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SUMMER WILL BE GRAND AND FABULOUS IN CHICAGO

Home to one of the most inclusive LGBTQ+ communities in the U.S.,

The Windy City is the ideal getaway to escape Brazil's winter blues

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS (April 11, 2018) – There are sufficient reasons to vacation in the culturally rich and vibrant city of Chicago, and in recent years the destination has attained some critical attention from LGBTQ visitors. Named “City of the Year” by *GayCities.com* and home to some of the largest LGBTQ celebrations in the U.S., Chicago’s summer months (June-August) will not only welcome travelers of all orientations, but also proudly celebrate this flourishing community in magnificent and grandeur style.

Chicago’s summer LGBTQ activities commence during June Pride Month in Chicago, which will feature close to 100 different social, cultural, athletic and political events throughout the city. One of the most popular LGBTQ+ events, the 49th annual [Chicago Pride Parade](#), will attract visitors from around the globe on June 24.

The Pride Parade culminates the city’s month-long activities with a famous 4-mile spectacle involving over 200 floats, marching bands, community groups, astonishing costumes and approximately a million risqué revelers. Drawing everyone from drag queens and scantily clad dancers to proud parents and local politicians wearing big smiles, the Chicago Pride Parade brings everyone together in support of the LGBTQ community. Admission is free and people of all ages are welcomed. The parade route winds through the diverse and dynamic neighborhoods of Chicago.

Chicago has a rich and proud LGBTQ history, and visitor can spend time learning about it with an [LGBTQ Landmarks Tour](#) or by strolling the [Legacy Walk](#) in Boystown. [Boystown](#) is one of the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in the U.S.; and it was named the “best gay neighborhood in the world” by *Out Traveler* magazine. The neighborhood, located within the East Lakeview community, has profoundly affected the cultural fabric of Chicago with the [Center on Halsted](#) – the Midwest’s largest LGBT community center – that offers support networks, cultural events and recreational programs to help meet the needs of the more than 1,000 people it welcomes each day.

Aside from the Chicago Pride Parade drawing the crowds into the neighborhood, [Northalsted Market Days](#) is a steamy and flamboyant two-day street fair August 11-12. This weekend long festival features live music on four stages, 200+ unique arts and craft vendors, food and drink that are all line on Halsted Street, but most people really come out for the drag queen in feather boas, *Twister* games played in the street and disco divas taking stage. Attendance approaches 200,000 people from near and far, representing all colors of the rainbow.

Definitely worth noting is Boystown’s lively nightlife act – the party never stops. Enjoy Chicago’s summer nights when rooftops are open on North Halsted’s bar and restaurant scene, which features gay-friendly staple spin-and-show-tune institution Sidetrack, a blast from the past with TVs pumping out 90s music videos. Just as lively, and as the name would imply, the drinks are always flowing at Hydrate, which features special events and comedy nights. Another dance party hot spot – [Berlin Nightclub](#) – a mainstay with an incredible mix of crowds, music – New Wave 80s to Electronica to House.

From Boystown, travel north along the lakefront through Uptown, Edgewater, Rogers Park and Andersonville – all LGBTQ-friendly neighborhoods with independent shops, charming restaurants and energetic nightlife and theater to dive in further into this community.

In **Uptown**, get a taste of the local vibe at cocktail lounge and art gallery **Big Chicks** – often called the friendliest gay bar in Chicago – or head to the an edgy show at the award-winning Profiles Theater. If fetishes are your thing, then head to **Rogers Park** and visit the **Leather Archives & Museum** that is devoted to fetishism, sadomasochism and alternative sexual practices. You will find an array of S&M artifacts, from the Red Spanking Bench to the painting of the *Last Supper in a Leather Bar with Judas Giving Christ the Finger*. Located inside a repurposed synagogue this cultural institution is unusual, but definitely a worthwhile experience.

A visit to Chicago would not be complete without exploring **Andersonville** anchored by the Swedish American Museum and home to one of the city’s largest gay and lesbian communities. Recognized for its diversity, quirky atmosphere and distinctive flavor, the neighborhood has quickly become one of the North Side’s most popular areas.

Unique to Andersonville is a lack of national chain stores. In fact, the neighborhood’s commercial district is made up almost entirely of independent, locally owned businesses. Between its specialty bakers, dynamic bar scene and incredible array of stylish boutiques, Andersonville is a thriving example of the colorful urban living.

Along Clark Street’s fabled “restaurant strip,” you will find the craft brew emporium Hopleaf Bar, epic Sunday brunch spot m. henry and some of the city’s best comfort good at Big Jones. **Hamburger Mary’s** is famous for its lively dining atmosphere, burgers, house-made brews and award-winning cabaret stage shows at an in-house theater, which is the kind of eccentric charm that you can expect from Andersonville.

Whether you are discovering the legacy of the LGBTQ+ community, viewing eccentric and sensual artifacts in the Leather Museum or playing a game of naughty *Twister* at the boisterous Market Days street fair, Chicago is where you can be yourself. Visitors will celebrate this summer all that makes them who they are. For more information on planning the perfect getaway, please visit www.choosechicago.com

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