

# A perfect day in *The Loop*

*Yvonne Gordon spends 24  
hours in the heart of Chicago*

## 10am

### CRUISE THE RIVER

Get your bearings and see Chicago's impressive skyline on a Chicago Architecture Foundation river cruise with Chicago's First Lady Cruises. It's a chance to admire historic buildings, new skyscrapers being built and the iconic Willis (Sears) Tower from all angles. If you're brave enough, visit the famous tower later for 103rd-floor views and step out into the 'Ledge' glass box.

**HOW:** [cruisechicago.com](http://cruisechicago.com) (\$43/€38); [theskydeck.com](http://theskydeck.com) (\$22/€19.50).



## 2pm

### DO IT

Aer Lingus ([aerlingus.com](http://aerlingus.com)) flies direct to Chicago from Dublin. See [choosechicago.com](http://choosechicago.com) for more info.

### HEART OF ART

The Art Institute of Chicago's collection spans 260,000 works, eight buildings and a million square feet. The secret is to focus on a couple of areas, such as the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Monets, Renoirs and Cézannes. Don't miss Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, too. There are plenty of options for a lunch break — the Institute's outdoor café (11am to 4pm) even has a full bar if art makes you thirsty.

**HOW:** [artic.edu](http://artic.edu) (\$25/€22, with under-14s free).



## 5pm

### SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP

Hit State Street for some retail therapy. Sprawling over a full city block since it opened in 1868, the iconic Macy's (formerly Marshall Fields) department store has eight floors with everything from clothes to furniture and electronics, plus a Tiffany glass dome. Block 37 across the street is where you'll find smaller stores like Anthropologie, Sephora and for cupcakes, Magnolia Bakery.

**HOW:** Macy's, 111 North State Street (Visitors can get a 10pc off visitors' pass); [blockthirtyseven.com](http://blockthirtyseven.com).

### PLAYTIME IN THE PARK

Grant Park is the place to play after a day's sightseeing. In Millennium Park, the Cloud Gate (Anish Kapoor's 'Bean' sculpture) will give you fun and distorted reflections of the city skyline while kids cool off at Crown Fountain. Afterwards, head to nearby Cindy's roof bar on Michigan for rooftop cocktails and sunset views of the park.

**HOW:** See [grantparkmusicfestival.com](http://grantparkmusicfestival.com) for free concert schedule; see also [cindysrooftop.com](http://cindysrooftop.com).

## 8pm

