

Traveling with Jewish Taste® Chicago: 'My Kind of Town'

By Carol Goodman Kaufman



Like a certain rental car company, 'the Second City' has always tried harder to prove its worth among the great metropolises of the world.

It has succeeded!

Chicago is a virtual treasure chest overflowing with glimmering gems of theater, music, museums, major league sports, and restaurants – too much to take in during one short visit, or even several. However, I offer some highlights.

Before you travel to Chicago, I would highly recommend reading Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America* (Crown, 2003; Vintage, 2004) for a great history of the Columbian Exhibition of 1893. Walking along the midway and seeing the remaining landmarks, especially

the magnificent Frederick Law Olmstead-designed parks, is a treat and will help orient you in the city.

The Museum of Science and Industry, the largest science museum in the Western Hemisphere, is located in a building designed to house the vast art collection on exhibit during the World's Fair (several artifacts are on exhibit still). Because it was built for security, it is the only structure that remains from that event.

Before you enter the museum, be sure to visit the beautiful and surprisingly peaceful Japanese Garden in the back. Situated on the shore of Lake Michigan, you will be completely removed from the noise and frantic pace of Lake Shore Drive.

Starting with the aforementioned museum, many of the crown jewels of the Windy City stud the greenway along Lake Michigan. From Hyde Park on the South Side all the way north to 'the Loop,' one can either motor on Lake Shore Drive or cycle on the well-maintained bike path to reach them all. Also dotting the path is the Chicago Bears' Soldier Field, and Wrigley Field, home to the Chicago Cubs.

At the far Northern end of the bike path is Grant Park. In addition to providing breathtaking lakefront views, the park is the site of three world-class museums – the Art Institute, the Field Museum of Natural History, and the Shedd Aquarium.

The centerpiece of the park is the Clarence Buckingham Fountain, not only lovely during the day but a visual treat at night with its brilliantly choreographed colored lighting. In 2004, Millennium Park expanded Grant Park by transforming almost twenty-five acres over a bleak railyard and becoming a center for culture in which you can experience everything from ice skating to *al fresco* dining. Free concerts emanate from the unique, Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion, named in memory of the Jewish businessman who, with his wife, established the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

If you like architecture, Chicago has it in abundance. The Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) is located right across the street from the Art Institute on South Michigan Avenue. This non-profit organization offers excellent tours of Chicago's architectural highlights. The visitor can choose from walking, boat, or bus tours, all informative and entertaining. Among the stand-outs on the bus tour is Frank Lloyd Wright's newly restored Robie House in Hyde Park.

The Spertus Institute, a few steps away from the CAF, offers – in addition to graduate degrees in Jewish Studies – a wide array of lectures, seminars, exhibitions, concerts, and films. In 2007, a new and award-winning building opened to serve as the main Spertus campus. It is worth taking a look at this unique glass building, both inside and out.

Chicago is also home to American media icon, Oprah Winfrey. Although I have never been successful in getting admission to the 'Oprah' show, I did manage to score tickets for the taping of National Public Radio's "Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me," at the

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The Jay Pritzker Pavilion, named in memory of the Jewish businessman who established the Pritzker Architecture Prize



Beginning in 1928, silent film star Colleen Moore enlisted the help of many talented professionals, including Walt Disney, to create the dollhouse of her dreams – the \$500,000, eight-foot wide, long, and high "Fairy Castle" has been on permanent exhibition at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry since 1949. Above: "The Dining Room."

The Perfect Chicago Hot Dog

I like a nice dinner-sized kosher hot dog – and, frankly (ouch) – with the long list of toppings the Chicago experts direct us to pile on, you will need the larger size just to accommodate them all.



Ingredients:

Hebrew National dinner-sized hot dogs
Sweet pickle relish
Yellow mustard
Kosher dill pickles, spear or slices acceptable
Chopped Vidalia onion
Tomato, cut into wedges only
Sport peppers, a medium-hot pepper, whole and never sliced
Celery salt
Poppy Seed Bun – to make it a "genuine" Chicago hot dog, the gurus say that one must have poppy seed buns, but, good luck trying to find one in these parts!



Japanese Garden on the shore of Lake Michigan

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Chase Bank auditorium, and am still laughing weeks later. Chicagoans really know their way around political satire. Be forewarned: you must be very quick on the web to get tickets to either of these shows as they go quickly.

Theater lovers will find Chicago to be the 'mother lode' of the stage – from Shakespeare to improvisation, Chicago has it all. The Goodman Theater, the Steppenwolf Theater, the Second City and the Court Theater, on the campus of the University of Chicago, are but four excellent choices. The Goodman has hosted events ranging from the National Jewish Theater to High Holiday programs.

Chicago is a fabulous place for foodies, with a plethora of fantastic restaurants both upscale and down. Virtually any ethnic cuisine is available, and it is worth visiting the many distinct neighborhoods of the city to indulge. If you happen to be visiting a relative with a kitchen, you can also try preparing your own as every necessary ingredient, from banana leaves to tamarind paste, is available at the numerous little shops lining the neighborhood streets.

For travelers desiring kosher dining, Chicago boasts seven kosher restaurants just within the city limits, and more in the suburbs. These range in style from deli and pizza to Thai (Tu Do), Chinese (Mi Tsu Yun), and fine dining (Shallots).

Despite the vast array of restaurants, the foods most closely associated with Chicago are deep dish pizza and hot dogs. Both have avid fans and the competition among purveyors is fierce. Aficionados



The Spertus Institute, Jewish Studies under glass

have even built several websites and "YouTube" videos dedicated solely to the building of the perfect Chicago dog.

Carol Goodman Kaufman, an organizational psychologist and writer, is the author of Sins of Omission: The Jewish Community's Reaction to Domestic Violence (Westview Press, 2003). She serves on the National Board of Hadassah and chairs the Jewish Community Relations Council of Central Massachusetts. Kaufman divides her time between Worcester, West Stockbridge, and the world.

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At the Center of Grant Park, 'The Clarence Buckingham Fountain' is especially a delight at night



Beluga Whale at the Shedd Aquarium

Summer Serenade A Success!



Held in late June at Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams and Pittsfield's Temple Anshe Amunim and Congregation Knesset Israel, the inaugural offering of the three-concert series "A Summer Celebration of Jewish Music" drew in excess of 250 to be delighted by both klezmer and chamber music sounds. Co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, with enabling support from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, the concerts brought top-flight artists – such as celebrated clarinetist Paul Green and sixteen-year-old violinist "phenom" Sarah Hubbard – to audiences at the Berkshire congregations.



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