

CHICAGO



SLEEP

C'EST MAGNIFIQUE

The Sofitel Chicago is equal parts iconic, modern and effortlessly chic.

| BY AMBER GIBSON

Sofitel Chicago Water Tower, 20 E. Chestnut St., Chicago
312-324-4000 // sofitel-chicago.com

The Sofitel Chicago Water Tower has been a favorite among discerning European leisure travelers for more than a decade. The dramatic triangular glass architecture holds its own in a city known for bold buildings. Both the iconic structure and interior décor are designed by Frenchmen, and artwork varies from vibrant, poetic cityscapes to black-and-white photographs of Chicago monuments.

Decidedly French savoir-faire imbues the lobby and guest rooms. Spacious suites are outfitted with Lanvin and Hermès toiletries, and *Le Monde* and fresh croissants are delivered to your door each morning. Unwind after a hectic day by perusing pictures of majestic Versailles while sipping on Champagne in the library adjacent to Le Bar.

The food at Café des Architectes is equally exquisite. Pastry Chef Leigh Omilinsky perfected the art of macaron making with Pierre Hermé in Paris, and her mobile patisserie of miniature French desserts is simply irresistible. Don't have a sweet tooth? Don't miss the cheese and charcuterie plate. The Sofitel is the only hotel in Illinois licensed to make cheese, and Executive Chef Greg Biggers crafts *Tomme*, taleggio and Cheddar along with charcuterie, pickles and jams.

SHOP

FROMAGE FIENDS

Small producers get top billing at Pastoral.

| BY AMBER GIBSON

Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine,
2945 N. Broadway St., Chicago
773-472-4781 // pastoralartisan.com

Every product on the shelves at Pastoral Artisan Cheese, Bread & Wine is guaranteed to be handcrafted with love. For the past decade, the delicatessen's mission has been to introduce consumers to new and often locally made artisanal cheeses, charcuterie, chocolate, honey, preserves, bread and wine.

"We have a more knowledgeable consumer now, and we like to think we were a part of that," says co-owner Greg O'Neill. Pastoral's three Chicago locations offer more than 120 varieties of cheese and wine, and the Lakeview flagship even boasts an attached cheese and wine bistro, Bar Pastoral, so you don't have to wait to indulge.

As the season shifts from winter to spring, O'Neill is looking forward to fresh chèvre, burrata and soft sheep's milk cheeses. "You'll see it get a little softer and fresher, and you'll be able to taste the grass in the milk that comes through in the cheese," he explains. "You get to experience spring on your palate."

In April, Pastoral hosts its fifth annual Artisan Producer Festival at the Chicago French Market, giving customers a chance to meet the people behind the products, hear their stories and taste their wares — forming an even stronger farm-to-table connection.



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