Wicker Park, Bucktown & Ukrainian Village

Neighborhood Top Five
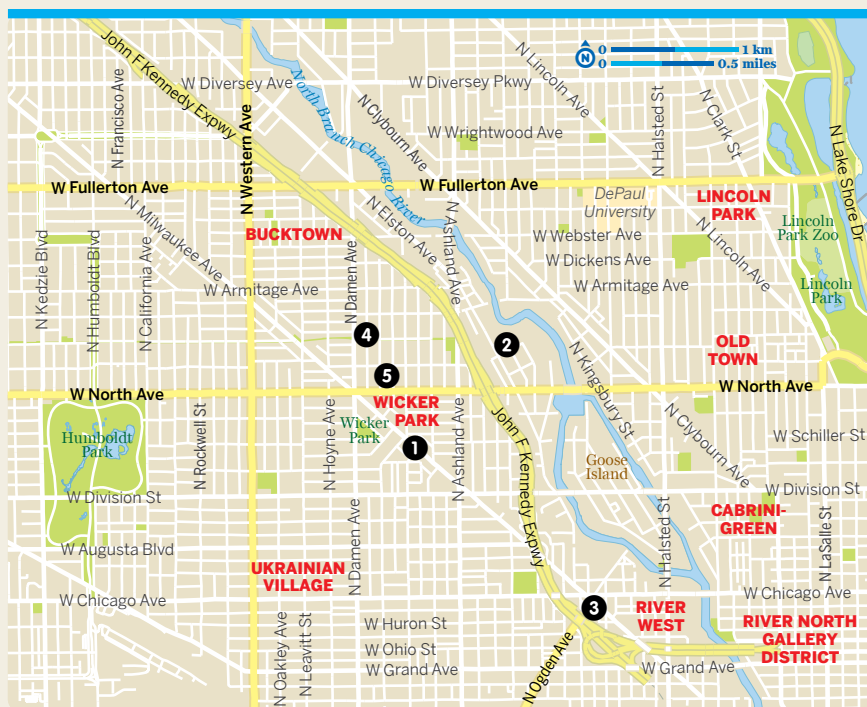
❶ Milwaukee Ave (p149) Trawling for treasures – an old Devo record, a vintage pillbox hat, steel-toed boots, a mustache disguise kit – in the shops along the half-mile stretch between Damen and Ashland Aves.

❷ Hideout (p148) Hearing an alt-country band, watching a local politics talk show, or singing along with a Meatloaf tribute band in one of Chicago's coolest venues.

❸ Matchbox (p147) Squeezing into the teeny bar for a gimlet, sidecar or other retro cocktail.

❹ 606 (p137) Strolling on high through the neighborhood past hip restaurants, clackety El trains and locals' backyards via this elevated trail.

❺ Quimby's (p149) Perusing the zines and getting the lowdown on the city's underground culture.

For more detail of this area see Map p304 ➡

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

In summer the neighborhood throws excellent street festivals with big-name bands. Watch for Do Division (www.do-divisionstreetfest.com) in early June; Green Music Fest (www.greenmusicfestchicago.com) in late June; West Fest (www.westfestchicago.com) in mid-July; and the Hideout Block Party (www.hideoutchicago.com) – the best of the bunch – in early September.

✖ Best Places to Eat

➡ Dove's Luncheonette (p141)

➡ Irazu (p138)

➡ Ruxbin (p145)

➡ Mana Food Bar (p141)

➡ Pub Royale (p138)

➡ Small Cheval (p139)

For reviews, see p138 ➡

🍷 Best Places to Drink

➡ Matchbox (p147)

➡ Danny's (p146)

➡ Map Room (p146)

➡ Violet Hour (p146)

➡ Forbidden Root (p147)

➡ Happy Village (p147)

For reviews, see p146 ➡

🔒 Best Places to Shop

➡ Reckless Records (p149)

➡ Quimby's (p149)

➡ Dusty Groove (p149)

➡ Una Mae's (p149)

➡ Wicker Park Secret Agent Supply Co (p149)

For reviews, see p149 ➡

Explore Wicker Park, Bucktown & Ukrainian Village

For a taste of trendy young Chicago, wander up Milwaukee Ave near Damen Ave in Wicker Park on a Friday night. You'll pass booming bars, packed restaurants and stages hosting indie rock on one side of the street and shushed underground author readings on the other. By Saturday morning the scene shifts to the dozens of cool vintage stores, in-the-know record shops and buzzing brunch spots. Buttressed by the slightly fancier Bucktown and slightly scruffier Ukrainian Village, this neighborhood has a lot happening, so strap on some comfortable (hip) sneakers and take it block by block.

Working-class Central and Eastern European immigrants arrived in the late 1800s to work in the factories and breweries that used to be prevalent in the area. Although signs of the community's past are fading fast, there are plenty of traces of the immigrants who founded it, especially in the western reaches of Ukrainian Village. A stroll here will take you past Ukrainian scrawl on shop windows, Orthodox churches and proud corner taverns.

Milwaukee, North and Damen Aves are the main veins through the neighborhood. Division St is also chockablock. Once a polka-bar-lined thoroughfare known as the 'Polish Broadway,' it's now full of burger bars and boutiques.

The neighborhood holds very few sights, but you could easily while away the day shopping and the night eating and drinking. And it's definitely Chicago's best 'hood for rock clubs, with the Hideout and Empty Bottle leading the cool-cat pack.

Local Life

➡ **Group soup** Crowds gather at the Hideout (p148) on Wednesdays in winter for Soup and Bread, a hobnobbing dinner series where local foodies, musicians and artists take turns making, well, soup and bread.

➡ **Bar crafts** The Handmade Market (p150) brings out the crafting community to the Empty Bottle each month.

➡ **Vinyl freaks** Crate diggers find their bliss near the corner of Milwaukee and Ashland Aves, where Reckless Records (p149), Shuga Records (p150) and Dusty Groove (p149) all hover.

Getting There & Away

➡ **El** Blue Line to Damen for Bucktown and northern Wicker Park; Blue Line to Division for southern Wicker Park; Blue Line to Chicago for Ukrainian Village.

➡ **Bus** Bus 72 runs along North Ave; bus 70 along Division St; bus 66 along Chicago Ave.

➡ **Car** Meter and free on-street parking are at a premium in Wicker Park and Bucktown; they're more available in Ukrainian Village.