
A Perfect Day in Hyde Park

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As home to the University of Chicago, Hyde Park's brainy reputation has allowed the neighborhood to fly under the radar. With lakefront views, numerous museums, and a vibrant restaurant scene, there are plenty of reasons to visit the South Side enclave, even if you aren't hitting the books.



Oriental Institute / Photo by Jessica Mlinaric

Eat: Breakfast at Plein Air

Enjoy your coffee with a view of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House at this French-inspired café. Start the day with savory pies by Pleasant House Bakery and sweet dishes with a European influence. Arrive early before the laptop jockeys crowd the bright white café and lush patio space. *5751 South Woodlawn Avenue*

Do: Visit the Oriental Institute

Enter the court of an ancient Assyrian king and come eye to eye with Hammurabi's Code at this free museum. Located on the University of Chicago campus, the Oriental Institute houses ancient artifacts from Egypt, Mesopotamia, Iran, and more. Soak in the campus's Hogwarts-like feel by listening to the world's second-largest carillon in nearby Rockefeller Chapel. *1155 East 58th Street*



Valois/Photo by Jessica Mlinaric

Eat: Lunch at Valois

A favorite of Chicago police officers, UC students, and even President Obama, Valois is always hopping. The cafeteria-style restaurant offers classic comfort food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If you can't decide what to order when it's your turn in line, go with Obama's favorite order of egg whites, turkey sausage, and hash browns. *1518 East 53rd Street*



Promontory Point / Photo by Jessica Mlinaric

Do: Visit Promontory Point

There are plenty of picture-perfect opportunities for you to walk off your lunch in Hyde Park. Take the Lakefront Trail to Promontory Point, a peninsula designed by landscape architect Alfred Caldwell, for some of the best views of the Chicago skyline. To follow in the footsteps of the 1893 World's Fair, stroll through Jackson Park's Osaka Garden or the Midway Plaisance. *5491 South Shore Drive*



Court Theater / Photo by Jessica Mlinaric

Watch: A Play at the Court Theater

Take in a show at the Court Theater on the University of Chicago's campus. The company has been delivering modern takes on classic plays from Sophocles to Stoppard for 65 years. The upcoming season features renditions of *Othello*, *Two Trains Running*, *Antigone*, and more. *5535 South Ellis Avenue*

Eat: Dinner at Virtue

Southern food gets a refresh at this buzzy restaurant by owner and executive chef Erick Williams. Dig into dishes layered with flavor, like scallops with black-eyed peas and bacon-chili oil or fall-off-the-bone beef short ribs in a bed of creamy spinach and potatoes. Just don't forget to load up on the golden cornbread and honey butter. *1462 East 53rd Street*



Mesler Kitchen / Photo by Jessica Mlinaric

Drink: An Old-Fashioned at Mesler Kitchen

End your day at Hyde Park's elegant new Hotel Sophy. Mesler, which in Old French translates to "mix and mingle," is a fitting name for the boutique hotel's bar and restaurant, which offers everything from small bites to innovative dinners. Sip an award-winning Mesler old-fashioned, made with Sophy house bourbon, rosemary-infused maple syrup, and orange bitters and garnished with a torched rosemary stem. *1401 East 53rd Street*