

Gold Coast

Neighborhood Top Five

1 Signature Lounge (p91) Getting high by taking the 20mph elevator to this 96th-floor lounge for a tall drink and sparkling views.

2 Museum of Contemporary Art (p84) Perusing the avant-garde paintings, sculptures and videos by day, then seeing an experi-

mental performance in the museum's theater at night.


3 Astor Street (p86) Ogling the genteel mansions where Chicago's rich and powerful have lived since the 1880s.

4 International Museum of Surgical Science (p85) Examining the eerie

gallstones and cadaver murals at this hair-raising museum set in a spooky old mansion.

5 Rush Street Wandering between flashy bars and restaurants during the see-and-be-seen weekend nights.



For more detail of this area see Map p294 

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The Gold Coast may be one of Chicago's most moneyed neighborhoods, but it offers several freebies to take advantage of: the International Museum of Surgical Science (p85) and Charnley-Persky House (p86) are free on Tuesday and Wednesday respectively, while the Newberry Library (p85) and City Gallery (p85) at the Water Tower are always free.



Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Le Colonial (p87)
- ➔ Gibson's (p87)
- ➔ Hendrickx Belgian Bread Crafter (p87)
- ➔ Pizano's (p87)

For reviews, see p87 ➔



Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Signature Lounge (p91)
- ➔ Coq d'Or (p92)
- ➔ 3 Arts Club Cafe (p92)
- ➔ Pump Room (p92)

For reviews, see p91 ➔



Best Places to Shop

- ➔ American Girl Place (p93)
- ➔ Hershey's (p93)
- ➔ Lego Store (p93)
- ➔ Uniqlo (p93)

For reviews, see p93 ➔

Explore the Gold Coast

The Gold Coast has been the address of Chicago's *crème de la crème* for more than 125 years. When you stroll through the neighborhood, especially the Astor St area, you'll take in some of the most beautiful old mansions in Chicago. One of them belonged to Hugh Hefner and was the Original Playboy Mansion (p85).

Beyond the sky-high 360° Chicago (p83) observatory and the underappreciated Museum of Contemporary Art (p84), the Gold Coast offers several small, quirky sights, such as the hair-raising surgery museum (p85), and memorabilia-filled sports museum (p85). The best way to get a feel for the neighborhood's moneyed present is to spend an afternoon browsing luxuriant designer wares around Oak and Rush Sts, or an evening among the glittering high heels and good cheekbones of the neighborhood's nightlife. On Friday evening, see-and-be-seen crowds glide through bars and restaurants at Rush and State Sts, where businessmen carve porters while downing martinis and ogling the action – no wonder locals call the area the 'Viagra Triangle.' It's quite a spectacle.

East along Michigan Ave the shopping gives way to high-rise malls that will be likely destinations for anyone with kids. American Girl Place (p93), Hershey's (p93) and the Lego Store (p93) send out their siren call from here. Oak Street Beach (p94) is a stone's throw away, offering a bit of breathing room from the high-rise jungle and a fine place to dip your toes in the lake.

Local Life

➔ **Hidden treats** Only neighborhood folks know that Hendrickx Belgian Bread Crafter (p87), purveyor of top-notch chocolate croissants, hides inside the bland apartment building on Walton St.

➔ **Low-key drinks** Locals looking for a well-made cocktail without the usual Gold Coast sceney vibe head upstairs to the relaxed bar at Le Colonial (p87).

➔ **Late-night munchies** When the bars and clubs close, everyone heads to Tempo Cafe (p87), open 24/7 for skillet-fried replenishment.

Getting There & Away

➔ **EI** Red Line to Clark/Division for the neighborhood's northern reaches; Red Line to Chicago for the southern areas.

➔ **Bus** Number 151 runs along Michigan Ave, handy for further-flung sights.

➔ **Car** Resident-only streets stymie street parking. Try LaSalle St, much of which is unmetered.