



VISIT
**OAK
PARK**

OAK PARK AREA

Come meet Chicago's fun next-door neighbors.
They're known for architecture and history, but
the longer you visit, the more they reveal.

VISITOAKPARK.COM



TOP: MAYA DEL SOL
FROM LEFT: GO APE,
FRANK LLOYD
WRIGHT BIKE TOUR,
BROOKFIELD ZOO



MEET US HERE

Getting to Oak Park is easy. Deciding what to do first is harder.

Less than 10 miles from downtown Chicago, Oak Park is the city's close western suburb—a quick side trip by car or train for sightseers. But the more you learn about Oak Park and its neighboring communities, the more you'll see the area as a dynamic destination in its own right (or Wright).

Families come for all-ages outdoor adventures. International travelers seek out world-class architecture. Road-tripping couples young and old bond at galleries, shops and eateries. Nightlife-lovers kick back and kick up their heels. Want to spend the night(s)? You'll find rooms at the inns.



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KEY

- A. **iCOMBAT Tactical Laser Tag**
- B. **Cernan Earth and Space Center**
- C. **Hal Tyrrell Trailside Museum of Natural History**
- D. **Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio**
- E. **Unity Temple**
- F. **Ernest Hemingway Birthplace Museum**
- G. **Al Capone's Grave at Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery**
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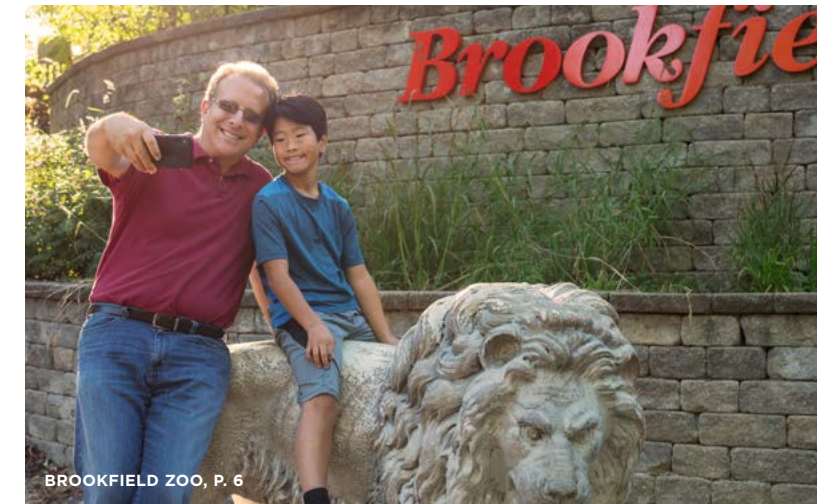
GO APE ADVENTURES, P. 8



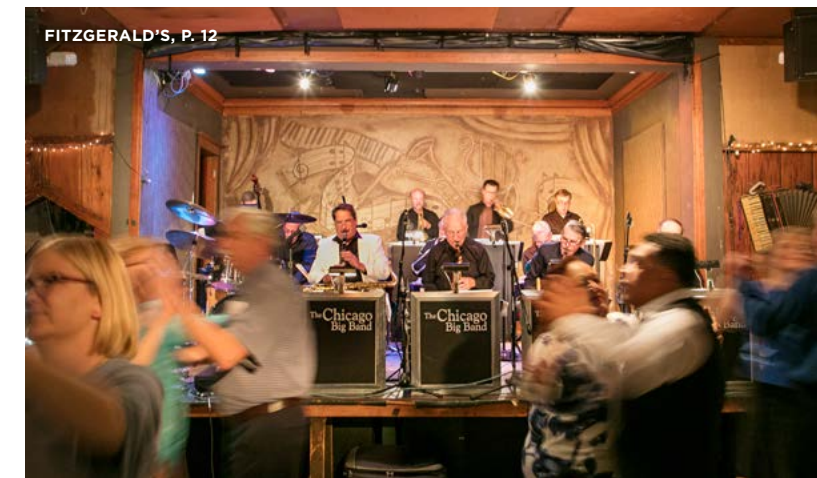
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CREATIVE GENIUS

Frank Lloyd Wright started his career in Oak Park, Ernest Hemingway started his life here, and Frederick Law Olmsted and others left their marks on the area.



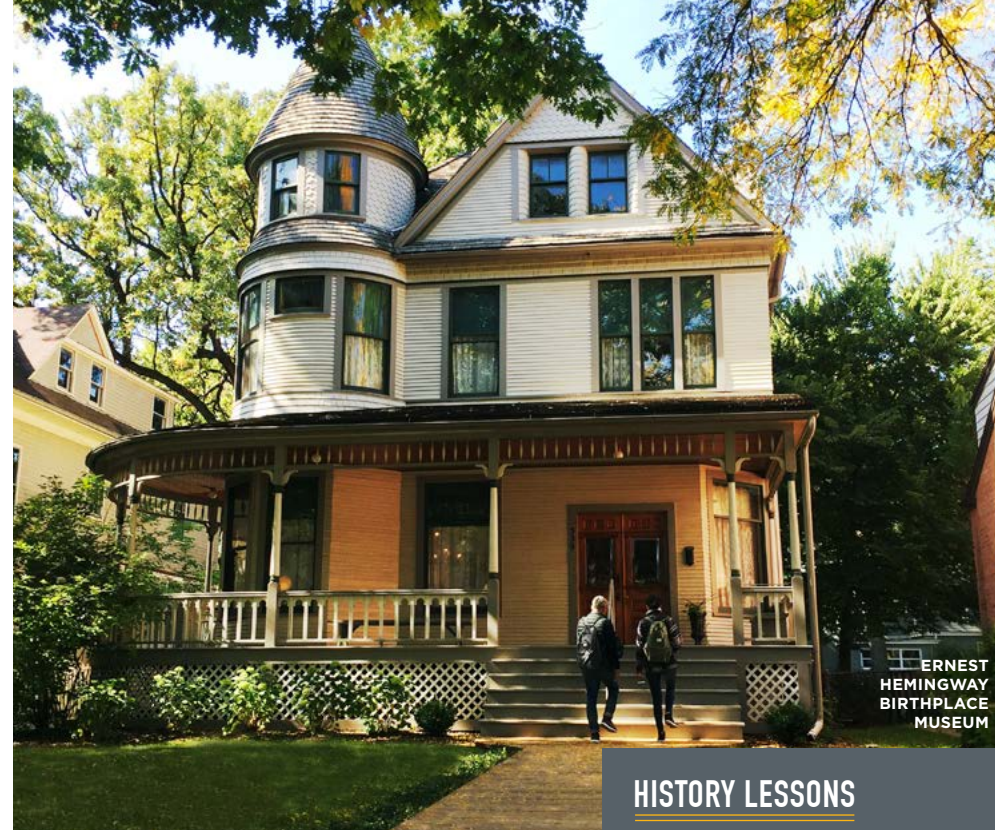
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOME AND STUDIO

ARCHITECTURE GEMS

Oak Park lays its reputation on a foundation of historic architecture, especially the Prairie School designs of Frank Lloyd Wright. The cornerstone is his own digs—the **Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio**—one of many structures by Wright and others in the **Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District**. See them on a bike tour, such as **Pedal Oak Park** or **The Wright Ride**. A must-see list starts with Wright's **Unity Temple** (the greatest public building of Wright's Prairie period), George W. Maher's **Pleasant Home** (now a museum), and E.E. Roberts' **Scoville Square**, a rare Prairie School commercial building. Extend your Wright itinerary with a drive through **River Forest** and a walk around **Riverside**, an early planned community by America's greatest landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Take the **Frederick Law Olmsted Society's Historic Walking Tours** to learn more about the architecture there, including Wright gems like the famed **Coonley Estate**. Just west of Oak Park, **Maywood** carries its own architectural pedigree, with homes on the National Register of Historic Places, including ones by Wright associates. And **Berwyn**, famous for bungalows, also delights with a variety of other home styles—Tudor Revivals, Victorians, Georgians, worker cottages and four-squares.



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOME AND STUDIO



ERNEST HEMINGWAY BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HISTORIC DISTRICT BIKE TOUR

HISTORY LESSONS

Story lines of history arc through Oak Park. See where writer Ernest Hemingway was born—a lovely Queen Anne Victorian home that is now the **Ernest Hemingway Birthplace Museum**. The **Oak Park River Forest Museum**, in a renovated 1898 Oak Park firehouse, offers changing exhibits on the region's history. Swing by the **Chicago 16 Inch Softball Hall of Fame Museum** in Forest Park for dirt on the Chicago-rooted game played with a big mushy ball and no gloves. You know Chicago's gangsters played hardball, but did you know many lived in Oak Park and River Forest? **There Goes the Neighborhood Gangster Tour** drives by hoodlums' homes, with narration by mob historian and author John J. Binder. Continue your gangster tour at **Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery** in Hillside, the final resting place for many mobsters, including Al Capone. The **Historical Society of Forest Park** cemetery tours take you to the graves of the famous (like radio legend Paul Harvey) and highlight local history. Historic routes pass through the area, too. A plaque in Maywood marks a stop on the **Underground Railroad**, and a stretch of Ogden Avenue in Berwyn follows the storied path of historic **Route 66**.



OAK PARK RIVER FOREST MUSEUM



CHICAGO 16 INCH SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME MUSEUM

ESSENTIAL EVENTS

Go to VisitOakPark.com for dates and more information.

WRIGHT PLUS HOUSEWALK

May | Oak Park

Take rare interior tours of private homes and public buildings designed by Wright and others.

MAYWOOD HISTORIC HOMES HOUSEWALK + TROLLEY TOUR

July 2020 | Maywood

Explore homes encompassing several styles, including many houses designed by Wright associates, on the biennial tour.

ROUTE 66 CAR SHOW

August | Berwyn

Check out more than 500 vintage and custom cars, trucks and motorcycles like those from the Mother Road's heyday.

BERWYN'S BUNGALOWS & MORE TOUR

September | Berwyn

Docents give tours of selected homes and churches constructed in the village's signature styles.

HILLSIDE CEMETERY TOUR

October | Hillside

The mayor leads the tour; see Al Capone's grave and get a rare look in the Bishops' Mausoleum.



FUN FOR ALL AGES

FAMILY TIME

Toddlers, grade schoolers, teens and grown-ups can find their kind of fun at attractions throughout the Oak Park area.

ON THE WILD SIDE

World-famous **Brookfield Zoo** in Brookfield provides one-stop suburban safari-ing for adventurers of all ages. Have close encounters of the creature kind by feeding a giraffe, petting a penguin, and watching dolphins leap and dive. Older kids can sign up for **Backstage Adventures** that put them to work with zookeepers. Little ones flock to the **Hamill Family Play Zoo**, where they can touch guinea pigs, rabbits and reptiles. At the three-acre **Hamill Family Wild Encounters**, kids (and parents) might be able to touch or feed goats, parakeets and wallabies, plus see red pandas, llamas and reindeer. And oh-oh, those **Summer Nights**—enjoy evening concerts in the park with activities for kids and a laser light show finale.

BROOKFIELD ZOO
SUMMER NIGHTS



BROOKFIELD ZOO

ESSENTIAL EVENTS

Go to VisitOakPark.com for dates and more information.

MONTHLY SKYWATCH

Second Saturday of each month

| Cernan Earth and Space Center, River Grove

Visit the planetarium for live presentations and, in clear weather, peek at the night sky through a telescope.

EARTH AND SKY

Kids kick off their shoes and put on their creative thinking caps at the **Wonder Works** children's museum in Oak Park, loaded with six multisensory, interactive exhibits like *Lights, Camera, Action!* for darling divas and *Build It!* for future Frank Lloyd Wrights. Aspiring astronomers and astronauts get all starry-eyed at the **Cernan Earth and Space Center** in River Grove. They can gaze at Apollo astronaut Gene Cernan's space suit, replica spacecraft and dazzling planetarium shows. Plants put on a show of their own at the **Oak Park Conservatory**. Citrus trees, scented geraniums, dreamy tropical palms, and desert cacti and succulents take turns in the spotlight. Kids love the chatty parrots.



CERNAN EARTH AND SPACE CENTER



WONDER WORKS



GALLOPING GHOST ARCADE

FUN AND GAMES

It's all-you-can-beat gaming at the **Galloping Ghost Arcade** in Brookfield, which lays claim to being the largest video arcade in the world. Pay \$20 at the door and play up to 700 classics like Frogger and Mario Kart for free—no quarters or tokens needed. Do some family bonding by teaming up to win your freedom. Both **Vault Escape Rooms** in Riverside and **Escape Factor** in Forest Park give you 60 minutes to find hidden clues, solve puzzles and decipher cryptic messages. Or escape reality entirely at **iCOMBAT**, a tactical laser tag experience in Schiller Park. Engage in ultra-realistic combat on a Hollywood movie-style set.

DISCOVERY GARDEN EXPLORATION TIME

Summer Wednesday and Saturday mornings

| Oak Park Conservatory

Docents guide you and your child to natural finds in the *Elsie Jacobsen Discovery Garden* outside the conservatory.

FRANKLIN PARK FEST FEATURING RAILROAD DAY

June | B-12 Tower, Franklin Park

Board an assortment of train engines and cars for a look inside and enjoy a kid-centric carnival with live music and food vendors.



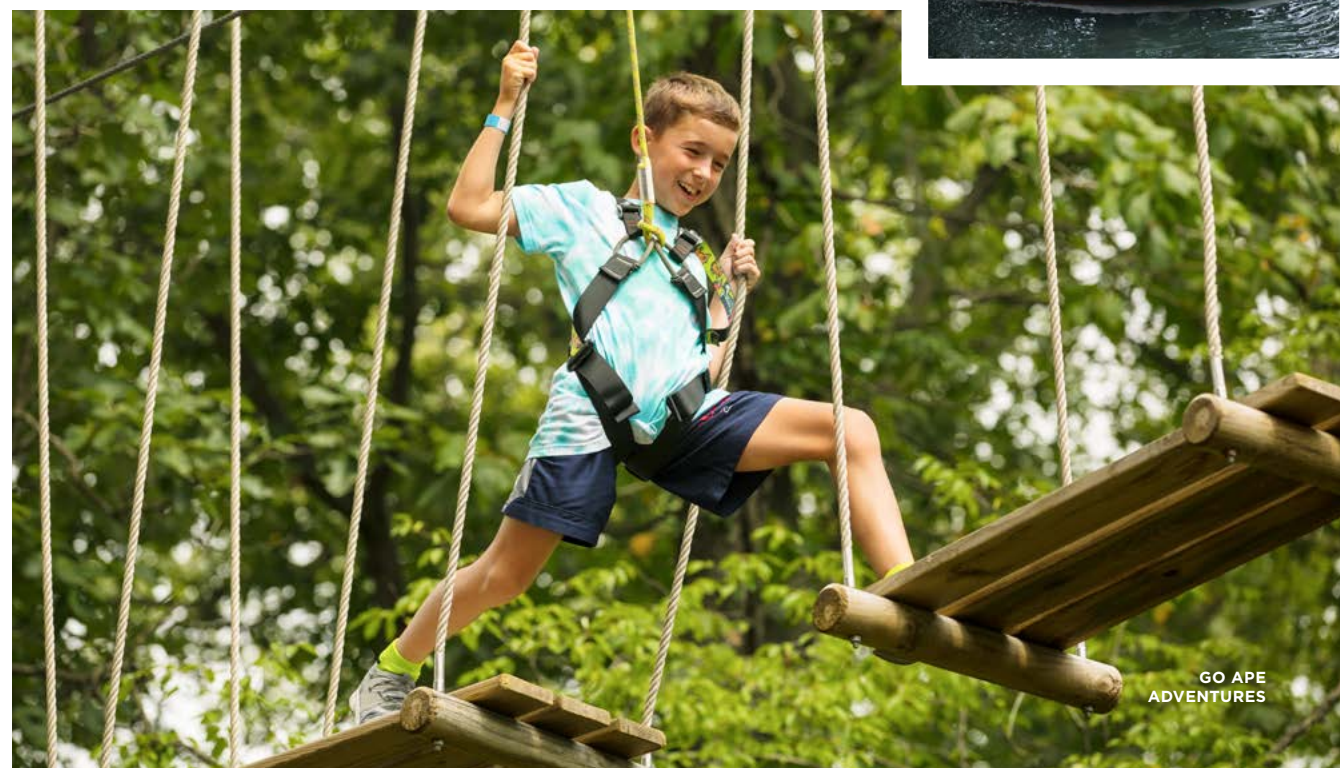
OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

NATURALLY FUN

Town names drawn from nature should tip you off: This area teems with green space, waters and wildlife to enjoy at your own speed and vantage point.

ACTIVE ADVENTURES

Make like Tarzan (or Jane) and monkey around 40 feet off the ground at **Go Ape Adventures** in Western Springs. The three-hour trek through the forest includes ziplines, swings and rope ladders. Rather keep your feet closer to the ground? Explore the tallgrass prairie at **Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve** in Westchester. Bike the **Salt Creek Trail's** 7-mile **Red Paved Trail** from Brookfield Zoo in Brookfield, or head out on the **Illinois Prairie Path** from the trailhead in Maywood.



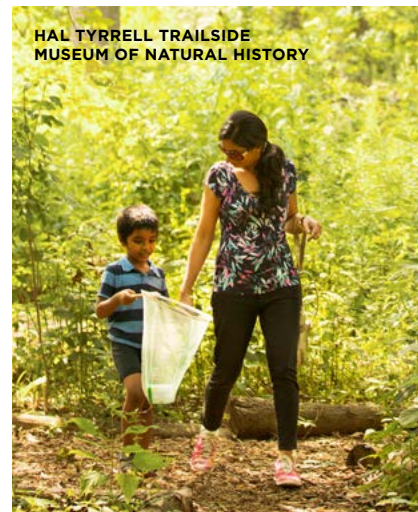
GO APE ADVENTURES

NATURE DISCOVERIES

You never know what natural wonders you'll see at the **Hal Tyrrell Trailside Museum of Natural History** in River Forest. A charming 1870s Victorian mansion nestled in the woods near the Des Plaines River provides a storybook setting for kids curious about nature. Inside, they can hear creature tales and see creature tails (via wildlife displays). Outside, there are nature trails and a pond to explore, a play area for fort building, and picnic-perfect wildflower gardens for relaxing. You can also hike by the Des Plaines River or bird-watch in surrounding **Thatcher Woods**, part of the **Forest Preserves of Cook County**.

ON THE WATER

The **Des Plaines River** and **Salt Creek** aren't just for viewing—they're for doing, too. Canoe or kayak the river from the new boat launch at **Maywood Grove** in Maywood. Or take to Salt Creek from the **Brookfield Village Hall Canoe Landing** in Brookfield.



HAL TYRRELL TRAILSIDE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



SALT CREEK KAYAKING

ARTS + SHOPPING



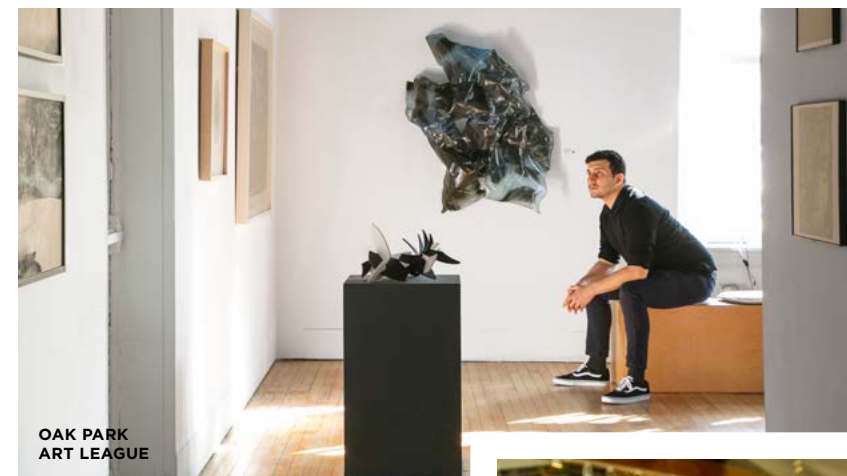
VILLAGE OF OAK PARK'S COMMUNITY MINI MURAL PROJECT

ARTISTIC SPIRIT

Events like **Harrison Street's Third Friday Gallery Walk** in the **Oak Park Arts District** reflect the rich vein of artistic energy in **Oak Park** and neighboring communities.

DAZZLING DISPLAYS

Appreciate the work of local artists or brush up on your own skills at the **Oak Park Art League** in Oak Park, a gallery and school founded in 1921. **Riverside Arts Center** and **Freeark Gallery** in Riverside offers a quirky artistic escape into themed exhibits, special events and classes. The gallery is known for its edgy, risk-taking creations. So, too, is the **O'Connor Art Gallery** at Dominican University in River Forest, where contemporary works expose students to cutting-edge concepts and approaches. Or think outside the gallery by taking in public art. A walk around the area reveals many examples large and small, including the **Village of Oak Park's Community Mini Mural Project**, transforming the concrete walls of the town's railroad viaduct.



OAK PARK ART LEAGUE

SINGULAR SHOPPING

There's art you just look at, and art you can take home. **Laura Atwood Studio** sells wearable art—beads, clothing, jewelry and handbags. **Higgins Glass Studio** in Riverside crafts home decor such as sconces, tableware and wall

art. **Riverside Arts Weekend** (May) in Riverside and **Brookfield Fine Arts Festival** (September) in Brookfield let you browse the works of many artists. And for **Garage Galleries** (August) in Forest Park, residents open their garages as exhibit spaces, creating casual art receptions. Go to VisitOakPark.com for specific event dates and more information.



LAURA ATWOOD



FOOD
+ DRINKS



MAYA DEL SOL

EAT HERE

Whether you're thinking fine-dining date night, a casual meal at a neighborhood joint, grab-and-go comfort food or a tempting special treat, Oak Park area eateries cater to all appetites.

DISTINCTIVE DINING

Hemmingway's Bistro (yes, two Ms) in Oak Park adds fresh Midwest flavors to seafood and French classics like duck à l'orange. Latin-fusion cuisine heats up **Maya Del Sol** in Oak Park. Pair spicy fare with a margarita on the spacious patio. The focus is seasonal at **The Heritage** in Forest Park, including cocktails—try the weekly

"Something & Tonic." Shareable upscale dishes include grass-fed steak and roasted oysters. **The Chew Chew** in Riverside, near a Metra train stop, stays on the right track with subtle train decor and fan favorites like grilled salmon and risotto. Top-notch tapas—think bacon-wrapped dates or Spanish-style black bean soup with ham—and house-made sangria await at **Emilio's Tapas** in Hillside.



THE HERITAGE



HEMMINGWAY'S BISTRO



HALA KAHIKI TIKI
BAR AND LOUNGE

PROPOSE A TOAST

Signature drinks and traditions set off these places for potent potables.

Hala Kahiki Tiki Bar and Lounge
Be bamboo-zled by the Polynesian decor and more than 130 tropical drinks at this River Grove institution.

La Tequileria
In Melrose Park, enjoy premium tequila, tapas and live music amid beautiful vintage Mexican decor.

Kinslahger Brewing Company
Oak Park's first brewery offers flagship beers like chestnut red Chicago Common and pale Prohibition Pilsner. Try the nitrogen coffee, too.

Quincy Street Distillery
Artisan whiskey, gin and other spirits flow behind a historic Riverside storefront. Book a

tour, buy bottles and enjoy cocktails in the speakeasy bar.

Short Fuse Brewing Company
Choose from at least 14 beers on tap (all brewed in-house) in Schiller Park, plus a huge taproom, full kitchen, weekend live music, tours and Tuesday-night trivia.

SWEET (AND SALTY) INDULGENCES

Say uncle to temptation at **Aunt Diana's Old Fashioned Fudge** in Riverside. If you think the aromas are amazing, taste the chocolate-covered (insert almost anything here). After a century in business, **Petersen's Ice Cream** in Oak Park follows the same recipe—up to 18 percent butterfat creates super-rich flavor. By comparison, **The Brown Cow Ice Cream Parlor** in Forest Park is a new kid, but boasts old-fashioned soda fountain charm. Enjoy their house-made ice cream and root beer, plus pies and cakes. Hip-hopper meets popper at **Benjamin's Gourmet Popcorn** in Broadview. Swapping tracks for snacks, local DJ Chris Benjamin turns out hits like Benjamin's White Cheddar Bliss, and keeps a DJ booth in the store.

FOOD TRUCK RALLY

August | River Forest
Mobile chefs wheel into town for this event co-sponsored (fittingly?) by the Rotary Club. Beer, live entertainment and inflatables, too.

HOPSTOP

September | Riverside
The zero-waste craft beer festival supports the Frederick Law Olmsted Society in its eco-friendly efforts.

NEIGHBORHOOD FAVES

Get your Irish on in Brookfield with shepherd's pie, corned beef and cabbage, and a bevy of beers at **Irish Times Pub and Restaurant**. **Alejandra's Mexican Cuisine and Cantina** in Northlake is famous for its carne asada and fun, family atmosphere. A 40-year-plus fixture, **Sawa's Old Warsaw** in Broadview still stuffs with its Polish-American smorgasbord—think potato pancakes, pierogi and blintzes. For Asian cuisine, try **Moon Temple Chinese Restaurant** in Berkeley or **Chef Shangri-La** in North Riverside, where diners enjoy Cantonese dishes in a festive Polynesian setting.



IRISH TIMES PUB
AND RESTAURANT

FAMOUS BEEF AND DOGS

Where's the beef? **Johnnie's Beef** in Elmwood Park serves Chicago-style Italian beef sandwiches at a no-frills, cash-only spot. The late celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain once paid a visit. Another TV chef, Rachael Ray, voted **Gene and Jude's** in River Grove the best hot dog in America. Since 1946, the no-seating place has doled out dogs the Chicago way—no ketchup (there's none on the premises). **Mickey's Drive-In** in Bellwood opened in 1959, and is famous for hot dogs, too, as well as Italian beef, Polish sausage and meatball sandwiches. It's still owned by the same family.

ESSENTIAL EVENTS

Go to VisitOakPark.com for dates and more information.

UNCORK ILLINOIS

June | Oak Park
Three cheers for the reds, whites and jazz. Wine-lovers sip offerings from local vintners and chill to relaxing live music.

OAK PARK MICRO BREW REVIEW

August | Oak Park
Sample more than 200 craft beers from 85 breweries, feed on vendor food and hear live bands. It's a zero-waste event.

TASTE OF MELROSE PARK

Labor Day Weekend | Melrose Park
It's been called the next-best food fest after Taste of Chicago. Local eateries and family vendors drive the nearly 40-year-old event.



NIGHTLIFE
+ SHOWS



WIRE

AFTER DARK

Nightlife buzzes at theaters and nightclubs in Oak Park, as well as in neighboring communities such as River Forest, Berwyn and Broadview.

PLAY ON

Catch soliloquies under the stars at the **Oak Park Festival Theatre**, set outdoors in Austin Gardens. Summer productions of Shakespeare and other masters captivate all ages. Students help run the show at **The Collective**, part of **Concordia University Chicago** in River Forest, staging newer works and twists on classics. Innovation and inspiration fill the bill at the **Open Door Theater** in Oak Park. Expect music, comedy and drama designed to entertain and provoke. Inclusivity and affordability draw fans to the **16th Street Theater** in Berwyn, now in its second decade of eye-opening plays (with a recent move to a larger space). **Madison Street Theatre** in Oak Park hosts shows by dozens of Chicago-area theater, improv and dance companies at its 180-seat Main Stage and smaller Studio Theatre.

ALL THAT JAZZ

One of the Chicago area's top live-music venues hides in Berwyn. **FitzGerald's**, in an old building with a hip history, features roots artists and hosts an annual summer music festival. Drag divas and comedians entertain at **Hamburger Mary's Show Lounge** in Oak Park. Take the stage yourself on MaryOke (karaoke) night. See local and national acts at **Wire**, a tech-focused music school, performing venue, recording studio, private event space and record label in Berwyn. Buy craft beer and cocktails, too. Folks love to dance at **The Blue Note Jazz Club** in Broadview. Hear house, hip-hop and R&B music. At **Dominican University Performing Arts Center** in River Forest, treat yourself to nationally acclaimed, award-winning acts in a venue with excellent acoustics.



THE CARLETON OF OAK PARK

RESTFUL RETREATS

After a day (and evening) of adventure, relax in these Oak Park lodgings:

The Carleton of Oak Park
Historic hotel with elegant furnishings and a boutique vibe in rooms and suites.

The Write Inn
The former Oak Park Manor, with a variety of room types, including family rooms.

Harvey House Bed and Breakfast
Named for the giant imaginary rabbit in the old Jimmy Stewart film.

Bishops Hall
A 1916 Georgian revival, now a bed-and-breakfast with three guest suites; once home to the local bishop of the Orthodox Church.



HAMBURGER MARY'S
SHOW LOUNGE



DISCOVER MORE
#VISITOAKPARK
VISITOAKPARK.COM

There's way more to do in the Oak Park area than we can include in this guide. Go to our website and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for information on more attractions, as well as details on upcoming events.