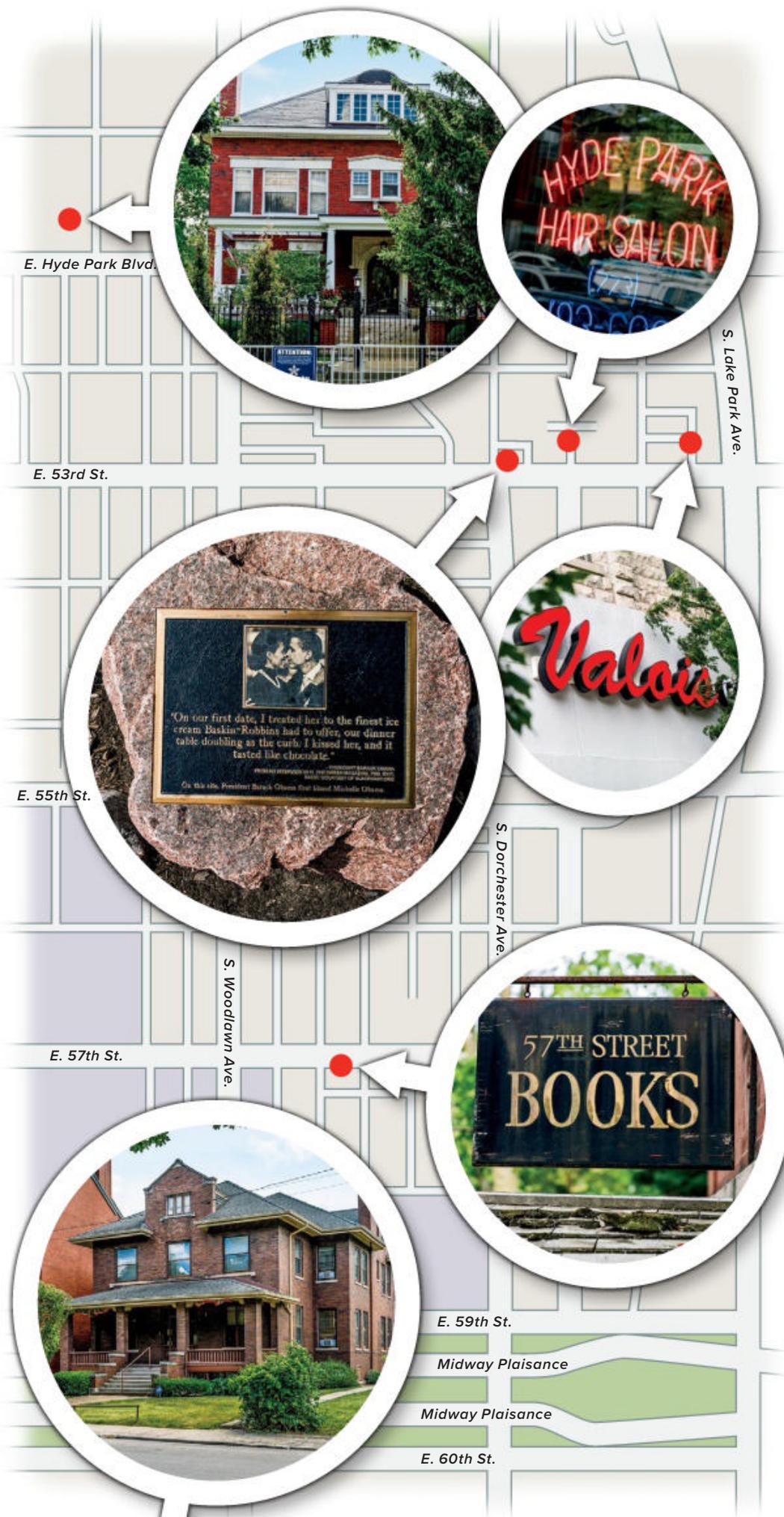
Obama got his hair cut here weekly when campaigning. The staff realized he was a big deal when onlookers started showing up out front. Zariff, Obama's barber, still works at the shop. Though the barbers say Barack was just another regular, his chair, signed and encased in bulletproof glass near the door, suggests otherwise. When the old patron occasionally shows up, the discussion is mostly about who has the most gray.

**> VALOIS RESTAURANT**  
1518 E. 53rd St.

At this Hyde Park cafeteria, the eggs, sausage, and hash browns remain part of 44's legacy. Will they taste better if you order them from the six combinations offered on the "President Obama's Favorites" menu? Maybe. Obama hasn't set foot here in years, but legend says his usual of egg whites, turkey sausage, toast, and hash browns is sometimes delivered to a car with tinted windows.

**> 57TH STREET BOOKS**  
1301 E. 57th St.

The story goes that when Barack taught at the University of Chicago Law School, he'd stop in this shop every Sunday to browse quietly. Michelle picked out children's books for their daughters here. And both Obamas later did book signings at the store.



PHOTOGRAPHY: LENNY GILMORE | MAP: JOE DARROW

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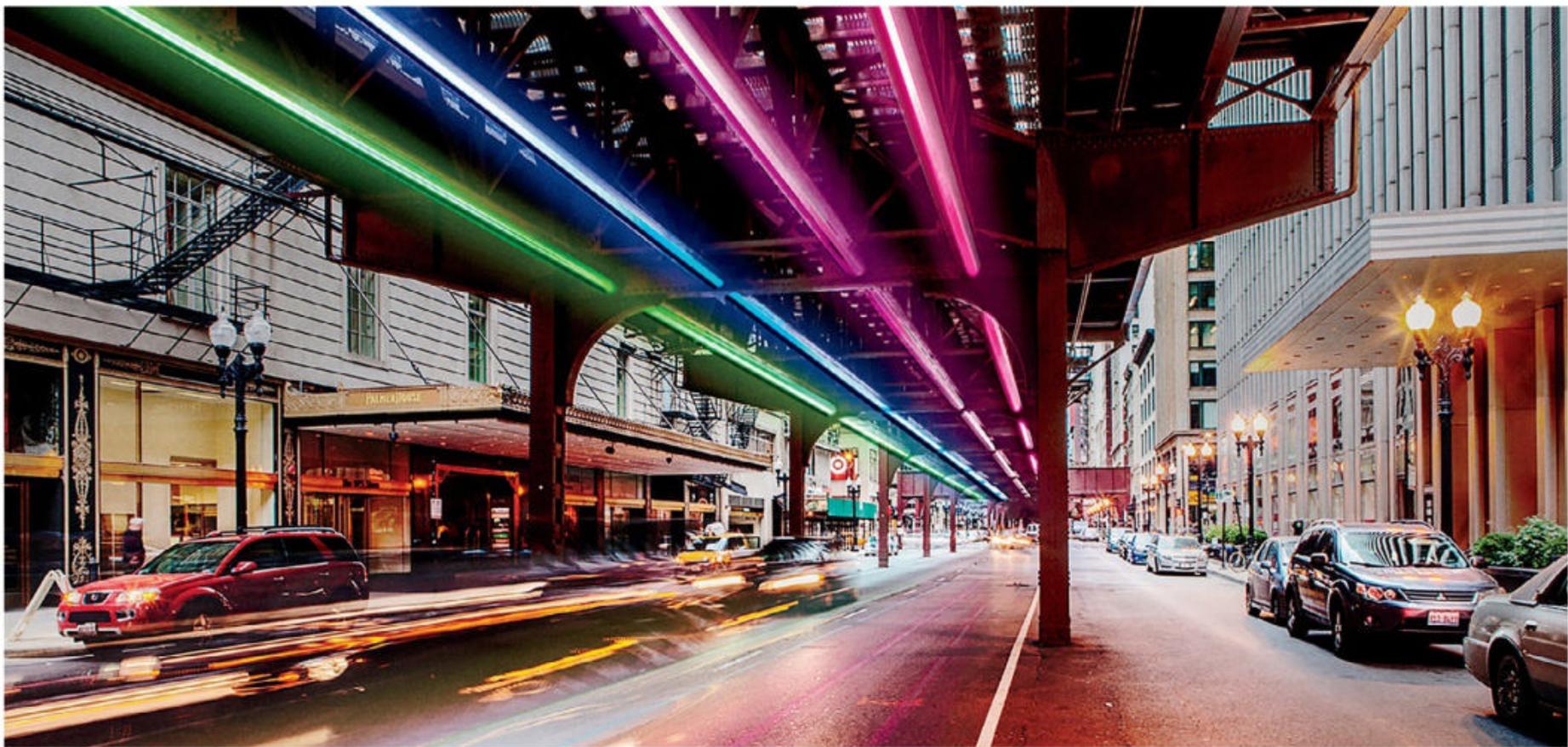
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THE TWO-MINUTE GUIDE

# The Wabash Lights

An interactive LED art project beneath the L brings some pizzazz to the Loop. By WEB BEHRENS



**I**F YOUR IDEA OF interactive public art is sliding down the Picasso in Daley Center or snapping fun-house-mirror selfies with the Bean, take note of a new project spearheaded by Lake View filmmaker Jack C. Newell. Ten years ago, he set out on a quest: “Could we make a piece of public art that’s actually made by the public?” His answer is finally at hand with the Wabash Lights. The week of August 12, Newell’s team will activate four parallel 50-foot stretches of custom-built colorful LEDs affixed beneath the L tracks along Wabash Avenue between Madison and Monroe—a lucent installation that lets anyone passing by play artist.

## HOW IT WORKS

Look for a QR code on a nearby light post or storefront window. Once you’ve scanned it, the prompts will let you choose a pattern and a speed to trigger a 15-second-or-so light show. (The exact timing is still being worked out.) “The lights are the canvas, and you or me or my 7-year-old daughter become the artists,” says Vinod Havalad, a pediatric critical care physician at Advocate Children’s Hospital and board president of the nonprofit created to support the Wabash Lights.

## WHAT IT COSTS

Thanks to two Kickstarter campaigns, private donations, and additional funding from Comcast and Gertie

(a local culture-minded civic group headed by Pritzker family member Abby Pucker), the team has enough money to complete the first phase—outfitting 50 feet of track for \$150,000—just ahead of the Democratic National Convention. Phase 2 involves finishing the entire Madison-to-Monroe stretch for an additional \$350,000, which they hope to do by December. “We will be pushing hard to fundraise to complete the full block,” Havalad notes.

## HOW WE GOT HERE (A.K.A. HIGH-VOLTAGE HURDLES)

Raising money wasn’t the only challenge. A tiny beta test with four 12-foot stringers of light went up in 2016,

proving that the public would respond with enthusiasm. But organizers still had to alleviate the city’s safety concerns, so they agreed to keep the LEDs 30 feet away from any traffic light and to forgo hyperactive flashing, which can induce seizures. They also needed LEDs capable of withstanding year-round conditions: winter ice, summer heat, and constant tremors from the trains rumbling above. The team turned to San Francisco-based Looking Up Arts, which specializes in large-scale art installations (think Burning Man), to design and custom-build the materials—not just the LEDs themselves, but metal clamps, nylon bolts,

and rubber vibration-suppression pads.

## WHAT’S NEXT

Havalad and Newell envision more elaborate opportunities for under-L auroras, such as having the LEDs accompany an ancillary Lollapalooza stage under the tracks. (“You basically plug the lights into their sound board, and it would become a visualizer,” Newell says.) They plan to collaborate with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago on other ideas. Their hope is that the installation will be a draw for a downtown that still hasn’t recovered fully from the pandemic. Says Newell: “Chicago needs a shot in the arm, and we think the Wabash Lights could help.”

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LISTING OF THE MONTH

# Modern Marvel

A Wilmette home by architect Harry Weese finally hits the market.

By RACHEL FREUNDT



**F**OR THE FIRST TIME SINCE its construction 70 years ago, a modernist home that famed architect Harry Weese designed for his sister is for sale. While best known for large projects – including Chicago’s triangular Metropolitan Correctional Center and the circular Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist – Weese also created residences for his parents, aunts, and siblings. “That’s the only thing an architect can do when he starts out,” Weese once told historian Betty J. Blum, “because no one will trust him with anything bigger.”

Weese’s sister Suzanne built the house in 1954. The board-and-batten design, listed at \$1.5 million, is on half an acre in Wilmette, at 2801 Iroquois Road, in the Indian Hill Estates subdivision. Suzanne was concerned how her tradition-minded neighbors, who commissioned Tudors and Colonial Revivals, might react to a modern home but found they were fine with it.

The house combined Weese’s influences of the International style and Scandinavian architecture. The exterior sports minimal windows and slatted screens to ensure privacy. At just under 3,000 square feet, the five-bedroom L-shaped residence features an interior filled with original materials. Design elements include an open staircase, wood-paneled walls, and a double-sided fireplace. The inner walls do not reach the ceiling, creating a sense of openness. Weese used passive solar design, with terra cotta flooring and south-facing windows capturing heat from the sun. Another architect sibling, their brother, Ben, designed a compatible second-floor addition in 1963. Suzanne resided here until her death last November at 100.

Though Weese had a long career as an architect before his death in 1998, his lasting legacy is as a preservationist. Here’s hoping the new owners appreciate the history and design as much as the Weese family did. 📍

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### > EDGEWATER MONDAY MARKET

“It’s a tiny little thing, the smallest farmers’ market in the city, but I’m excited about getting my ginger juice.” 5917 N. Broadway

### > SENN HIGH SCHOOL

“The front yard has a big gathering place, and on Thursday nights in summer it becomes an outdoor neighborhood party. A string quartet shows up, and people bring their dogs.” 5900 N. Glenwood Ave.

### > KOHOKU-KU RAMEN

“A new place around the corner from us, and it’s adorable. Great ramen, great fried rice, even great fried chicken.” 1136 W. Thorndale Ave. – INTERVIEW BY ISI FRANK ATIVIE



## THE REGIMEN

# Catherine De Orio

Professional omnivore,  
evening stroller,  
recovering overachiever

By WEB BEHRENS

**R**EINVENTION COMES naturally to Catherine De Orio. As a young lawyer whose renowned party planning caught Oprah's attention, she enrolled in night culinary classes at Kendall College, then hopped into a foodie career, including a five-year stint as host of WTTW's *Check, Please!* Now executive director of the Foundation for Culinary Arts, which helps aspiring teen chefs, she's also on the verge of launching Casa De Orio, a website devoted to food and design. While still passionate about fitness – she runs on the lakefront and tones up with the Tracy Anderson Method – the 48-year-old West Loop resident leans into doing less: “Ten years ago, I thought I could do everything. Now I'm a big proponent of slowing down and enjoying life.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: (ALBUM) WAGRAM: (PHONE) ISTOCKPHOTO



## IT'S IN THE HIPS

“I got into Latin dance aerobics during COVID. I found an instructor online named Lonnie, and his routines are so joyful. One day, I came home to find my husband doing the class. He said, ‘Well, I had to see who you’re spending all this time with. Now I get it!’ You can’t stay in a bad mood if you’re dancing to salsa music.”

## POSTMEAL PROMENADE

“My husband and I do what in Italy they call a *passeggiata*, where you take a stroll after dinner. It’s great for us, both mentally and physically. We download about our days, it’s time when we’re not in front of our screens, and, of course, it helps you digest your food.”

## LEARNING TO LET GO

“The balance between work and leisure is so important. In America, we’re shamed for wanting to rest. In my 30s and most of my 40s, if I wasn’t at the restaurant eating for my job, I spent hours trying to work it off. I went to the gym at 5 a.m., I ran seven miles a day. Externally, I was in shape, but I burned myself out. Once I started creating very firm boundaries and got my head right with stress management, things turned around. Did I gain a few pounds? Yeah. But what I gained in overall well-being is well worth the tradeoff.”

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# LEGACY

## REAL ESTATE

GO

# Best Feet Forward

The Chicago Black Dance Legacy Project's Pritzker Pavilion performance will spotlight the breadth of local troupes.

By LAUREN WARNECKE



Amber Johnson (left) of Move Me Soul and Brenda Malika Moore of Najwa Dance Corps

**T**WO YEARS AGO, THE Chicago Black Dance Legacy Project's daylong showcase *Reclamation* drew 7,000 fans to Millennium Park, marking the end of its three-year pilot program and capping the city's Year of Chicago Dance initiative. Now, on August 24, the project will see if lightning can strike twice as it sets off another joy bomb at Pritzker Pavilion with its latest showcase, *Divination: The Dancing Souls of Black Folk*.

The subtitle alludes to an early 20th-century W.E.B. Du Bois text on the African American experience. But CBDLP director Princess Mhoon says the project's broader goal is to reframe Black dance as American dance—for everyone. “We’re not separate,” the veteran choreographer says. “We can find our common humanity on that stage, whether it’s in the church, on your prayer rug, in your community, or at a wedding.”

*Divination*, which kicks off at 5:45 p.m., will see performances from all 10 local troupes participating in the project's latest incarnation. But they won't be the only ones finding their groove. A preshow DJ will entice attendees to dance on the lawn and in the aisles, while a commissioned finale will bring to the stage all of the CBDLP dancers, as well as others from Chicago. “We’re hoping to pack the house again,” Mhoon says. “People should know that they’re coming to be part of a day of dance and not to just watch pieces.”

The participating troupes represent a wider range of dance styles this time around. Companies specializing in footwork, born out of Chicago's house music scene, and tap have been added to the project. “There are still people who are very unaware about Chicago footwork,” says Jamal “Litebulb” Oliver, cofounder of the Era Footwork Crew, a participating dance company. “Being able to present footwork in different places is definitely a value for us. Growing up, the most people did was the Bud Billiken Parade.”

In addition to providing performance showcases around the city, the



CBDLP, a program run by the University of Chicago's Logan Center for the Arts, offers development support to the participating troupes, some of which are less established than others. This might mean guidance on attracting funding, boosting audiences, or archiving performances (the project recently added an archival specialist to its staff). The CBDLP also coordinates peer-to-peer support among fellow participants.

“Everyone’s trying to grow their business in some way, shape, or form,” says Makeda Crayton, executive director of Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, a participating troupe that melds African American traditions and contemporary dance forms. Now in residence in the Loop with Ballet Chicago, Deeply Rooted has undertaken an ambitious \$15.6 million capital campaign to create a new dance center on the South Side. “In all of these dance organizations, the performance aspect gets the most attention, and this other stuff falls by the wayside.”

**“We’re not separate.  
We can find our  
common humanity on  
that stage.”**

—Princess Mhoon, director of the Chicago Black Dance Legacy Project

Providing support for such matters is part of a rising-tide-lifts-all-boats philosophy that pervades the CBDLP. “There’s an African saying: ‘I am because we are,’” says Emily Hooper Lansana, a senior administrator at the Logan Center. “If you are a leader of a Black arts organization that has been able to sustain itself for decades, you have a fierce spirit and survival skills.”

When Lansana moved to Chicago 30 years ago, “it felt like a place where you could have an idea and bring that idea to fruition,” she says. The Chicago Black Dance Legacy Project is working to keep the harvest growing. 📍

# AGENDA

## Top 10 reasons to fill up your calendar this month

By KRIS VIRE



**< GOTTA HAVE FAITH**  
In First Floor Theater's religious-ish rom-com *In His Hands*, Christian (played by Alex Benito Rodriguez, pictured) and Daniel might be falling in love, as long as God doesn't get in the way. *Through Aug. 24.* [firstfloortheater.com](http://firstfloortheater.com)

**> CURRENCY AFFAIRS**

Cash is king at Rosemont's *World's Fair of Money*, where vintage coin and currency collectors can browse dealers' wares and ogle rarities like a 1794 U.S. silver dollar. *Aug. 6–10.* [money.org](http://money.org)

**> GAY RITES**

Queer-friendly music acts fill five stages at *Northalsted Market Days*, the long-running street fest that brings 100,000 visitors to the city's official gayborhood. *Aug. 10–11.* [northalsted.com](http://northalsted.com)



**> BLAST TO THE PAST**

It was only a matter of time before *Back to the Future* became a musical. The tuner based on the 1985 time-travel caper sets the Cadillac Palace Theatre as its destination. *Aug. 13–Sept. 1.* [broadwayinchicago.com](http://broadwayinchicago.com)



**> EXPIRATION DATE NIGHT**

*Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* star Rachel Bloom confronts mortality (but in a fun way, with songs!) in her solo comedy *Death, Let Me Do My Show*. *Aug. 14–24.* [steppenwolf.org](http://steppenwolf.org)

**> FOUNDING FODDER**

Marriott Theatre gets into the political-squabbling spirit with a revival of *1776*, the Tony-winning musical about the Continental Congress. *Aug. 21–Oct. 13.* [marriotttheatre.com](http://marriotttheatre.com)

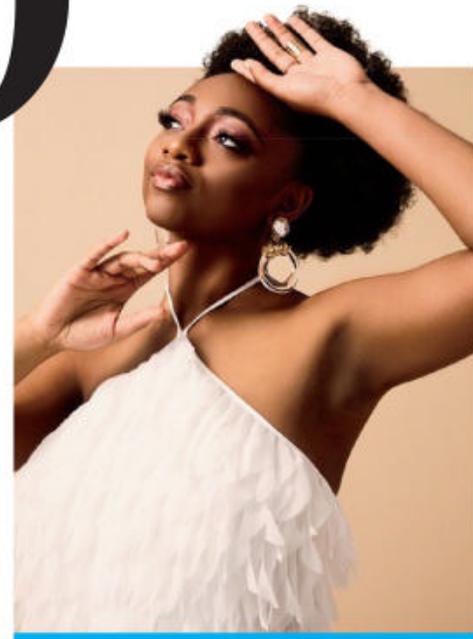
**> OMAR'S COMIN'**

Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter and northwest Indiana native *Omar Apollo* headlines Northerly Island in support of his sophomore album, *God Said No*. *Aug. 23.* [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)



**> NEXT LEVEL**

The free two-day music fest *LatiNxt* brings rising Latin American acts (including French Chilean rapper Ana Tijoux and Mexican electronic-folk artist Pahuja) to three Navy Pier stages. *Aug. 24–25.* [navypier.org](http://navypier.org)



**< JOY TO THE WORLD**

The 24-year-old jazz singer *Samara Joy* has been hailed as a generational talent. Hear her croon under the stars at her Ravinia debut. *Aug. 25.* [ravinia.org](http://ravinia.org)

**> POLISH WITH EVERYTHING**

Get your fill of polka and pierogi at *Taste of Polonia*. The Labor Day weekend affair in Jefferson Park bills itself as the country's largest Polish festival. *Aug. 30–Sept. 2.* [topchicago.org](http://topchicago.org)

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# TABLE

Kakigori  
at Gaijin

## Chilled Out

Asian shaved-ice desserts are here to cool you down this summer. By JOHN KESSLER

**J**UST ABOUT EVERY ASIAN COUNTRY OFFERS a version of a crushed-ice sundae. Unlike with a snow cone, ice and syrup mark just the beginning of these creations – they may include ice cream, sweetened beans, corn flakes, fresh fruit, condensed milk, springy cubes of gelatin, even corn. They look enormous but disappear quickly as the ice melts, the flavors swirl, and you keep assembling surprising, wonderful spoonfuls. Try these five.



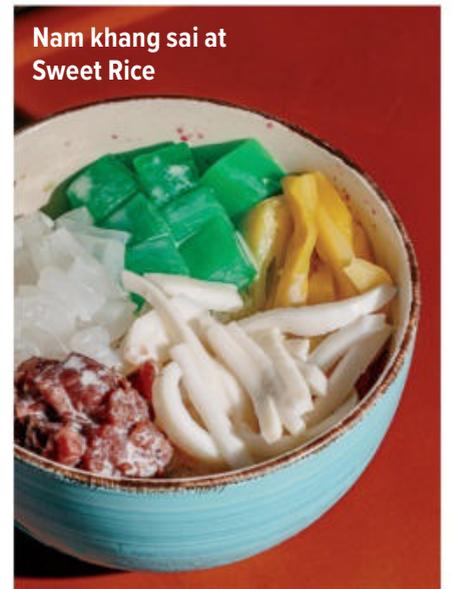
Halo-halo at Boonie's



Bingsu at Tsaocaa



Citrus coupe at Asador Bastian



Nam khang sai at Sweet Rice

**JAPANESE**

**Kakigori at Gaijin**

During the warm months in Japan, shopkeepers hang curtains displaying the character for 'ice' to entice passersby to come inside and escape the humidity over a giant mound of kakigori. This okonomiyaki spot offers the flavored ice for dessert, and bless them for showcasing the most classic type, Ujikintoki. Named after a town renowned for its green tea, it combines matcha syrup with azuki red bean paste and fun, wiggly cubes of coffee jelly. This typically Japanese combination of astringency and sweetness spells refreshment. **\$11.** 950 W. Lake St., West Loop

**FILIPINO**

**Halo-halo at Boonie's**

Joe Fontelera offers a streamlined version (no sweetened

kidney beans!) of the Filipino classic, built on the tropical flavors of ube and coconut. Ube ice cream, jam, and milk streak a tall parfait glass with their purple hue, while cubes of coconut gel and soft, sweet macapuno coconut add an all-important slippery texture and comforting flavor. It's available only at midday, but lunch at Boonie's is never a bad idea. **\$8.** 4337 N. Western Ave., North Center

**KOREAN**

**Bingsu at Tsaocaa**

Bingsu is loved throughout Asia, which is why this Taiwanese snack shop offers "Korean snowflake ice." The hallmarks of the style include ample fresh fruit and milk-infused ice that shaves into fine, snowy shards. The "double mix" with strawberries and mango holds a buried treasure of sweet azuki beans

and is drizzled with sweetened condensed milk. It's portioned for sharing, but take it from me, it's not impossible to polish one off alone. **\$13.25.** 2026 S. Clark St., South Loop; 1337 W. Fullerton Ave., Lincoln Park; 3139 N. Broadway, Lake View East; 5220 Fashion Outlets Way, Rosemont

**CHINESE**

**Citrus coupe at Asador Bastian**

Co-owner Hsing Chen wanted a refreshing dessert at her Basque steakhouse, so she and pastry chef Hannah Acosta devised this delightful take. In addition to icy, crunchy grapefruit granité, it features gelée with suspended grapefruit and orange segments, a layer of coconut cream, freeze-dried mandarins, and lime zest. In short, all the melty, wobbly textures and bright

flavors that spell summer in Asia. It's inspired by the shaved-ice sweets of Chen's Bay Area childhood, but made less sweet and with fresh fruit for a version that's just right after eating a steak. **\$17.** 214 W. Erie St., River North

**THAI**

**Nam khang sai at Sweet Rice**

Thai shaved ice is notable for the hue imparted by a red syrup called nam daeng. It tastes a little like strawberry and rose, with a bit of mouth-drying astringency. The version at this street food haven starts with a base of pebbly ice and arrives topped with jellies, coconut gel, palm seeds, corn, jackfruit, condensed milk, and red syrup, which add springy and crunchy textures. **\$7.50.** 1904 N. Western Ave., Logan Square



TASTEMAKERS

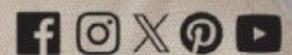
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tetela and  
taco dorado

## REVIEW

# A Double Delight

**With both a tasting menu and taco omakase, Cariño pushes the local Latin food scene forward.**

By JOHN KESSLER

**R**EMEMBER *THE FAR SIDE* cartoon that compared what we say to dogs (a speech bubble with full sentences) with what they hear (a thought bubble with “blah, blah, blah” and, occasionally, their names)? I feel like one of those dogs whenever I go to a tasting-menu restaurant and the server spiels each dish over loud music, listing a dozen arcane ingredients bound up in a story. I nod politely, then ask my companion, “Did she say this was salmon?”

At some restaurants the dishes themselves can be as much of a blur as the word salad that precedes them. But at Cariño, a five-table rabbit hutch in the

Uptown space that previously housed Brass Heart and 42 Grams, the descriptions may be long, but the flavors unfold with such clarity that I find myself drawn in nonetheless. Before long I ask the server, “Can we go over this again?”

Chef-owner Norman Fenton, who previously helmed Brass Heart, characterizes his style as “Latin inspired,” but it reads as a meditation on his experiences in Mexico, where he has a wife and child as well as a second restaurant, Wild Tulum, which he also runs with business partner Karen Young. A meal at Cariño means cucumber-jalapeño aguachile with Ora King salmon, a churro unlike any other, and many dishes based

on masa ground from corn that Fenton nixtamalizes in the kitchen. He is one of the most technically proficient modernist chefs working today – a man who can tweezer, foam, gel, and encapsulate like no one’s business and create visual art with his dishes. He also seems to have a lot of fun doing so, cooking with a level of maturity and insight that sets him apart. His best dishes forge an emotional connection; you feel them.

Fenton offers two distinct experiences at Cariño, which opened in December. There’s a tasting menu, available in the dining room or, with a slightly more elaborate upgrade, at his seven-seat chef’s counter. Then he offers a taco omakase, which is served only at the chef’s counter at 10 each night. I love the omakase – it’s delightful and unexpected and bounces along with a pacing and logic unlike any other dining experience in Chicago. The tasting menu captivated me as well, though I was pining for something simple and ingredient-driven for this long meal’s third act. I’m not complaining, just stating a preference. This chef traffics in wow, and each of his courses is a banger.

I don’t want to provide a beat-by-beat account of the tasting menu (that almost feels like a spoiler), but I can say the theatrics here are familiar yet exciting. The surprising whoosh of the dry ice releases a chile vapor that enhances the lively heat in one dish. Another tickles your nose with the lemony scent of white copal resin once its dome lifts.

Beautiful little bites – a tiny triangular tetela bursting with duck confit and smoked sweet potato, a tubular taco dorado holding creamy chicken liver mousse – thrum with flavor. If you’re like me, you’ll melt at the first bite of a huitlacoche raviolo swathed in foamy sweet corn butter and fried corn silk. The textures and tastes sway to the same rhythm, and the tiniest bit of black truffle enhancing the flavor of the corn fungus is as perfect a use of the fragrant truffle as I’ve encountered.

Everyone’s tasting-menu mileage varies, and my tank often starts



Norman Fenton



Wagyu beef taco with salsa de molcajete

running on empty about the time the meat courses arrive. That happened at Cariño. I enjoyed the sweetbreads and parsnips in their unusual banana mole chiapaneco once I pulled off the fried plantain strips that capped it like an ill-fitting fascinator. What I really wanted, though, was a steamy tortilla to mop up the sauce. The star culmination of this grand meal was a slice of lamb loin in a tart hibiscus demi-glace, but it was too much by that point for my appetite or my interest.

That may explain why I wasn't more pumped for Fenton's wild segue into an elaborate predessert. It's coffee and churros, but freaky: a warmly spiced café de olla brewed with duck stock instead of water, and a churro with foie gras mousse, mole negro, and raisins. I found it intriguing for one bite, yet six more remained on the plate.

At the taco omakase, however, I relished every taste. Also, though a table in the tiny room is perfectly nice, a seat at the counter facing the open kitchen is far more exciting. You are greeted by a cook wielding a serious molcajete, into which he adds charred vegetables and other ingredients that will make up the night's fresh salsa. The counter, too, is the place to enjoy one of the not wholly successful but fun riffs on classic cocktails, such as

a margarita built around a ball of green ice and a smoky old-fashioned topped with a flaming skull. Two drinks (wine, beer, cocktails, or nonalcoholic beverages) are included.

The meal begins with smaller versions of a few dishes from the tasting menu, including that salmon aguachile and a michelada oyster hiding in its Tajín-dusted shell under Clamato spheres and beer foam. The tacos arrive on hot-off-the-griddle tortillas, which are exemplars of form, so nutty and toasty you want to inhale them.

Make that the whole taco you want to inhale. Fenton's slow-braised suadero, a belly cut popular in Mexico, arrives simply with green salsa and a lime wedge. It's sublime, one of the best tacos I've ever eaten. A batter-fried baton of king crab in an achiote-orange crema inspired by the flavors of cochinita pibil tastes equally of fun and luxury, as does a rare slice of wagyu strip loin in that tart salsa de molcajete. Then there's a lovely ice cream and fruit coupe with mango and chamoy, and you're done. One hour.

I left that taco omakase wanting more. Not more food but more of that feeling – that floaty sensation when my mind is racing and my lips are tingling and I realize I've just experienced a truly great meal. 🍴

**CARIÑO**  
Tasting menu

★★★★  
Taco omakase

★★★★★  
4662 N. Broadway,  
Uptown

■ **Dinner for two**  
Tasting menu: \$600;  
taco omakase: \$320

■ **Tip** The taco omakase books out first on Tock, so reserve it early.

★ Recommended  
★★ Very good ★★★ Excellent  
★★★★ Exceptional

NEIGHBORHOOD FIND

# Rice World

**AMICI-CHICAGO**

3933 N. Broadway, Lake View  
■ **Perfect order** Italian arancino with pasta salad

■ Amici-Chicago, a counter-service spot that opened in September, is Italian in origin — owner Alfio Sciacca moved here from Sicily at the age of 24 — but as he'll tell you, it isn't solely an Italian restaurant. "Amici" means "friends" in Italian, but here it is an acronym for African, Mexican, Indian, Caribbean, and Italian. Sciacca, who has worked in Chicago restaurants, including Topo Gigio, for 36 years, specializes in arancini (fried Italian rice balls), which he stuffs with dishes from these countries and regions.

Try the Masalacino, filled with chicken tikka masala; the Birriacino, packed with beef birria; or the Jambacino, a recent addition made with sausage, shrimp, and seasoned rice that's a fried version of spicy jambalaya. This global tour is fun, but my favorite is the original: the classic Italian arancino. Delivered hot from the fryer, it has a crisp golden exterior and a center filled with rich meat sauce, gooey melted mozzarella, and peas. It's served with marinara sauce on the side for dipping every bite.

Each \$8 rice ball comes with your choice of fresh-cut fries or a housemade pasta salad. Opt for the latter — it's made with a light touch of mayo, olive oil, and giardiniera, which adds just the right amount of crunch and brings this international restaurant right back around to Chicago.

—TITUS RUSCITTI



Italian arancini



# South American Soul

By AMY CAVANAUGH

**A**T BRASERO, THE THRILLING NEW SPOT FROM THE EL CHE STEAKHOUSE & Bar team, chef John Manion and chef de cuisine Adam Meyer explore the flavors of South America, particularly Brazil, where Manion lived as a kid. That means loads of seafood, wood-fired meats, and wines from the continent. Beverage director Alex Cuper offers 100 bottles under \$100. Below, they share pairings for three of their favorite dishes. 1709 W. Chicago Ave., West Town

## MOQUECA

“Moqueca is one of the national dishes of Brazil,” Manion says. “We lean into the West African influences, so there’s tomatoes, chiles, garlic, ginger, and dendê oil, which is a defining flavor and aroma. Shrimp and mussels flavor the broth, and we’re using mahi mahi. It’s not far outside something you’d have at home, just polished up.” \$63

### Pair with ...

**Roberto Henriquez Corinto Super Estrella, Chile, 2021**

“I put a magnum of this on the menu as something fun,” says Cuper. “The moqueca is such a communal dish; just get a big bottle of wine to go with it.” \$99 a bottle

## HAMACHI CRUDO

“Our sous chef, Zach [Hertz], came up with this,” Meyer says. “He takes red yuzu kosho and cuts the acidity and spiciness with Duke’s mayonnaise.” Manion adds: “There are more Japanese in São Paulo than anywhere outside of Japan. We’re pulling influences from places that had an impact on the food.” \$24

### Pair with ...

**Colectivo Mutante PX#1, Chile, 2021**

“There’s salinity that goes well with the super-savory ponzu,” Cuper says. “It’s a great wine to branch people out of their comfort zone.” \$14 a glass; \$54 a bottle

## GRILLED QUAIL

“I hadn’t dreamed of changing the quail dish until we did a dinner with Zubair Mohajir from Coach House,” Manion says. “I gave the quail a dousing of house hot sauce, Zubair fried Indian chickpeas, and we added chimichurri-inspired green goddess dressing and black garlic molasses. It needed a little crunchy-crunch: Chicken skins, as they say, tied the room together.” \$34

### Pair with ...

**Viña González Bastías Matorral, Chile, 2019**

“I find a unique savory characteristic similar to dried herbs that matches the quail really well,” Cuper says. “It’s chilled, so it’s a great wine for summertime.” \$72 a bottle



## Ask the Dining Editor

**My parents are coming to town. Where should I take them for dinner?**

When I have visitors, I want a place that has great food (obviously!) and feels unique but also very Chicago. In other words, a restaurant like Boeufhaus in Humboldt Park. The French-and-German-influenced steakhouse is cozy and offers some of the city’s best beef. Besides a steak, order the shrimp cocktail and short rib beignets to share and the ceci bean cavatelli—ever since I learned it’s a server favorite, I’ve been getting it every time.

**What’s a good place for a breakfast meeting?**

For a casual weekday morning get-together, I like Loaf Lounge in Avondale for great breakfast sandwiches and pastries and a low-key atmosphere that allows for lingering. For something more formal, an elegant hotel restaurant is a good bet. Try NoMI Kitchen at the Park Hyatt in the Gold Coast for Michigan Avenue views and fancy eggs Benedict. —AMY CAVANAUGH

Email Amy at [acavanaugh@chicagomag.com](mailto:acavanaugh@chicagomag.com) with your burning dining questions.

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# The Hot List

10 places everyone's talking about (in order of heat)

**1** **PETITE VIE BRASSERIE** What Paul Virant (Gaijin) gets back to his French roots with this newcomer in Western Springs, just around the corner from his now-closed favorite, Vie. **Why** We'll go anywhere Virant is cooking, and we'll give you two reasons why: duck confit with roasted leeks in vinaigrette and gnocchi Parisienne with peas and spring onion. **Where** 909 Burlington Ave., Western Springs



Gnocchi Parisienne

**2** **BAYAN KO DINER** What Bayan Ko's Cuban-Filipino fusion makes its way down the block to this more casual diner. **Why** We'll take a Cubano breakfast burrito for breakfast and cola-glazed chicken skewers at lunch. Dinner is coming soon. **Where** 1820 W. Montrose Ave., Ravenswood

**3** **MINYOLI** What Rich Wang cooks the Taiwanese dishes of his youth at this Andersonville newcomer. **Why** Try classics of the cuisine like fried chicken and beef noodle soup. **Where** 5420 N. Clark St., Andersonville

**4** **SALT SHED PUB** What Goose Island's brewpub relocated from its Clybourn beginnings to the music venue (you can go even if you're not seeing a show). **Why** Post up on the deck overlooking the river and sip beers while eating smash burgers. **Where** 1221 W. Blackhawk St., Goose Island

**5** **COMMON DECENCY** What Mark Steuer (Funkenhausen) is behind this '90s-inspired bar. **Why** Coffee Date, an espresso martini with dates, honey, and cacao, attracts folks on, well, dates. **Where** 3154 W. Diversey Ave., Logan Square

**6** **MILLY'S PIZZA IN THE PAN** What After setting up shop in Uptown in 2022, the top pizza joint in our recent rankings has opened a takeout-and-delivery-only location in the near western burbs of Berwyn. **Why** Robert Maleski nails the crust. **Where** 6737 Roosevelt Rd., Berwyn

**7** **VALHALLA** What Stephen Gillanders moved his tasting-menu restaurant out of Time Out Market and into a standalone (and more refined) Wicker Park space. **Why** You'll find familiar favorites, like the crab arroz caldo, but Gillanders has added new dishes, too. **Where** 2020 W. Division St., Wicker Park

**8** **CASA CHI** What Nikkei cuisine (Peruvian-Japanese fusion) is the focus at Richard Sandoval's bar in the InterContinental Chicago. **Why** Snack on ceviche alongside cocktails. **Where** 505 N. Michigan Ave., Magnificent Mile

**9** **RUNAWAY COW** What A colorful new vegan ice cream shack slinging oat-milk-based frozen treats **Why** Cool down with German chocolate sundaes, Biscoff snowstorms, and ice cream cakes. **Where** 608 W. 31st St., Bridgeport

**10** **TORTAZO** What Rick Bayless's casual torta joint adds a new location at Old Orchard mall. **Why** Grab a chicken milanese torta – and a marg – to keep you going between stores. **Where** Skokie Boulevard and Golf Road, Skokie

Now is  
the time to  
**THINK  
BIG  
— AND —  
DRIVE  
CHANGE.**

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**TIGIST REDA'S BERBERE  
HEIRLOOM TOMATO SALAD**

**Makes** 6 servings

**Active time** 5 minutes

**Total time** 30 minutes

- ½ cup cubed ambasha or other bread
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 3 medium heirloom tomatoes, cored and roughly chopped
- 1 jalapeño (deseeded for less heat if desired), sliced
- 1 small shallot, sliced
- 5 basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. berbere
- ½ tsp. ground cardamom
- ½ tsp. salt
- Juice of 1 lime

IN THE KITCHEN

## Salad Days

**T**OMATO SALADS MAY BE ALL OVER MENUS DURING THIS FLEETING season, when the fruit is at its juicy peak, but Tigist Reda's take is a little different. "I wanted to make something that was familiar, but give it a distinct flavor," says the Demera chef. To garden-variety ingredients like olive oil and basil, she adds berbere, a brilliant red blend of cayenne pepper and spices like cumin and coriander that's foundational to the cuisine of her native Ethiopia. The resulting salad – bright and fresh with an undertone of complex heat – feels both classic and new. Along with ambasha (a traditional flatbread that's cubed and toasted into croutons here), berbere can be found at Ethiopian grocery stores like Edgewater's Kukul Market. – CATE HUGUELET

1

Make the croutons: Heat the oven to 425 degrees. Toss bread cubes with 1 tablespoon olive oil and spread on a baking tray. Bake, shaking the pan half-way through, until golden brown and crisp, about 15 minutes. Set aside to cool.

2

Make the salad: Place croutons in a large bowl and add tomatoes, jalapeño, shallot, basil, berbere, cardamom, salt, lime juice, and remaining olive oil. Toss to coat. Serve immediately.



# Best of

Whether you are in town for a certain convention or have lived here forever, we've got you covered with top picks for shopping, eating, drinking, and more.

# Chicago

Photography by Nick Murway  
Imanaga portrait by Clayton Hauck



# BEST NEW REASON TO VISIT WRIGLEY FIELD

All we really require from our city's pro athletes is that they help their teams win. But it doesn't hurt when they also love being here — and get what makes us tick. In his first season with the Cubs after eight years playing in his native Japan, 30-year-old phenom **Shota Imanaga** is nailing it on all fronts. Not only has he enjoyed a sensational start to his rookie season, he has further endeared himself to fans by coming onto the field to “Chelsea Dagger.” He explains, through an interpreter: “I had a chance to go to a Blackhawks game, and when they played the song, I saw how much the fans were getting into it. It was like a whole performance.” He also has started to embrace local cuisine. He's had deep-dish pizza (from where, he's not sure) and offers this review: “If I'm super hungry, I feel like that would be the best time to eat it.” And though he has yet to try a Chicago hot dog, he's been warned: “I like ketchup, but from what I've heard, if you use it, people will get mad at you.” That's another thing about Imanaga: He's funny. To wit, the nameplate above his locker reads “Mike Imanaga” because Mike is the name he gives at Starbucks. Coffee is a central part of his perfect off day, which he describes this way: “Waking up early, driving on Lake Shore Drive, watching the lake, really taking in the view, grabbing an iced latte, and then enjoying it on a terrace.” Welcome to Chicago, Mike. —MARK BAZER





## BEST EXCUSE TO GO OUT ON A MONDAY NIGHT

The dark confines of the Green Mill are superb for winding down after the week's first day of work. Sit back and watch one of the city's most impressive guitarists, **Joel Paterson**, masterfully flick his Epiphone's strings to conjure slinky melodies — from Benny Goodman to the Beatles — before switching to the plaintive crying of his pedal steel guitar. His weekly show at this Uptown institution runs from 8 p.m. to midnight, but the final minutes are when you'll hear lovely lullabies like "Mr. Sandman." As Paterson remarked during one recent show, "We need you late-night people." *4802 N. Broadway* — ROBERT LOERZEL

## BEST STOREFRONT THEATER INCUBATOR

Chicago has earned its reputation for adventurous stage productions that lure audiences well beyond downtown. But even the most enterprising theatergoers may not know what's worth checking out. One solid rule of thumb: See what's playing at the **Chopin Theatre**. In recent decades, the 106-year-old Noble Square theater has served as a rental venue nurturing scores of sensationally scrappy companies. The street-level main stage and squat basement studio provided fertile grounds for storefront standouts like Trap Door Theatre (which performed its first avant-garde outing here in 1994), Roadworks, Defiant Theatre, the Hypocrites, and the House Theatre, among many others. More recently, you might find Michael Shannon prowling upstairs in A Red Orchid Theatre's *Turret*, while the crafty Kokandy Productions mounts idiosyncratic musicals below (like its current production, *Alice by Heart*). For a reliably quirky sampling of quintessential Chicago theater, the Chopin's got you covered. *1543 W. Division St.* — KRIS VIRE

PHOTOGRAPH: (EAGLE) JOSE M. OSORIO/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



## BEST BALD EAGLE SPOTTING WITHIN CITY LIMITS

Majestic raptors are a year-round sight above **Big Marsh Park**, but they're not the only reason to visit this nearly 300-acre swath of urban wilderness in South Deering. It used to be a dumping ground, polluted with slag from nearby factories. But since the Chicago Park District acquired it in 2011 and started cleaning it up, it's become a haven for deer, coyotes, turtles, snakes, muskrats, herons, and hawks. You'll glimpse those critters, but not many fellow humans, while walking the miles of paved trails. *11559 S. Stony Island Ave.* — ROBERT LOERZEL

## BEST RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE VIEWING PARTY

Sixteen seasons in, *RuPaul's Drag Race* still has a grip on its fans even firmer than the contestants' corsets. You can find numerous raucous viewing parties in Northalsted and Andersonville bars — but there's only one where you can sit mere feet from actual participants. At **Roscoe's**, two-time contestant Naysha Lopez hosts alongside local queens Batty Davis and Kara Mel D'Ville. They invite a rotating cast of *RPDR*ers to spill behind-the-scenes tea during commercial breaks: who kiki'd, who kai kai'd (Google it), and who hates whom. Afterward, there's a full drag show. Tickets are \$15 to \$75, depending on the lineup. *3356 N. Halsted St.* — ARCHY JAMJUN

## BEST PLACE TO WAIT FOR YOUR SHIP TO COME IN

You can see boats in the distance from practically anywhere along the lake-shore, but seasoned ship watchers know the prime viewing is actually inland. Spanning the Calumet River, the **95th Street Bridge** connects South Chicago and the East Side, the city's most maritime neighborhoods. Standing beside it is as close as you can get to oceangoing "salties" and Great Lakes freighters, some actually delivering salt to the Morton dock at 100th Street. Track their arrivals on the MarineTraffic app. And when a ship passes, bells clang and the bridge rises, just as it did for the Blues Brothers. — EDWARD MCCLELLAND

## BEST PLACE TO CRUSH A BASEBALL

Just because you're a dad doesn't mean you know how to hit a curve. Fortunately, after my son fell in love with baseball four years ago, I had **SwingScience Hitting Lab**. This Lincoln Square facility has two batting cages equipped with HitTrax, which uses motion capture technology. You can see your swings played back in slow motion, and radar detection calculates exit velocity and distance, so you can self-correct as you square off against a digital pitcher in a ballpark of your choice. Cages are \$40 for a half hour; lessons start at \$50. 2425 W. Lawrence Ave. —JOE MENO

## BEST VIBES ON KARAOKE NIGHT

True to the name, **Pop Up Karaoke** apparatuses in various North Side bars five nights a week, putting on an infectious joyful experience. As an enthusiast who has taken my "Wrecking Ball" all over town, I love how this series fosters a community of regulars who pack the dance floor and applaud every performance. It's not about being great — it's about having a great time. First-time crooners receive a gold star, and any heckling gets shut down by DJ Eamon Daly. Stick around for the final tune of the night, a bar-wide sing-along. It's impossible to go home in a bad mood once you've joined in the backing vocals for "Build Me Up Buttercup." —KIMBERLY NELSON





## BEST AQUATIC RESPITE AWAY FROM THE LAKE

There's something magical about gliding through the **Humboldt Park Lagoon** on Chicago's only pedal-powered swan boats. Who knew the city had so much serenity to absorb: water lilies floating along the surface, wetland grasses humming in the breeze, turtles basking on sunbaked logs. For \$30 an hour, up to four people can ride inside a giant swan, so it's a versatile outing — great for sharing laughs with the kids or romance with a date. Though Chance the Snapper (the lagoon's famous alligator) relocated to Florida, spotting a majestic heron is just as cool, not to mention safer. If it weren't for the Willis Tower peeking between the trees, you'd never believe you were in the middle of a bustling neighborhood. *1301 N. Humboldt Dr.*

—JOANNA MARSZALEK

# BEST SMALL SETTING FOR BIG-NAME COMEDY

A mix of chutzpah and attention to detail has enabled founder and co-owner Ryan Martin to attract top-tier standups to the 302-seat **Den Theatre** in Wicker Park. For example: John Mulaney, who's had multirate gigs at the United Center, played the Den in February; Tom Segura was there in October; Maria Bamford will return in December. "I'm pretty bold when it comes to going after big things," says Martin. "But we also worked hard to create an environment that feels good for both our customers and the talent." That includes filament lighting to create a soft glow and a thrust stage, with seating on three sides, to foster interaction. "The acts we book tell us we've hit a sweet spot — this is a space where they can be themselves, connect with the audience, and work on their craft." *1331 N. Milwaukee Ave.* —JUDY SUTTON TAYLOR

## BEST PLACE TO BLOW YOUR KID'S MIND

Each Sunday afternoon at **Chicago Magic Lounge**, a feat of pure impossibility is deftly performed: keeping a bunch of fidgety kids entertained for a full hour. The genre of children's magic shows sometimes suffers from a corny reputation, but this long-standing residency in Andersonville is anything but. There's a science to holding children's attention rapt, and the professionals here do so with colorful props, family-friendly one-liners, cute animal appearances, and genuinely amazing tricks. While the rotating cast is consistently great, look for when Danny Orleans, the dean of children's magicians, is headlining. *5050 N. Clark St.* —KEVIN PANG



## BEST PUBLIC SCULPTURE NOT MODELED AFTER AN AFGHAN HOUND

For a dramatic take on public art, head to Jackson Park's Wooded Island for Yoko Ono's **Skylanding**. Amid this serene, grassy setting, a dozen 12-foot-tall steel lotus petals protrude from the ground — or have they fallen from the sky? The work, installed in 2016 on the site of the Japanese Pavilion from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, symbolizes peace and harmony. Indeed, as you wander through the undulating metal flower, its twisting petals creating an interplay of light and shadow, a palpable sense of calm envelops you — the perfect respite in a busy city. *6401 S. Stony Island Ave.* —DAVID SYREK

## BEST PLACE TO ENJOY A PREMOVIE SAKE

The combined onset of streaming services and the pandemic made us all question the very notion of going to the movies. Why fork out the price of a monthly gym membership just so your family can see yet another Marvel sequel and munch on overpriced Sno-Caps? The **Logan Theatre's lobby bar** will make you want to return. With its beautifully restored gold-and-black art deco touches and vintage film posters, the lounge feels transportive, steeped in the gilded atmosphere of cinematic history. And its menu treats you like a grownup, offering margaritas, old-fashioned, even sake, along with such delightfully eclectic snacks as cheddar-and-jalapeño-stuffed pretzels and helado de limón. Let's see Netflix do all that. *2646 N. Milwaukee Ave.* —JOE MENO

## BEST PLACE TO LOL WITH THE LITERATI

Who says poetry is for sad sacks sighing over their diaries or delicate flowers musing obscurely about actual flowers? Not the poets at **Giggle Hour!** Cofounder Kailah "KP" Peters explains: "There is a time and space for trauma dumping and crying in a group, but we also need to hold space for joy." The silly, anarchic, and interactive show, complete with a crowdsourced Mad Lib, entertains a rowdy but supportive audience (admission is \$10) inside the low-key Lincoln Lodge in Logan Square. Every first Tuesday, performers get seven minutes max to walk the tightrope between poetry and standup, with just one rule: no haters (read: racists, TERFs, homophobes). *2040 N. Milwaukee Ave.* —KATHLEEN ROONEY



# BEST SPOT TO GET YOUR HORROR FIX

Whatever your tastes in creepy flicks — monster movies, arty gore films, sleepaway camp slashers — **the Brewed** has something for you. (Even the name of this Avondale café is an Easter egg reference to David Cronenberg's *The Brood*.) Inside these lavender walls, no one has to wait until October to indulge in all things Halloween. The joint hosts book release parties, members-only film screenings, and, every third Thursday of the month, Deep Cuts Horror Trivia night. It's fine to show up solo — no matter your degree of knowledge about scream queens and screen fiends, you can become part of an impromptu team. Maybe you know every *Final Destination* kill but haven't explored Mike Flanagan's filmography? You're sure to find a teammate who loves *Midnight Mass*. Even if the genre gives you the ick, come for the Franken Berry-inspired matcha lattes. *2843 N. Milwaukee Ave.* —SKYLER AIKERSON

## BEST BRAINY BATTLE OF WORDS

I usually feel like a smart and confident person — until I walk into **Write Club**, the monthly melee of minds at Gman Tavern in Wrigleyville. Every third Tuesday, fiery host Corrbette Pasko, delivering her best Tyler Durden shtick, pits writer against writer in onstage verbal combat. In three bouts, competitors get seven minutes to dominate each other with words, reading essays they've prepared from prompts (example: cake vs. ice cream). Their treatises set off verbal bombs, leaving the audience dripping in nimble wordplay. At the end of each raucous round, the winner (determined by crowd applause and screams) receives a tiny plastic trophy known as the Loving Cup of Deathless Fucking Glory. Oh, and \$100. *3740 N. Clark St.*

—ELIZABETH GOMEZ



## BEST MOVIEPASS SUBSTITUTE FOR FILM SNOBS

If you're the type eager to see the 1994 lesbian dramedy *Go Fish* one night and the 2023 Spanish coming-of-age film *20,000 Species of Bees* another, then you already know the Gene Siskel Film Center is your spot. But unlimited arthouse movies for \$30 per month, through August (including the Sidney Lumet series running through August 21)? The **Siskel Summer Pass** is a cinephile's dream. *164 N. State St.*

—CHARLOTTE GODDU

## BEST VENUE FOR SACRED MUSIC

Despite hopeful new construction, the area around Jackson and Kedzie in East Garfield Park is still pretty bleak: boarded-up storefronts, weedy vacant lots. So when I wandered into **Our Lady of Sorrows Basilica**, it was like going from the desert into Aladdin's Cave of Wonders: a magnificent 80-foot-high vaulted and coffered ceiling, a vast marble altar, multiple statues, jewel-toned stained glass. (If this incredibly ornate institution looks familiar, perhaps you recall seeing Sean Connery and Kevin Costner kneeling here in *The Untouchables*.) But the best part of this Italian Renaissance-style church is the 3,000-pipe Lyon & Healy organ, which rattled my molars at a free Lenten concert. Experience it yourself September 15 at the big 150th anniversary concert, featuring the St. Cecilia Choir of St. John Cantius Church. *3121 W. Jackson Blvd.*

—MARY WISNIEWSKI



## BEST SPOT FOR JUDGING TOURISTS

By the salty sainted ghost of Mike Royko, how the **Billy Goat Tavern** on Lower Michigan has changed! It used to be a newspaper bar, but with both the *Tribune* and *Sun-Times* no longer nearby, ink-stained tipplers are scarce. Now the Goat has become a haven for locals to quietly mock tourists. Look at those prep school boys, competing over who can bellow “Cheezborger!” most obnoxiously. Or that pastel-polo-shirted Iowa couple saying how they loved the Art Institute but didn’t dare head south of Jackson. Then there’s that jagoff talking his poor date into a Malört shot and mansplaining about “authenticity.” The best scoffing is done from Wise Guy’s Corner, just to the right of the door — it was the favorite nook of wizened journalists, who could peer over the whole room from there. But don’t take a stool from a wise guy, lest you be nonsilently judged.

430 N. Michigan Ave. — MARY WISNIEWSKI

## BEST LOOP SANCTUM

Forget Maggie Daley and Grant Parks. The best downtown spot tourists *haven’t* discovered is **Lakeshore East Park**, bounded by Columbus Drive, Randolph Street, Wacker Drive, and the lake. Surrounded by a mountain range of high-rise condo buildings, including Jeanne Gang’s Aqua and St. Regis masterpieces, the park provides a lush landscape of flowers and fountains. It’s a great place to read a book, have a picnic, or just wander.

450 E. Benton Pl. — STANLEY KAY

## BEST PLACE TO GET YOUR GOSPEL GROOVE ON

You can hear the music thumping as you approach the outdoor patio. Inside Afro Joe’s Coffee & Tea in Beverly, DJ Stephen Cosey is busy on the turntable, masterfully mixing house beats with gospel tunes. That’s how you know you made it to **Tabernacle Soul**. It’s not a club party, and it’s not church. It’s a chill last-Sunday-of-the-month midday vibe session.

1818 W. 99th St. — CARISA CHAPPELL

## BEST SIDEWALK FOR MOVIE CHATS

After a screening at the **Music Box Theatre**, cinephiles tend to linger outside, conferring about what they loved or hated, dissecting deeper meanings. Maybe it’s because the vintage marquee juts over your head, making you feel like you’ve stepped into the 1920s. Or maybe the Lake View venue’s programming — everything from century-old silent flicks to cutting-edge indie cinema — encourages discourse. Regardless, the scene makes for captivating conversation and company: You might meet a *Rocky Horror Picture Show* super-fan in costume for a midnight show, a local critic, even a filmmaker.

3733 N. Southport Ave. — ROBERT LOERZEL

## BEST WAY TO VISIT ENGLAND WITHOUT LEAVING THE NORTH SHORE

Looking like a stately manor straight out of *The Crown*, **Deer Path Inn** in Lake Forest will have you feeling an ocean away, even though it's just an hour north of the Loop by Metra. The moment you enter the lushly manicured, ivy-clad confines, you realize that traditional British hospitality is the order of the day here. Raise a pinkie at afternoon tea in the English Room, quaff a pint in the White Hart Pub, and devour an Austen novel by the fire. The inn's 57 spacious rooms (starting at \$399 a night) all have tall beds topped with Frette linens; some also have a free-standing tub. Make time for Deer Path staycation plot twists, like a class with resident mixologist Jorge Centeno, known for serving concoctions in light bulbs and cereal boxes. Or borrow one of the inn's bikes and take a prepared picnic to Forest Park Beach, a seven-minute ride away. *255 E. Illinois Rd., Lake Forest*  
—NINA KOKOTAS HAHN



## BEST PLACE TO CLIMB WITH LAKE VIEWS, NOT CROWDS

At the south end of DuSable Lake Shore Drive, you'll find **Steelworkers Park**, the perfect hidden-gem location for an outdoor 30-foot rock-climbing wall. Part of the U.S. Steel South Works plant, which shut down in 1992, it's now the ideal place to learn how to scale an old ore wall without a gymful of people watching your every fall. You don't need reservations most of the time, just your own shoes, harness, and helmet. The Chicago Park District organizes monthly climbs during the summer for ages 8 and up, while REI hosts events and classes that start at \$69. Safety equipment is included with both. The big reward for making it to the top? A peek at the city's skyline in the distance. *87th Street and Lake Shore Drive* —CARISA CHAPPELL

## BEST BOAT RIDE NOT GEARED FOR TOURISTS

The most beguiling way to appreciate the city's skyscraper-driven topography is from below — as in, below street level. Cue the **Chicago Water Taxi**, making its post-COVID return to daily service this summer with \$10 one-way rides (\$20 for an all-day pass). Gently motor west from Michigan Avenue on the marigold boat, gazing up into an urban Grand Canyon. From this river-skimming perspective, iconic structures like the Carbide & Carbon Building and Marina City loom bolder and brighter. Stay seated when the taxi docks at Ogilvie, because the second half of the 30-minute chug to Chinatown provides the contrast that turns this into an adventure. High-rises and bridges ebb, replaced by a riverbank mix of nature and industry: small trees, duck families, the Amtrak yard. When you spot the St. Charles Air Line, a 105-year-old bascule bridge stuck in the “up” position, your ride is almost done: You'll soon disembark at the pagoda of scenic Ping Tom Memorial Park — and you didn't have to fight traffic to get there. —WEB BEHRENS

## BEST SHOW FOR TWO-STEPPING INTO THE WEEKEND

The Empty Bottle may be best known for turn-it-up-to-11 rock shows that stretch past midnight, but it's got a softer side. Every Friday evening at 5:30, the Ukrainian Village grunge dive welcomes **the Hoyle Brothers**, a honky-tonk band with a twang that feels more West Texas than Western Avenue. They aren't actually related, nor is anyone named Hoyle — although musicians may recognize Steve Doyle, the lead guitarist, who teaches at the Old Town School of Folk Music. Don't be fooled by the rainy-day song titles, such as “The Woman That Passed Me By” and “Love Has Let Me Down”: The band's pedal steel sound will make you smile. They've been kicking off the weekend here since 2002, and their shows are still free. Take that, inflation! *1035 N. Western Ave.* —DAVID McMILLIN

## BEST WAY TO INTRODUCE YOUR TODDLER TO THE CTA

My 2-year-old loves nothing more than watching the L whoosh overhead, so when we're looking for an easy weekday adventure (and cheap — kids under 7 ride free), we hit the **Brown Line's Rockwell stop** in Ravenswood. The tracks run on street level there, so it's easy to navigate a stroller onto the platform. A perk: With Beans & Bagels a block away, I can first grab a coffee for myself and a bagel for my bread-obsessed daughter. Once we're on board, the goal is always the same: Ride a few stops for the thrill of exploring a different playlot. We love Cubs-themed Donahue Playground, a quick walk from the Southport stop. If we're feeling especially ambitious, we head downtown to Maggie Daley Park, getting off at Washington/Wabash, which (critically) has an elevator. Upon heading home, a short stroll from Rockwell is Jacob Playground, with a great hill for log rolls. No matter where we go, we make a game of pointing out beloved buildings, waving to fellow passengers, and watching the city rush past. Just like Ralph Waldo Emerson said, it's more about the journey than the destination. *4648 N. Rockwell St.* —KELLEY ENGELBRECHT



# EAT & DRINK





## BEST INTRODUCTION TO CLASSIC COCKTAILS

Whether you're just getting into grown-up drinks or, like me, have a great appreciation for the standards done right, **Moneygun** in the West Loop is the place to dive in. All 30 cocktails on the menu are well-executed classics with tweaks for modern palates — and all are \$15. Complete a punch card by trying each one (no, not in one visit) and join the Dirty Thirty Club. As you make your way through everything from a zhuzhed-up Appletini to a rye-and-cognac-based Vieux Carré, you'll get a solid cocktail education — plus your name on a plaque and half-price cocktails on Sundays.

660 W. Lake St. —AMY CAVANAUGH

## BEST LOW-KEY PATIO FOR KICKING BACK

Summertime drinking should be about ease, which is exactly why **Sportsman's Club** in Humboldt Park is my preferred spot for an alfresco hang. Not a single thing about this bar is fussy, from the long wooden picnic tables to the crushable cocktails that rotate daily. (Who doesn't want to sip a watermelon and gin drink on a hot day?) Dogs are allowed, and it's easy for groups to congregate since everyone orders at the bar (no tabs to split!). On Sundays, top restaurants like Le Bouchon and Birrieria Zaragoza come by to host cookouts. Summertime Sportsman's is like the world's greatest backyard barbecue. 948 N. Western Ave.

—AMY CAVANAUGH

## BEST MEAL DEAL FOR LITTLES

Though the **Oakville Grill & Cellar** is a magnet for West Loop office workers, let us not forget it's a Lettuce Entertain You joint. And for that forward-thinking restaurant group, school-age diners' palates are no afterthought. Case in point: the tasty and healthy kids' menu offering of grilled Faroe Islands salmon served with fresh berries and sweet potatoes. My proud pescatarian son feels like royalty when this colorful feast lands in front of him. And it sets me back a mere 10 bucks. Win-win. 163 N. Green St.

—CARLY BOERS



## BEST SPOT FOR JAVA AFICIONADOS

The thoughtfulness underpinning the drinks at **Two Mile Coffee**, a light-soaked Beverly café, could be borrowed from a seasonally driven tasting menu. So might the evolving catalog of flavors: Come chilly weather, the offerings revel in savory grace notes (think lattes laced with cedar-smoked vanilla syrup or nutty miso caramel), while the warmer months bring playful refreshers like sparkling matcha swirled with mango juice and housemade calamansi honey syrup. The shop's back door exits directly onto the platform of the 99th Street Metra station, making it a popular weekday pit stop for Loop commuters, but these drinks are special enough to warrant a dedicated visit. 9907 S. Walden Pkwy. —CATE HUGUELET



# THE BEST OF CHICAGO'S TRIO OF CLASSICS

**Titus Ruscitti, our resident street food expert, weighs in.**

## 👉 BEST ITALIAN BEEF

Justin Fortuna opened the first **Jay's Beef** in Schiller Park back in 1976. That spot has since closed, but the family's other northwest suburban location is still kicking. Their prep is a two-day process that involves roasting the meat in a mix of seasonings, then cutting it razor thin. They dunk slices in potent gravy before tucking them into rolls from nearby Liborio Bakery. I like it "hot," with the unique house blend of giardiniera. 4418 N. Narragansett Ave., Harwood Heights

## 👉 BEST DEEP-DISH PIZZA

Jerry Czerwinski has taken deep dish to new heights at **Uncle Jerry's Pizza Company**, which he opened in 2021. It has a light crust that gets extra crispy around the edges, and he dresses it with a beautifully bright red sauce, rich and tangy cheese, and chunks of housemade Italian sausage with a heavy garlic accent. It all adds up to a worthwhile trip to the northwest suburbs. 133 W. Main St., Cary

## 👉 BEST CHICAGO-STYLE HOT DOG

An inductee into the Vienna Beef Hot Dog Hall of Fame — yes, that is a real thing — **Jeff's Red Hots** serves a textbook-perfect example of the genre. It's hard to go wrong with a natural-casing wiener steamed plump and juicy, but this Portage Park stand adds one thing others don't. When you place your order, you'll be asked, "With or without?" — as in, sauerkraut. Sacrilege? Maybe, but there's no denying the cabbage condiment works in harmony with the classic Chicago-style toppings. 3901 N. Cicero Ave.



PHOTOGRAPH: (PIZZA) ERIN HOOLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



## BEST ROOFTOP BIERGARTEN

As you stroll past a certain food shop in Lincoln Square in the summer, you might not be aware that some folks are sitting on its roof, sipping craft beers, biting into spicy sausages, and possibly even looking down at you. To reach that delightful space, enter **Gene's Sausage Shop & Delicatessen**, walk past the produce, and take the elevator up. As you head out onto the roof, you'll be greeted by a big fiberglass cow. With its umbrella-shaded picnic tables, the eatery feels like a German Biergarten that was somehow plopped down on top of a Chicago building: a piece of the Old World where you can escape for an hour or two, even as you look out across the city. *4750 N. Lincoln Ave.* —ROBERT LOERZEL

## BEST SPOT TO PREGAME THE DNC

Attention, delegates: The area around the United Center isn't exactly a drinking destination, so thank goodness for the West Loop's **Kaiser Tiger**, a 15-minute walk away. Double thanks since the drink list offers a tour of Chicago's best breweries — an Italian ice-inspired lager from Hopewell, a clementine cider from Right Bee Cider, a collaborative Pilsner from Noon Whistle and Goldfinger — as well as easy cocktails like an Aperol spritz. There's a menu of sausages, plus a massive beer garden and multiple patios, so you can bring all your fellow delegates along. *1415 W. Randolph St.* —AMY CAVANAUGH

## BEST MARTINI SERVICE

No place in town gives this classic cocktail its due quite like **Queen Mary Tavern**. A couple of times a month, beverage director Dan Smith changes up the offering by selecting a gin from the Ukrainian Village bar's deep selection — maybe it's Mahón from Spain or Kyrö from Finland — and turns it into a martini with dry vermouth, orange bitters, and a lemon twist. Smith serves it in a martini glass on a golden tray, and he pours the leftover into an accompanying sidecar set on crushed ice so you can top yourself off. Elegant service for an elegant drink. *2125 W. Division St.* —AMY CAVANAUGH



## BEST USE OF COOKIES IN A COCKTAIL

Joe Briglio and Lily Wang of **Nine Bar** make terrific cocktails with Asian ingredients like Sichuan peppercorn, ube, Calpico, and baijiu, so we shouldn't be surprised that they had the brilliant idea to turn Chinese almond cookies into a smooth orgeat syrup for their mai tai. Loaded with flavor, it's become an instant classic and menu staple at the Chinatown bar. *216 W. Cermak Rd.* —AMY CAVANAUGH

## BEST VERDANT OASIS

Stepping inside **Carver 47 Food & Wellness Market** in North Kenwood is like entering a fairy tale for the senses. The name honors George Washington Carver, the Black inventor and agricultural scientist (yes, the peanut guy), and the plant-filled café is like a greenhouse, reflecting his love of nature. So does chef-general manager Lizz Wright's menu of veggie-forward dishes, like a pear, goat cheese, and walnut salad and the Green Glory, a smoothie with apple, spinach, celery, ginger, lemon, and parsley. The artfully arranged colorful flowers are for sale, as are the vegetables freshly picked from the onsite garden and the jarred spices and jams — all the things you need to re-create the calm of this café at home. *1050 E. 47th St.* —CARISA CHAPPELL

## BEST ROOFTOP SCENE FOR THOSE WHO DON'T WANT A SCENE

Between the rumblings of L trains passing nearby and the vibrations from bands playing downstairs, this fourth-floor South Loop rooftop isn't for the faint-hearted. But what it lacks in refinement, **Reggies Trainwreck Rooftop Deck** — actual name — more than makes up for in unpretentious charm. Grab a spot at the bar, where friendly bartenders can walk you through the menu of no-frills drinks — a Vegas Bomb, perhaps? — at prices below your usual rooftop hang. Or grab some friends and order fried pickles, chicken wings, and Garbage Fries to share at one of the metal picnic tables. The pool table and Pop-A-Shot are free, and should you work up a sweat, there's an outdoor pull-string shower to cool you off. *2105 S. State St.* —LISA SHAMES

## BEST BREWERY FOR BEER NERDS

For people who love European-style offerings — from hefeweizens and Kölsches to smoky Grodziskies — **Dovetail Brewery** in North Center is heaven. Its relaxed vibe makes it approachable for imbibers of all types, but beer geeks can buckle down and sip through spontaneously fermented beers like fruity krieks, framboises, and funky bourbon-barrel-aged gueuzes while affable bartenders school you in Belgian malts and lagering traditions. There's nowhere else in Chicago doing this stuff. *1800 W. Belle Plaine Ave.* —ADAM ROTHBARTH

## BEST SPORTS BAR THAT DOESN'T ACT LIKE A SPORTS BAR

Over my 30 years as a sportswriter, sports bars have always left me wanting more — even in places where I've become the Black Norm. That's until I visited **Signature** in the South Loop. It's from former Chicago Bear Israel Idonije and chef Stephen Gillanders, who met in 2018 when Idonije dined at Gillanders's S.K.Y. The ambience is elevated, but it's the food and drink that set Signature apart from your usual spot to catch the home teams: the well-balanced off-menu mezcal Negroni and the pink guava daiquiri; the open kitchen turning out bites that draw on Asian and Southern flavors, like spicy salmon on crispy rice, short rib nachos, and a lobster roll with pickled ginger rémoulade. No longer do you have to choose between having a great meal and watching a great game. *1312 S. Wabash Ave.* —ROBERT "SCOOP" JACKSON

## BEST PLACE TO EXPLORE THE WORLD OF FERMENTATION

From its start in the early 2010s as an itinerant brewery with twin interests in experimental beers and social justice, Logan Square's **Bungalow by Middle Brow** seems to gain new layers of complexity by the year. It's a pizzeria. It's a bread bakery. And most recently, Middle Brow is also a daytime café serving up creative pastries (like chocolate bostock finished with banana jam and a swoosh of torched marshmallow) and a low-intervention winery spotlighting Midwest-friendly grape varietals. It's an ever-widening net, yet the thread of natural fermentation (in other words, forgoing commercial yeast for the wild stuff) brings it all together. 2840 W. Armitage Ave. —CATE HUGUELET



## BEST PLACE TO HAVE A PINT AT 7 A.M. WITHOUT JUDGMENT

Having a beer before noon is generally frowned upon. But not at the **Globe Pub**, where on a weekend it's not uncommon to find a line out the door before sunrise. That's because the North Center bar is a destination for soccer fans, opening early in the morning to accommodate supporters of Arsenal, Aston Villa, and other clubs around Europe, whose matches air here at unusual hours because of the time difference. Can't handle a beer on an empty stomach? The pub's delightfully greasy breakfast fare (you can't go wrong with the burrito) hits the spot. 1934 W. Irving Park Rd.

—STANLEY KAY

# STOPS





## BEST DESIGNER FOR DRESSING YOU LIKE MICHELLE OBAMA

Say you are in town for a certain convention and have long admired the stylish fits of a certain former first lady. It's time to get acquainted with **Maria Pinto** (that's her, pictured at left), Michelle O's go-to designer throughout her husband's presidential run (who can ever forget that ocean-blue 2008 DNC dress?). Pinto's designs aren't reserved for just political power players. Her new boutique in River North is all about catering to busy women. That translates to ready-to-wear pieces, from A-line dresses to sleek suits, all machine washable and travel friendly. And if you happen to pick up a body-grazing jewel-neck dress worthy of the Governor's Ball, well, all the better. **710 N. Wabash Ave.**

—KELLY AIGLON

PHOTOGRAPHY: (RECORDS) COURTESY OF THE VENDORS

## BEST PLACE TO SAMPLE SNAIL SECRETION MASKS

Korean beauty is big right now. Still, those buzzworthy rice protein serums and volcanic clay masks can be hard to find beyond H-Mart. Which is why Leah Kim decided to open **Choc Choc**. Now in a new location in Lake View East, the shop attracts K-pop fans and beauty junkies alike. You may feel like you landed in an *Alice in Wonderland* version of Sephora as you dabble in creams made from beet juice, smear snail mucin on your face, or don a Mickey Mouse sheet mask. Staffers steer the extra curious to out-there essences and ampoules (yes, that's a wrinkle treatment made from rare truffles, TYVM). **3127 N. Broadway** —HEIDI MITCHELL

## BEST SPOT FOR CLASSY CHICAGO SOUVENIRS

When I wanted Chicago-centric gifts for relatives in Germany, I knew where to shop — and it sure wasn't on Navy Pier for Windy City shot glasses. No, I went to the **Chicago Architecture Center's Design Store**. Amid books, games, and prints, you'll find the likes of Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired earrings and tea towels featuring a modernist depiction of the city's neighborhood grid. Ready to splurge? The stunning \$659 Skyline Chess set uses a map-of-Chicago board and giant metal playing pieces. The Willis Tower and Hancock Center are king and queen; bungalows are the pawns. Supply your own symbolism. **111 E. Wacker Dr.** —WEB BEHRENS

## BEST PLACE TO PRETEND YOU'RE SHOPPING IN PARIS, NOT EDGEWATER

POV: You're strolling down Broadway when you spot a petite corner shop exuding an unmistakable *je ne sais quoi*. Marais, says the front, after the historic district in Paris. You enter an airy space, punctuated by the scent of fig and earth. Songstress Carla Bruni croons through speakers *en français* as you peruse the paper products, including a congratulations card declaring, "It's a bébé!" Opened in 2020 by Angelina Prino, **Marais Home & Garden** offers an ambience that you can't find elsewhere in town. Chalk it up to the thrill of discovering designer vintage clothing like Nanette Lepore silk ensembles from Y2K and poet blouses from the '80s, plus artisanal home goods, curated jewelry, and witty, literary stickers, like the one with an Oscar Wilde quote: "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars." Consider it your one-stop shop for *joie de vivre*. **1206 W. Victoria St.** —KATHLEEN ROONEY

## BEST SPOT FOR HUNTING ECLECTIC VINYL

Chicago is rich in record stores. But not all of them give you that satisfying passport-stamped feeling that **606 Records** in Pilsen does. You won't find the umpteenth reissue of your favorite classic rock or Blue Note jazz record (no shade on either). Instead, you'll discover a shop dedicated to turning people onto many of the world's most eclectic artists and boundary-pushing independent labels. Jazz-funk from Tokyo, house music from South Africa, underground rap from Chicago, electronica from all corners of the globe, and everything else you can imagine — it's somehow all impeccably curated just across the way from Thalia Hall. **1808 S. Allport St.** —MARK BAZER



## BEST PLACE TO DISCOVER A CHEAP WEIRD GIFT

Think of **American Science & Surplus** as a combination of 7-Eleven and Dollar Tree — if you swapped out the candy and cards for squirrel-in-a-tree-stump stress-relief squeeze toys or goth cat figurines. On any given day, more than 6,000 items pack its 5,000-square-foot store in Park Ridge — and about 99 percent are things you never knew you always wanted. Who couldn't use a glow-in-the-dark toilet bowl? The store has been peddling random (and ridiculously inexpensive) items since 1937, when it was founded to sell surplus stock. Today, it sells just about anything owner Patrick Meyer can secure, from closeouts to overruns and misprints. So if you crave crystals that transform your fire pit's blast from mundane orange to rainbow, get them before they're gone. 27 N. Northwest Hwy., Park Ridge — DANIELLE BRAFF

## BEST TRASH-TO-TREASURE PIPELINE

If you've decided to take up sewing or try making stained glass, don't head to Blick or Joann or — God forbid — Hobby Lobby. **The WasteShed**, a nonprofit with locations in Humboldt Park and Evanston, sells (mostly) used art supplies at a discount. You never know what you'll find. A vintage Singer sewing machine? Surprisingly fancy yarn? A notepad formatted specifically for storyboarding that TV show you've been meaning to pitch? Whatever you dig up will be cheap and good. You might feel like you've landed in Pee-wee Herman's garage, crammed with colorful bits and bobs, but hobbyists love the thrill of the hunt. Pros, too; a friend's fashion designer sister swings by for bargain fabric and cool buttons whenever she's in town. 1754 N. Kimball Ave.; 1245 Hartrey Ave., Evanston — CHARLOTTE GODDU

## BEST WAY TO SLOW YOUR FASHION ROLL

Former labor rights organizer Jamie Hayes opened **Production Mode** in 2015 as an alternative to mass-produced fast-fashion chains. Her take on "slow fashion" breaks the assembly line mold. The tailor-made clothing is designed via a face-to-face collaboration between customers and Hayes's team of designers and is crafted by seamstresses in the North Center store (the patterning and cutting table is in plain sight, and the sewing machines are just beyond the fitting rooms). Dream up a style (anything from cap-sleeved tops to cape coats) and sustainable material (like luscious wool cotton made locally by the Weaving Mill). There is also an off-the-rack collection, with tailoring onsite at no extra charge. Either way, you're guaranteed formfitting, flattering clothing that you'll have a story about. 3860 N. Lincoln Ave. — XIMENA N. BELTRAN QUAN KIU

## BEST SHOPPING STRETCH FOR GUYS

Updating your look doesn't have to be a painful ordeal, not when you can do it in one easy sweep. A two-block strip of **Armitage Avenue**, between Halsted and Fremont, in Lincoln Park has everything you need for a style refresh, whether you're hosting a backyard barbecue or heading to a chic soiree. — DAVID SYREK

**Buck Mason (854)**  
These clothes aren't about trends; they are made to stand the test of time. Consider yourself outfitted for good in Japanese Loomstate Selvage jeans and soft cotton jackets.

**Allbirds (843)**  
If you're looking for stylish kicks that won't hurt your feet, this is your spot. Cushy and breathable, these are made with natural materials like merino wool and eucalyptus.

**See Eyewear (808)**  
A great pair of sunnies is an instant summer upgrade. The selection here ranges from tortoiseshell standards to funky triple-laminated acetate showstoppers.

**Aesop (857)**  
Entering this skin care shop is instant zen. Take home items for your morning ritual, like Moroccan neroli shaving serum and after-shave lotion and an exhilarating mouthwash.

**Bonobos (845)**  
There's nothing more classic in summer than a seersucker suit. At Bonobos, you can get one in mossy green. (Note: The shop is for try-ons only, with free shipping.)

**Todd Snyder Townhouse (815)**  
One of America's hottest menswear designers is all about laid-back looks. Think retro knit polos, washed-denim shirts, and suede jackets.

**FREMONT** **ARMITAGE** **HALSTED**

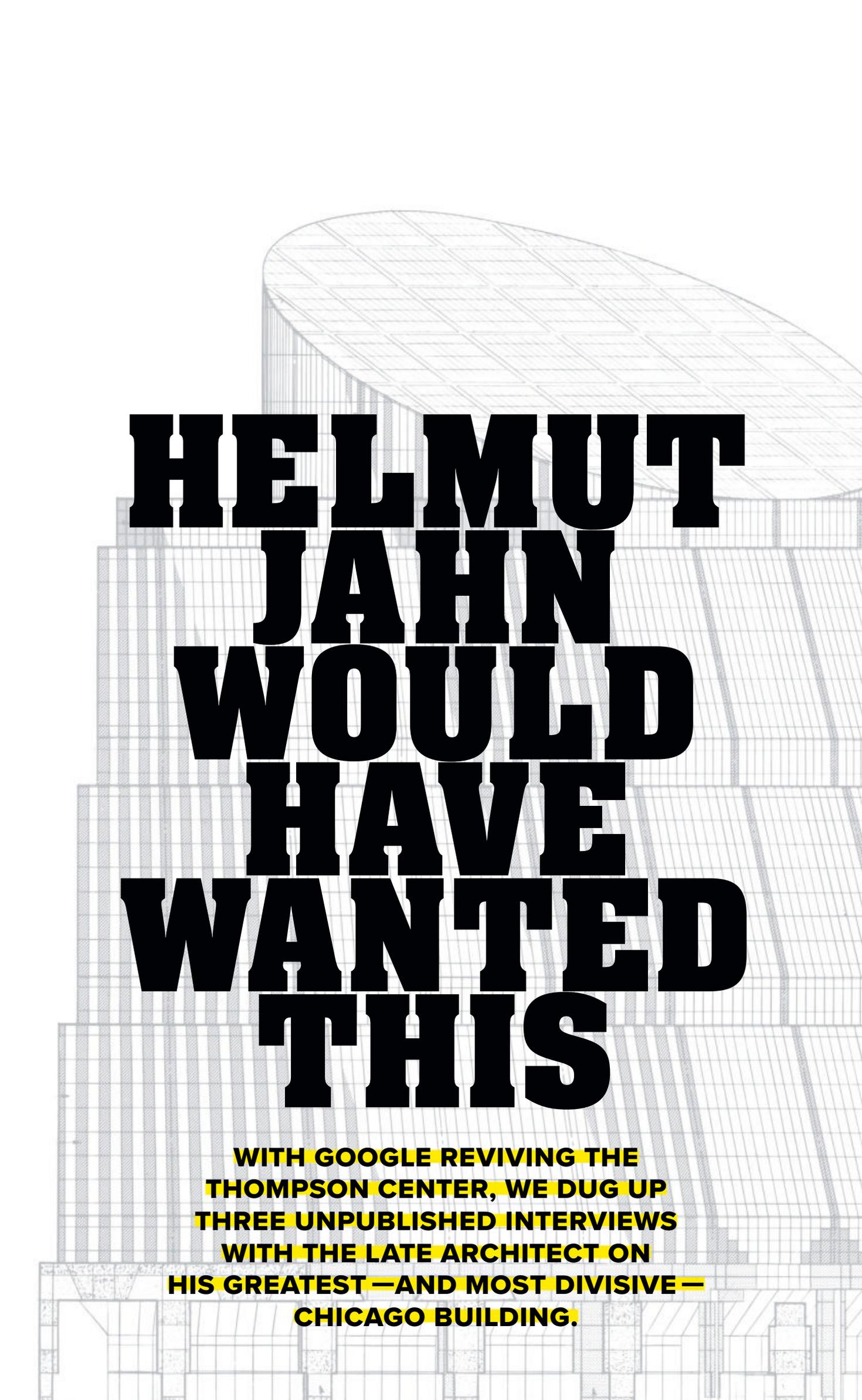
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PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE VENDORS



## BEST PLACE TO FIND A SOFA SHAPED LIKE LIPS

It's not every day you walk into a store and see a giant Gaetano Pesce foot sculpture near a mounted aluminum breast from a 1940s Chicago gentlemen's club. Or — on a more functional level, perhaps — a rare Percival Lafer '70s brown leather and wood sofa. "I get a lot of customers come in and say, 'What's happening here?'" says Andy Alguire, a former video producer who, in 2022, turned his passion for unique yet well-designed vintage home furnishings into the East Ukrainian Village weekends-only shop **River Otter**. The curious and ever-changing assortment is exactly what makes the hunt here so thrilling. 918 N. Ashland Ave. —LISA SHAMES



# HELMUT JAHN WOULD HAVE WANTED THIS

WITH GOOGLE REVIVING THE  
THOMPSON CENTER, WE DUG UP  
THREE UNPUBLISHED INTERVIEWS  
WITH THE LATE ARCHITECT ON  
HIS GREATEST — AND MOST DIVISIVE —  
CHICAGO BUILDING.

BY AJ LATRACE AND JAKE MALOOLEY  
PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHAN BENN



Jahn in 1988,  
three years after  
his postmodern  
landmark was  
completed





elmut Jahn died without knowing the fate of his polarizing masterpiece, the James R. Thompson Center. *How much longer will it stand?* Just five days before the architect's death in 2021, Governor J.B. Pritzker issued the state's request for proposals for the sale of Jahn's long-embattled Loop landmark – without any stipulation that it not be torn down.

With its soaring 17-story atrium, the curved glass building, which initially housed state offices, nodded to the domed structures of classical civic structures and symbolized a desire for transparency in government. During the grand public unveiling in 1985, officials unfurled a banner declaring it “A Building for Year 2000,” a sign of optimism for Illinois's future and Chicago's legacy of boundary-pushing design. But years of deferred maintenance and political ambivalence eventually took their toll, and the Pritzker administration estimated the cost of necessary repairs and updates at more than \$325 million.

Preservationists and admirers worried the Thompson Center would be demolished. Jahn shared that fear, and in 2016 he drafted an ambitious proposal to repurpose the building by adding a 110-story tower featuring a hotel, residences, and office and retail space. He seemed barely able to process a reality in which one of his proudest creations might cease to exist.

“I think about it, but then I say, ‘I can't go on this street,’” the dapper German-born architect said in an interview at his firm's office, then located within the Loop's historic Jewelers Building. “I imagine I would stand in front of the building with a [protest] sign.” He summoned the memory of Chicago architectural photographer and preservationist Richard Nickel, who was killed in 1972 when a portion of Adler & Sullivan's Chicago Stock Exchange Building collapsed on him as he was salvaging fragments during its demolition. Losing one's life trying to save a building—to Jahn it was an honorable death.

He expressed this during the second of our three interviews conducted in May

2018, July 2019, and October 2020 and almost entirely unpublished until now. The idea had been to compile conversations with Jahn and his Thompson Center collaborators into an oral history of the endangered building.

But seven months after the last interview, Jahn was riding his bicycle a few miles from his home in the western suburb of St. Charles when he was killed in a crash involving two vehicles. He was 81. When Jahn died, so too did the momentum for our story. Though his professional legacy still seemed tied to survival of the Thompson Center, the sudden absence of the creative force behind the structure—the man known as the “Flash Gordon of architecture”—was deflating. Elvis had indeed left the building.

Then came renewed hope for the Thompson Center: In July 2022, Google announced it would purchase the structure for its Chicago headquarters. The tech giant is working with Jahn's firm, now headed by his son, Evan, on renovations, which began in May and are expected to be completed in 2026. The innards are getting overhauled, but from the outside, the building will still look like the one its fans know and love.

This latest infusion of energy into the Thompson Center sent us back to our shelved interviews with Jahn. Not unlike Nickel, we dug through the ruins in search of treasure—and we found it. Jahn's words, presented here, now speak to us from across the veil, describing the creation and early promise of the building, his despair at seeing it fall victim to neglect, and what he believed needed to happen for his marvel of structural expressionism to have a life beyond his own.

The design started in 1979. This idea of how our world lives today, with restaurants and free time and looking for more excitement in a public place – just think, in 1979 there wasn't a sidewalk café in Chicago, right? Somebody would say, “**You are crazy to open that!**”

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There was no design competition. There were no interviews. There was just a selection, and we were told we were going to be the architect.

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I never asked Governor [James R.] Thompson about it directly, but I think the decision to give me the Thompson Center job had to do with the fact that he didn't want an established firm like Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. He wanted somebody who was new and becoming known.

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**The state always wanted a high-rise building. But a high-rise on that site would've gotten lost.** That's why I ultimately gravitated to the urban block design, with the rotunda and the

dome, reminiscent of the old government building on the Federal Building site at Dearborn and Adams by Henry Ives Cobb. That's where the idea came from.

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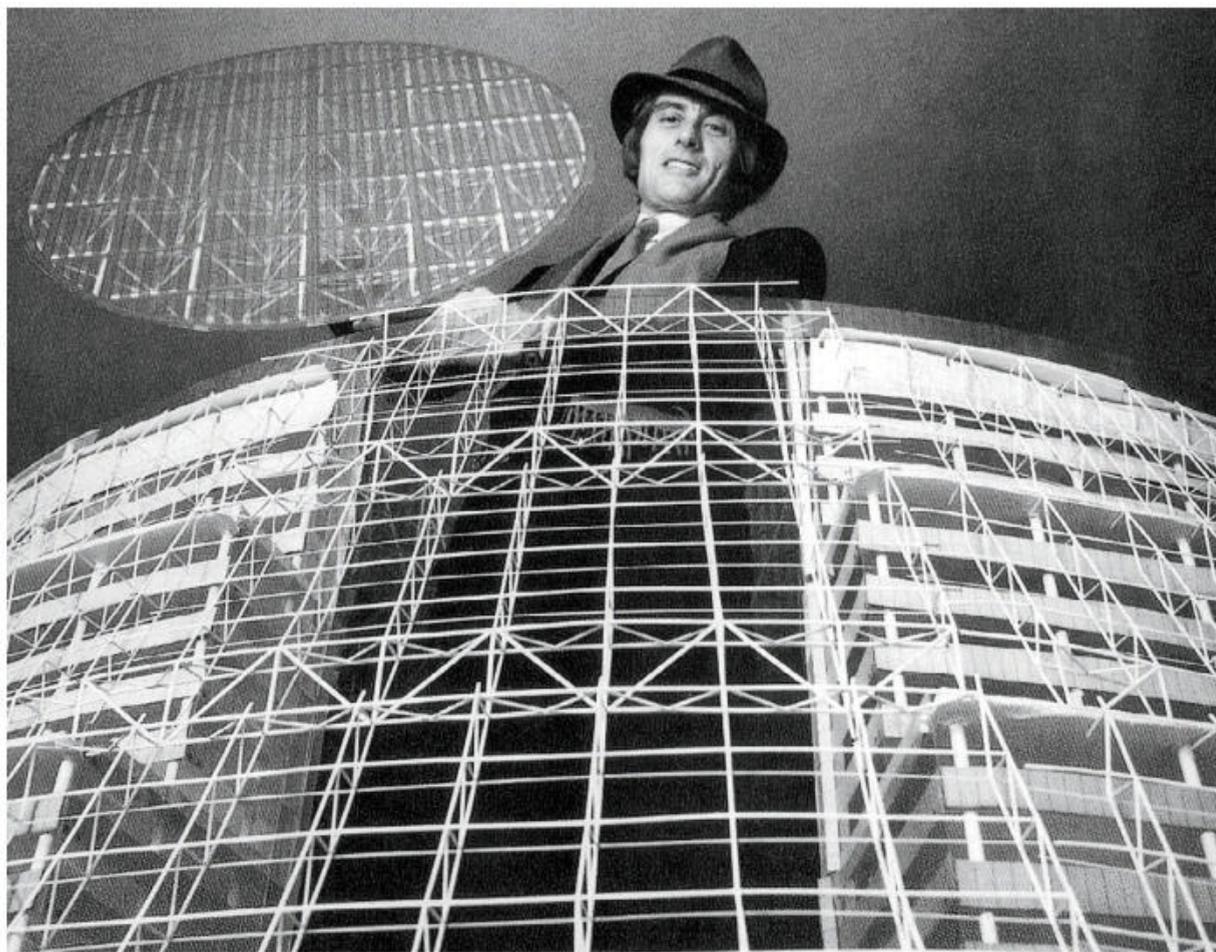
I had three different schemes that I presented. I was not allowed to favor one. I was asked to leave the room while Thompson and the state officials debated the designs. There was someone I knew very well named Brian O'Connor, who was working for the state development agency as the project manager. He said, "Well, Governor, now we've gotta pick one." Thompson said, "What one does Helmut like?" And Brian said, "This one" – the one that ultimately was built. **And Thompson said, "Well, I wouldn't have picked that one, but Helmut must know why."**

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And that was it. I wish things would be so easy these days. I was extremely happy, because if he would have picked the high-rise, I would have gone back to him and said, "I don't want to do this," because the idea with the Thompson Center to merge public space with retail and the activities of the state – it's an idea you can't do with a high-rise building. A high-rise is a commercial building.

///

When the building was designed, and we had built a big model, this was during a time when [Chicago-based architect] Stanley Tigerman was doing a series of talks with renowned architects. They were all there at the University of Illinois's Circle Campus: Philip Johnson and Peter Eisenman and Michael Graves and Tigerman, and then there were younger guys like me. Johnson said to me, "How are you doing on this state building?" I said, "Do you want to come to my office? I'll show you." The big model was in the



Jahn with a model of his creation

photo studio, and we walked in there, and Johnson said, "Wow!" Tigerman said, "This isn't a postmodern building." **Because the building was, like all my buildings are, about the integration of architecture and engineering, the integration of urban space, the breaking down of barriers, making a symbolic statement about the openness of the government.**

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I remember the opening day of what was then known as the State of Illinois Center. It was 1985. My son was 3 or 4 years old, and he played with Governor Thompson's kids while we did the speeches and the ribbon cutting. Certain things I remember very well, like the big sign that said "A Building for Year 2000." Halfway through the ceremony, my son came up to my wife and said, "Mommy, I gotta go pee-pee."

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**The initial problem with the Thompson Center was that the mechanicals were miscalculated.** The idea was always that heat rising in the atrium would be drawn into a vent. But there was a misjudgment in terms of the air being pulled out of the atrium correctly, so hot air filled the atrium and

## HOW THE THOMPSON CENTER GOT ITS BIG-SCREEN MOMENT



Shortly after the completion of what was then called the State of Illinois Building, the 1986 buddy-cop film *Running Scared* thrust Jahn's eye-popping edifice into the Hollywood spotlight. ("I'm not a movie guy," the architect told me in 2019, "[but] I've seen parts of it.")

Director Peter Hyams recalls how he came to shoot his climactic scene there:

*Running Scared* grew out of a love affair I have with Chicago. From 1968 to 1970, I was a blissfully untalented anchorman and reporter for CBS-2. One of the things I felt about Chicago was that it was visually spectacular—more so, actually, than New York. Chicago has the elevated train going right through the city. The original script was about two New York City cops who retire. I said, "I'd like to change it to two Chicago cops who *don't* retire. And instead of two elderly guys, I want Billy Crystal and Gregory Hines."

I wanted to use the city as much as possible. And while we were scouting locations, I saw this building downtown. I went, "What is that?" The person from the Chicago Film Office said, "It's the State of Illinois Building. There are some people there, but it's not totally open yet." I said, "Can we get in there at night?" That building, to me, engenders acrophobia. Just go inside and look up. It's the fact that it kind of slants inward. It has a vertigo quality to it. That's why I wanted it.

What I asked the film office for was not easy. I wanted to have a guy coming down from the roof into the atrium on what's known in the stunt world as a descender. But we got the go-ahead to do whatever we wanted, including taking a panel of glass out of the roof. I said, "Holy shit!"

The stunt people, at one point, didn't want to do the stunt. So we had the building's window washer do it. To him, it was like a walk in the park. To me, it was absolutely horrifying. —AS TOLD TO J.M.

moved into the floors. One thing I was always against was the state's insistence that the cooling—somebody put this thought into their heads—would be done by ice. It was a gimmick to use cheap electricity at night to make ice and blow air over it during the day. I said, "It's never going to work." Through overexposure to sunlight, the rooms would get very hot, the ice would melt by late morning, and there was no cooling effect. There are a lot more efficient ways today to air-condition a building.

After Governor Thompson came Jim Edgar, who somewhat still cared about the building. But he wasn't very long in office. After him, it was just neglect.

The building has become a bad mark in the cityscape. You walk by and you look at the rusted column covers and no maintenance of the landscaping and they haven't fixed those stone pieces on the lower part of the building. They took all the stone away for no reason—just because a couple stones fell off. **This is criminal. This is a bunch of idiots.**

///  
**Watching the Thompson Center fall into disrepair over the years, I've felt—"angry" is not the right word. It makes me sad.** My son has two young girls, and they wanted to see some of my buildings. So during Christmastime we went there. It was a Saturday, and the building was closed. It's supposed to be a public place. When I said, "I'm the architect," the guard got all friendly, wanted to take a picture with me, and gave us a tour. My son said, "Dad, this is really sad." The carpet in the walkways is 30 years old. It looks like asphalt, it's so dirty. You don't even want to put your shoe down on it. That was the last time I was there.

///  
The Thompson Center is more than 30 years old now, and there's a lot of change in building technology—mechanical systems and stricter codes in terms of how we use the energy consumption of the building. A lot of public buildings that have been repurposed—they have come to a new life. **I think that's what this building needs. It needs a new life.**

///  
There's a history of my buildings being repurposed. Real estate investment companies buy the building, fix it up, and sell it. The Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Missouri, has been repurposed. Somebody bought it, put extra floors in, and it now has 20 basketball courts and different things. The Messeturm "pencil tower" in Frankfurt, Germany, is owned by Blackstone. We

are working on redoing the main lobby and some of the floor lobbies. This is costing \$80 million to \$100 million. The lobby is going to be more active, with a coworking space, a bar, a restaurant that changes from morning to night, and an exhibition space. The Sony Center in Berlin has been bought by Oxford, which is the codeveloper of Hudson Yards. They spent \$1.2 billion. The building was only just finished in 2000. It's not that the building, in this case, has any problems. It's that they want to change the tenancy. They rented to Facebook, WeWork, Google.

///

**It may seem like I have been fairly quiet about the Thompson Center being threatened. But to get out into the public and create a controversy—that's not going to bring anything positive.** Instead, I did the work to show repurposing the building is very feasible, that it could be a hotel and an office building and apartments. When I showed the architect and structural engineer Werner Sobek my proposal, he said, "It looks like it's always been there." My hope is that when the request for proposals comes out, they will contact me. I hope somebody is not going to propose to tear the building down.

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My idea is to make the atrium open. No doors. Anybody can go in there. You can be outside. This could be something you can go and see at the center of the city.

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The best outcome is that you find somebody who gets the building away from the state and does the most responsible thing in terms of upgrades and repurposing the building. **The building is an iconic one and nobody can deny it.**



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Somebody once told me, "If you tear the Thompson Center down, you would have to do something that the whole world would talk about." Hopefully there are some people with their right and conscious mind who will say tearing the building down is not going to solve the problem. At this time, this location is not where anybody wants to build a three-million-square-foot building. You don't build these monsters anymore. And if you build multiple smaller buildings on the site one at a time, it's going to take just as long as Block 37, which took 25 years and ended up in a real mess. **The easiest thing would be to fix up the Thompson Center. And the best chance to save it is to repurpose it into a tech loft space.**

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A lot of the postmodern buildings are forgotten now. But this building isn't forgotten. 📍

As this rendering shows, the building's signature curved glass exterior will largely be left intact in Google's renovations, but the colonnade at the base is being redesigned for better use of the ground floor and plaza.

**IN A CITY OF  
GREAT PLACES  
TO EAT, THESE ARE  
OUR FAVORITES,  
RANKED.**

**THE**

**50 BEST**

**RESTAURANTS**

BY AMY CAVANAUGH AND JOHN KESSLER ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF MARINI AND JACLYN RIVAS



# WANTS



Sarah Grueneberg

1

## Monteverde

West Loop | \$\$\$

Our top pick gets all the little things *and* all the big things right. Monteverde is buzzy but not braying, easy on the eyes but not designy, constantly busy but never a madhouse. We love the way the servers are comfily dressed and totally knowledgeable, and we love the ways around the always-filled reservation book (i.e., by going for the city's best lunch or its best first-come, first-served dining bar). We love the way the bill comes as a pleasant surprise, always less than expected. More than anything, we love the distinctive way chef-owner Sarah Grueneberg cooks: Italian via her native Texas. Time and again, we both recognize and thrill to her flavors, like trying comfort food for the first time. Her cacio e pepe, with bucatini and ricotta whey, is such a marvel—so sharp and peppery it slaps, so creamy you scrape the plate. We want anything in her tomato sauce, from her soppressata meatballs to a fantastic dish of singed, wok-seared spaghetti with ground shrimp Bolognese and chile-garlic oil. We're still thinking about how her char-roasted asparagus, feta, and honey bruschetta come together in a bitter-salty-sweet chord. Some afternoons we dream of sitting at the bar with gushy-hot 'nduja arancini and a bitter orange spritz. And in our dreams we always stay for dessert. 1020 W. Madison St.

# 2

## Oriole

West Loop | \$\$\$\$\$

Think of an evening at Noah Sandoval's fine-dining restaurant as a journey through an enchanted space. You begin with sashimi and a nonalcoholic cocktail at the bar, move to the kitchen for foie gras on brioche, and end at your table with dishes like sablefish topped with caviar. You'll float out afterward. *661 W. Walnut St.*

# 3

## Galit

Lincoln Park | \$\$\$\$

Dinner here is a Levantine feast. It starts with dipping pita into the creamiest possible hummus. Then it's a clatter of mezes filling every inch of the table: pickles and dips, lamb kibbeh, glazed carrots. Make room for coal-grilled lobster, and finish with pastry, strong coffee, and a feeling of satisfaction. *2429 N. Lincoln Ave.*

# 4

## Avec

West Loop, River North | \$\$\$

Everyone needs to have a restaurant in their back pocket where anyone they might bring with them will feel comfortable, where reservations don't require repeatedly refreshing your browser at midnight a week in advance, and where the food is unfailingly delicious. Avec is ours. *615 W. Randolph St., 141 W. Erie St.*

# 5

## Kasama

East Ukrainian Village | \$\$\$\$\$

Tim Flores and Genie Kwon hit upon something special with their daytime menu of pastries, coffee, and sandwiches and nighttime tasting menu that tours traditional Filipino techniques. Everyone—Michelin critics, James Beard Foundation members, the cast of *The Bear*, and the rest of us—willingly get in line for a taste of it all. *1001 N. Winchester Ave.*

# 6

## Virtue

Hyde Park | \$\$\$

Chef-owner Erick Williams and chef de cuisine Damarr Brown couldn't be more purposeful about this Southern heritage restaurant—its menu paying tribute to their forebears while going in new directions. The cornbread, served with house-churned butter and local honey, tastes like what you'd be served at a down-home kitchen table. *1462 E. 53rd St.*



# 7

## HaiSous Vietnamese Kitchen

Pilsen | \$\$\$

Thai Dang's Vietnamese cooking is at once true to its origins and wholly at home in an American setting. Beef rolls in betel leaf, fish sauce chicken wings, and fried fluke with lettuce wraps have origins in tradition, yet feel as fresh and contemporary as anything in town. *1800 S. Carpenter St.*



Hummus with short rib and sumac

# 8

## Shaw's Crab House

River North | \$\$\$

Energetic and always packed, the Oyster Bar here hums with people drinking martinis and slurping freshly shucked oysters. Try one of Chicago's best lobster rolls, and don't miss the chopped seafood salad, loaded with crab, shrimp, and lobster. If there's a more appealing perch than a barstool here, we haven't found it. *21 E. Hubbard St.*



# 9

## Dear Margaret

Lake View | \$\$\$

This little French Canadian restaurant is the city's best bistro, but there's nary a bowl of French onion soup. Instead, dishes like sweetbreads in demi-glace with corn chow-chow and fried Ontario smelts showcase the ingenious way Ryan Brosseau melds Great Lakes ingredients with French tradition. *2965 N. Lincoln Ave.*



Sweetbreads in demi-glace with corn chow-chow

# 10

## Boka

Lincoln Park | \$\$\$\$\$

After 21 years, Boka Restaurant Group's flagship seasonal American restaurant is still a stunner. Boka is both a destination and a neighborhood spot, where you can order the eight-course tasting menu or post up at the bar for Lee Wolen's black truffle roast chicken and a glass of wine. *1729 N. Halsted St.*

PHOTOGRAPH: (SHAW'S) CHRISTINA SLATON; (DEAR MARGARET) COURTESY OF THE RESTAURANT

# 11

## Kyoten/Kyoten Next Door

Logan Square | \$\$\$\$\$

Otto Phan's side-by-side omakase bars are two sides of the same coin. Kyoten (\$440 to \$490 per person) offers intricate small plates and rare wild fish; the less exorbitant yet still pricey Kyoten Next Door serves mostly nigiri. At both, you'll taste fish that's a world away from other seafood in town. *Kyoten, 2507 W. Armitage Ave.; Kyoten Next Door, 2513 W. Armitage Ave.*

# 12

## Hermosa Restaurant

Hermosa | \$\$\$

There are three ways to try Ethan Eang Lim's Cambodian fine-dining BYOB: a very good carryout chicken sandwich at lunch; a tour de force "family meal," with platters of shellfish salad, fish curry, and housemade sausages, at night; and now the sporadic à la carte menus. *4356 W. Armitage Ave.*



# 13

## Warlord

Avondale | \$\$\$\$

One word describes this restaurant: *fire*. After more than a year, the buzz hasn't abated, while inside, flames billow from the hearth. The menu? Simple, direct: dry-aged ducks, king salmon, scallops on the half shell presented without fuss. Dining here feels like getting in touch with something elemental. *3198 N. Milwaukee Ave.*



John Manion

# 14

## Elske

West Loop | \$\$\$\$

Few places in town have the sheer warmth of David and Anna Posey's restaurant, but there's more that sets it apart, like the thoughtful, Nordic-influenced cuisine; the tiny bar, where we head for martinis and cheese plates; and the charming outdoor fireplace that serves as a winter escape. It's all so very *Elske*. *1350 W. Randolph St.*

# 15

## John's Food & Wine

Lincoln Park | \$\$\$

This fast-fancy counter-service spot is open seven days a week, which is fortunate because we want to spend all of our time here. At lunch, we're getting the pulled pork sandwich with Thai chile vinaigrette. At night, we're drinking cool wines and eating funky small plates. Believe us, one bite of the cold lobster with leek aioli will hook you, too. *2114 N. Halsted St.*

# 16

## El Che Steakhouse & Bar

West Loop | \$\$\$\$

John Manion's Argentine steakhouse was always great, but the postpandemic emphasis on seafood has made it even better. We love the steak frites but are here these days for the grilled oysters with smoked onion aioli and bacon and head-on shrimp with salsa macha. *845 W. Washington Blvd.*

# 17

## Ever

West Loop | \$\$\$\$\$

Curtis Duffy and Michael Muser's restaurant sets the bar for service in this city—from the moment you walk through the door, you're taken care of. The food, presented as an eight-to-10-course tasting menu, follows suit with its attention to detail and forward-thinking flavors. *1340 W. Fulton St.*

# 18

## Obélix

River North | \$\$\$\$

Oliver and Nicolas Poilevey cut their teeth at Le Bouchon, their parents' French bistro. At Obélix, the brothers marry classics with global influences for a fresh take on the genre—think foie gras tacos—proving it's possible to honor what came before you while making your own mark. 700 N. Sedgwick St.

# 19

## Sepia

West Loop | \$\$\$

Chef Andrew Zimmerman's \$95 four-course prix fixe menu is always on point—take a play on steak Oscar with short rib, fried morels, smoked béarnaise, and nori. The service is just as memorable, whether you're in the elegant dining room or at the bar for a bite and a cocktail. 123 N. Jefferson St.

# 20

## Lula Cafe

Logan Square | \$\$\$

For 25 years, Jason Hammel's café has been the standard-bearer for Logan Square dining. You'd be happy sticking to signatures—baked French feta, Pasta Yiayia, carrot cake—but try the seasonal plates, too. Sit at the window so you can take in the square. From here, Lula feels like the center of the world. 2537 N. Kedzie Blvd.

# 21

## Bungalow by Middle Brow

Logan Square | \$\$

We've long been fans of this pub's beers, baked goods, and pizza, but once it rolled out its tavern style, we were stunned that this place could just keep adding more deliciousness to the menu. Stop in on Tuesdays for paper-thin pies and every other day of the week for Neapolitan-ish pizzas and Sicilian slices. 2840 W. Armitage Ave.

# 22

## Atelier

Lincoln Square | \$\$\$\$\$

Christian Hunter has established himself as one of the city's brightest new voices. Working with executive chef Bradyn Kawcak, Hunter changes the tasting menu nightly, though count on a fantastic first array of bites. Semolina-fried cheese curds with romesco? Yes, please. 4835 N. Western Ave.

# 23

## La Chaparrita Grocery

Little Village | \$

In a city filled with great taquerias, La Chaparrita stands above the rest. Here you'll find tortillas piled with crispy tripas or tender tongue that you can dress with piquant salsas and a squeeze of lime. For less than \$3, you'll experience a moment of joy on a corner in Little Village. 2500 S. Whipple St.

# 24

## Perilla

West Loop | \$\$\$\$

Andrew Lim's dishes draw on his experiences as a second-generation Korean American for this take on Korean barbecue. Think Korean fried chicken wings with ranch alongside galbi. Order pours of soju, makgeolli, or wine to complement the deliciously fatty grilled meats. We're all for tradition, but we're also keen on starting new ones. 401 N. Milwaukee Ave.

# 25

## Superkhana International

Logan Square | \$\$\$

You know the phrase "ugly delicious"? That fits the food here, but we're content to skip posting on the 'gram and just enjoy the gloppy, sloppy, and wholly original takes on Indian street food. We suggest the palak paneer pizza, butter chicken calzone, or mushroom and rice cake stir-fry. 3059 W. Diversey Ave.



**26**

**Birrieria Zaragoza**

Archer Heights, Uptown | \$

The goat whisperers here serve tender birria that's available by the pound, plate, or bowl or in tacos, one of which is the quesabirria, our favorite. The two tortillas come filled with meat and two cheeses, and are served with consommé for dunking. One bite and you'll see why this place is the GOAT. 4852 S. Pulaski Rd., 4800 N. Broadway

**27**

**Lem's Bar-B-Q**

Chatham | \$

Lem's is our gold-standard Chicago-style barbecue, and the lines prove we aren't the only ones who think so. The slabs of tender ribs with potato salad, the rib tips served over fries and drenched with lip-smacking tangy red barbecue sauce, and the spicy, juicy hot links are well worth the wait. 311 E. 75th St.

**28**

**Indienne**

River North | \$\$\$\$

When we want a fun tasting menu that doesn't completely break the budget, we go to Indienne. Chef-owner Sujan Sarkar and culinary director Sahil Sethi serve blackberry-tamarind pani puri that bursts in your mouth and a soulful black dal. A rarity: The vegetarian menu is even better than the omnivorous one. 217 W. Huron St.

**29**

**Demera**

Uptown | \$\$

Tigist Reda's joyful Ethiopian restaurant always delivers a stellar experience. Start with kay seer salata, a bright beet salad, and flaky sambusas stuffed with lentils. Then feast on platters with silky collards, yellow split peas, and potatoes in spicy berbere sauce, scooping it all up with tangy injera. 4801 N. Broadway

**30**

**The Loyalist**

West Loop | \$\$\$

John Shields and Karen Urie Shields recently picked up a third Michelin star for their fine-dining Smyth, but we are all about their casual spot downstairs. Most people come for the OG cheeseburger, but don't miss the French classics handled so well, like the Camembert omelet and the roast chicken. The brunch rocks, too. 177 N. Ada St.

**31**

**JT's Genuine Sandwich Shop**

Irving Park | \$

Chris Cunningham serves such terrific renditions of American regional sammies that picking a favorite is impossible. Is it the pork tenderloin with onion, pickles, mayo, and mustard? The beans and greens melt with caramelized onions, provolone, and Calabrian chile aioli? Just choose one and know there's a new fave to discover next time. 3970 N. Elston Ave.

**32**

**The Duck Inn**

Bridgeport | \$\$\$

Every neighborhood needs a good neighborhood restaurant, and Bridgeporters are lucky theirs is the Duck Inn. On your first visit, get the rotisserie duck, then return for the Chicago-style dog made with beef and duck fat and the cheese curds with Bloody Mary ketchup. Owner Kevin Hickey runs dishes and greets diners, adding to the friendliness of this place. 2701 S. Eleanor St.

**33**

**Mitsuwa Marketplace Food Court**

Arlington Heights | \$

We feel like teenage mall rats discovering Mrs. Fields whenever we visit the cacophonous food court in this Japanese supermarket. A dozen restaurants serve everything from ramen (at Santouka) to lunch plates with grilled mackerel or curry rice (at Tokyo Shokudo). Save room for Re Leaf's green tea soft serve. 100 E. Algonquin Rd.

**34**

**Lilac Tiger**

Wicker Park | \$\$

Zubair Mohajir's Southeast Asian spot packs in diners for spicy mango margaritas and shareable plates. Try as many as you can, like the juicy momo with beef and Sichuan peppercorn, poutine with Korean curry sauce and paneer, and tandoori chicken nuggets with spicy honey. Everything here is a winner. 1742 W. Division St.



# 35

## Bavette's Bar & Boeuf

River North | \$\$\$\$

Brendan Sodikoff's steakhouse is one of the most seamless dining experiences in town, thanks to warm service and zero menu misses. Get the wedge salad with maple and black pepper bacon and the 42-day dry-aged bone-in rib eye. Even if you're stuffed, order the carrot cake — it'll be just as tasty tomorrow. 218 W. Kinzie St.

# 36

## Ocean Grill & Bar

East Pilsen | \$\$\$

Vietnamese seafood is the specialty here, and you'll find market-fresh shellfish in a variety of preparations. Our fave? Grilled oysters topped with sizzling scallion oil, peanuts, and fried shallots. Chef and co-owner Ricky Dinh's pho, with rare beef tenderloin and fresh noodles, is some of the city's best. *1826 S. Canal St.*



# 37

## Daisies

Logan Square | \$\$\$

A new location, the addition of Leigh Omilinsky as pastry chef-partner, and extra daytime hours make Daisies feel like a whole new restaurant. Come for an oat milk latte and a pastry out of the filled-to-the-brim case during the day and return for Joe Frillman's onion dip and beet agnolotti at night. *2375 N. Milwaukee Ave.*



Fried green tomato tartine

# 38

## Roux

Hyde Park | \$\$

Expat Southerners will experience a pang of recognition when they bite into a laminated biscuit breakfast sandwich or swipe country ham through redeye gravy. The bright space makes you want to hang out with a cup of coffee and a powdery beignet, a little bit of New Orleans up north. *1055 E. 55th St.*

# 39

## S.K.Y.

Pilsen | \$\$\$

Stephen Gillanders's casual-chic restaurant offers the most sanely priced and portioned tasting menu around. For \$68, you get a fantastic one-two punch of octopus meunière and dry-aged lamb chop. Order Tatum Sinclair's black truffle Pavlova for the table. The first bite is weird, the second is pure love. *1239 W. 18th St.*

# 40

## Schwa

Wicker Park | \$\$\$\$\$

At Michael Carlson's one-room BYO, the cooks (led by chef de cuisine Caleb Trahan) deliver their creations and explain (over the din) the ingredients and inspirations behind every two-bite joy ride. Think: a Choco Taco with Parmesan ice cream, or a candied apple quail. Everyone at the table just sits there beaming. *1466 N. Ashland Ave.*

# 41

## Boeufhaus

Humboldt Park | \$\$\$\$

Sometimes you want the whole steakhouse song and dance; other times you just want steak. For the latter, come to this French German bistro, with its value-priced steak frites and premium cuts dry-aged in-house and sliced for sharing. The lunchtime boeuf on weck is like the Arby's roast beef sandwich of the gods. *1012 N. Western Ave.*

# 42

## New Village Gastro Pub

Northbrook | \$\$

James Shin and Brian Lee have created the kind of neighborhood spot you'd look for in Seoul. Bring a crowd to feast on communal pots of spicy army stew and whole fried chickens the server rips into pieces at the table. Drink soju beer bombs while shouting "Geonbae!" (Cheers!). *3566 Milwaukee Ave.*

# 43

## Bayan Ko

Ravenswood | \$\$\$

Lawrence Letrero and Raquel Quadreny have always smartly melded Filipino and Cuban flavors, but their new \$95 five-course menu shows how seamlessly the cuisines work at a higher level. We can't stop thinking about the crispy octopus with black garlic emulsion or the tamale with a savory Creole sauce. *1810 W. Montrose Ave.*

# 44

## Noon-O-Kabab

Albany Park, Highwood | \$\$

Dining at this Persian spot feels like a celebration. The room has a lively din, and everyone is there to dig into the vibrant flavors and large portions of smoky baba ghanoush, dill rice, and skewers of barg and joojeh (filet mignon and chicken breast, our go-to order). Every night is a party. 4701 N. Kedzie Ave., 242 Green Bay Rd.

# 45

## Spacca Napoli

Ravenswood | \$\$

Chicago has many great places for pizza, but only this one takes us to Italy. The blistered, puffy-edged Neapolitan beauties — like our pick, the one made with buffalo mozzarella — are scorched in a wood-fired oven. Eat like an Italian with a knife and fork, or slice and grab. Either way, *buonissimo*. 1769 W. Sunnyside Ave.

# 46

## Shanghai Terrace

River North | \$\$\$\$

The terrace at this restaurant in the Peninsula Chicago affords stunning views of the city, but you'll find us inside eating Elmo Han's refined Chinese cooking. The order? Peking duck — a classic done just right, it's happiness in a pancake — and the wondrous dong po pork belly, tender sliced meat encasing braised taro. 108 E. Superior St.

# 47

## Daisy's Po-Boy and Tavern

Hyde Park | \$\$

Erick Williams's fast-casual ode to New Orleans just keeps getting better: the crackly catfish po' boy, the seafood gumbo made with lump crab, the fried chicken tingling with spice, the light and melty drop biscuits. The cavernous room hums with an energy that feels like Mardi Gras is just around the corner. 5215 S. Harper Ave.

# 48

## Dolo Restaurant and Bar

Chinatown | \$\$

This dim sum spot looks more like a clubstaurant than a traditional Cantonese teahouse, but the kitchen sends out scores of excellent siu mai and har gow with chunky shrimp, along with creative offerings such as crisp cubes of turnip cake in XO sauce. Come dinnertime, there's a solid menu with duck tongues and the like. 2222 S. Archer Ave.

# 49

## Redhot Ranch

Lake View, Logan Square, Bridgeport | \$

You'll need to order the Depression-style hot dog. And the crispy-edged double cheeseburger. Oh, and a smattering of fried shrimp (ask for a quarter pound). Luckily, nothing will set you back more than \$10. Think of it as an affordable gourmet experience. 3057 N. Ashland Ave., 2449 W. Armitage Ave., 500 W. 35th St.

# 50

## Immm Rice & Beyond

Uptown | \$

Tasty newcomers arrive regularly on Asia on Argyle, but we keep returning to Immm Rice & Beyond for Thai street food, like the grilled pork collar. A new beverage program means you can sip pandan or Thai chile cocktails. Even within this one restaurant, change is always afoot. 4949 N. Broadway



\$ Under \$50    \$\$ \$50 to \$100    \$\$\$ \$100 to \$200  
\$\$\$\$ \$200 to \$300    \$\$\$\$ More than \$300

● Price estimates are for a meal for two, excluding tax, tip, and alcohol

# CHICAGO GOURMET FASHION, PLATED

SEPTEMBER  
21-29, 2024

HARRIS THEATER ROOFTOP | MILLENNIUM PARK

TICKETS:  
CHICAGOGOURMET.ORG



## SPONSORS



# FOUND



Viscose Hawaiian shirt, \$1,150; Mini Cruiser skateboard, \$890; Black Frame 53 acetate sunglasses, \$460

## High Roller

**Newcomer Celine bumps Rush Street up a notch.**

By KELLY AIGLON

■ The luxury French fashion house Celine has boosted the *style élevé* in the Gold Coast since setting up shop here in December. Its sprawling store satisfies loyalists with signature minimalist men's and women's ready-to-wear, leather goods, accessories, and perfume. (Yes, you can score an iconic crossbody Triomphe bag.) Equally impressive is the Hedi Slimane–designed Brutalist setting, where natural stone statues loom next to mirrored gold glass, making this shop-museum hybrid a thrill for browsers and big spenders alike. 939 N. Rush St.

STORE EXPLORER

# Emmy Star Brown

The muralist frequents shops that stimulate new neural pathways. By WEB BEHRENS



**DESIGN AT 329**

329 W. 18th St.,  
South Loop

“From vintage clothing to furniture and antique birdcages, you never know what you’ll stumble upon inside this multifloor warehouse.”

**WISH LIST**

- **Oversize paintbrush** (1) “It feels like a treasured artifact with stories to tell. I want to display it on my gallery wall.” \$25
- **Antique wooden bench** “It’s a really unique accent piece that’s covered in Pollock-like splatters.” \$75

**THE INSECT ASYLUM**

2870 N. Milwaukee Ave.,  
Avondale

“This educational, artful museum allows you to appreciate the natural world through a new lens.”

**WISH LIST**

- **Bone-and-plant-encased resin dice** “I can’t stop turning them and observing them.” \$55 for a set of seven
- **Long Dog Dandy canvas print** (2) “Stylistically, this playful piece is really unique.” \$70
- **Ampersand Curiosities gold-gilded cicada** (3) “I love unique ways to preserve cicadas. The metallic sheen really catches the eye.” \$95 to \$130

**NOMAD CHICAGO**

820 N. Franklin St.,  
Near North Side

“A charming gift shop, coffee bar, and event space with treasures from around the world. The smell of sage captures me every time I walk in.”

**WISH LIST**

- **Cedar pencils** “Since I’m someone who’s always doodling, these thoughtfully designed art supplies are at the top of my list.” \$20
- **French silk and cashmere scarves** (4) “With their vibrant colors and hand-drawn illustrations, they feel like wearable works of art.” \$140

**A**LTHOUGH HER ART IS BIG and bold, muralist Emmy Star Brown keeps a modest footprint. “I love supporting small businesses and independent makers,” says the Logan Square resident. She hunts for treasures at her favorite flea markets, art fairs, and gift shops: “I’m very loyal to specific, unique places.” Kimball Arts Center in Humboldt Park is one of many local buildings emblazoned with her colorful abstract paintings. (Her @emmystarbrown Insta has more.) Her work also adorns smaller canvases, like Yeti drinkware and Field Notes journals.



THE GOODS

# Tropical Cool

The perfect antidote for summer heat: style that delivers a chill vacation vibe

By JESSICA MOAZAMI



< **GOING TO THE MAT**

Tory Burch woven raffia placemats, \$228 for a set of four. 45 E. Oak St.



^ **FLAMINGO FLAIR**

Lisa C rhinestone brooch, \$290. Ikram, 15 E. Huron St.

< **EASY BREEZY**

Michael Kors Collection silk crêpe de Chine caftan, \$3,290. 900 N. Michigan Ave.

< **PALM READER**

Serena & Lily Breakers rattan floor lamp, \$2,698. 853 W. Armitage Ave.

^ **GREEN SCENE**

Gale Switzer throw pillow, \$45. target.com

< **PATIO SHINE**

Crate & Barrel Brighton rattan outdoor lanterns, \$50 to \$103. 850 W. North Ave.

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE VENDORS

# 2024 FIVE STAR WEALTH MANAGERS

## WHO WILL BE NAMED?

Find out in a special section inside the **NOVEMBER ISSUE.**

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR RESEARCH PROCESS, GO TO:  
[fivestarpromotional.com/public/research](https://fivestarpromotional.com/public/research)

FIVE STAR  
PROMOTIONAL

## Our Menu Celebrates the Essence of Breakfast



*Serving  
Chicago  
since 2012...*

Welcome to Breakfast House, your premier destination in Chicago for a cozy and delightful dining experience. Since our inception in the charming West Town neighborhood in 2012, we have been on a mission to unite people through the joy of breakfast. Our philosophy is simple: provide delicious, homemade meals within a welcoming and amiable environment, making every visitor feel at home. “Amor es nuestro sazón” – Love is our seasoning – embodies our approach, infusing love into every facet of our service, from the kitchen to your table.

As Breakfast House has expanded, introducing new locations in Lake View, Irving Park, Wrigleyville, Belmont Heights, and Belmont Cragin, our dedication to fostering a community gathering place for everyone to relish in excellent food and camaraderie has only intensified. Each location reflects the distinct character of its neighborhood, creating a warm, inviting atmosphere for both locals and tourists to begin their day positively.

Our menu celebrates the essence of breakfast, merging traditional favorites with unique creations that appeal to a wide range of palates and dietary needs. From fluffy pancakes and savory omelets to our distinctive dishes with a Latin flair, every meal is prepared with passion, attention to detail, and the finest ingredients. Highlighting our commitment to inclusivity, we offer exciting vegan options like our Vegan Chorizo Hash, catering to those seeking plant-based alternatives.

We continually innovate in the kitchen, rolling out weekly specials and broadening our menu, ensuring there is always something new for you to discover.

Scan here  
for free coffee!



Visit any of our 7 locations, open every day from 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM

# SQUARE FEET



## The Incredible Shrinking Market

Low housing inventory in the metro area has meant tough times not only for homebuyers but for the real estate agents in our rankings of top performers.

By LEIGH KUNKEL and ROBERT LOERZEL

**I**T'S BEEN A ROUGH RIDE of late for homebuyers in the Chicago area. With inventory shortages plaguing the local market, prices rose 4.6 percent last year, while the number of sales fell 20 percent. Real estate agents have felt the pinch, too. In our latest annual rankings, 477 agents reached residential sales of at least \$10 million in 2023. That's a sharp drop from 2021, when 861 did. It is a similar story for agent teams, with just 276 of them hitting at least \$20 million, down from 435 two years earlier.

So why is housing supply struggling to keep up with increased demand, particularly in the suburbs? "Last I checked, there weren't UFOs that dropped off more people. We didn't create a bunch of new 22-to-45-year-olds," quips agent Matt Laricy, whose group at Americorp ranked second among teams. "Prepandemic, inventory wasn't an issue. What happened is that during COVID, everyone left the city and they didn't care what they had to pay, but now the surrounding areas can't take in all these people."

Inventory problems are spottier within the city. "There's high demand and a shortage of single-family homes in areas like Bucktown, Lake View, and North Center, while in Streeterville, the Gold Coast, and elsewhere downtown you have a surplus," says Carrie McCormick of @properties Christie's International Real Estate, who ranked second among individual agents.

The rise in mortgage rates has helped fuel shortages, as potential sellers hold off on jumping to new homes, hesitant to give up their existing low terms. But McCormick thinks that may change soon: For homeowners who have five- or seven-year adjustable rates, "those will start to expire, and it will inspire people to start moving."

# Top Real Estate Agents

Rankings based on 2023 residential sales in the six-county metro area

AGENT	COMPANY	SALES (IN MILLIONS OF \$)
1 Jena Radnay	@properties Christie's	169.0
2 Carrie McCormick	@properties Christie's	150.1
3 Nicholas Solano	Twin Vines	138.2
4 Paige Dooley	Compass	109.9
5 Christopher Loblillo	Grandview Realty	108.1
6 Joanne Nemerovski	Compass	72.0
7 Robert Picciariello	Prelo Realty	70.4
8 Chezi Rafaeli	Coldwell Banker	68.3
9 Susan Miner	Premier Relocation	61.8
10 Sam Shaffer	Chicago Properties	57.2
11 Liz Brooks	Belgravia	57.2
12 Linda Feinstein	Compass	54.4
13 Nathan Stillwell	John Greene	53.7
14 Lina Shah	Coldwell Banker	51.1
15 Cory Green	Compass	48.4
16 Susan Maman	@properties Christie's	47.5
17 Anne Dubray	Coldwell Banker	46.8
18 Dave Chung	Compass	44.7
19 Joanne Hudson	Compass	44.3
20 Sarah Toso	RE/Max	43.4
21 Robbie Morrison	Coldwell Banker	43.3
22 Paul Mancini	@properties Christie's	42.2
23 Timothy Salm	Jameson Sotheby's	41.5
24 Margie Brooks	Baird & Warner	41.5
25 Andra O'Neill	@properties Christie's	41.4
26 Jason O'Beirne	Jameson Sotheby's	41.1
27 Linda Levin	Jameson Sotheby's	40.8
28 Millie Rosenbloom	Baird & Warner	39.2
29 Mark Ahmad	Century 21	39.0
30 Annika Valdiserri	@properties Christie's	37.5
31 Patrick Teets	Jameson Sotheby's	37.4
32 Laura Fitzpatrick	@properties Christie's	36.7
33 Suzanne Gignilliat	@properties Christie's	36.5
34 Scott Curcio	Baird & Warner	36.3
35 Nancy Tassone	Jameson Sotheby's	35.1
36 Rachel Krueger	Jameson Sotheby's	35.0
37 Michael Hall	Baird & Warner	34.4
38 Raymond Morandi	Morandi Properties	33.7
39 Beth Burt	@properties Christie's	33.3
40 Cathy Oberbroeckling	Baird & Warner	33.0
41 Ginny Stewart	Jameson Sotheby's	32.7
42 Aly Tesar	@properties Christie's	32.6
43 Megan McCleary	BHHS Chicago	32.6
44 Mary Wallace	Coldwell Banker	32.3
45 Ryan Smith	RE/Max	32.1
46 Stephanie LoVerde	Baird & Warner	31.8
47 James Ziltz	BHHS Chicago	31.7
48 Vaseekaran Janarthanam	RE/Max	31.2
49 Pasquale Recchia	@properties Christie's	31.2
50 Benjamin Hickman	RE/Max	30.1



No. 9

SUSAN MINER

Premier Relocation

**How can buyers gain an edge in this market?** Your brokers have to be more involved in finding homes that haven't yet been put on the market. You have to act quickly because there's so little inventory. We try to work with brokers in the geographical areas where our clients are looking so they can tell us what's coming.

**What's the wildest thing you've seen in an offer recently?** I had a unit in the Waldorf Astoria for sale. During an open house, the buyer fell in love with the renter's French bulldog puppy. We got an offer for the condo, the furniture ... and the puppy! He got the unit, but not the puppy.

AGENT	COMPANY	SALES (IN MILLIONS OF \$)
51 Glenn Sharp	RE/Max	29.7
52 Bonnie Tripton	@properties Christie's	29.3
53 Greg Cirone	XR Realty	28.7
54 Sara Brahm	@properties Christie's	28.6
55 Cadey O'Leary	@properties Christie's	28.4
56 Sherri Hoke	Jameson Sotheby's	28.3
57 Michael Rosenblum	BHHS Chicago	28.2
58 Dave Shalabi	RE/Max	28.0
59 Michael Maier	BHHS Chicago	27.9
60 Julie Cassin	@properties Christie's	27.6
61 Emily Smart LeMire	Compass	27.5
62 Katie Hackett	@properties Christie's	26.9
63 Marty Dunne	BHHS Chicago	26.8
64 Alexandra Shaban	Jameson Sotheby's	26.7
65 Hadley Rue	Dream Town	25.7
66 Mike Greco	Baird & Warner	25.7
67 Jeff Stainer	RE/Max	25.6
68 Nancy Gibson	@properties Christie's	25.5
69 Katherine Malkin	Compass	25.3
70 Trevor Pauling	John Greene	25.3
71 Matthew Smith	John Greene	25.2
72 Ryan Huyler	Compass	25.1
73 Vipin Gulati	RE/Max	24.9
74 Shaun Raugstad	Coldwell Banker	24.9
75 Lori Neuschel	@properties Christie's	24.6
76 Kathleen Malone	Compass	24.4
77 Anne Hodge	Compass	24.2
78 Nicholas Colagiovanni	Baird & Warner	23.7
79 Simran Dua	RE/Max	23.6
80 Margaret Smego	Jameson Sotheby's	23.4
81 Elizabeth August	@properties Christie's	23.3
82 Zeferino Martinez	RE/Max	23.2
83 Alan Berlow	Coldwell Banker	23.2
84 Keith Brand	BHHS Chicago	23.1
85 Jonathan Lopez	Century 21	22.8
86 Cindi Sodolski	Compass	22.8
87 Annie Schweitzer	Compass	22.7
88 Susan Teper	@properties Christie's	22.5
89 Melanie Carlson	@properties Christie's	22.3
90 Martha Harrison	@properties Christie's	22.1
91 Salvador Gonzalez	RE/Max	21.2
92 Julie Kaczor	Baird & Warner	21.1
93 Ralph Milito	@properties Christie's	21.0
94 Michael Mitchell	@properties Christie's	20.9
95 Peter Angelo	Jameson Sotheby's	20.8
96 Jim Abbott	Baird & Warner	20.7
97 Mary Hoffman	Baird & Warner	20.7
98 Lisa Finks	Compass	20.1
99 Tracy Tran	Coldwell Banker	20.0
100 Jan Morel	@properties Christie's	19.9

SOURCE: Data provided by agencies

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANCIS SON

## SALES ABOVE \$15 MILLION

- **Darren Allen**  
Compass
- **Elizabeth Amidon**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Deb Baker**  
Compass
- **Cathy Balice**  
@properties Christie's
- **Mary Baubonis**  
@properties Christie's
- **Roger Blomgren**  
Baird & Warner
- **Fabio Brancati**  
@properties Christie's
- **Bradley Brondyke**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Ben Broughton**  
RE/Max
- **Tom Campone**  
Compass
- **Maria Castillo**  
RE/Max
- **Houda Chedid**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Robin Chessick**  
Dream Town
- **Terri Christian**  
@properties Christie's
- **David J. Cobb**  
RE/Max
- **Carol Collins**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Linda Conforti**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Courtney Cook**  
@properties Christie's
- **Ashley Cox**  
Compass
- **Meg Daday**  
Keller Williams
- **Brooke Daitchman**  
Dream Town
- **Sheila Dantzler**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Mariah Dell**  
Compass
- **Sarah DePasquale**  
@properties Christie's
- **Ann deVane**  
John Greene
- **Ardit Dizdari**  
@properties Christie's
- **Rory Dominick**  
Keller Williams
- **Dinny Dwyer**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Ronda Fish**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Tania Forte**  
@properties Christie's
- **Kristine Frost**  
Compass
- **Carla Gorman**  
Baird & Warner
- **Lindy Goss**  
Baird & Warner
- **Chris Grano**  
Keller Williams
- **Anne Hardy**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Coco Harris**  
Compass

- **Kim Heller**  
Baird & Warner
- **Laura Henrikson**  
@properties Christie's
- **Juana Honeycutt**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Connie Hoos**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Amy Hoover**  
RE/Max
- **Ginny Jackson**  
Baird & Warner
- **Ashley Kaehn**  
Compass
- **Kevin Kemp**  
RE/Max
- **Mark Keppy**  
Dream Town
- **Anne Kothe**  
Keller Williams
- **Shannon Kutchek**  
Compass
- **Darragh Landry**  
@properties Christie's
- **Liz Lassner**  
@properties Christie's
- **Liz LaTour**  
Dream Town
- **K.C. Lau**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jamie Lee**  
Baird & Warner
- **R. Matt Leutheuser**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Danny Lewis**  
Dream Town
- **Edward Lukasik Jr.**  
RE/Max
- **J Maggio**  
@properties Christie's
- **Harry Maisel**  
@properties Christie's
- **Erick Matos**  
RE/Max
- **Nancy McAdam**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Jenifer McCartney**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Keith McMahon**  
Compass
- **Lisa Miceli**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Caroline Moellering**  
@properties Christie's
- **Peter Moore**  
Baird & Warner
- **Randy Nasatir**  
@properties Christie's
- **Dan Nelson**  
Baird & Warner

- **Susan Nice**  
Dream Town
- **Lori Nieman**  
@properties Christie's
- **Lindsey Paulus**  
@properties Christie's
- **Joel Perez**  
RE/Max
- **Shelly Perkowski**  
@properties Christie's
- **Tere Proctor**  
@properties Christie's
- **Lynn Purcell**  
Baird & Warner
- **Gina Purdy**  
Baird & Warner
- **Rick Richker**  
@properties Christie's
- **Deidre Rudich**  
Compass
- **Pamela Rueve**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Jeff/Amjad Salhani**  
RE/Max
- **Swati Saxena**  
Baird & Warner
- **Frank Scaletta**  
XR Realty
- **Susie Scheuber**  
RE/Max
- **Steve Scheuring**  
Baird & Warner
- **Kelly Schmidt**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Victoria Krause Schutte**  
@properties Christie's
- **Caroline V. Senetar**  
RE/Max
- **Matt Steiger**  
@properties Christie's
- **Victoria Stein**  
Compass
- **Selena Stloukal**  
RE/Max
- **Kathy Szuba**  
RE/Max
- **Jake Tasharski**  
Compass
- **Megan Tirpak**  
@properties Christie's
- **Mark Vaccaro**  
Century 21
- **George Venturella**  
Century 21
- **Cindy Weinreb**  
@properties Christie's
- **Julie White**  
@properties Christie's
- **Alex Wolking**  
Keller Williams

- **Sara Young**  
RE/Max
- **Steven Zaleski**  
Compass
- **Lisa Zeller-O'Malley**  
Coldwell Banker

## SALES ABOVE \$10 MILLION

- **Ayesha Afaq**  
RE/Max
- **Diana Ahlf**  
RE/Max
- **Cory Albiani**  
@properties Christie's
- **Patrick Alvarez**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Liz Anderson**  
@properties Christie's
- **Kelly Angelopoulos**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Jackie Angiello**  
Keller Williams
- **Karen Arenson**  
Engel & Völkers
- **Amy Avakian**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Christie Baines**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Katie Barreto**  
Compass
- **Blake Bauer**  
Baird & Warner
- **Brian Behan**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jennifer Bennett**  
RE/Max
- **Brenda Bill**  
@properties Christie's
- **Katie Bishop**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Sandra Black**  
RE/Max
- **Brandon Blankenship**  
Keller Williams
- **Nicole Bokich**  
@properties Christie's
- **Brant Booker**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Mary Bruno**  
Keller Williams
- **Elizabeth Bryant**  
Baird & Warner
- **Cara Buffa**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Pam Burke**  
Keller Williams
- **Marge Cahill**  
@properties Christie's
- **April Callahan**  
Compass

- **Valerie Campbell**  
Baird & Warner
- **Alan Candea**  
Dream Town
- **Bridget Cantafio**  
@properties Christie's
- **Marj Carpenter**  
RE/Max
- **Tom Carris**  
@properties Christie's
- **Bridget Carroll**  
Keller Williams
- **Audra Casey**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jennifer Cavanaugh**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Amber Cawley**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jordan Chalmers**  
Baird & Warner
- **Caroline Chambers**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Joseph Champagne**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Mike Checuga**  
RE/Max
- **Jill Clark**  
Compass
- **Patrick Cogan**  
Compass
- **Edward Colatorti**  
Compass
- **Michelle Collingbourne**  
RE/Max
- **Ilsa Conover**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Jen Conte**  
RE/Max
- **Troy Cooper**  
John Greene
- **Monica Corbett**  
Compass
- **Ila Coretti**  
@properties Christie's
- **Erik Corral**  
RE/Max
- **Peggie Costello**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jessica Coulson**  
Compass
- **Bucky Cross**  
Baird & Warner
- **Barb Cullen**  
Baird & Warner
- **Agnes Czaja**  
RE/Max
- **Dawn Dause**  
RE/Max
- **Chris Demos**  
@properties Christie's
- **Frank DeNovi**  
Compass
- **Yvonne Despinich**  
@properties Christie's
- **Emily DeStefano**  
@properties Christie's
- **Bill Dewar**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Mario DiLorenzo**  
Keller Williams
- **Paul Dimmick**  
@properties Christie's

- **Craig Doherty**  
@properties Christie's
- **Mark Dollard**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Shawn Dowd**  
John Greene
- **Nicole Duran**  
@properties Christie's
- **Nano Engdahl**  
Baird & Warner
- **Connie Engel**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jordan Euson**  
Compass
- **Lindsay Everest**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Anne Fan**  
Compass
- **Dympna Fay-Hart**  
Dream Town
- **Erin Feinerman**  
@properties Christie's
- **Eileen Fielding**  
RE/Max
- **Grace Flatt**  
@properties Christie's
- **Julie Fleetwood**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Katie Foss**  
Baird & Warner
- **Amir Fouad**  
@properties Christie's
- **Kathie Frerman**  
@properties Christie's
- **George Furla**  
Dream Town
- **Patti Furman**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Naveena Ganesan**  
John Greene
- **Joe Gasbarra**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Megan Gemp**  
@properties Christie's
- **Lisa Gendel**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Judy Gibbons**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Edward Gobbo**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Chris Gomes**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Julie Goodyear**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jacquelynn Gordon**  
Compass
- **Jenni Gordon**  
Compass
- **Bridget Gricus**  
@properties Christie's
- **Connie Grunwaldt**  
@properties Christie's
- **Carol Guist**  
Baird & Warner
- **Anne Gummarsall**  
Coldwell Banker
- **James Gurick**  
Baird & Warner
- **Mary Haight Himes**  
Compass
- **Agnes Halmon**  
@properties Christie's
- **Dan Halperin**  
@properties Christie's



## No. 10

### SAM SHAFFER Chicago Properties

#### How can buyers gain an edge in this market?

Consider an "as is" rider, where the seller doesn't cover repairs but you can still terminate the contract after inspection; an appraisal gap waiver, where you cover any difference between the price and appraisal; or a postpossession agreement, which lets the seller remain in the house after closing so they don't have to navigate a same-day buy and sell.



**No. 43**

**MEGAN McCLEARY** BHHS Chicago

**Should you sell your home as is?** No. It sends the message that there might be something wrong in the home. The only time I recommend as is is when a family member passes away and leaves an estate.

**What small thing can turn off buyers?** Weird smells.

- **Lyn Harvie**  
Baird & Warner
- **Dino Hasapis**  
Compass
- **Hamza Hassan**  
RE/Max
- **Joelle Hayes**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jan Hazlett**  
@properties Christie's
- **Mona Hellinga**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jamie Hogan**  
@properties Christie's
- **Ann Hogle**  
@properties Christie's
- **Victoria Holmes**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Nancy Hotchkiss**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Kassie Houlihan**  
@properties Christie's
- **Yevhen Hurtovyi**  
RE/Max
- **Mohammed Islam**  
Century 21
- **Anne Jacobs**  
Baird & Warner
- **David Jaffe**  
@properties Christie's
- **Ed Jelinek**  
@properties Christie's
- **Melissa Johnson**  
RE/Max
- **Rudy Johnson**  
Keller Williams
- **Stacy Johnson**  
Baird & Warner
- **Katherine Karvelas**  
@properties Christie's
- **Anne Kavanaugh**  
Compass
- **Michael Kelly**  
Compass
- **Mary Reuter Kenney**  
RE/Max
- **Kim Kerbis**  
@properties Christie's
- **Rita Kerins**  
@properties Christie's
- **Maria Kernahan**  
@properties Christie's
- **Batgerel Khurelbaatar**  
Compass
- **Van Ann Kim**  
Compass
- **Cricket King**  
@properties Christie's
- **Kelly Kirchheimer**  
@properties Christie's

- **Micah Kirstein**  
John Greene
- **Danielle Klausung**  
Compass
- **Greg Klemstein**  
RE/Max
- **Karolina Klinowski**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Mark Kloss**  
@properties Christie's
- **Nick Kluding**  
Baird & Warner
- **Mark Koehler**  
@properties Christie's
- **Karina Kolb-Formento**  
@properties Christie's
- **Marcin Krempa**  
RE/Max
- **Tadeusz Krzysztofki**  
RE/Max
- **Jeannie Kurtzhalts**  
Compass
- **Jim Laha**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Helen LaLonde**  
@properties Christie's
- **Marta Landrosh**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Julie Latsko**  
Compass
- **Jose Leon**  
RE/Max
- **Giovanni Leopaldi**  
Compass
- **Haley Levine**  
Compass
- **Michael Lohens**  
RE/Max
- **Mike Long**  
@properties Christie's
- **Michell Lukasik**  
RE/Max
- **Sharyl Mackey**  
Baird & Warner
- **Kelly Maggio**  
@properties Christie's
- **Leslie Maguire**  
@properties Christie's
- **Kerri Mahon**  
@properties Christie's
- **Brandie Malay Siavelis**  
@properties Christie's
- **Anthony Maione**  
@properties Christie's
- **Simmi Malhotra**  
John Greene
- **Stephanie Malmquist**  
@properties Christie's
- **Molly Mann**  
@properties Christie's

- **Meredith Manni Meserow**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Linda Martin**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Natalia Martinez**  
RE/Max
- **Brenda Mauldin**  
Baird & Warner
- **Kelsey Mayher**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Emily McClintock**  
Baird & Warner
- **Kathy McKinney**  
Baird & Warner
- **Caitlin McLain**  
Baird & Warner
- **Tim McLoughlin**  
@properties Christie's
- **Ashraf Memon**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Daniel Merrion**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Dalia Metzger**  
@properties Christie's
- **Howard Meyers**  
Compass
- **Neveen Michael**  
Keller Williams
- **Heidi Michaels**  
@properties Christie's
- **Laura Michicich**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Tania Mihaylova**  
RE/Max
- **Debbie Miller Cohen**  
Baird & Warner
- **David Mishel**  
Compass
- **Mandy Montford**  
Baird & Warner
- **Josie Morrison**  
RE/Max
- **Ghita Mueller**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Khaled Muza**  
RE/Max
- **Suzanne Myers**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Mary Myzia**  
RE/Max
- **Roni Nanini**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jason Nash**  
@properties Christie's
- **John Nash**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Rita Neri**  
RE/Max

- **Brenda Newman-Lawler**  
RE/Max
- **Jennifer Newsom**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Gail Niermeyer**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Neringa Northcutt**  
@properties Christie's
- **Nancy Nugent**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Susan O'Connor Davis**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Andres Olaez**  
RE/Max
- **Maria B. Orozco**  
RE/Max
- **Jennifer Oukrust**  
Compass
- **Roman Patzner**  
Fulton Grace
- **Katerina Pavlova**  
RE/Max
- **Jacklyn Pepoon**  
Compass
- **Chris Pequet**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Heidi Peterson**  
RE/Max
- **Lisa Petrik**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Brett Picarazzi**  
@properties Christie's
- **Monique Pieron**  
@properties Christie's
- **Slav Polinski**  
@properties Christie's
- **Nadine Pomilia**  
RE/Max
- **Karen Potesman Skurie**  
Baird & Warner
- **Liz Prassas Licata**  
Compass
- **Marek Prus**  
RE/Max
- **Jordan Pyle**  
Compass
- **Diana Radosta**  
Compass
- **Karen Ranquist**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Dawn Recchia**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jen Riccolo DeBower**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jeanne Rickard**  
Compass
- **Elise Rinaldi**  
@properties Christie's
- **Deb Ritter**  
Keller Williams
- **Niki Rocco**  
@properties Christie's
- **Beata Rogowski**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Chris Rosenburg**  
United Real Estate
- **Anne Rossley**  
Baird & Warner
- **Janine Sasso**  
Coldwell Banker

- **Kimberly Schmidt**  
RE/Max
- **Mark Schrimmer**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Al Schwartz**  
Fulton Grace
- **Becky Sexson**  
Baird & Warner
- **Gina Shad**  
@properties Christie's
- **Linda Shaughnessy**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Elizabeth Sheeran**  
@properties Christie's
- **Brant Sichko**  
Baird & Warner
- **Robert Sikkell**  
@properties Christie's
- **George Simic**  
John Greene
- **Patricia Skirving**  
Compass
- **Daniel Slivka**  
@properties Christie's
- **Nancy Sliwa**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Elliot Small**  
Compass
- **Evan Smeenge**  
Compass
- **Amy Smith**  
RE/Max
- **Doug Smith**  
@properties Christie's
- **Gregory Smith**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Kevin Snow**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Kacia Snyder**  
Jameson Sotheby's

- **Diana Soldo Massaro**  
Dream Town
- **Clare Spartz**  
@properties Christie's
- **John Spieske**  
Baird & Warner
- **Eamonn Stafford**  
@properties Christie's
- **Elizabeth Stephenson**  
RE/Max
- **Dan Straus**  
Dream Town
- **Sophia Su**  
RE/Max
- **Oksana Suden**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Tim Sullivan**  
Baird & Warner
- **Dave Swanson**  
John Greene
- **Lesley Sweeney**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Bernadeta Szczech**  
RE/Max
- **Carrie Tarzon**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jeffrey Taylor**  
RE/Max
- **Casselyn Tertell**  
Compass
- **Dan Timm**  
Baird & Warner
- **Benjamin Turbow**  
Keller Williams
- **Loreal Urso**  
Dream Town
- **Jennifer Vande Lune**  
@properties Christie's
- **Dawn Venit**  
Baird & Warner
- **Madison Verdun**  
Keller Williams
- **Neil Verhagen**  
Baird & Warner
- **Cheryl Waldstein**  
@properties Christie's
- **Collin Wasiak**  
Compass
- **Courtney Welsch**  
Baird & Warner
- **Keith Wilkey**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Cynthia Windeler**  
Keller Williams
- **Mike Wolson**  
Compass
- **Michael Yeagle**  
Compass
- **Robert Yoshimura**  
Compass
- **Melanie Young**  
Keller Williams
- **Pat Young**  
@properties Christie's
- **Adam Zagata**  
Dream Town
- **Marc Zale**  
Compass
- **David Zwarycz**  
BHHS Chicago



**No. 79**

**SIMRAN DUA**  
RE/Max

**What's an unusual thing you've done to close a deal?** I was representing the seller, and the buyers insisted on doing a religious ceremony at the house before closing. It had to do with an auspicious date and time, so we all went over at 6 a.m. You want to make people happy!

# Top Real Estate Teams

Rankings based on 2023 residential sales in the six-county metro area

TEAM	COMPANY	SALES (IN MILLIONS OF \$)
1 Jane Lee Team	RE/Max	257.2
2 Laricy Team	Americorp	234.9
3 Dawn McKenna Group	Coldwell Banker	217.2
4 Lowe Group	Compass	211.7
5 Emily Sachs Wong	@properties Christie's	178.2
6 Sarah Leonard Team	Legacy Properties	168.0
7 Ben Lalez Team	Compass	166.4
8 Leigh Marcus Team	@properties Christie's	155.1
9 Schiller Team	@properties Christie's	153.1
10 GGL Group	Compass	144.1
11 Sheahan Group	Compass	142.2
12 Vesta Team	Vesta Preferred	136.4
13 Morrison Home Team	@properties Christie's	121.4
14 Mike McCatty Group	Century 21	108.6
15 Refine Residential	@properties Christie's	105.7
16 MG Group	BHHS Chicago	100.8
17 Kim Alden Team	Compass	96.5
18 Gagliardo Group	Compass	93.5
19 DG Advisors Group	Fulton Grace	90.1
20 Westhoff Group	Compass	85.3
21 Melissa Siegal Group	@properties Christie's	83.8
22 Busby Group	Compass	83.6
23 Connie Dornan Group	@properties Christie's	82.3
24 DelBoccio/Marchetti Group	@properties Christie's	81.5
25 Lance Kammes Team	RE/Max	81.2
26 Alex Stoykov Group	Compass	81.1
27 Wilczek Bacza Group	Wilczek & Bacza Brokers	80.8
28 Skowron Group	@properties Christie's	79.1
29 Klopas Stratton Team	BHHS Chicago	77.8
30 Biazar Group	North Clybourn Group	77.2
31 Wexler Gault Group	@properties Christie's	75.8
32 Leslie McDonnell Team	RE/Max	75.0
33 Brad Lippitz Group	Compass	72.8
34 Arrow Home Advisors	Compass	72.4
35 Rubenstein Fox Team	Baird & Warner	72.3
36 Team Fallico	Dream Town	72.0
37 Qamar Group	Real Brokerage	71.4
38 Kate Waddell Group	Compass	71.4
39 Kris Berger Group	Compass	71.0
40 MacPherson Group	@properties Christie's	70.9
41 Kelly Stetler Team	Compass	67.8
42 Olive Well	Compass	67.2
43 Dean Tubekis Team	Coldwell Banker	65.2
44 Moy Group	@properties Christie's	64.3
45 Larysa Domino	@properties Christie's	64.3
46 Blackshaw Messel Group	Compass	62.6
47 Hebson Murphy Group	Dream Town	62.3
48 Pattie Murray Team	BHHS Chicago	61.5
49 GetBurbed	@properties Christie's	61.1
50 Monarque Group	@properties Christie's	60.8

TEAM	COMPANY	SALES (IN MILLIONS OF \$)
51 Bryan Bomba Group	@properties Christie's	60.4
52 Currey Koertgen Team	RE/Max	60.0
53 Weinberg Choi	Keller Williams	59.6
54 Cathy Bier Team	Coldwell Banker	58.6
55 Ames Group Chicago	Engel & Völkers	58.6
56 Kite Team	Keller Williams	57.6
57 Cindy Banks Team	RE/Max	52.9
58 Danny Glick Group	@properties Christie's	52.6
59 MVP Team	Compass	52.6
60 Lake Group	Compass	52.0
61 Sergio & Banks	@properties Christie's	52.0
62 Gold Group	@properties Christie's	51.9
63 Chicago Home Partner	@properties Christie's	51.8
64 Fu Group	@properties Christie's	51.6
65 Dowell Group	BHHS Chicago	51.2
66 Sam Jenkins Group	Jameson Sotheby's	51.1
67 Melanie Everett & Company	Melanie Everett & Company	51.0
68 Kalamaras Group	@properties Christie's	50.9
69 Jerfita Pierson Team	Compass	50.5
70 Julie Sutton Group	Compass	50.5
71 Baker McNicholas Group	Compass	49.6
72 Quaid & Rooney	Keller Williams	49.5
73 Scott Group	Compass	48.6
74 Ted Pickus Team	@properties Christie's	48.6
75 Icuss Group	Compass	48.4
76 Tracy Anderson	Compass	46.9
77 Phair-Hinton Group	Keller Williams	46.8
78 Hering Homes Team	Coldwell Banker	45.6
79 Home Discovery Team	Jameson Sotheby's	45.4
80 Ryan Preuett Group	Jameson Sotheby's	45.3
81 SK Group	Fulton Grace	45.2
82 Buy Sell Love Chicago Team	BHHS Chicago	45.2
83 Chicago Home Collective	Compass	45.1
84 C Starr Team	@properties Christie's	44.9
85 Flora Blahnik Group	@properties Christie's	44.8
86 Second City Agents	Compass	43.9
87 Mawicke Group	@properties Christie's	43.9
88 Seventy7 Group	Fulton Grace	43.7
89 Streeterville Properties Group	Jameson Sotheby's	43.6
90 MB Luxury Group	@properties Christie's	43.6
91 Karen Schwartz Group	Dream Town	43.4
92 MB Team	@properties Christie's	41.0
93 Mary Grant	@properties Christie's	41.0
94 Camille Canales Group	Compass	40.9
95 Lori Johanneson Team	@properties Christie's	40.7
96 Lavelle Group	@properties Christie's	40.6
97 Vincent Anzalone Realtor Group	Dream Town	40.2
98 Moda Group	Compass	40.2
99 Home Connective	@properties Christie's	39.6
100 Relux Group	Compass	39.3

SOURCE: Data provided by agencies



No. 5

**EMILY SACHS WONG** @properties Christie's

**What design touches are appealing to buyers right now?** We're done with gray. Everything is warming up—colors and patterns are coming back.

**What small thing can turn off buyers?** Carbon monoxide detectors and alarm panels that are old and yellowed.

**SALES ABOVE \$35 MILLION**

- **Connie Antoniou**  
Luxury Lifestyles  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **ATM Team**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Capitanini Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Alice Chin Team**  
Compass
- **Corteam**  
RE/Max
- **Corwin Partners**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Dobbs Group**  
Compass
- **Owen Duffy Group**  
Fulton Grace
- **Essence Realty Team**  
Keller Williams
- **Foley Group**  
John Greene
- **Graff Group**  
Compass
- **Judy Greenberg Group**  
Compass
- **Brian Grossman Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Holz Homes**  
Keller Williams
- **Kasper Group**  
Compass
- **Kim and Katie Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Jackie Mack & More**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Kathryn and Kelly Mangel**  
@properties Christie's
- **Matlin Group**  
Compass
- **McCarthy Schwager Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **O'Connor Group**  
Dream Town
- **PAK Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **REV Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Riverwalk Partners**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Shenfeld Group**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Swake Group**  
Dream Town
- **Team Luis Ortiz**  
RE/Max
- **Thomas Team**  
@properties Christie's

- **Trace Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Ville Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Bill White Homes**  
Baird & Warner
- **Robert Wisdom Team**  
RE/Max
- **Yeager Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Your Home Group**  
Baird & Warner

- **Christie Ascione Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Tim Binning Team**  
RE/Max
- **ChicagoHome Brokerage Network**  
@properties Christie's
- **Cobb Team**  
RE/Max
- **Dom and Judie**  
@properties Christie's
- **Dorger McCarthy Group**  
Keller Williams
- **DWK Realty Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Geeks Team**  
RE/Max
- **GK Chicago**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Hajdu Group**  
Dream Town
- **Hausman Team**  
Compass
- **HL2R Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **IKGroup**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Duong Kim Global**  
Compass
- **Kohler Group**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Ginny Leamy Team**  
Compass
- **Gassensmith Group**  
Compass
- **Livian Chicagoland**  
Keller Williams
- **Vittoria Logli Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Lotzof Malk Residential**  
Compass
- **Lyon, Folker, Campbell, Mower Partners**  
@properties Christie's
- **Mabadi Group**  
BHHS Chicago

**SALES ABOVE \$30 MILLION**

- **Christie Ascione Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Tim Binning Team**  
RE/Max
- **ChicagoHome Brokerage Network**  
@properties Christie's
- **Cobb Team**  
RE/Max
- **Dom and Judie**  
@properties Christie's
- **Dorger McCarthy Group**  
Keller Williams
- **DWK Realty Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Geeks Team**  
RE/Max
- **GK Chicago**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Hajdu Group**  
Dream Town
- **Hausman Team**  
Compass
- **HL2R Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **IKGroup**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Duong Kim Global**  
Compass
- **Kohler Group**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Ginny Leamy Team**  
Compass
- **Gassensmith Group**  
Compass
- **Livian Chicagoland**  
Keller Williams
- **Vittoria Logli Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Lotzof Malk Residential**  
Compass
- **Lyon, Folker, Campbell, Mower Partners**  
@properties Christie's
- **Mabadi Group**  
BHHS Chicago

- **Makinney Group**  
Compass
- **McGovern Group**  
RE/Max
- **Meg + Katie Group**  
Compass
- **Memeti Group**  
RE/Max
- **Tom Moran Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Pagels Group**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Lori Rowe Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Ruettiger Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **Saladino Sells Team**  
Keller Williams
- **Schreiber Branning Weiss Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Share Team**  
Compass
- **Shore Group**  
Compass
- **Jill Silverstein Group**  
Compass
- **Summerville Partners**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Basel Tarabein Team**  
RE/Max
- **Crystal Tran Team**  
@properties Christie's

- **Makinney Group**  
Compass
- **McGovern Group**  
RE/Max
- **Meg + Katie Group**  
Compass
- **Memeti Group**  
RE/Max
- **Tom Moran Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Pagels Group**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Lori Rowe Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Ruettiger Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **Saladino Sells Team**  
Keller Williams
- **Schreiber Branning Weiss Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Share Team**  
Compass
- **Shore Group**  
Compass
- **Jill Silverstein Group**  
Compass
- **Summerville Partners**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Basel Tarabein Team**  
RE/Max
- **Crystal Tran Team**  
@properties Christie's

**SALES ABOVE \$25 MILLION**

- **Ballis Group**  
Compass
- **Rubina Bokhari Luxury Group**  
Compass
- **Brown Team**  
Baird & Warner
- **Randy Brush Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Burlington Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Byrne Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **Olivia Carlson Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Chicago Condo Finder**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Chicago Property Sisters Team**  
RE/Max
- **Thomas Domasik Team**  
RE/Max
- **Dulaitis Group**  
RE/Max
- **Fogel Slate Group**  
Compass

- **Fru mentino Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Hall Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **Häus Squad**  
@properties Christie's
- **Brandy Isaac Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Chris Jacobs' Team**  
Century 21
- **JProctor Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Keystone Home Hub**  
Compass
- **KMG Group**  
Compass
- **Lipton Luxury Living**  
Compass
- **Diana Matichyn Home Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Brett McIntyre and Beth Schoonenberg**  
John Greene
- **MD Partners**  
@properties Christie's
- **Michels Group**  
Compass
- **Moon Group**  
Keller Williams
- **Mrs. Whitted Collective**  
Baird & Warner
- **Niko Collaborative**  
Keller Williams
- **Noote Partners**  
Compass
- **Brett Novack Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Penny O'Brien Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **One Corner**  
Keller Williams
- **Porter Goldberg Residential**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Quesada Group**  
Keller Williams
- **RG Group**  
Dream Town
- **Schwabe Group**  
Compass
- **Seagren Fine Homes**  
Compass
- **Scott Stavish Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Robert Sullivan Team**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Taub Stronberg Residential**  
@properties Christie's
- **Team Newman**  
Keller Williams

- **Fru mentino Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Hall Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **Häus Squad**  
@properties Christie's
- **Brandy Isaac Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Chris Jacobs' Team**  
Century 21
- **JProctor Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Keystone Home Hub**  
Compass
- **KMG Group**  
Compass
- **Lipton Luxury Living**  
Compass
- **Diana Matichyn Home Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Brett McIntyre and Beth Schoonenberg**  
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- **Moon Group**  
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- **Mrs. Whitted Collective**  
Baird & Warner
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Keller Williams
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- **Brett Novack Group**  
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Jameson Sotheby's
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Keller Williams
- **RG Group**  
Dream Town
- **Schwabe Group**  
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- **Seagren Fine Homes**  
Compass
- **Scott Stavish Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Robert Sullivan Team**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Taub Stronberg Residential**  
@properties Christie's
- **Team Newman**  
Keller Williams

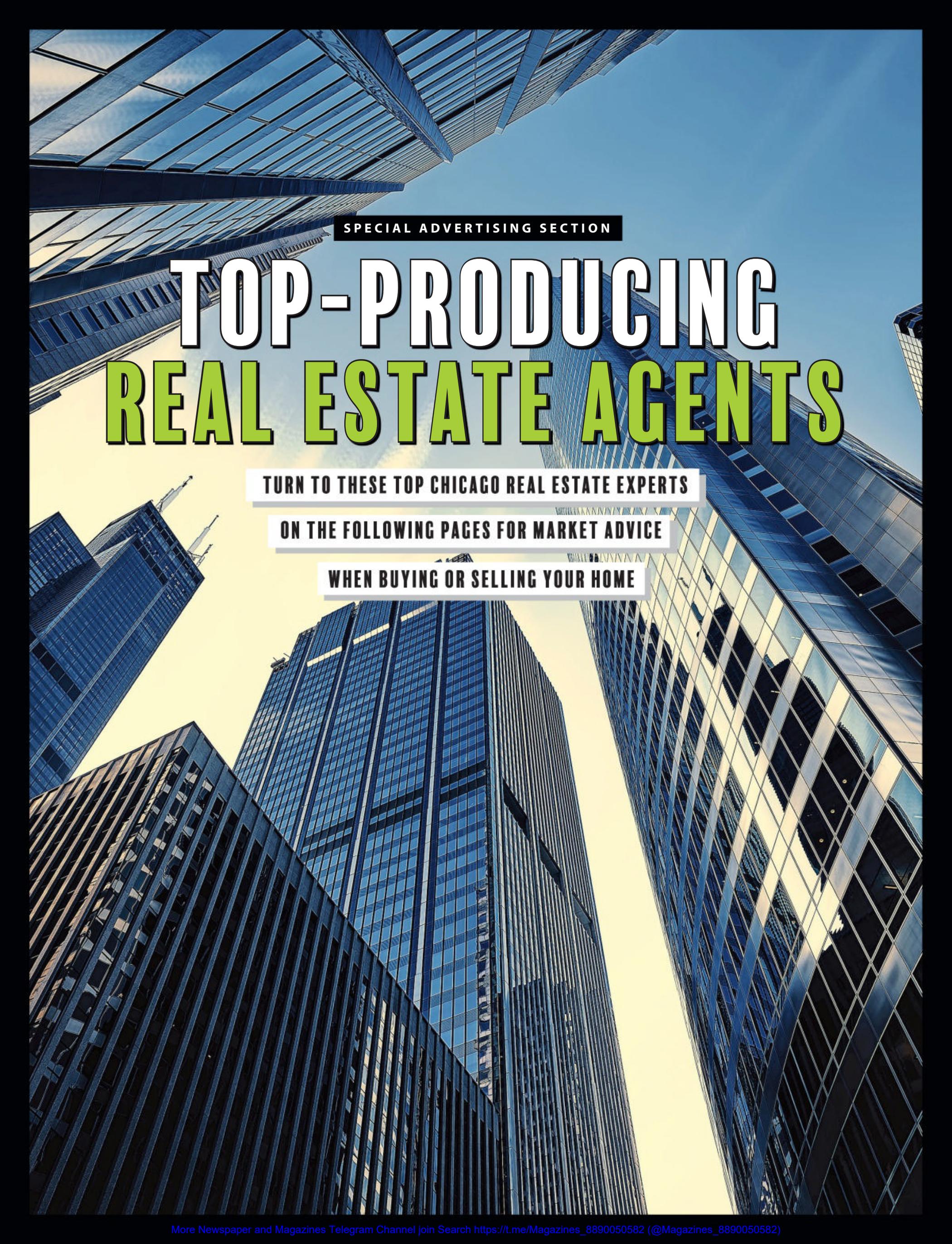
- **Kevin Wood Group**  
@properties Christie's

**SALES ABOVE \$20 MILLION**

- **ACD Group**  
Compass
- **Jean Anderson & Donna Mancuso**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Around Town Real Estate Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **George Bessette Team**  
RE/Max
- **Blume Group**  
Keller Williams
- **Kathy Brothers Team**  
Keller Williams
- **Burhop Group**  
Baird & Warner
- **Chicago Residential Partners**  
Compass
- **Kiki Clark & Polly Richardson**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Lauren Dayton Real Estate Group**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **Deal With Diamond Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Dickstein Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Matt Engle Group**  
Fulton Grace
- **Kate Faselow Group**  
Compass
- **NL Ferrata Team**  
Compass
- **Kat Fish Group**  
Keller Williams
- **Fisher + Hasak**  
Compass
- **Fowler Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Gaggero & Tully**  
@properties Christie's
- **GPS Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Moin Haque Team**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Deb Hess and Partners**  
Compass
- **Homes by Marco Team**  
RE/Max
- **JH Real Estate Group**  
Jameson Sotheby's
- **JS Group**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Lisa Kalous**  
Compass
- **Kaplan Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **KD Homes**  
BHHS Chicago
- **Keller Group Chicago**  
Baird & Warner
- **L&M Home Group**  
@properties Christie's

- **Likus Collective**  
Dream Town
- **Jennifer Liu Team**  
Baird & Warner
- **LIV Partners**  
Compass
- **Lothamer Group**  
Compass
- **Mandile + Lorimer Property Group**  
Compass
- **Lori Mattice Team**  
RE/Max
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- **Randy McGhee Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Michelson Team**  
Baird & Warner
- **Lucille Mierop Team**  
RE/Max
- **Mundy Advisors**  
@properties Christie's
- **Pagonis Team**  
Keller Williams
- **Phelps-Hanson Kardosh Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **Pickard Group**  
RE/Max
- **Pinnacle Team**  
Compass
- **Brian Pistorius Group**  
Compass
- **Wendy Puszczan Group**  
Keller Williams
- **Roback Czuprynski Team**  
Baird & Warner
- **Rowland Group**  
Compass
- **Rullo Team**  
RE/Max
- **Ian Schwartz Group**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Shimmon Group**  
Dream Town
- **Tim Sotis Team**  
RE/Max
- **SpaceMatch Michael Kang**  
Coldwell Banker
- **Team Miller**  
Keller Williams
- **Team Open Doors**  
Compass
- **Team Sachs**  
@properties Christie's
- **Michael Thornton Team**  
Keller Williams
- **Brooke Vanderbok Team**  
@properties Christie's
- **Vesta Home Team**  
Compass
- **Lyn Wise Group**  
@properties Christie's
- **ZK Group**  
BHHS Chicago

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**SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION**

# **TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS**

**TURN TO THESE TOP CHICAGO REAL ESTATE EXPERTS**

**ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR MARKET ADVICE**

**WHEN BUYING OR SELLING YOUR HOME**

# TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS

## KIM KERBIS

@properties Christie's International

Native Chicagoan Kim Kerbis, ABR, CRS, GRI, CNE, SRES, AHWD, has been a top-producing real estate agent in the city for over 25 years.

She brings both a high touch and high-tech approach to working with clients, 99 percent of whom are past clients and referrals. “I work with buyers and sellers and do a touch of leasing as well. I think it is important to see the whole market, not just a small part of it. Even though the market can be segmented, it all works together as a cohesive whole. I’m always educating myself and asking questions to see how local, national, and international events put pressure on different aspects of the market.”

In addition to being a Chicago Association of Realtors top-producer, Kim has been recognized as a Who’s Who in Chicago Real Estate by *Chicago Agent Magazine* since 2016, including being voted Managing Broker of the Year (city) in 2019; as one of Chicago’s most influential residential real estate brokers by *Crain’s Chicago Business* (2018); top-producing individual agent in the @properties Lakeview office in 2016; appearing on WBEZ and being a go-to resource for local and national news outlets, including *Crain’s*, *Chicago* magazine, *Curbed Chicago*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. Kim is also renowned for “kerb appeal-working with buyers” a course she teaches to @properties agents.

Kim chairs CAR’s Forms & Contracts Committee and serves on the Illinois & Chicago Realtors Professional Standards Committees. She recently served on CAR’s Board of Directors. She’s also on the Board of Trustees for the Francis W. Parker School and the Board of Directors of Chicago Women in Architecture Foundation. “I was recently named an @properties brand ambassador. Everything I do, whether on behalf of my clients, or for the profession or for the organizations I serve, reflect my belief system: ‘Everything to help, nothing to hinder.’”

**lake effect**  
lakeeffectchicago.com

4100 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 60618  
lakeeffectchicago@atproperties.com  
312-339-1849

PHOTOGRAPHY: FRANCIS SON

▪ **TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS** ▪



**THE KLOPAS STRATTON TEAM**  
 Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Chicago

The KlopasStratton Team is a collaboration of 4 top producing brokers with over 50 years of combined experience in the Chicago real estate market. Our team offers a diverse range of skills and professional expertise, making us unique in the industry. Despite being small in size, we are known for our outstanding client service, experienced business practices, and innovative marketing strategies. Our success is solely based on our client’s satisfaction, and we take pride in

having sold over 1.2 billion dollars worth of real estate. Whether you are buying or selling property, we are here to be your trusted partners.

Jason Stratton: 312-415-1551  
 Beth Gomez: 773-727-1707  
 Sophia Klopas: 312-927-0334  
 Lisa Huber: 312-610-0755  
[klopasstratton.com](http://klopasstratton.com)



**BERKSHIRE  
 HATHAWAY**  
 HOMESERVICES  
 CHICAGO

PHOTOGRAPHY: FRANCIS SON

# TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS



## CARRIE MCCORMICK

@properties Christie's

For over two decades, Carrie McCormick has been at the forefront of the Chicago real estate scene, consistently delivering unparalleled results across all neighborhoods and price points. With a remarkable career amassing an impressive \$1.5 billion in sales, she has firmly established herself as the epitome of luxury real estate.

Carrie's reputation precedes her, and her name has become synonymous with excellence and expertise in the industry. Her extensive experience and unwavering commitment to her clients have solidified her as a true luminary in the world of Chicago real estate.

In an era where digital presence is paramount, Carrie McCormick shines brightly. Her robust and engaging social media presence keeps her clients and followers informed about the latest market trends, opportunities, and exclusive listings. This dedication to staying ahead of the curve has made her a digital influencer in the world of luxury real estate.

Carrie's approach to marketing is nothing short of customized perfection. She understands that every property is unique, and her tailored strategies ensure that each listing receives the attention it deserves. Whether it's a luxury penthouse or a charming family home, Carrie knows how to showcase a property's finest attributes to attract the right buyers.

CARRIE  
MCCORMICK  
LUXURY GROUP

@properties | CHRISTIE'S  
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

carriemccormickre.com  
carrie@atproperties.com  
312-961-4612

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# ■ TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS ■

## SUSAN MINER

### Premier Relocation and Real Estate Services

As the Founder of Premier Relocation & Real Estate Services, Susan Miner has earned a reputation among clients as one of the most knowledgeable and savvy real estate brokers in Chicago. Susan's unique skill set includes law and MBA degrees that she utilizes to buy and sell homes for C-suite executives and other sophisticated clients.

Susan has closed over \$1 billion in individual sales and rentals including \$500M in luxury Gold Coast buildings such as 9 West Walton and Waldorf Astoria and has procured the highest-priced home purchase and rental in Chicago history. In 2023, Susan ranked in the top 1% of Chicago residential real estate brokers, a platinum producer, and in the top 10 highest producing brokers in Illinois.

Susan has developed a corporate relocation program to assist Fortune 500 companies in their efforts to recruit and relocate senior management executives and their families to Chicago. In recent years, Susan has expanded Premier Relocation's presence nationwide by getting her sales license in Florida and partnering with an exclusive network of luxury real estate brokers across 85 markets in the U.S., Mexico and the Caribbean. All of the affiliated brokers are highly respected and share Susan's commitment to client service, integrity, confidentiality, and deep knowledge of their respective real estate market. Susan has utilized her referral network to help clients who are looking to purchase or rent a second home in popular destinations such as Florida, Arizona, and Cabo. In addition to helping her clients identify top local brokers, Susan collaborates closely with them throughout the vetting, negotiating, and closing process.



1640 N. Wells St., Suite 203  
 Chicago, IL 60614  
 premier-relocation.com  
 sminer@premier-relocation.com  
 312-397-1923



## TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS



# JOANNE & RACHEL NEMEROVSKI

Compass

Joanne and Rachel Nemerovski stand at the forefront of Chicago luxury real estate and are consistently ranked as Top Producers. This dynamic mother-daughter duo has successfully guided countless Chicagoans through the buying and selling process, managing transactions that collectively exceed \$1.5 billion in luxury sales.

Their commitment to integrity and motivation for results are showcased throughout the buying and selling process with their white glove service. Joanne and Rachel have a proven track record with over 95% of their business year after year consisting of repeat and referrals. You'll feel like family working with these two, who always have your best interests at heart with unwavering support and hand-holding through every phase of the process.

No matter where you are in the home-buying, home-selling or home-enjoying phase of life, the Nemerovski Network offers concierge-level service for all of your real estate needs and maintains extensive relationships with ancillary services, delivering the best professionals in the industry whenever you need them.

They also offer a nation-wide network of top-producing partners and can help you wherever your real estate dreams are coast to coast. Understanding that real estate is a global asset class, they are uniquely positioned to deliver a seamless experience throughout your real estate portfolio.

Both natives of their beloved Chicago, Joanne and Rachel are committed to helping others experience the best this city offers. In doing so, they will ensure every aspect of your partnership is well taken care.



2350 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60614  
joannesellschicago.com  
312-720-4505

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■ **TOP-PRODUCING REAL ESTATE AGENTS** ■

# LANCE KIRSHNER

## LAKE Group at Compass

With over 80-plus years of combined experience, the LAKE Group excels as a top-performing team of seven real estate professionals. Our extensive reach spans from the bustling South Loop to the esteemed North Shore and surrounding suburbs. Whether you're dealing with condos, townhouses, single-family homes, or multiunit apartment buildings, the LAKE Group expertly manages all your real estate needs. Boasting an impressive sales volume in excess of \$500 million, and over 1,100 successful transactions, we consistently achieve outstanding results. The group's collective average is just 21 days for all listings across our professional careers; while maintaining an extraordinary 99.8 percent sales-to-list-price ratio. Although diverse backgrounds, the common theme amongst the team is a shared commitment to providing concierge level real estate services with exceptional results.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SONYA MARTIN



Back row, from left: Cristina Tu, Julie Stanczak, Nancy Gordon. Front Row, from left: Laura Lando, Lance Kirshner, Lia Scala. Not pictured: Kyle Bordner



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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

# MEDICAL PROFILES

TOP PHYSICIANS TO CONSULT FOR YOUR MEDICAL PROCEDURES AND SERVICES

## MEDICAL PROFILES

**BODY BY BLOCH**

STEVEN BLOCH, MD

Dr. Steven Bloch is a nationally recognized plastic surgeon with an international patient base. He has consistently been named a “top plastic surgeon.” He has been a leader in introducing advanced techniques in his Center of Excellence, including most recently the Vaser 4D Hi-Definition Liposculpture.

A board-certified plastic surgeon for more than 30 years, Dr. Bloch has the skills and experience to match. He rose to prominence quickly and has been featured on CBS, Discovery Channel, FOX News Channel, NBC, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and WGN-TV Chicago, to name a few.

Dr. Bloch combines an artistic sense with a technical, scientific background to create a natural and refined look for his patients. He believes that each of us has an inner sense of how we should look, and the art of plastic surgery is to listen to each patient’s desires and needs. It is important to separate reality from fantasy. After a consultation with the patient, a plan is outlined and costs are discussed. The next step is to transform these dreams, when appropriate, into reality.

Dr. Bloch does not believe that his role ends with surgery. He is actively involved in the post-operative phase and has a dedicated staff to assist patients with their needs, whether medical or emotional.

Additionally, he has a nationally recognized medical spa with state-of-the-art, spare-no-expense, cutting-edge technologies to treat the entire body. The latest technology being introduced to the Chicago area is EmFace and Cool Peel. This really works and is painless. We guarantee it. Dr. Bloch supervises these treatments at Skin Deep Medical Spa, which has locations in Highland Park and Glenview.

All injections are given by Dr. Bloch; he believes your face is too important to delegate to a non-physician. Furthermore, a firm understanding of the aging process and underlying anatomy is critical to getting it right.

To learn about new and innovative treatment options, Dr. Bloch encourages you to visit his websites at [bodybybloch.com](http://bodybybloch.com) and [skindeepmedicalspa.com](http://skindeepmedicalspa.com).

**bodybybloch™**

**Body By Bloch**  
1160 Park Ave. W., Ste. 2E  
Highland Park, IL 60035  
**847-432-0840**

**Skin Deep Medical Spa**  
1160 Park Ave. W., Ste. 2E  
Highland Park, IL 60035  
**847-432-0426**

**Skin Deep Medical Spa**  
1986 Tower Dr.  
Glenview, IL 60026  
**847-901-0800**

**bodybybloch.com**  
**skindeepmedicalspa.com**

## MEDICAL PROFILES



## DR. PETER D. GELDNER

THE GELDNER CENTER  
PLASTIC SURGERY & MED SPA

Go from ordinary to extraordinary with today's advanced cosmetic surgery and aesthetic procedures from The Geldner Center. Experience a whole new way to feel about yourself and gain a new outlook on life. Dr. Peter Geldner is a nationally recognized board-certified plastic surgeon specializing in cosmetic surgery of the face and body. He has performed surgery on thousands of satisfied patients over the past 33 years and has demonstrated the highest level of expertise in his field. The Geldner Center is committed to maximizing each patient's aesthetic goals while providing a personalized experience.

Dr. Geldner is past president of the Chicago Society of Plastic Surgeons and is considered one of the leading plastic surgeons in the Midwest. He is a perennial fixture on "best of" lists, both regionally and nationally. Dr. Geldner has been named a "Top Doctor" by *U.S. News and World Report*, *Castle Connolly*, the Consumers' Research Council of America, *RealSelf*, and *Chicago* magazine. When the media wants an expert, they talk to Dr. Geldner. He has shared his expertise on ABC, NBC, WGN, Fox Business, Fox News, the Learning Channel, Web MD Radio Live, and many other media outlets.

The Geldner Center's Chicago and western suburb locations feature nonsurgical treatments like Ultherapy, Morpheus, CoolSculpting, Emsculpt Neo, Emtone, and Emface. Emface is a revolution in facial treatments. By admitting both synchronized RF and HIFES energies, it simultaneously affects the skin and muscles. The end result is fewer wrinkles. Best of all, Emface treats the full face in only 20 minutes.

The Geldner Center also has licensed nurse injectors in both locations to meet your injectable needs as well as licensed medical aestheticians specializing in chemical peels, photo facials, laser therapy treatment, Ultherapy, Morpheus, microneedling, skin care regimens, and more. We now offer infusion therapy to help with fatigue, anxiety, dehydration, anti-aging and more.

Together, Dr. Geldner and The Geldner Center staff can help you achieve the look you desire with the personalized care you deserve so you have the confidence to live life to the fullest.



680 N. Lake Shore Dr.  
Ste. 1325  
Chicago, IL 60611

**312-981-4440**  
Fax: 312-981-4441  
[mygeldnercenter.com](http://mygeldnercenter.com)

2425 22nd St.  
Ste. 212  
Oak Brook, IL 60523

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**@thegeldnercenter**

## MEDICAL PROFILES



## GEORGE F. WARGA, DDS

WINNETKA DENTAL ARTS  
AND IMPLANTS

Dr. George Warga specializes in identifying the underlying causes of dental instability resulting from developmental issues, previous dental or orthodontic procedures, or traumatic events. We provide our patients with comprehensive dentistry, including cosmetic bonding and veneers, orthodontics, implant and prosthetic reconstruction, and TMJ treatment.

For over 30 years, Dr. Warga has helped patients reclaim their beauty and health with innovative, conservative and cost-effective solutions. Your overall general health is Dr. Warga's ultimate concern. Sleep-disordered breathing and sleep apnea, often overlooked by physicians, is a primary causative agent for various health issues including snoring, ADHD, depression, gastric reflux, atrial fibrillation, diabetes, obesity, heart attacks, strokes, allergies, insomnia and TMJ dysfunction. To regain your health and energy, Dr. Warga offers convenient at-home sleep studies to diagnose and treat obstructive breathing disorders with oral appliance therapy in lieu of CPAP treatment. Oral appliances are less intrusive and more readily accepted by patients than being tethered to a cumbersome CPAP machine.

Many individuals may face challenges with previous dental procedures or experience setbacks in their orthodontic treatment which can cause bite instability, tooth and jaw discomfort (TMJ pain), and the loss of teeth and the destruction of implants, veneers and crowns. Though most orthodontists treat patients to finish as a Class 1 (normal bite), it is often not feasible to correct a severe overbite or underbite (Class 2 or 3) and finish them to this position. These patients are often advised to undergo extensive surgical and dental procedures to address their dental and cosmetic concerns. However, Dr. Warga takes an innovative approach utilizing his extensive training and experience in the understanding of treating these complex conditions. Conservative and cost-effective unique solutions are offered instead of surgical interventions or more costly and extensive procedures. The ultimate goal is to provide you with health and lifelong satisfaction and stability and if desired, a naturally beautiful smile.

Dr. Warga's practice incorporates cutting-edge technology, including state-of-the-art 3D scanning, smile design and on-site printing. These advanced tools enable him to artistically design and create smile makeovers with exceptional precision and efficiency.

Beyond his clinical knowledge, Dr. Warga is a nationally recognized teacher and speaker in comprehensive restorative dentistry. With over 30 years of experience, he has maintained a private practice dedicated to delivering comprehensive dental care tailored to patients' unique oral health needs.

To learn more about the range of services we provide, please visit our website at [winnetkadentalarts.com](http://winnetkadentalarts.com). We would be delighted to assist you in achieving predictable health and the smile of your dreams.



WINNETKA DENTAL ARTS

570 Lincoln Ave.  
Winnetka, IL 60093  
847-441-6510  
[winnetkadentalarts.com](http://winnetkadentalarts.com)

# CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE THEATER

Chicago Shakespeare Theater brings internationally acclaimed artists and companies together with Chicago's incredibly talented artist community to produce world-class theatrical events in a three-theater complex on Navy Pier that boasts the most spectacular views of Chicago and Lake Michigan, transporting every visitor to a world of wonder and adventure.

In their inaugural season, Artistic Director Edward Hall and Executive Director Kimberly Motes have curated a thrilling, entertaining, and joyful season featuring 10 productions over 12 months that bring international companies to Chicago, launch North American, U.S. and regional premieres, and create dynamic Shakespeare productions for multigenerational audiences.

This summer, with the U.S. premiere of *The Lord of the Rings*, Chicago Shakespeare Theater



## UPCOMING EVENTS

***The Lord of the Rings – A Musical Tale***

Now playing through September 1

***Henry V***

September 6–October 6

**Royal Shakespeare Company's *Pericles***

October 20–December 8

takes you to Middle-earth for the adventure of a lifetime before launching the production on an international tour starting in New Zealand. Don't miss this musical tale that brings Tolkien's gripping storytelling to the stage delivering an unforgettable experience for longtime fans and newcomers alike.

In the fall, the Royal Shakespeare Company makes its triumphant return to Chicago for the first time in 30 years with *Pericles*—the only American engagement for this globally celebrated company. Playing alongside the RSC, Hall directs *Henry V*, Shakespeare's gripping tale of youthful ambition exploring the thrill and

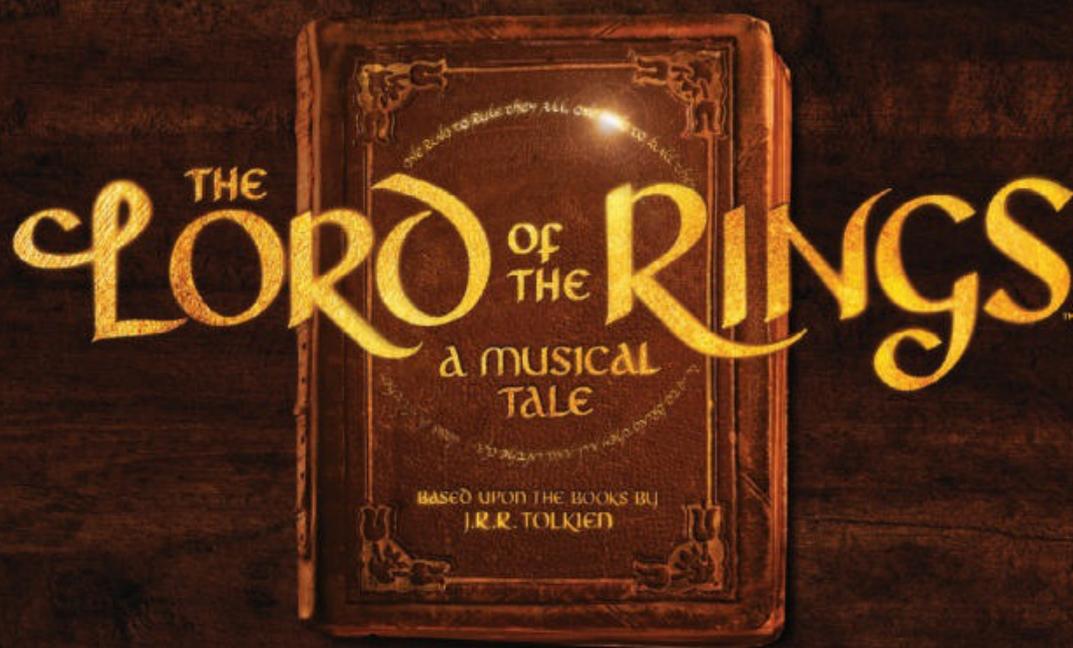
destructive power of war. Nationalism at its most dangerous, heroic, and seductive.

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**SEP 6–OCT 6**

**HENRY V**



Written by **William Shakespeare**

Directed by **Edward Hall**

**OCT 20–DEC 8**

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The Poetry Foundation's current exhibition, *A Bigger Table: 50 Years of the Chicago Poetry Center*, celebrates five decades of a beloved Chicago institution and partner organization. The CPC was born out of defiance of literary censorship in the 1950s, and has been a welcoming space for diverse voices from its radical roots to its work serving CPS students today.

For the latest on the Foundation's operating hours and more, please visit [PoetryFoundation.org/Visit](https://PoetryFoundation.org/Visit).



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**SECRET SUPPER**

Following the mesmerizing solar eclipse on April 8th, Chicago Magazine hosted its Secret Supper at Miru Restaurant downtown. Aptly named "Miru," which translates as "to view" in Japanese, this culinary gem perched on the 11th floor provides stunning vistas of the winding river and iconic downtown buildings. Amid this panoramic setting, Secret Supper guests savored a five-course dinner curated by Chef Osaka and his culinary team, which consisted of succulent salmon, shishito peppers with bonito, tempura rock shrimp, savory chicken teriyaki, and wild mushroom sizzling rice. Throughout dinner, guests luxuriated in custom cocktails featuring a refreshing Legent bourbon mule with zesty ginger and yuzu, Roku gin and tonic with shiso leaf and strawberries, and lastly a Japanese-inspired margarita with Tres Generaciones tequila and a togarashi spice rim. With its elegant decor and savory Japanese flavor, Miru immersed Secret Supper attendees in the beauty of Chicago while delighting taste buds.

**1.** Chefs at the sushi bar prepping the evening's Secret Supper menu. **2.** King Salmon in Peanut Herb Sauce and Umami Vinaigrette. **3.** Shishito Peppers with Bonito flakes. **4.** Wild Mushroom Sizzling Rice with vegetable Dashi and Crispy Shallots. **5.** From left: Legent bourbon mule, Tres Generaciones margarita with togarashi spice, Roku gin and tonic with Shiso leaf, lime, and strawberries. **6.** Secret Supper guests enjoying Miru's vibrant rooftop patio and city views. **7.** All smiles following a delightful Secret Supper.

**To purchase tickets for future Secret Supper events please visit [chicagomag.com/secret-supper](http://chicagomag.com/secret-supper).**



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# Jill Wine-Banks

The Watergate prosecutor and TV pundit, 81, on Trump's cases, sexism, and condo boards

Interview by MIKE THOMAS

■ **One of the big differences with Watergate is that the media agreed on the facts.** They might argue the meaning or the policy implications, but facts were facts. You had William F. Buckley and Gore Vidal doing their debate show, and it was perfectly civil. It was an intellectual discussion where you could go, "Oh, that's a rational point of view."

■ **Trump is toast in terms of convictions** as long as we get to trial. All of the cases are clear-cut. There's no question in my mind. There are times when I would like to be involved, particularly in the investigations. Imagine how we felt listening to the Nixon tapes the first time, or imagine how we felt when we found out there were tapes. It's very exciting to gather the evidence.

■ **A year after I started at the Justice Department,** prosecuting organized crime, I realized the men who started with me were trying cases while I was still doing appeals. I went to the head of the section: "How come?" He said, "Because you're a girl, and you'd be more vulnerable." I said, "What didn't you notice about me when you hired me as a trial attorney?"

■ **My first time on TV,** when I was general counsel of the army, was on *Good Morning America* with David Hartman. We're talking about a tank and how it would operate in the desert or cold weather. When we're done, he says, "I have just one last question: Do you plan to have children?" I'm on live TV. My mother wouldn't ask me that question.

■ **Doing appeals was actually a great way to learn** the mistakes trial lawyers make. In fact, having a year of arguing appeals is probably what qualified me to be the first solicitor general of the State of Illinois. So I got lemons, but I made them into lemonade.

■ **I started with MSNBC in 2017.** People say, "You're in my bedroom with me. I feel like I know you." I'll be walking down the street and someone will roll down their car window and go, "Jill, Jill." I turn around, thinking I know them, and they go, "Oh, I don't know you, I just know you." People constantly say, "You helped me get through this. You kept me sane. You explained things." I love it. It's very reaffirming.

■ **I take my preparation seriously.** The same was true as a trial lawyer. I can't go on TV and just wing it. If I'm going to be believed, I can't just read a news article. If it says someone was indicted, I read the indictment. I read the pleading. I read the opinion that granted cert. I have to know more than the people listening or what's the point of their listening to me?

■ **I know the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner,"** but I don't sing it out loud. I don't sing "Happy Birthday" out loud. I was told to mouth the words to my grade school graduation song because I would throw everyone off-key.

■ **My father would say, "If you see a problem, fix it.** Don't bemoan it. Do something." That's how I've always been. I had complaints when I moved into a condo in the city, but instead of complaining, I ran for the board. Which was a terrible mistake. Nothing worse than a condo board. ■



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