

Great Lakes, USA & Canada

Five connected freshwater seas stretching 750 miles from Chicago to the St. Lawrence — the Great Lakes offer an utterly unique cruise experience through historic canal locks, remote island wilderness, and classic American and Canadian cities.

 Docked at major ports  Itineraries: 7–15 nights (May–October)  USD & CAD  English (French in Quebec)

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____	Arrive: _____	All aboard: _____
Excursion: _____	Notes: _____	

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Docked at city piers in Chicago, Toronto, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Duluth and others; occasional tender at smaller stops

Best For: History buffs, nature lovers, North America fans seeking something different from ocean cruising

Season: Late May through early October only — short season, ships sell out a year in advance

Don't Miss: Mackinac Island (no cars allowed), the Soo Locks transit, and the Welland Canal passage

 Getting around:  Taxi  \$8–25 USD ·  Rideshare  Uber, Lyft ·  Hop-on hop-off  Hop-on hop-off

TOP THINGS TO DO

- **Mackinac Island Carriage & Fudge Tour** — No cars have been allowed on Mackinac Island since 1898 — you explore by horse-drawn carriage, bicycle, or on foot.
- **Soo Locks Observation & Canal Tour** — Watch massive freighters rise or fall 21 feet through the Soo Locks at Sault Ste.
- **Georgian Bay Island Wilderness** — Viking itineraries often include anchored calls in Georgian Bay — 30,000 islands of windswept pink granite, clear freshwater, and absolute remoteness.
- **Chicago Architecture River Cruise** — The Chicago Architecture Center's 90-minute river cruise is one of the best city tours in the world — skyscraper by skyscraper from the water, with...
- **Niagara Falls from Port Colborne** — Viking and Victory itineraries call at Port Colborne, Ontario — gateway to Niagara Falls, about 20 miles away.

BEST WALKS

- **Chicago Lakefront Trail from Navy Pier** 3–5 miles · Easy · 1.5–2.5 hrs — Head south from Navy Pier along the paved lakefront path toward Millennium Park and the Museum Campus.
- **Mackinac Island Town & Fort Loop** 2–3 miles · Moderate (uphill to fort) · 1.5 hrs — From the ferry dock, walk Main Street past fudge shops and Victorian hotels to Fort Mackinac at the bluff.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

 CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)				 DAYLIGHT &  MONEY	
Mon	High	Low	Rain	Apr 6:10AM–7:31PM · Jun 5:15AM–8:27PM · Aug 5:59AM–7:49PM · Sep 6:31AM–6:59PM · Oct 7:03AM–6:08PM	
Apr	54°	39°	14d	 USD & CAD	
Jun	77°	61°	13d		
Aug	80°	66°	12d		
Sep	74°	61°	10d		
Oct	61°	48°	12d		

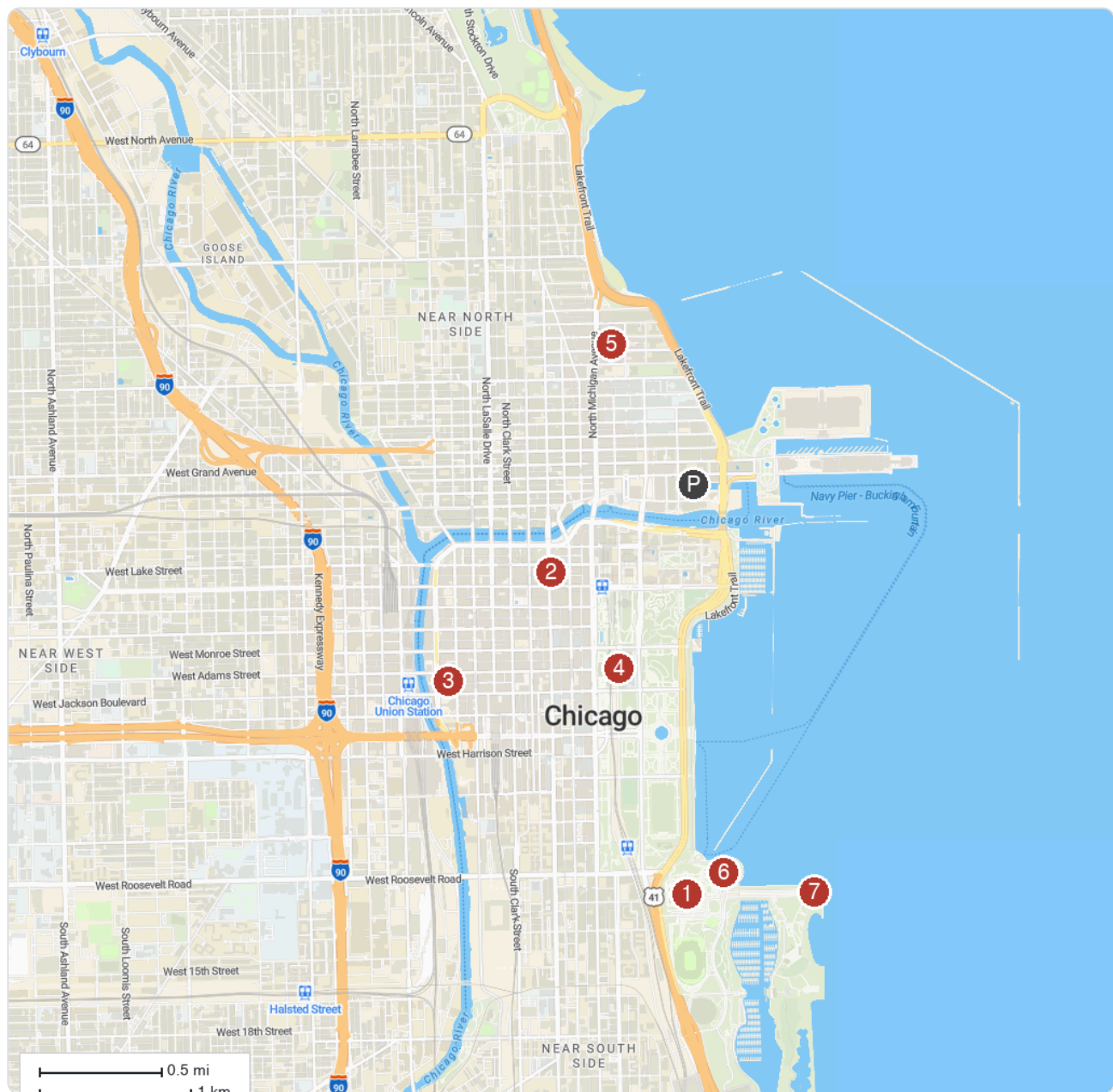
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Passport is non-negotiable. Great Lakes cruises cross US-Canadian waters. Bring a valid passport — even on itineraries marketed as US-only, the ship may enter Canadian waters.
- Carry both currencies. USD for US ports, CAD for Toronto, Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario), Port Colborne, and other Canadian stops. Credit cards accepted everywhere, but small cash is handy at markets and tips.
- Pack serious layers. Weather on open water — especially Lake Superior — can be 30°F colder than the city you just left. Windbreaker, fleece, and a packable rain shell are essential even in July.
- Book at least a year out. Great Lakes ships carry 150–380 passengers and the season runs May–October only. Popular departures with iconic itineraries sell out 12–18 months in advance.
- Bug season is real. Northern ports (Georgian Bay, Thunder Bay, Lake Superior) can have intense blackflies and mosquitoes in June and early July. Pack DEET-based repellent — this is not optional.
- Be on deck for lock transits. Navigating the Soo Locks or Welland Canal is a once-in-a-lifetime experience — the ship squeezes into a chamber barely wider than the hull while walls of concrete rise around you. Don't miss it.

Great Lakes, USA & Canada — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Field Museum | Chicago's natural history museum, home to Sue the T-Rex. | 2 The Chicago Theatre | Iconic Chicago landmark theatre for live performances. |
| 3 Willis Tower | Chicago's iconic 110-story skyscraper with a glass ledge. | 4 The Art Institute of Chicago | World-renowned art museum with diverse collections. |
| 5 875 North Michigan Avenue | Iconic Chicago skyscraper, formerly John Hancock Center. | 6 Shedd Aquarium | Large indoor aquarium with diverse aquatic life. |
| 7 Adler Planetarium | America's first planetarium, focusing on space and astronomy. | P Cruise port / terminal | |