



STAY

BOOKISH B & B

This West Loop hideaway is Chicago's best-kept secret.

BY AMBER GIBSON

Situated on a little side street in Chicago's trendy West Loop, the Publishing House combines the charm of a traditional B & B with the chicness of a boutique hotel. Having opened last June, it's still an under-the-radar gem.

Husband-and-wife innkeepers Shawn Uldridge and Kimberly Lowery are consummate hosts, quickly making guests feel like old friends. They cook breakfast to order each morning, happily accommodating dietary restrictions and special requests (think gluten-free corn fritters topped with spinach and poached eggs). The spacious common area features a grand piano, a wood-burning fireplace and a lovely hodgepodge of midcentury modern furniture.

Eleven guest rooms are inspired by authors who have written books based in Chicago. The Sinclair is stocked with copies of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, while the Audrey is named for Audrey Niffenegger, author of *The Time Traveler's Wife*. Even non-bookworms will appreciate the industrial furnishings, heated bathroom floors, and Malin + Goetz toiletries. Ladies can get coiffed and made up at the Solo Salon without leaving the building, and the intimate Press Room wine bar is a cozy spot for a nightcap. *The Publishing House, 108 N. May St., Chicago, 312-554-5857, publishinghousebnb.com*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSHUA HAINES

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SHOP

INDIE COOL

At Ad Hoc, chic local fashion rules the day.

BY AMBER GIBSON

Bomber jackets, fringe jeans, alligator-leather bracelets, scarab earrings: Ad Hoc's eclectic array of womenswear and accessories makes it easy to design a whole new outfit. You'll find mostly independent designers at this Ukrainian Village boutique, with a few bigger brand names scattered throughout the well-curated mix. The creative collection of small goods — candles, essential oils, tarot cards and the like — makes Ad Hoc the perfect spot to pick up a thoughtful gift, too.

"We try to carry items that you can't find elsewhere," explains owner Kat Heil. "Many lines are made in the United States or at least sourced ethically and designed here. We're always on the hunt for indie makers of cool lifestyle and home goods."

Local company Bird Trouble also has a studio in the shop, where visitors can watch founder Alexz Sandoval dyeing leather and designing and sewing handbags. The studio also doubles as a gallery space in the evening, hosting pop-up events and occasional artist exhibitions. *Ad Hoc, 1948 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, 312-343-9991, chicagoadhoc.com*

DINE

VIVA MÉXICO

Iconic Topolobampo is better than ever.

BY AMBER GIBSON

Last year, Topolobampo won the highest honors at the James Beard Awards, picking up the prize for Outstanding Restaurant after many years of Outstanding Service nominations. Chef Rick Bayless's Michelin-starred gem has been dazzling Chicagoans with elegant, authentic Mexican cuisine since 1989. And in today's fickle culinary landscape, that's no small feat.

After the big win, Bayless nixed the eatery's à-la-carte menu in favor of three tasting menus. This past winter, the seasonal seven-course option was playfully based on seven different beaches in Mexico. Skipping touristic Cabo and Cancun, Bayless turned to namesake Topolobampo in Sinaloa for aguachile negro and to Puerto Escondido in Oaxaca for a seared-scallop course with sumptuous uni-infused yellow mole poured tableside by passionate, knowledgeable servers.

Bayless brings the entire staff on an R & D field trip to Mexico each May. This year, the team visited the Yucatán Peninsula; their culinary and cultural experiences there will spark ideas for the autumn menu. The current summer menu, meanwhile, is inspired by the collection of Mexican artwork on display at the eatery, connecting ingredients with emotions. *Topolobampo, 445 N. Clark St., Chicago, 312-661-1434, rickbayless.com*

