

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. Herein I offer a selection of the 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* 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 still on exhibit). 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 U.S. Cellular Field, home to the Chicago White Sox.

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 25 acres over a bleak rail yard 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 Chase Bank auditorium, and I am still laughing. 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. From Shakespeare to improvisation, Chicago has it all. The Goodman Theater, Steppenwolf Theater, Second City and the Court Theater, on the campus of the University of Chicago, are but four excellent choices. The Goodman has also 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), Middle Eastern (Mizrachi) and fine dining (Shallots Bistro).

The Perfect Chicago Hot Dog

Despite the vast array of restaurants featuring haute cuisine and ethnic specialties, 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 have even built several websites and YouTube videos dedicated solely to the building of the perfect Chicago dog.

I like a nice dinner-size 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.

- 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 dog, the gurus say that one must have poppy seed buns. Good luck trying to find one in these parts.)

Meet Carol Goodman Kaufman

Carol Goodman Kaufman has always loved to write. While writing a number of scientific papers as part of her doctorate and post-doctoral work over the years, she discovered her love of human interest stories, as well as her love of travel and food stories. Go to Carol's website <http://carolgoodmankaufman.com/> to learn more about this fascinating author.

Prime Minister celebrates 65th birthday

By Edgar Asher, Ashernet

It is not too clear how 'happy' this birthday will be for Netanyahu as there are serious rumblings of discontent in the government coalition. Despite the Prime Minister's previous success with controlling the economy, there is general public dissatisfaction with ever rising prices and fuel costs.

Despite a serious decline in oil demand around the world, which has resulted in lowering of fuel prices, this reduction has hardly had an effect on prices in Israel. The need to maintain the coalition

has meant that Netanyahu has had to offer incentives to coalition members in order to preserve the advantage of votes in the Knesset which at best is very shaky.

The country's finances are in the hands of a finance minister, Yair Lapid, who by his charisma managed in the last election to make his party Yesh Atid - there is a future - the second largest in the Knesset with nineteen seats in the 120-seat parliament.

The former journalist, TV presenter and news

anchor was a high school dropout and never earned a high school leaving certificate. He is often at odds with Bank of Israel governor Karnit Flug for what she often describes as Lapid's irrational fiscal policies. Lapid's popularity has waned with the public of late and opinion polls indicate that if there was a general election tomorrow Lapid's party would probably halve its present number of seats.

The question is where will Binyamin Netanyahu be celebrating his next birthday?

© ASHERNET



Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu seen with his wife Sara, celebrating the Prime Minister's 65th birthday, at PM Netanyahu's office in Jerusalem on October 21.