

2009

AHCA/NCAL 60th Annual *Chicago: City of*

Convention attendees who visit the Windy City will be blown away by the number of things to see and do. Chicago is universally recognized for its variety of activities, landmarks, entertainment, and culture.

Known for its hilarious improv comedy, passionate sports fans, sultry blues and jazz music, and famous deep dish pizza, Chicago's culture is certainly one worth exploring.

Landmarks such as the Willis Tower, Navy Pier, Cloud Gate at Millennium Park, the iconic Water Tower, and much more await visitors to come experience.

As the site of the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living's 60th annual Convention & Exposition, Oct. 4-7, attendees can savor the sights and sounds of Chicago in addition to absorbing the valuable resources and tools that the convention has to offer.

A Proud Heritage

From its humble start as a small trading post on Lake Michigan, Chicago has grown leaps and bounds and is now ranked the third-largest city in the United States. Fort Dearborn, the first settlement developed in the late 1770s, launched the area's most popular trading center due to its central location and accessibility to waterways.

Created in 1848, The Illinois Michigan Canal connected the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River, which



The Navy Pier on Lake Michigan is a popular destination for locals and tourists alike.

became an enormous asset to western trading. Tragically, in 1871 a violent fire spread throughout the city.

Old wooden streets made it impossible to stop the devastation of The Great Fire of 1871, which destroyed more than 17,000 buildings and claimed the lives of 250 people.

The citizens of Chicago were resilient and proud of the heritage of their fine city. They embarked on what is still considered today to be one of the largest building initiatives in the United States.

Chicago stands tall and strong with

its incredible architecture, historic sites, and breathtaking skyscrapers.

Architectural Attractions

With a new start after its unfortunate fire, Chicago experienced decades of rapid growth. Historic buildings that had been destroyed by the fire were replaced with new architecture and a new identity for the city. Since then, Chicago has truly transformed its skyline into the stunning rows of skyscrapers it's known for today.

Some refer to Chicago as the "City of the Big Shoulders" due to its

Convention & Expo *the Century*

LAUREN KOSTE



Cloud Gate is made of highly polished steel plates.



“Sue” is a Field Museum star.

brawling buildings. The city has been described as an international innovator in architecture since it was the first to create such masterpieces as the nation’s first skyscraper in 1884. The Willis Tower, formerly known as Sears Tower, is the tallest building in North America and the third-tallest building in the world. It rises to an impressive

103 stories, where the Skydeck Chicago offers breathtaking views of Chicago, Lake Michigan, and the surrounding communities.

Popular architectural and historic tours lead visitors through the jungle of landmarks such as the Buckingham Fountain, considered to be one of the world’s largest fountains; the magnificent Burnham Hotel, one of the first buildings made of glass and steel;

and the striking interior of the Cultural Center.

Whether touring by foot, trolley, boat, or segway, visitors can experience the incredible sites and extraordinary architecture of the city in many different ways.

Must-See Sites

The Navy Pier, one of the most popular destinations along Lake Michigan, offers a variety of activities, including taking a cruise on the pier’s own Tall Ship, *Windy*—an impeccable replica of a traditional American schooner that displays 11 massive sails.

Cloud Gate, more commonly referred to as “the Bean,” is majestically positioned in Chicago’s Millennium Park and is made of highly polished steel plates. British artist Anish Kapoor constructed the 33-foot-tall sculpture

to resemble liquid mercury and reflect Chicago’s dazzling skyline and the clouds above.

Those who are interested in paleontology discoveries flock to the Field Museum to say “hello” to Sue, the largest and most complete T-Rex fossil yet revealed.

The lakefront Museum Campus is also home to the Adler Planetarium and John G. Shedd Aquarium.

In the midst of the buzzing city lies the Lincoln Park Zoo, which features more than 1,000 animals. Visitors and locals alike are lured by the serenity of its tropical rainforests and open savannas showcasing exotic mammals, reptiles, and birds.

The Chicago Cultural Center’s two stained-glass domes, antique brass, and extraordinary imported marble make the center one of Chicago’s most beautiful landmarks and popular attractions, hosting performances from jazz concerts to classic plays and displaying a diverse collection of art.

Some people take advantage of the beaches and parks off of Lake Shore Drive when they wish to get away from the hustle and bustle of the metropolitan environment.

Live Music

Chicago hosts a variety of first-class music entertainment options, from the sophistication of classical music to the funkiness of late night jazz clubs. Legendary jazz lounges are scattered throughout the city, spreading the sound of live music into the streets. The bril-

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liant and renowned Chicago Symphony Orchestra hosts a number of first-class performances throughout the year, from the world's leading mariachi band—Mariachi Varga—to the classic samplings of electronic pieces from the Chicago Symphony. Performances of both will take place during the AHCA/NCAL Convention.

If visitors are seeking live music performances with a more outdoorsy ambiance, the Millennium Park, a well-known concert venue located in the heart of Chicago, would be a superior choice. Millennium Park hosts a variety of live musical events and is considered a favorite location among Chicagoans.

Comedic Entertainment

Chicago is home to some of the most hilarious improv comedians of the time, including Stephen Colbert, Bill Murray, Tina Fey, Will Ferrell, Steve



Wrigley Field hot dogs are a classic.

Carell, and many more. Many consider Chicago to be where the world of modern improv got its start.

Second City, the famous improv venue, launched the careers of many famous comedians and continues to support new upcoming artists.

Visit on Monday nights to see the next generation of world class comedians perform their skits and songs.

ComedySportz is located in the Lakeview neighborhood and hosts comedy team challenges, which involve beat boxing, improv songs, skits, and verbal battles where audience members participate in the competitions and challenge the comedians themselves.

Play Ball!

The comradery sensed between sports fans is felt the minute one enters Chicago. After all, in 2006 the city was nominated as the Best Sports City by *Sporting News*.

Taking part in a Cubs baseball game at the historic and charming Wrigley Field is the best way for an interested visitor to witness Chicagoans' enthusiasm at its best.

It's crucial to sample the classic Chicago hot dog packed with everything from its trademark neon green relish to the more unique cucumber slices and pickled sport peppers. Chicagoans will warn tourists: Dressing a Chicago hot dog merely with plain old ketchup is offensive.

Those who are interested in the rich sports history and prefer a more in-depth look into Chicago's teams without having to join the ardent fans on the front line may want to visit the Chicago Museum of Sports History or the Chicago Baseball Museum. Wrigley Field was built in 1914 and is the second-oldest ballpark in the country.

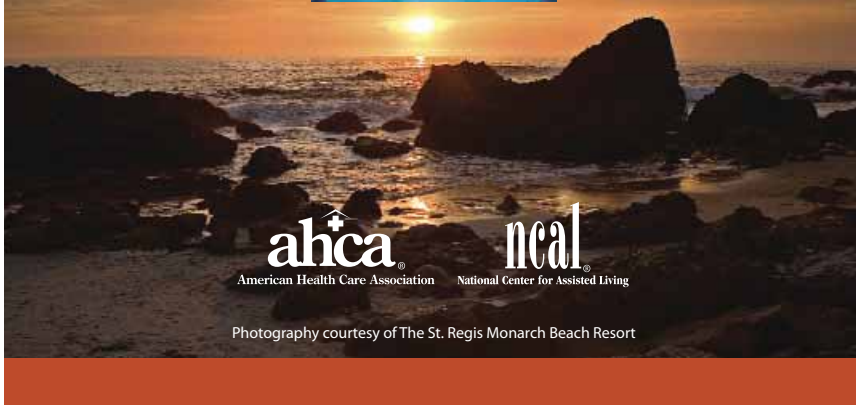
Nominated as one of the final four world cities with the honor to host the 2016 Summer Olympics, it is apparent that Chicago has made not only a national but a global impression. ■

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AHCA/NCAL Fall 2009 Multifacility Conference for CEOs and Senior Executive Leaders

November 18-20, 2009

St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort, Monarch Beach, CA



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To find out more about Chicago, visit www.explorechicago.org/city/en.html.

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