

Ten Tips for Visiting Chicago

Discover Chicago's Architectural Legacy



Photo: Anne Evans

10 Step Plan for Discovering Chicago's Architecture and Design Resources:

1. Plan ahead: get maps, materials, schedules and information from the web or request information by mail from places you want to visit. Resources include www.architecture.org, www.877chicago.com, www.choosechicago.com, www.visitillinois.com and www.cityofchicago.org
2. Create an itinerary with extra time allotted to change plans if necessary. The Historic Skyscrapers walking tour is a perfect introduction – a two-hour summary led by CAF trained volunteer docents. Other popular tours include the Official CAF Architecture River Cruise, architecture Highlights by Bus and other walking tours that take in Art Deco, Millennium Park and Tiffany stained glass. There are more than 85 different architecture-themed tours available in the city and neighborhoods.
3. Be sure to include Chicago's Millennium Park, Loop, some neighborhoods and the views from the Sears Tower SkyDeck and the Hancock Observatory. Many of these sites are included in various CAF tours or they can be visited on your own.
4. Schedule time-specific tours in conjunction with free time periods to visit museums on your own.
5. If your visit is between May and November, be sure to include the Chicago Architecture Foundation architecture river tour on *Chicago's First Lady Cruises*. It is a great way to relax while seeing Chicago's architecture and hearing about the buildings from the perspective of the river.
6. Wear comfortable shoes, appropriate clothing and bring an umbrella.
7. Bring a camera and take photos of things that will help you relive the visit when you get home.
8. Talk to other people on the tours as well as the docent leading the tour; find out their home towns, get tips on other tours, restaurants and museums.
9. Make sure you see Chicago's downtown and North Michigan Avenue in the evening for the lights and sparkle of the city. CAF offers "Happy Hour" walking tours weekdays May–September at 5:30pm.
10. Go out to the museum campus and/or to Navy Pier to get a sense of Chicago's skyline.