

# Travelling to chicago: what should you visit

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## **Chicago: The Heart of America**

Chicago, Illinois is an alluring attraction to tourists all across the world. Huge celebrities such as Kanye West, Harrison Ford, and Robin Williams were raised in this hustling and bustling city. Chicago has a staggering population of over 2.7 million people, with no signs of slowing down. Chicago also has one of the most thriving economies in the United States, with great help from tourists. With all great things, there are also negative aspects. Chicago is a perfect testament to this statement. Despite Chicago's downfalls, its bright side illuminates a lot of hope for the city's future.

In a YouTube video called "Visit Chicago: 5 things you will love and hate about Chicago, Illinois, USA", the user "Wolters World" created a travel guide packed full with pros and cons of the windy city. The man in the video looks just like someone from Chicago would stereotypically look like. With his messy hair and tight fit polo, he recites the positive and negative aspects of the city displayed in the background behind him, Chicago. He explained that he told the negative aspects before the positive aspects due to the fact that he wants to leave the viewer thinking Chicago is a great city when the video ends. His video was organized and effective in the way that it was under 10 minutes and it gave information in a very straightforward manner. He was talking as if him and the viewer were having a private conversation over some coffee. A video like this is convenient for a person that processes information in this way; which is people that want to learn if Chicago is a great place to travel or not. Overall, he portrayed Chicago as a great city, despite the negative aspects.

First, “Wolters World” spoke of the negative aspects of Chicago. The weather was listed as a major issue. Chicago is definitely not called the windy city for nothing. The wind is so strong there, it could push a person onto the ground with absolutely no problem. Citizens and tourists alike need to be extremely cautious while walking through the streets during a windy storm. Chicago’s climate is described as humid continental. That makes Chicago a very cold and windy city with four distinct seasons. The hot seasons usually don’t go any higher than 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Tourists often commend Chicago for its cool weather, while also trying to forget about the harsh and powerful winds.

The second negative aspect that was listed has to do with the beggars. They are described as shockingly aggressive and particularly annoying after living in the city for a while. The aggressive beggars could leave tourists who don’t know what to expect in a very awkward situation that they do not deserve to be in. “Wolters World” advises to firmly say ‘no’ and just keep walking if you are asked for money. Sadly enough, there are over 44,000 homeless people in the Chicago area. With such a high homelessness rate, it is very likely that you will be stopped and asked for money. If you keep walking and they are still harassing you, it would be an exceptional idea to call the police, because they are known to become quite agitated and aggressive.

The next two negative attributes go hand in hand and they are parking and traffic. Parking is atrocious because it is very difficult to even find a spot. And when you do find a spot, the fee will leave your wallet crying; it’s quite expensive. Wolter recommends one should mostly walk around the city. This

can be a little tricky if it is extremely windy. The traffic is so backed up in Chicago. It could take an hour for you to get back from the airport when it should really be about 15 minutes. With regards to parking and traffic, Chicago is very similar to a college campus. It is very busy and there's a lot of walking. Walking is the way to go on a college campus just as it is in Chicago.

The last negative aspect listed is that the museum prices are very expensive. While Chicago is home to many interesting historical and scientific museums, they are often underappreciated due to the extremely high prices. Because Chicago is just a temporary home to many families of tourists, ticket prices can skyrocket as the number of museum goers go up. Wolter still recommends checking out some of the museums Chicago has to offer despite the ridiculously high admittance price.

Finally, Wolter begins to list the positive aspects of Chicago. His first positive aspect is the intuitive and amazing architecture. Tourists enjoy taking boat rides to view the buildings. The most famous architecture of Chicago is the Willis Tower, John Hancock Center, and the Tribune Tower. The innovative and creative architecture of Chicago sets the bar culturally for all the big cities of America. Chicago is home to some of the tallest skyscrapers of the world; these buildings attract different tourists from all over the world.

The second positive aspect that Wolter listed is that the people of Chicago are very friendly. As opposed to other big cities who often have a negative stereotype associated with them that they are rude, in Chicago the citizens are perceived and stereotyped to be very friendly people. Technically,

there's no way that every person in an area is nice; but it's the thought that counts. On a pragmatic level, the crime rates of Chicago would seriously oppose Wolters statement. Alas, stereotypes are never rooted in logic or political correctness, quite frankly it is usually the opposite.

The third positive attribute that Wolter lists is that Chicago is a very clean town. When thinking of big cities, the world clean certainly does not come to mind; Chicago is the exception. There is usually no trash in the streets and they have a very clean irrigation system. Due to the extensive cleaning that Chicago undergoes, it would not be crazy to assume that this helps stimulate the economy as well as lowering the already high homelessness rates in the city of Chicago.

The fourth positive aspect that Wolter listed is the food of Chicago. There is a food truck on just about every corner and the restaurants are sworn upon by tourists and citizens alike. Some of the favorite foods amongst Chicago citizens is modern American cuisine as well as korean food, steakhouses, and Southeast Asian food. One of the biggest delicacies of Chicago is the pizza; Chicago is the home to some amazing pizza. If none of that sounds good to you, look a little closer and in the big city of Chicago, you will definitely find what you're looking for.

The last positive aspect that was listed by Wolter is based upon how the city is built. After the big Chicago rebuild after the fire, the city has been changed for the better. That being the said, all the major parts of the city are extremely accessible by walking. The city is built in such a way that walking is the easiest way to get around. This is also true of most other big cities; a

great example of this being Time Square in New York City. Chicago really redeems itself from the bad traffic and parking with its accessible and fast walking/biking paths. If it weren't for the great walking paths, Chicago's influx of tourism would most likely greatly reduce.

In an ABC News article called " Chicago Gang Violence: Numbers", the statistics behind Chicago's gang violence is revealed. In Chicago there are 12, 000 cops. Compare that number to 100, 000; the number of active gang members in Chicago. The police-force is incredibly overworked. Gang presence is so heavy in Chicago, families might rethink coming here for a vacation. Sadly enough, people living in poverty in Chicago don't really have a say in the matter. Young men in impoverished neighborhoods or communities turn to gang affiliation in order to scrape by. The worst part about this is that these gang members are stuck in a cycle of poverty. Also the crimes they commit force them into the revolving door of the judicial system. You can leave, but you'll be coming back; statistically, that is. The most shocking statistic that was listed is the fact that gang activity in Chicago has increased over 40% from 2009 to 2011. Slowly but steadily, Chicago is becoming more and more unsafe for tourists. Tourists going to Chicago should be very careful to map out safe places and to never enter any gang affiliated territory. As long as tourists know to stay on the north side of Chicago, they should be fine but should still be cautious.

Chicago is not the prettiest place in the world; nor is it the ugliest. What Chicago is, is a city with culture and history. The hustle and bustle of the city inspires you to get involved and make a change for yourself. Chicago is not

without its faults and they are very prevalent. The most prevalent being gang violence, which was shockingly left unmentioned by the YouTube video creator Wolter. Chicago cannot be accurately described with one view point. On one side, it is one of the most amazing places on the planet; but on the other side, it has a very ugly face to hide. The horrifically tragic lifestyle of gang violence in Chicago just goes to show that some of the prettiest places do the ugliest things. That being said, Chicago still has hope, and it's shining values of good outshines the negative aspects.