



# 2026 Sports Lawyers Association Conference

## Chicago Attendee Guide: Experience the City Like a Local

### A Warm Welcome to Chicago

Welcome to Chicago!

On behalf of the many sports, business, and legal professionals who live and work here, we're genuinely excited to host you for the **2026 Sports Lawyers Association Conference**.

We know you're here for a packed and engaging conference—but we also hope you'll take time to experience the city beyond the meeting rooms. Chicago is a city of neighborhoods, lakefront energy, incredible food, and architecture that tells a story at every corner.

As locals, we don't just visit these places—we live them. Whether it's grabbing a drink along the Riverwalk after work, heading to the West Loop for dinner, or catching a show downtown, we hope you'll experience Chicago the same way we do:

### **Authentically, casually, and with a sense of discovery.**

Welcome to a city we're proud to call home. We're excited to host you as one of our own!

### **YOUR HOME BASE: RIVER NORTH/STREETERVILLE**

#### **(Sheraton Grand Riverwalk Area)**

You're staying in one of the best possible locations—right on the river, walkable to many of Chicago's most iconic experiences.

### **Between Sessions (Quick Local Favorites)**

- Chicago Riverwalk – Walk, grab a drink, take in the skyline
- Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) – Modern art
- Millennium Park – Cloud Gate (“The Bean”) + skyline views
- Maggie Daley Park – Green space + walking paths
- Daley Plaza – Public art and city energy
- Grant Park – Chicago's “front yard”
- River Esplanade walk toward Lake Michigan
- Quick coffee stop at local cafés along Wacker Drive

### **Best Nearby Dining (Close, Reliable, Local-Approved)**

- Shaw's Crab House → Seafood classic
- Harold's Chicken Shack → Legendary fried chicken
- Chicago Athletic Association → multifaceted space with games and park views
- Eleven City Diner → Classic deli
- Jake Melnick's Corner Tap → Wings and pub fare
- Goddess and the Baker → Café and baked goods
- Remington's → Steakhouse feel
- Miller's Pub → Old-school Chicago institution
- Billy Goat Tavern → No-frills burger joint
- Pizzeria Portofino → Pizza on the waterfront
- Mercadito → Upscale Mexican and lively brunch
- The Dearborn → Polished, business-friendly
- Petterino's → Theatre district Italian staple

## RIVER NORTH (Nightlife & Energy)

- Andy's Jazz Club → Smooth jazz music
- RPM Italian → Trendy dining
- Three Dots and a Dash → Tiki bar
- Magnificent Mile → shopping
- House of Blues → Premier live music venue
- Bavette's → Classic steakhouse
- Siena Tavern → Lively Italian
- Bassment → Live music bar
- TAO Chicago → Big nightlife scene
- Celeste → Multi-level nightlife venue
- ROOF on the Wit → Rooftop dancing
- Howl at the Moon → High-energy piano bar
- Untitled Supper Club → Speakeasy vibe
- Joy District → Late-night hotspot

## Drinks & Easy Evenings Nearby

- Riverwalk bars → Casual and scenic
- LondonHouse Rooftop → Iconic skyline views
- Cindy's Rooftop → Lake + park views
- Raised | An Urban Rooftop Bar → Lively atmosphere
- Cerise Rooftop → Trendy crowd
- The Berghoff Bar → Historic Chicago feel
- Monk's Pub → Cozy beer spot
- Watershed Bar → Riverfront views
- Hotel bars along Michigan Avenue corridor

## Walkable Experiences

- Architecture boat tour (must-do)
- Art Institute of Chicago
- Chicago Theatre shows
- Goodman Theatre productions
- Symphony Center (Chicago Symphony Orchestra)
- Public art walking tour
- State Street shopping corridor
- Museum Campus short ride away
- Evening comedy shows
- Seasonal festivals and pop-ups



## Best Chicago Pizza

- Exchequer Restaurant & Pub → Historic pizza
- Pizano's → Pizza and pasta
- Lou Malnati's → Chicago-style deep dish pizza
- Giordano's
- Gino's East
- Nancy's Pizza Chicago West Loop
- Rosati's Pizza Chicago Loop

## EXPLORE LIKE A LOCAL: NEIGHBORHOODS WORTH THE TRIP

### WEST LOOP (Chicago's Best Food Scene)

- Au Cheval → Iconic burger
- Girl & the Goat → Energetic dining
- Monteverde → Top-tier Italian
- Time Out Market → Variety for groups
- Aba → Mediterranean rooftop vibes
- Swift & Sons → Modern steakhouse
- Publican → Beer + pork-focused menu
- Avec → Small plates, wine-driven
- Beatrix → Lighter, modern fare
- Nobu Chicago → High-end dining

### **WICKER PARK / LOGAN SQUARE (Trendy & Authentic)**

- Big Star → Tacos + patio
- Lula Cafe → Neighborhood staple
- The Violet Hour → Craft cocktails
- Piece Brewery → Pizza + beer
- Dorian's → Music + cocktails
- Estelle's → Late-night comfort
- Scofflaw → Gin-focused bar
- Parson's Chicken & Fish → Casual patio
- Cafe Mustache → Indie vibe
- Revolution Brewing → Local brewery

### **LINCOLN PARK (Scenic & Classic Chicago)**

- Lincoln Park Zoo (free)
- Lakefront Trail → Walk/run
- Cafe Ba-Ba-Reeba! → Tapas
- Second City → Legendary SNL-sourced comedy institution
- Kingston Mines → Chicago's oldest blues club
- North Avenue Beach → Skyline views
- Oz Park → Unique green space
- Summer House Santa Monica → Bright, coastal vibe
- Gemini → Neighborhood dining
- Armitage Avenue shopping
- Green City Market (seasonal)
- Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

### **FULTON MARKET (Dining + Nightlife Hub)**

- Aba → Mediterranean
- Nobu → Upscale dining
- Federales → Outdoor tequila bar
- Lazy Bird → Live music cocktails
- Punch Bowl Social → Group entertainment
- The Hoxton Rooftop → Stylish drinks
- Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken → Casual staple
- Bar Siena → Italian + lively vibe
- Blind Barber → Speakeasy feel
- Headquarters Beercade → Games + drinks

### **BONUS: CLASSIC CHICAGO EXPERIENCES**

- Catch a Cubs versus Sox "Crosstown Classic" game at Rate Field
- Walk Navy Pier
- Explore Museum Campus

- Take an architecture river cruise or walking tour
- Lakefront sunrise or sunset
- Chicago river kayak (seasonal)
- Food tour (pizza, hot dogs, etc.)
- Visit historic neighborhoods like Hyde Park

### CHICAGO IN BOOKS (Highly Recommended)

- *The Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson
- *Boss* by Mike Royko
- *Native Son* by Richard Wright
- *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair
- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *Crossing California* by Adam Langer
- *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson
- *American Pharaoh* by Adam Cohen
- *Dream Town* by Harry Mark Petrakis
- *My Chicago* by Nelson Algren

### CHICAGO ON SCREEN (Movies to Know)

- *The Fugitive*
- *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*
- *The Blues Brothers*
- *The Dark Knight*
- *Ocean's Eleven* (partially filmed)
- *Chicago* (the musical film)
- *Risky Business*
- *High Fidelity*
- *The Untouchables*
- *Transformers: Dark of the Moon*
- *Public Enemies*

### EASY GAME PLANS

#### ✓ One Free Evening

- Riverwalk drink
- West Loop dinner
- River North cocktails

#### ✓ One Full Night Out

- Fulton Market dinner
- River North nightlife
- Late walk along the river

#### ✓ Half-Day

- Millennium Park + Art Institute
- Lincoln Park or Wicker Park exploration

### Major League Baseball: The Crosstown Classic

The **Chicago Cubs** face the **Chicago White Sox** for a three-game series at Guaranteed Rate Field.

- **Friday, May 15:** 6:40 PM
- **Saturday, May 16:** 6:10 PM

- **Sunday, May 17: 1:10 PM**

## **Upper Deck Golf at Wrigley Field**

From May 14–16, Upper Deck is hosting a golf experience at Wrigley Field offering a unique 9-hole experience where participants hit from the upper deck toward custom greens on the field. Tickets range from standard to premium packages, with gameplay featuring a Clubhouse Festival in the American Airlines 1914 Club.

### **LOCAL TIPS**

- Pick one neighborhood per outing
- Use public transportation: the El train, bus routes and taxis surround the area
- Make reservations in advance
- Use rideshare for convenience at night
- The Riverwalk is always a good fallback plan
- Don't rush—Chicago is best experienced at a steady pace

### **ENJOY CHICAGO**

We're glad you're here and hope you experience the city the way locals do—through great meals, neighborhoods, and moments along the river and lake.

#### **Enjoy the conference—and enjoy Chicago.**

Folarin Dosunmu, Levy Restaurants

Shelby Klose, Chicago Fire FC

Marcus LeBeouf, Chicago Blackhawks

Lacey Mencl, National Women's Soccer League (NWSL)

Matthew Mitten, Marquette University

Maacah Scott, Chicago White Sox

Michelle Tourtillott, Neal & McDevitt

Laura Warren, Chicago Fire