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## Here's What's Happening In Chicago, Now And Over The Next Couple Of Months



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Travel

*I cover travel, adventure, and culture across the globe, specializing in nature and the great outdoors.*



A view of Chicago's skyline at sunset. GETTY

Due to the pandemic, Chicago's local businesses—museums, attractions, restaurants, and hotels—have been in constant flux, leaving residents and hopeful visitors waiting in the wings. While we're far from visiting indoor locations without social distancing protocols, mask wearing, and a profuse use of hand sanitizer, the Windy City is preparing to reopen. And, with Valentine's Day, President's Day, and a whole bunch of other dates to celebrate—Groundhog Day, Mardi Gras, Paczki Day, International Women's

Day, St. Patrick's Day—it might be time to plan for a bit of revelry. Safely. Keep reading to learn about what's happening now and over the next couple of months throughout Chicago, a hopeful city with 77 distinct neighborhoods.

## Meet Van Gogh in Chicago



Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit Chicago IMMERSIVE VAN GOGH

Prepare for an immersive art experience like no other with [Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit Chicago](#), where you'll feel like you're stepping inside of the Dutch post-impressionist painter's most famous works: *The Potato Eaters* (1885), *Starry Night* (1889),

*Sunflowers* (1888), and *The Bedroom* (1889). Paris and Toronto have hosted the exhibit successfully, and now it's Chicago's turn. Expect an original score, moving images, 60,600 frames of video, and 500,000 cubic feet of projections as they float across the walls, ceiling, and floor, fully immersing you into the paintings.

**What you should know:** The Van Gogh exhibit is held in the historic Germania Club Building, in Chicago's Near North Side neighborhood, at Lighthouse ArtSpace: 108 West Germania Place. Tickets are sold for specific times and dates and prices vary depending on peak show times to ensure reduced capacity and social distancing. Mask wearing is required.

**See Your Friends: Joey, Chandler, Ross, Rachel, Monica, and Phoebe**



The FRIENDS Experience, Chicago WENDY ALTSCHULER

**The FRIENDS Experience: The One in Chicago**, with 12 rooms full of T.V. nostalgia, returns March 2021. Walk through set recreations, see costumes and props from the show, answer trivia questions, and take photographs in front of Monica's door, on the orange couch, in Joey and Chandler's apartment, and more. And, if you want to bring a piece of the show home with you, purchase one of the goodies from the on-site shop.

**What you should know:** Located on the corner of north Michigan Avenue and Ohio Street, you'll find The FRIENDS Experience at [The Shops at North Bridge](#). Sign up with your e-mail to be in-the-know on ticket sales or check the website frequently to know when you can purchase tickets in advance. Tickets are sold for a specific date and time to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Mask wearing is required.

## **Wander Through The Windy City's Most Popular Museums**



The Art Institute of Chicago WENDY.ALTSCHULER

The [Art Institute of Chicago](#), located in Grant Park, currently allows visitors to view their collection virtually, however, the museum will reopen February 11. The Monet in Chicago exhibit, featuring the “Father of Impressionism” is expected to reopen later this spring.

The [Field Museum of Natural History](#), one of the largest such museums on the planet, just re-opened January 23. Illinois residents can visit the museum for free on [select dates](#). Ticketed experiences

include the *Apsáalooke Women and Warriors*, *Titanosaur 3D*, *Underground Adventure*, *Cyrus Tang Hall of China*, and more.

The [Shedd Aquarium](#) is reopening to the public later this month, on January 30. Members of the Shedd earn early access to the museum, January 27–29. Enjoy a number of virtual experiences—Penguin and Sea Otter encounters—at home as well.

The [Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center](#), located in Skokie, has a number of special exhibits, contemplative spaces, and a library and resource center. Admission will be free on Wednesdays from February 3 through the month of March. [Mandela: Struggle for Freedom](#) opens February 20.

**What you should know:** Masks are required, as is social distancing, at Chicago’s indoor museums and attractions. Most tickets are sold for timed slots and on specific dates. Check the venue’s website to purchase tickets in advance and to be sure of the timing.

### **Consider a Staycation or Vacation: Chicago’s Hotels**

Chicago’s hotels have reconsidered their sanitation and hygiene guidelines, taking into account new safety protocols due to the pandemic. Social distancing is promoted throughout common areas, express and contactless check-in and check-out procedures have been implemented, and the flow of fresh and clean air throughout the indoor spaces has been taken into consideration.