


Best beds: Chicago

Rooftop bars, river views and bags of razzle-dazzle — there’s a bed for everyone here on Lake

Michigan. **Travis Levius** has scoured America’s second city for the finest boltholes

	
	The retro bombshell St Jane
PRICE	Doubles start at £150, room only; for an extra £48 you can bag a spacious Studio Suite . The gorgeous dark wood-panelled Tower Suites, on the uppermost floors, start at a reasonable £238 (stjanehotel.com).
LOCATION	On Michigan Avenue, across the river from the Magnificent Mile , and around the corner from the Chicago Architecture Center, which runs tours of the first skyscrapers.
THE VIBE	Art Deco glamour — this is a designated landmark building, erected in 1929.
ROOMS	Step back to the Jazz Age , with orb lamps, rust-coloured bureaux, stucco-clad ceilings and marble bathrooms with Maison Martin Margiela toiletries.
FOOD & DRINK	The Free Rein brasserie pairs plates of ricotta gnocchi or braised short rib with seasonal craft cocktails.
BEST THING	A part of the profits go to charity
WORST THING	The soundproofing could use an upgrade, especially if your room is near a lift.
TRAVEL TIP	For the best views of the Magnificent Mile and skyscraped horizon, ask for a room number ending in 04.


The high-roller The Langham
Doubles start at £434, room only. Splurge on a Club level room (from £491) and you'll get extras, including food and drinks in the Club Lounge , butler service and chauffeured rides (langhamhotels.com).
A Mies van der Rohe building overlooking the Chicago River.
This is genteel 'pass the caviar, dahling' territory : dignitaries, socialites and celebs such as Christian Bale keep things classy.
A refined (if a bit luxury-by-numbers) beige-on-cream look , with clean-lined Bauhaus-influenced furniture. The minibar is in the supersized credenza.
The David Rockwell-designed Travelle has a menu featuring tomahawk steaks that are torched tableside . Pavilion's afternoon tea harks back to the hotel group's London roots.
The extensive fine art collection in the public areas includes works by Anish Kapoor and Jaume Plensa.
It's next to a skyscraper hotel owned by a very controversial American president — you can't escape the view of it!
Families can save by splashing out on Club Room access (with free food and drink) for £113pp a day (under-17s are free).


The hipster The Hoxton
Snug doubles start at £120 and come with a small breakfast bag delivered to your door. An extra £15 gets you an upgrade to Cosy. Roomy, the most spacious category, costs an additional £30 (thehoxton.com).
Shoreditch-meets-the-Midwest in the Fulton Market District, Chicago's trendiest neighbourhood, where self-styled creatives and tech types hang out in converted warehouses like this one.
Classy, but cool — think young business types and the fashion-forward set . It's been wildly popular with locals since its 2019 opening and is buzzing after work.
Mid-century stylish, with brass bedside lamps, panelled leather headboards and a Bluetooth speaker masquerading as a Marshall amplifier.
Top marks for Cira, the ground-level Mediterranean joint. Rooftop Peruvian restaurant Cabra is a big local hit for its ceviche and <i>tiraditos</i> , while Lazy Bird is the classy basement bar.
You can't fault the soaring open-plan lobby for people-watching — get a drink from the bar and pull up one of the plush couches.
No priority access for hotel guests at Cabra
Hate noon check-outs and 3pm check-ins? The Flexy Time policy allows guests to check in and out at any time — if booked three days in advance.

PHOTOGRAPHS GETTY MAP ROBERT LITTLEFORD


The genius Hotel EMC2
Doubles from £195, but some standard rooms look over alleyways . For something marginally more inspiring, City View rooms start at £218 (hotelemc2.com).
In the central Streeterville neighbourhood, three blocks from pretty Ohio Street Beach on Lake Michigan.
Geek meets chic — you'll find smartly dressed travellers alongside locals on date nights at the ground-floor restaurant.
EMC2's aim to marry science and art is at its best in the slightly retro rooms. There's a lot of brass, peekaboo showers and tons of tech , including an Amazon Alexa that can relay your requests to the hotel 24/7.
The Albert (like Einstein, natch) serves New American cuisine in a two-storey space lined with huge bookcases . Try the white-barbecue-charred octopus.
 Robot butlers Cleo and Leo
The views aren't great compared with other downtown hotels — even in the City View category.
Listening to music? Pop your phone in the slot above that pretty brass horn by the desk — it'll amplify the sound, gramophone-style .


The playmate Virgin Hotels
Chambers rooms — with sliding doors between the bedroom and seating area, which give them a hint of suite — start at £123, room only (virginhotels.com).
A block south of the Chicago River, putting you equidistant from Millennium Park and the Magnificent Mile shopping drag — both a quick walk away.
It's all happy hipsters and cheeky signage
Neatly designed with lively accents of the brand's signature red . Download the Virgin app to control the temperature, order room service and access the digital concierge.
The soy-glazed chicken wings at the Commons Club restaurant are addictive, while Cerise is a red-hot rooftop party spot on the 26th floor .
Guests get a free daily cocktail from 5pm-6pm . Minibars are sensibly priced — think crisps and sweets for less than £2.50.
Bring earplugs — the windows aren't great at filtering out street noise or the lively rooftop crowd.
The digital concierge is one thing, but seek out the Woman in Red, the VIP manager and city know-it-all , for the best insider recommendations.

Or try...
£180 Sophy Hyde Park Because: It's the first luxury hotel in Obama's former neighbourhood. Artworks and design elements are inspired by Chicago luminaries such as gospel singer Mahalia Jackson and writer Saul Bellow. Doubles from £180, room only (sophyhotel.com).
£229 Four Seasons Because: This Mag Mile icon has one of the city's finest spas, with a glass-domed pool and lake views. Doubles from £229, room only (fourseasons.com).
£252 Soho House Chicago Because: There's a 20-metre rooftop pool at this Chicago outpost of the members' club, which doubles as a hotel (guests can use all the club facilities). Doubles from £252, room only (sohohouse-chicago.com).
£184 Kimpton Hotel Monaco Because: There's free nightly wine at this century-old former hat factory. Doubles from £184, room only (monaco-chicago.com).
Get me there
American Airlines flies direct from Heathrow from £361 return. Or try United Airlines (also from £361 return) or BA (from £345 return). Norwegian operates a seasonal service from Gatwick from April to October, from £296 return. See choosechicago.com .
