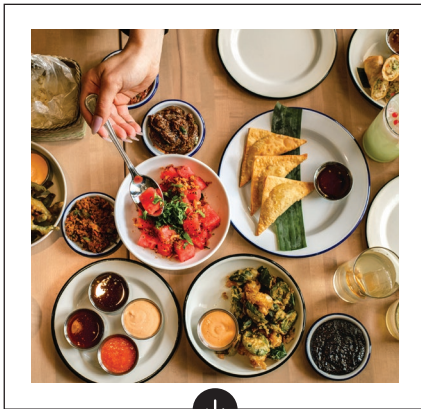


# the buzz

Hot off the minds of Midwest travel writers: a fresh look at where to eat, drink, play and stay around the region.



## EAT & DRINK



### Sticking Together

MINNEAPOLIS

As refugees decades ago, Laotian chef Ann Ahmed and her grandmother stayed connected to their homeland through cooking. Ahmed's confidence grew when she learned to make jeow—a condiment that starts with roasted chilies, garlic and shallots. "If my grandmother tasks you with this dish, she trusts you," she says. Today, Ahmed has three restaurants in the Twin Cities; at her newest, Gai Noi, she serves four different jeows, plus papaya salads, noodles, curries, grilled meats and more. Named for Laotian sticky rice, Gai Noi also references the "stickiness" of community and culture. [gainoimpls.com](http://gainoimpls.com)

PHOTOGRAPHS: (FOOD) MONIQUE SOURINHO, (BAKERY) DANIELLE DOEPKE

### Nosh On

CHICAGO

Walk into any Jewish deli, and you're likely to find certain staples. Corned beef on rye. Bagels and lox. Matzo ball soup. But a pickled mushroom sandwich or corned beef burger? Count those among the surprises at Schneider Deli, which opened in River North in August and serves both traditional and inventive fare.

Zeitlin's Delicatessen takes a different type of modern approach: Owner Sam Zeitlin operates a mobile storefront at farmers markets and pop-ups all over the city (including Logan Square, Wicker Park and South Loop farmers markets). Known as Bagel Boy, Zeitlin specializes in hand-rolled bagels, challah and knishes. [schneiderdeli.com](http://schneiderdeli.com); [zeitlinsdeli.com](http://zeitlinsdeli.com)

"Trust us, once you have our cinnamon rolls, there is no going back."

**GRACE KELLY MAY,  
GK CAFE AND PROVISIONS**



### That Dough Though

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

As a pastry chef, Grace Kelly May knows a thing or two about patience. Her baguettes ferment for days. Each airy crossant requires countless rounds of rolling and folding. And she put in 8 years supplying wholesale pastries and running a food truck before finally opening her storefront, GK Cafe and Provisions. May's new shop in downtown Fort Wayne sells treats like rustic hand pies, macarons and her famous cinny rolls. "Trust us, once you have them, there is no going back," May says. Beyond the bakery, the grocery area stocks cookware and goods from local producers and farmers. [gkbakedgoods.com](http://gkbakedgoods.com)

### Alpine Dream

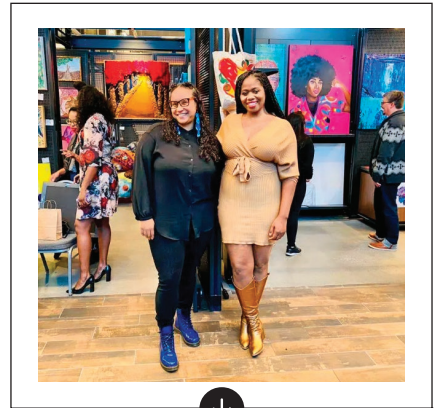
DETROIT

With a fire crackling in the stone hearth, servers whisking cheese boards, and plates full of spaetzle, it's easy to imagine snowy peaks outside Alpino, a new restaurant in Detroit's Corktown neighborhood. Austria, France and Germany populate the wine list (along with Michigan labels), and specialties include Wiener schnitzel, rotkraut (braised red cabbage), buckwheat pasta, fondue, ricotta dumplings and pan-fried walleye. Local musicians perform on a corner stage, and Alpino regularly hosts wine nights. [alpinodetroit.com](http://alpinodetroit.com)

Bonus content for select readers in ILLINOIS / INDIANA / MICHIGAN / MINNESOTA / WISCONSIN



## PLAY



### Artist Close-Up

CHICAGO

There's something captivating about watching an artist work, observing how colors blend and brush strokes build, waiting to see what image emerges. (Call it the Bob Ross Effect.) That's the allure of Women's Live Artist Studio at Navy Pier, where a different Chicago artist is featured each day. A gallery in the studio sells pieces from participating artists and other local makers. "Women have unique obstacles when it comes to exhibiting their work," says Dana Todd Pope, who started the project with fellow artist Martha Wade. "Supporting women in the arts in tangible, life-sustaining ways is at the core of what we do." [womensliveartiststudio.com](http://womensliveartiststudio.com)

### Dress Like Giannis

MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee Bucks superstar Giannis Antetokounmpo is known for his versatility on the court, his charming demeanor, his humble beginnings and his passion for

bucket hats. The latter are among the wares at Antetokounbros Shop, a new store in The Trade hotel named for the “Greek Freak” and his four brothers. (It’s the brand’s second location; the first is in the Athens International Airport in Greece.) Shop for sweatshirts, mugs, backpacks and other branded gear. [antetokounbros.shop](https://antetokounbros.shop)

---

## Snow Much Fun

STILLWATER, MINNESOTA

The air glitters with tiny specks of snow as a woman wielding an ice auger puts the finishing touches on her entry in the World Snow Sculpting Championship. The annual event (January 17–21, 2024) draws three-person teams from as far away as Argentina, Finland and Turkey to compete for prize money and the coveted title of

---

“Women have unique obstacles when it comes to exhibiting their work. Supporting women in the arts in tangible, life-sustaining ways is at the core of what we do.”

**DANA TODD POPE,  
WOMEN’S LIVE ARTIST STUDIO**

---

World Champ. Bundle up to watch the teams work, or take a break from the cold in the indoor market or concession tent. A free block party with fire dancers and live music concludes the festival. [greaterstillwaterchamber.com/WSSC](https://greaterstillwaterchamber.com/WSSC)

---

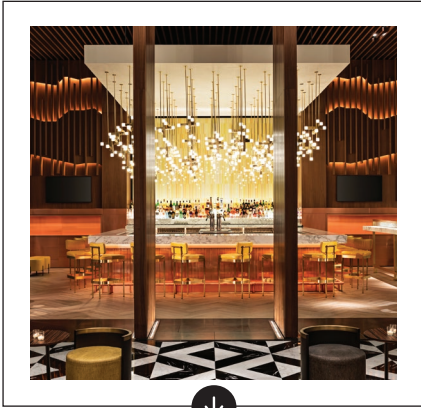
## What the Camera Saw

MINNEAPOLIS

An exhibit, now through January 14, at the Minneapolis Institute of Art brings viewers into the ordinary and extraordinary worlds of Native peoples. *In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now* showcases more than 160 images. In one photo, two Kiowa men wearing regal headdresses crouch in a B-17 bomber; another shows an Inuit woman in the snow, preparing muktuk (whale skin and blubber) for a Thanksgiving meal. “I truly believe that it is important for the legacy of all photographers to know this history, and it is the history of the land you are more than likely standing upon,” says photojournalist and guest curator Jaida Grey Eagle. [artsmia.org](https://artsmia.org)



## STAY



### Hotel Facelifts

CHICAGO AND MILWAUKEE

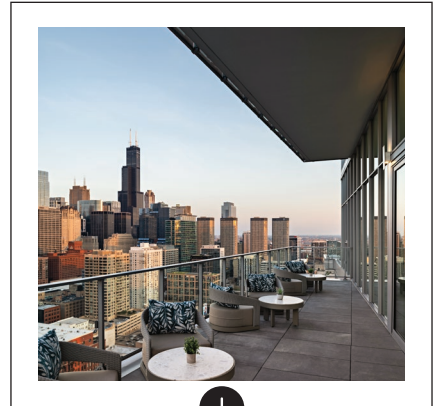
A trio of big-name hotels has gotten big-ticket upgrades. In downtown Chicago, The Ritz-Carlton (*pictured*) revamped all 434 guest rooms, the spa and restaurants, the 12th-floor lobby, and more. A refreshed art collection—including pieces by Roy

Lichtenstein and René Magritte—pays homage to the neighboring Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. A few blocks away, renovations at the InterContinental Chicago Magnificent Mile lean into the hotel's Moorish architecture and its roots as the Shriners' Medinah Athletic Club. In Milwaukee this spring, The Pfister Hotel will unveil revitalized guest rooms, bathrooms and event spaces. [ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com); [icchicagohotel.com](http://icchicagohotel.com); [thepfisterhotel.com](http://thepfisterhotel.com)

### The Sporting Life

DETROIT

Visiting the Motor City for a game? The Cambria Hotel sits in walking distance of Comerica Park (home of the Tigers), Little Caesars Arena (Pistons, Red Wings) and Ford Field (Lions). Back at home base, guests can try out the hotel's virtual golf experience and two-lane bowling alley. On-site dining choices include all-day Mediterranean restaurant Cibo, Detroit Taco Company's bodega, or Beve Bar for light snacks. Another bar, Cielo, delivers a park-like feel with trees, hedges and sky-high urban views. [cambriadetroit.com](http://cambriadetroit.com)



### Work Hard, Play Hard

CHICAGO

Specializing in bookings of 30-plus days, Level Hotels and Furnished Suites in Fulton Market aspires to feel like home—or perhaps even better. (Unless your home has a bocce ball court, arcade, firepits, heated pool and pet spa?) But the features aren't all fun and games. Conference rooms, collaboration spaces and a media center cater to working nomads. Long-term guests also will appreciate in-suite kitchens stocked with cookware. Home sweet home, indeed. [stayinglevel.com](http://stayinglevel.com)