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# In Chicago? Four Surprising Places For Fun



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Travel

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The good thing about Midwest travel is that a flight here is reasonable from pretty much anywhere else in the country. Hence, Chicago is a great long weekend getaway. You can pack in enough to have fun, but still have time to relax. Here are four places that make the Chicagoland area well worth a visit.



iFLY indoor skydiving wind tunnel DENVER POST VIA GETTY IMAGES

## iFly

**iFLY** is indoor skydiving center is a great spot for families—even kids over three years old can do it. It's a confidence-boosting experience, not to mention a whole lot of fun. It's almost like flying on a cushion of air. The instructors are great at calming nerves and encouraging those that are a little hesitant. The whole process—from check-in, getting instructions, changing into the suits—is about 90 minutes and each person is in the air for about one minute. It sounds like a short amount of time, but, trust us, when you're actually flying it feels much longer. Make sure to book the two flight time experience. That way, the first time you fly you get your jitters/nerves out and the second time you can just enjoy being suspended in the air.

## The Morton Arboretum

The Morton Arboretum has over 1,700 acres and 222,000 live plants which makes it a great place to visit if you're traveling with kids. There are nature-related activities throughout the year including the popular Illumination, a seasonal event that takes place at the end of November through early January. New for summer 2020 is the Human+Nature exhibition, which features five massive outdoor sculptures created exclusively for The Morton Arboretum. The 20- to 25-foot-tall sculptures will be installed across the 1,700-acre site, where visitors can watch the artistic process over several weeks leading up to the June 12th opening. The installations will include a towering interpretation of a Mother Nature figure welcoming visitors to the Arboretum. The exhibit will be free with Arboretum admission—and will run through June 2021.



Illumination: Tree Lights at The Morton Arboretum. XINHUA NEWS AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES

## Chicago Botanic Gardens

The [Chicago Botanic Gardens](#) is a much-treasured Chicago institution, so it's not surprising that the attendance last year increased 22 percent over the previous year. The 2019 attendance at the gardens was the highest to date with over 1.27 million visitors. The gardens are host to many popular events and exhibits including the Lightscape holiday show and the Night of 1,000 Jack-o'-Lanterns, a Halloween event featuring hand-carved pumpkins. Other favorites include Bees & Beyond, a Garden-wide exhibition showing the importance of the pollinators; and In the Tropics: The Orchid Show, a beautiful display of more than 10,000 orchids.

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Whether coming for a specific exhibit or simply coming to enjoy the beauty of the grounds, visitors will find plenty to observe in the 385-acre living plant museum featuring 27 distinct gardens and four natural areas. Best of all, the gardens are open every day of the year and admission is free (there's a fee for special events/exhibits and parking).

## Tranquility Skin Spa

For moms (or dads) who want a little pampering while in the Chicagoland

area, head to [Tranquility Skin Spa](#). Owner and Esthetician, Debbie Markiewicz started the spa in 2009 with the goal of providing personalized, affordable skin care in a comfortable environment—and that’s exactly what the spa is. She often greets clients with a hug as soon as they walk in the door.



A spa treatment can be the perfect way to end a long weekend getaway. GETTY

The spa has a warm, cozy and intimate feeling. During the week the spa offers facials, but on Saturdays they offer massages as well. Markiewicz says that she often gets regulars who come in monthly, as well as travelers to the Chicagoland area who find her online. She customizes the facials and offers treatments for a wide variety of conditions including milia, clogged pores, broken capillaries and keratosis.

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