

ALL ABOUT TOWN

While Chicago makes a great destination in itself, there are worthwhile day trips to enhance your experience. BY JAY GENTILE



From quaint small towns with a country feel to bustling mid-size cities with more than 150,000 people, there's a lot to see and do. And with Illinois celebrating its bicentennial in 2018, there's never been a better time to get out and explore the state.

EVANSTON Located just north of the city along Lake Michigan, Evanston is most famous as the home of Northwestern University, one of America's premier academic institutions which offers the action-packed Ryan Field on college football Saturdays. The downtown district also features a wealth of shops and restaurants buzzing with activity, as Evanston boasts one of the finest dining scenes outside the city. Just a short walk from downtown, Centennial Park and Clark Street Beach offer unobstructed views of the lake, with additional beaches like Lighthouse Beach offering plenty of opportunities for recreation. **How to get there:** Take the CTA Purple Line north to South Blvd., Main, Dempster, Davis, Foster, Noyes, Central stops; or Metra UP-N Line north to Main Street, Davis Street, Central Street stops

LONG GROVE This quaint bedroom community located about 35 miles northwest of Chicago offers a unique small-town country charm that seems far removed from the hustle and bustle of fast-paced city

life. With historic homes and buildings dating to the 1800s paired with cobblestone paths dotted with lush gardens, Long Grove's downtown is meant to be explored by foot. Pick up souvenirs from the downtown gift shops, boutiques and art galleries, or relax with friends at one of the town's popular local restaurants like Paddy's on the Square. And if you like food festivals, Long Grove has you covered with its annual strawberry, chocolate and apple festivals held every summer and fall. **How to get there:** Take the I-94 Expressway north to IL 22/Half Day Road West

OAK BROOK This affluent community located about 20 miles west of downtown is perhaps most known for its sprawling Oakbrook Center shopping mall and movie theatre, but there's also the iconic Drury Lane Theatre that has been performing Broadway shows for decades. The town is also a golfer's paradise with five courses (including the world-renowned Butler National Golf Club.) Oak Brook also sits next to Bemis Woods, a 480-acre forest preserve featuring its own treetop zipline. **How to get there:** Take the I-290 Expressway west to I-88 Expressway west to IL-83/Kingery Highway

NAPERVILLE Illinois' third-largest city is also one of the most active, with a thriving downtown scene offering a wealth of activity. You can ex-



plore much of the town by strolling the 613 buildings that make up the Naperville Historic District or walking the famed Naperville Riverwalk alongside the DuPage River, which passes through many of the town's main attractions including Centennial Park (which includes a small public beach) and several downtown bars/restaurants. Naperville is also home to well-attended summer festivals including the massive Naperville Ribfest, held every Fourth of July weekend. **How to get there:** Take the Metra BNSF Line to the Naperville stop

ROSEMONT Visitors arriving to Chicago from O'Hare International Airport won't have to travel far to reach Rosemont, located along the airport's eastern boundary. The main activity here centers around sprawling entertainment complexes like the Allstate Arena and the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, which host a dizzying array of live concerts and conventions every year. More recent attractions include the nearby Rivers Casino (located in neighboring Des Plaines) and Impact Field, home of independent league baseball club the Chicago Dogs, plus the Fashion Outlets of Chicago. Rosemont's Parkway Bank Entertainment District also includes a movie theatre, music venue and dining options. **How to get there:** Take the CTA Blue Line west to the Rosemont stop; or Metra UP-NW Line west to the Rosemont stop

HIGHLAND PARK This posh lakefront suburb located about 25 miles north of downtown offers a little something for everyone, from high-end dining to live music at the beautiful outdoor summer music venue Ravinia, the oldest continually-running outdoor music festival in America. You can also explore the neighborhood by driving Sheridan Road along the lakefront to ogle million-dollar homes and panoramic lakefront views. Immediately south of town, discover the 385-acre Chicago Botanic Garden. **How to get there:** Take Metra UP-N Line north to the Braeside, Ravinia Park, Ravinia or Highland Park stops

OAK PARK With famous residents Frank Lloyd Wright and Ernest Hemingway, this lively suburb located along Chicago's western border has long been a gathering place for artists and creatives of all types. In addition to hosting a stunning array of turn-of-the-century Frank Lloyd Wright homes, the diverse community also features a strong food scene with 150-plus restaurants. **How to get there:** Take the CTA Green Line west to the Ridgeland, Oak Park, Harlem/Lake stops; or Metra UP-W Line west to the Oak Park stop

Stroll the Dupage River in Naperville (left) and see Frank Lloyd Wright homes in Oak Park (right). Facing page: Enjoy Evanston's beaches.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Just Desserts, page 32

Genevieve Diesing is a Chicago-based writer, editor and chef. She has written about music, food and healthcare for outlets such as the Chicago Tribune, Atlantic.com, Chicago Sun-Times, Crain's Chicago Business and more. Writing about historic Chicago desserts for this issue of Where Chicago was fascinating, and now she wants to recreate them all for her friends. When she's not writing, she's likely eating, cooking or hosting dinner parties.

Jay Gentile

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Jay Gentile is an award-winning journalist and Chicago expert who has written for a variety of publications including SPIN, VICE, Chicago Tribune, The Guardian, Lonely Planet, Outside Magazine, Thrillist, Huffington Post, Chicago Reader and many others. He is also the editor/founder of local music magazine Chicago INNERVIEW and digital marketing specialist with Consequence of Sound. Jay is recognized as a leading authority in a wide array of topics including travel, music, entertainment, food/drink, events and nightlife.

Anthony Settipani

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Anthony Settipani is a freelance writer and graduate of the Medill School of Journalism in Evanston, Illinois. His work has been featured in the Chicago Tribune, Time Out Chicago and Huffington

Post, among others in the U.S. and beyond. When he's not busy diving into long-forgotten Chicago lore, he enjoys dreaming up new ways to house his ever-expanding collection of tea.

Trashhand

A Holy Place, page 22

Trashhand is a Chicago-based photographer that specializes in architecture and lifestyle. After starting his career being self-taught with just an iPhone, he quickly gained a large following on Instagram that propelled him into the professional photography world. Whether it is capturing modern architecture from new perspectives or dilapidated locations never seen before, trashhand continues to showcase his unique perspective from his lens.

Lisa White

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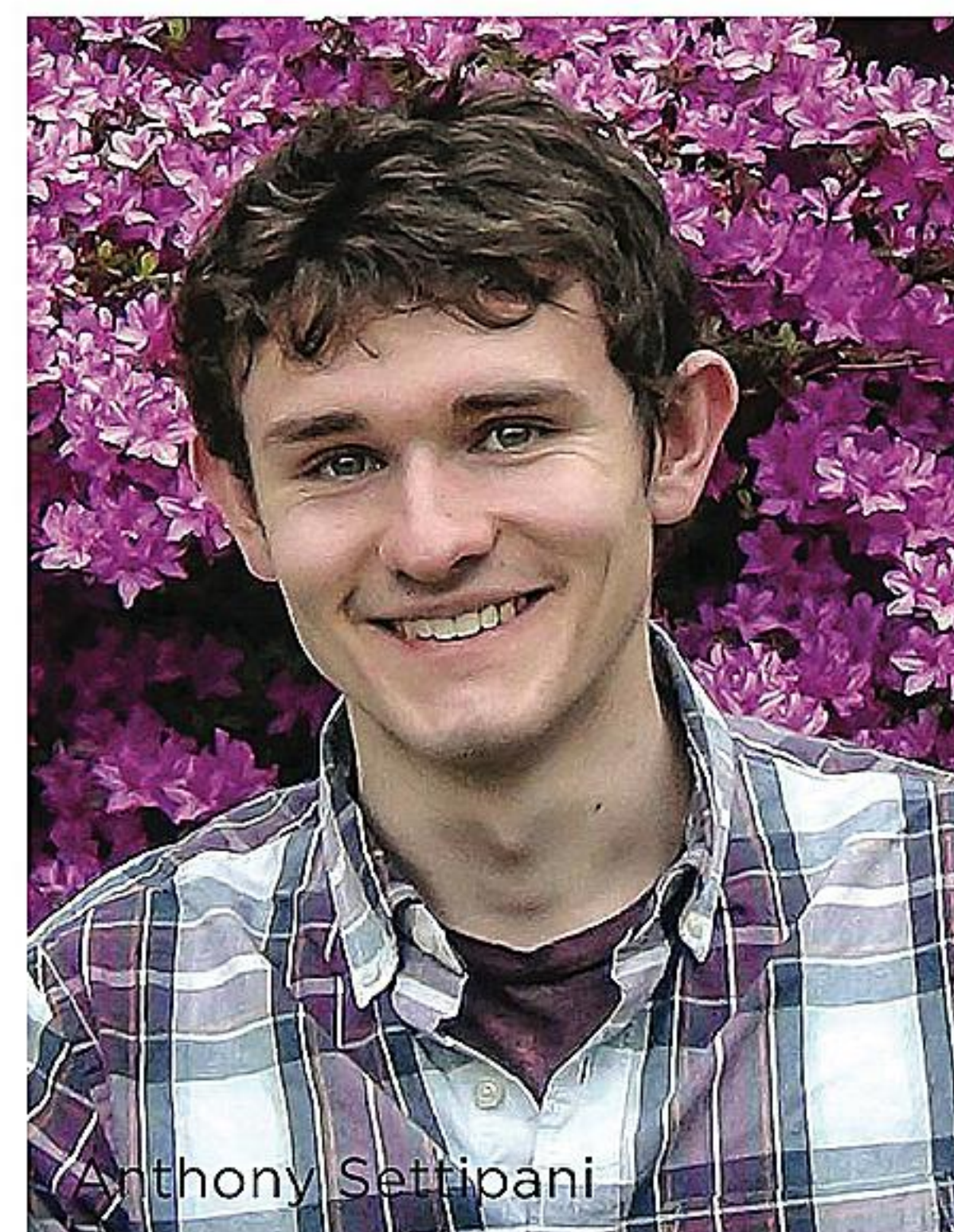
Lisa White is a writer and editor based in Chicago. Her work has appeared in the Chicago Reader, DNAinfo Chicago, Time Out Chicago, Chicagoist and Gapers Block. Writing has led her on such adventures as co-writing a hot dog column (no ketchup, of course) to interviewing a slew of musicians, fulfilling her teenage rock journalist fantasy. She works in publishing and lives in Logan Square with her partner Justin.



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