

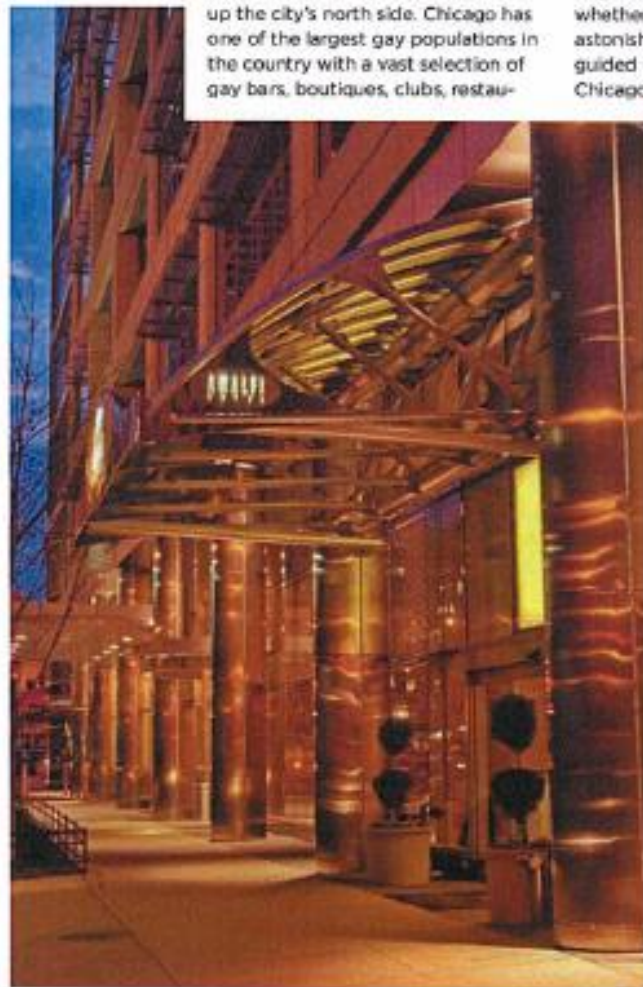
## BLEU IN THE CITY CHICAGO

CHICAGO IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS "LITTLE NEW YORK." YES, THERE ARE SIMILARITIES LIKE THE ARRAY OF SHOPS, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS. THERE ARE ALSO SOME DIFFERENCES - PEOPLE SAY HELLO ON THE SUBWAY IN CHICAGO. HERE IS BLEU'S GUIDE THROUGH THE WINDY CITY. WORDS LENOX MAGEE

**C**hicago is the nation's third largest city and boasts a large and vibrant gay community. Like New York or Atlanta in their regions, Chicago serves as the Midwest's cosmopolitan hub and attracts young and old alike - all looking to escape to the big city. Gay life (and gay bars) in Chicago is mostly concentrated in two areas: Boystown (really "North Lakeview") and Andersonville, which is farther up the city's north side. Chicago has one of the largest gay populations in the country with a vast selection of gay bars, boutiques, clubs, restau-

rants, publications and events. You'll find magic in such sparkling Chicago attractions as Navy Pier - the Midwest's top tourist destination - and its boardwalk, 150-foot Ferris wheel, boat tours, and countless dining or shopping options. Millennium Park offers dazzling music, art, landscape design and architecture, splashing around in the interactive Crown Fountain during summer and alfresco dining from spring to fall. Chicago, often called a friendly city, looks great from every angle, whether you're exploring the city's astonishing architecture during a guided tour (on foot or aboard a Chicago River boat, lakeshore cruise

or sightseeing bus) or you're enjoying the birds-eye view from the 103rd floor Sears Tower Skydeck or the 94th floor Hancock Observatory. The city's 29 miles of lakefront paths are just one reason Chicago is one of the world's most walk-able and beautiful cities. One important Chicago destination is the Magnificent Mile along Michigan Avenue. In this eight-block stretch, 460 stores offer luxury items, beautiful bargains and everything in-between. Shoppers from all over the world love Oak Street, an international style center with high-end stores and salons just steps off Michigan Avenue. Chicago is definitely the place to be!



## ROOM SERVICE?

Whether you're planning a trip for business, fun, or looking for a romantic getaway, you'll find a remarkable range of hotel options all within reach of the things you most want to do. Bleu Magazine hit the streets to search out some of the best gay-friendly, chic boutique-style hotels in Chicago.

**AMALFI HOTEL** in Chicago is the newest chic hotel to grace the Chicago River North District, located within walking distance of Michigan Avenue, the Navy Pier and The Loop Financial District. Your stay begins with a greeting from your Experience Designer as you are seated at an individual check-in desk. Guest rooms feature high-thread-count Egyptian cotton sheets, pillow-top mattresses, 32-inch LCD HDTVs, DVD/CD players, in-room CD libraries, high-speed Internet access and the amazing multi-head showers - a must try. The 215-luxury room hotel is designed with one thought in mind: giving you all the space you need to make you feel at home. On each floor of this trendy hotel, you will find an executive breakfast served each morning and evening cocktail reception in the Amalfi's Reveallo Lounge, all complimentary. The Amalfi provides every guest with an Experience Designer, akin to a super-concierge, and can help you plan your Chicago visit or find you a set of favorite CDs for your in-room CD/DVD player. Finally, a hotel designed around the guest experience!

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