



*Chicago Bites – Dining adventures in Chicago*

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## 7-Day Chicago Dining Tour

Xian and Ann,

So you want to eat out in Chicago? We're taking you at your word, and we're excited you're coming to visit! If you don't gain ten pounds during your stay, it's not our fault. You might want to step on the scale now, and note your beginning weight.

First, a few disclaimers:

If you're going to spend time here in our wonderful city, do justice to the local cuisine. Chicago is a city of neighborhoods and almost every type of food can be found here. You may have to move out of your comfort zone to get the full dining experience, but it's always worth it. Chicago is also home to several James Beard award winners, television chefs, and fancy-schmancy temples of haute cuisine. You just have to know where to find them.

And you must promise us you'll stay the hell away from Harry Carey's, the Rainforest Café, the Rock-n-Roll McDonald's or anything that smacks of a chain restaurant. Seriously. We'll hunt you down and openly mock you. We'll take out a web site dedicated to your foolish choices. When you have this guide there are no excuses for bad eating behavior.

Okay, ready? Read on...

## DAY 1 – Monday, Downtown



*Breakfast* – We’ll assume that you’re just rolling into town and have wisely chosen to nosh on a few granola bars. You didn’t tell us WHERE you’re staying, but it doesn’t matter. We’re going to spin you around this town like a top. Eat your granola bars because you’ll need your strength. However, if you did come in time for breakfast, head over to **Nookies** (1746 N Wells, 312-337-2454).

*Lunch* – Now you’re hungry. We know. You’ve settled into your hotel and the city beckons. You’re probably attracted to the bright shiny bean at Millennium Park. If you move in that direction and look below it, you’ll see the **Park Grill** (11 N Michigan Ave, 312-521-7275). You may be tempted to eat in the tent area outside if it’s nice. Don’t. The food they serve outside is crap. Go inside and be delighted by the seasonal salads and lovely sandwiches. Bridget thinks the waiters here are pretty nifty, too.

*Snack* – Chicago’s battle between cupcake establishments isn’t widely known outside of the city, but since you’re coming we’re going to put you on the front lines. Your first cupcake establishment is **Sugar Bliss** (115 N Wabash, 312-845-9669). Pick your baseline cupcake (we recommend vanilla) so you can give us a definitive opinion about who’s best by the end of your stay. Oh, and get a frosting shot. It’s totally worth it.

*Dinner* – Millennium Park and the Museum Campus probably kept you busy all afternoon. It’s understandable because there’s a lot to see. What you probably didn’t notice was a bustling gastropub called **The Gage** (24 S Michigan Ave, 312-372-4243). This place has amazing food & we’ll happily eat here with you. Make reservations and we can split an order of lobster quinoa!

## **DAY 2 – Tuesday, Wicker Park/Bucktown**

*Breakfast* – Chicago is more of a weekend brunch place, but there are spots throughout the city that offer something for the locals. You should stop into **The Bongo Room** (1470 N. Milwaukee Ave, 773-489-0690). It's quieter than it sounds, plus the food is really good.

*Lunch* – We can't leave pizza off of a culinary tour of Chicago, now can we? You can get a piece at **Piece** (1927 W North Ave, 773-772-4422). They also have a microbrewery onsite – two great tastes that taste great together, right?

*Snack* – **Alliance Bakery & Café** (1736 W. Division, 773-278-0366) has fine European desserts that look awfully naughty. You should be naughty and have a few.

*Dinner* – Head back into the city and enjoy dinner at **Frontera Grill/Topalobambo** (445 North Clark St, 312-661-1434). Tammy has had 100% success running into Chef Rick Bayless (James Beard Award winner) when she's dined here. If you want to run into Rick, your odds might improve if you bought her a round or two of margaritas.



### DAY 3 – Wednesday, Lincoln Park

*Breakfast* – **Orange** (3231 N. Clark St, 773-549-4400) has pancake flights and mix-your-own-juice, but the specials really make this place. Where else can you get a Fruity Pebble short stack and fruit sushi? Yum!



*Lunch* – One of the best farmer’s markets in the country is open on Wednesday in Lincoln Park. You can find plenty to nosh on at **Green City Market** (1750 N Clark) as well as see demonstrations by some of Chicago’s premiere chefs. It’s a great place to people watch.

*Snack* – Another day, another cupcake! This time, you should stop by **Molly’s Cupcakes** (2536 N Clark St, 773-883-7220), sit in the swings, and dust your cupcake at the fully loaded sprinkle station. You can also play a rousing game of Rock’em Sock’em robots if you so choose.



*Dinner* – After a day of strolling along through the Lincoln Park Zoo we think Xian should take Ann to a romantic dinner at **North Pond** (2610 Cannon Drive between Fullerton & LSD, 773-477-5845). Chef Bruce Sherman will make you fat and happy, and the Arts & Crafts Style décor and lovely view of the city skyline will make you mushy.

## **DAY 4 – Thursday, West Loop**

*Breakfast* – Start of the day with a little **Milk & Honey** (1920 W Division, 773-395-9434) in Greek town. The breakfast panini is good here, but be sure to pace yourself.

*Lunch* – There are things to do in West Chicago like the Conservatory and the Museum of Holography, but the best reason we've discovered for heading west is the food! **Greek Isles** (200 S Halstead, 312-348-5531) is the best Greek restaurant in the city and fortunately for you, it's usually not busy during lunch! Opa!



*Dinner* – If you're still out West exploring everything from Opa To Oprah, then make certain to get reservations at **Sepia** (123 N Jefferson, 312-441-1920) for dinner. We love the flatbreads here and the excellent service. Hell, we love everything here.



## **DAY 5 – Friday, Adventures in Chicago**

*Breakfast* – **M. Henry** (5707 N Clark, 773-561-1600) has the best-damned pancakes in the city. In fact, they're so good they're called blisscakes. BLISSCAKES! What are you waiting for? Get thee to M. Henry's!

*Lunch* – Head a little further north to Devon Street for a quick Indian lunch. **Udupi Palace** (2543 W Devon Ave, 773-338-2152) has stuffed paratha bread bigger than your head. Swear!

*Snack* – While you're still in Andersonville, drop by **Taste of Heaven** (5401 N Clark, 773-989-0151) for their vanilla cupcake. It's Tammy's favorite. Their Blondie bars are also pretty awesome.

*Dinner* – Nothing in KC has prepared you for the splendor that is **Kuma's Corner** (2900 W Belmont, 773-604-8769). It's part biker bar, part heavy metal pilgrimage, and 100% pure beef bliss. However, it would be a mistake to stop with the burgers! We feel that Kuma's also has the best mac-n-cheese in the city. Order some with sun-dried tomatoes and we guarantee you'll be emailing us weekly to ship some back to Kansas for you.



## **DAY 6 – Saturday, A Pinch of Adventure**

*Breakfast* – We love the sassy eggs at **Over Easy** (4943 N Damon, 773-506-2605). They have other things on the menu, but we’ve never made it past sassy eggs. You should order yours with extra guacamole and sass. Go ahead, we promise they won’t spit in your food. If there is a wait to get into the restaurant, there’s a nice coffee shop next door where you can hang out ‘til there’s room for you.



*Lunch* – You should work a little sushi into your Chicago experience, too. **Matsuyama** (1059 W Belmont, 773-327-8838) is a dive-y little place, but the prices aren’t too bad and the menus are filled with pictures. Honestly though, if you’re still too full from breakfast, it’s okay to skip it.

*Snack* – **Phoebe’s Cupcakes** (3327 N. Broadway, 773-868-4000) is one of the newest entrants into the battle of cupcakes, but their frosting has a certain something-something that elevates it above the fray. You should stop by.

*Dinner* – Our Twitter followers have told us that we should move Chef Bill Kim’s **Urban Belly** (3053 N California Ave; 773-583-0500) to the top of our dining list. Social media people never lie, right? Right! We should definitely go. It’ll be an adventure for all of us.

## **DAY 7 – Sunday, More of everything**

*Brunch (we combine things on Sunday's)* – Splurge a little and enjoy the view at **Sixteen** (401 N Wabash Ave, Trump Tower; 312-588-8030). You can get made-to-order omelets and all manner of good things while enjoying one of the most spectacular views in the city. It's so awesome, you will need to remind yourself to close your mouth and chew.

*Snack* – Don't leave Chicago without trying **More Cupcakes** (1 E Delaware Place, 312-951-0001). They have some interesting savory combinations in addition to their excellent red velvet cuppies. It's worth the stop.



*Dinner* – Aww, c'mon! Stay for dinner! Don't go back to KC! We have cupcakes! We have BBQ! We even know where to get BBQ'd cupcakes! Okay, fine, we know you need to go home. But before you do, weigh yourself. Ten pounds? How much did you gain? What? Did you say, eleven? Excellent. Our work here is done.

Have a fantastic time in Chicago!

-Tammy and Bridget

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