

For more detail of this area see Map p310 ➡

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

You'll need to make reservations months in advance (at least) for hot restaurants such as Next (p172) and Girl and the Goat (p172). But if you can't get in, you can still sample the wares of chefs Grant Achatz and Stephanie Izard. Try Aviary (p174), Achatz' cocktail bar, and Little Goat (p167), Izard's diner.



Best Places to Eat

- Little Goat (p167)
- Lou Mitchell's (p166)
- Publican Quality Meats (p167)
- Saint Lou's Assembly (p171)
- Sweet Maple Cafe (p172)

For reviews, see p166 ➡



Best Places to Drink

- RM Champagne Salon (p174)
- Goose Island Brewery (p174)
- Skylark (p175)
- La Catrina Cafe (p175)
- Cruz Blanca (p174)

For reviews, see p174 ➡



Best Places to Shop

- Modern Cooperative (p175)
- Open Books (p175)
- Knee Deep Vintage (p176)
- Randolph Street Market (p176)
- Athenian Candle Co (p176)

For reviews, see p175 ➡

Explore Near West Side & Pilsen

Just west of the Loop is, well, the West Loop. It's akin to New York City's Meatpacking District, with chic restaurants, clubs and galleries poking out between meat-processing plants. The area is booming, and it seems like a new hot chef opens a restaurant (or two) here weekly. By day it's still a serious food-supply zone filled with forklifts and delivery trucks – though Google and other tech companies are joining the action with their dapper office buildings. At night the West Loop turns up the glamour. Stroll along the main veins of W Randolph St and W Fulton Market and you'll get the drift.

The Near West Side also includes the ethnic neighborhoods of Greektown (along Halsted St) and Little Italy (along Taylor St). Neither has much in the way of sights, but gustatory tourists will revel in the delicious offerings.

To the southwest lies Pilsen, the center of Chicago's Mexican community. A trip to this colorful, mural-splashed neighborhood is like stepping into a foreign country. Spend an afternoon poking around the bakeries, taquerias and the impressive art museum. Chicago's hipster underground is also here, so you'll find some great bohemian bars and restaurants if you linger into the evening.

Local Life

- **Vintage jackpot** Local fashionistas scour 18th St's vintage shops in Pilsen. Several pop up in the mile-long stretch between Halsted St and Ashland Ave.
- **Tube socks and tacos** Maxwell Street Market (p176) draws a local crowd of junk hounds and Mexican-street-food fans.
- **Fish for all** Pleasant House (p173) has a devoted fan base, especially during the Friday fish fry.
- **Pastrami for politicians** Local politicians get their sandwich fix at Manny's Deli (p167); listen in for good gossip.

Getting There & Away

- **El Pink Line** to 18th St for Pilsen; Green, Pink Lines to Morgan or Clinton for West Loop; Blue Line to UIC-Halsted for Greektown; Pink Line to Polk or Blue Line to Racine for Little Italy.
- **Bus** For United Center, buses 19 (game-day express) and 20 run along Madison St. Number 8 travels along Halsted St through Greektown and Pilsen.
- **Taxi** The West Loop and Greektown are only 1.25 miles west of the Loop, making them a fairly cheap ride. And cabs are easy to hail in the neighborhoods.
- **Car** It can be tough to find parking in the West Loop and Greektown, but valets abound. Street parking is pretty easy in Little Italy and Pilsen.