CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS

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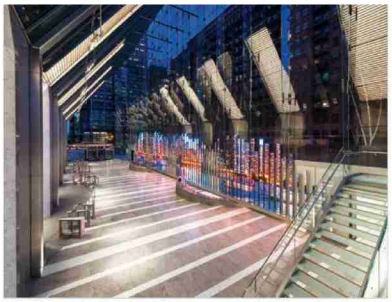
CRAIN'S LIST

BEST NEW EVENT SPACES

This year, when we issued the call for new or recently rehabbed event spaces, we heard from more owners than ever before. What follows are 31 spots that are the most intriguing venues we've encountered. One prominent trend? Refashioning vintage spaces into settings that blend Chicago's history with modern event necessities. **By Molly Each**



150 N. RIVERSIDE PLAZA

Address: West Loop/150 N. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1800
Square footage: 14,300 inside, 1.5 acres outside
Capacity: 500
Cost: Space rentals range from $550 to $7,000.
Special features: Videoconferencing, valet parking, luggage storage, staging and piano available for rental.
Best for: Big companywide meetings with breakout sessions followed by riverfront cocktails.

ACE HOTEL CHICAGO

Address: West Loop/311 N. Morgan St.
Square footage: 6,000 inside, 3,000 outside
Capacity: 180 seated, 550 reception-style
Cost: Space rental starts at $5,000 during peak periods, food and beverage for cocktail receptions and meetings starts at $50 per person, formal dinners start at $155 per person.
Special features: Unobstructed skyline views, adjacent terrace, flexible room combinations.
Best for: Corporate meetings and presentations in a chic environment.

AMERICAN WRITERS MUSEUM

Address: Magnificent Mile/180 N. Michigan Ave., 2nd floor
Square footage: 11,000
Capacity: 250
Cost: Typical cost per person for a three-hour event is $25.
Special features: Guests can roam the wide range of interactive exhibits that chronicle our country's rich literary history.
Best for: Culture-filled cocktail parties.

BRIDGE 410

Address: West Town/410 N. Paulina St.
Square footage: 5,000 inside, 3,000 outside
Capacity: 120 seated, 200 reception-style
Cost: Rental rates start at $1,500 Monday-Thursday, $2,500 Friday, $3,500 Saturday.
Special features: 3,000-square-foot courtyard, parking lot, food truck driveway, catering kitchen, bocce courts available for an additional fee.
Best for: Interactive team gatherings.

PETER MCCULLOUGH

THE COMMONS AT THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

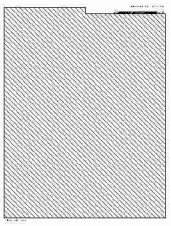
Address: Magnificent Mile/220 E. Chicago Ave.
Square footage: 1,800
Capacity: 100 seated, 200 reception-style
Cost: $65 to $200 per person
Special features: Views of Lake Michigan, hanging lights and planters by Mexico City artists Pedro y Juana.
Best for: Art-inspired social time with co-workers.

CREATIVE COWORKING

Address: Edgewater/5940 N. Sheridan Road
Square footage: 2,500
Capacity: 100
Cost: $1,000 space rental Monday-Thursday, Saturday-Sunday daytime; $2,000 Friday and Sunday evening; $2,500 Saturday evening.
Special features: Vintage architectural details, commercial kitchen, AV equipment, projector and screen, additional event bathrooms.
Best for: Collaborative meetings in a creative atmosphere.

EVOLVEHER

Address: River North/358 W. Ontario St., Suite 3W
Square footage: 5,000
Capacity: 200
Cost: $25 an hour for small conference room, $125 to $175 an hour for inspiration lab, $200 to $300 an hour for front room, $400 to $500 an hour for full venue rental.
Special features: AV equipment, projector and screen, graphic design assistance, photo booth, custom swag, event programming (speakers, experiential classes, etc.).
Best for: Outside-the-box meetings, team building and creative collaboration.



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FIELDHOUSE JONES
Address: Near North/312 W. Chestnut St.
Square footage: 3,500
Capacity: 135
Cost: Space rental starts at $3,500, food and beverage costs start at $30 per person.
Special features: Commercial kitchen, slot car racing, foosball, air hockey, ping-pong, 75-inch flat-screen TV, ability to rent entire hotel, vintage sports decor.
Best for: A lively, nostalgia-filled party.

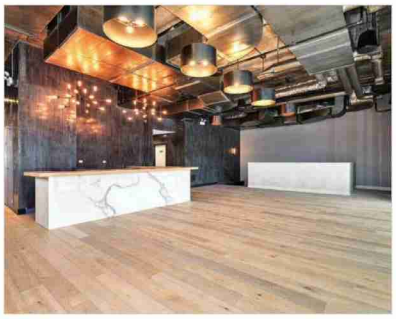
THE GALLERY ROOM AT THE TALBOTT HOTEL
Address: Gold Coast/20 E. Delaware Place
Square footage: 300
Capacity: Ideal for 15 to 20, though can accommodate 40.
Cost: $32 to $80 per person
Special features: Bar cart, adjacent pet-friendly patio, chic Kara Mann-designed interior.
Best for: Intimate cocktail parties.

GRAINGER SKY THEATER AT THE ADLER PLANETARIUM
Address: Museum Campus/1300 S. Lake Shore Drive
Square footage: 4,070
Capacity: 200 seated, 400 reception-style
Cost: $170 to $350 per person
Special features: High-tech video visualization system that projects everything from custom logos to astronomical images; programmable event lighting.
Best for: Out-of-this-world product launches and celebratory bashes.

LAKESIDE PAVILION AT THE CHICAGO MARRIOTT LINCOLNSHIRE RESORT
Address: 10 Marriott Drive, Lincolnshire
Square footage: 2,500 inside, 2,500 outside
Capacity: 300 seated, 500 reception-style
Cost: $50 per person for a formal dinner, $35 per person for a cocktail party
Special features: Four-season structure set away from the hotel; AV equipment; floor-to-ceiling windows with views of Lake Lincolnshire, the surrounding golf course and wooded area.
Best for: Elegant company receptions accompanied by natural views.

LEVEL 33 AT MARRIOTT MARQUIS CHICAGO
Address: South Loop/2121 S. Prairie Ave.
Square footage: 3,717
Capacity: 100 seated, 150 reception-style
Cost: $15,000 food and beverage minimum
Special features: Floor-to-ceiling windows with 270-degree views of Lake Michigan and the Chicago skyline; a meeting services app to control the room temperature, manage billing and communicate event needs to the hotel staff in real time.
Best for: Corporate meetings and meals with inspiring views.

LOFT 21
Address: 1501 N. Milwaukee Ave., Lincolnshire
Square footage: 31,000
Capacity: 1,600
Cost: Space rental starts at $4,500.
Special features: State-of-the-art sound and lighting, 11 screens, 15 mechanical walls for custom space design, four terraces, private parking, nature preserve with walking trails, four ceiling trapdoors for dramatic entrances.
Best for: Big, all-out bashes.



LOFT LUCIA
Address: West Loop/7 N. Carpenter St.
Square footage: 6,889
Capacity: 190
Cost: $1,500 to $6,000
Special features: Commercial kitchen, sound system, floor-to-ceiling windows that open onto spacious landscaped outdoor terrace.
Best for: Food-focused events.

THE LYTLE HOUSE
Address: Edgewater/5517 N. Broadway St.
Square footage: 2,800
Capacity: 80
Cost: $400 an hour weekdays (three-hour minimum), $4,200 flat fee. Friday-Sunday (for a 10-hour event, includes setup and cleanup). Inquire about special pricing for nonprofits and Edgewater residents.
Special features: LED lighting, sound system, customizable lighting, steel-and-walnut chairs and tables, chalkboard wall, private landscaped courtyard, prep area, food truck accessibility.
Best for: Team workshops followed by happy hour and a family-style dinner.

MARSHALL'S LANDING
Address: River North/222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, 2nd floor
Square footage: 12,000
Capacity: 225 seated, 350 reception-style
Cost: $65 to $110 per person
Special features: 70- and 90-inch TVs, projection screen with ability to hook up to four sources, Bluetooth- and iPod-enabled Bose speakers, microphone access, warm and modern design by architecture firm A+I.
Best for: High-tech meetings and presentations.

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MB ICE ARENA
Address: Near West Side/1801 W. Jackson Blvd.
Square footage: 125,000
Capacity: 2,000
Cost: Room rentals range from $150 to $5,000 depending on which space; ice rental starts at $450 per hour.
Special features: Two NHL regulation-size hockey rinks, executive suite, a rooftop deck with skyline views, flat-screen TVs with high-definition inputs, adjacent private parking lot, food by Levy Restaurants, chance to watch the Blackhawks practice or get a behind-the-scenes tour of team facilities.
Best for: Big company bashes, viewing parties or family-friendly events.

MIDTOWN ATHLETIC CLUB
Address: Bucktown/2444 N. Elston Ave.
Square footage: 25,000
Capacity: 250
Cost: $50 to $115 per person
Special features: Fitness studios, tennis courts, three conference rooms, a rooftop with views of Lincoln Park and Lake Michigan, guided team-building activities.
Best for: Team building through sports and activities, with dinner and drinks after.

THE MITZ
Address: Wicker Park/1019 N. Wolcott Ave.
Square footage: 2,100
Capacity: 60 seated, 80 standing
Cost: Space rental $1,800 to $4,000.
Special features: Commercial kitchen, retractable projector screen, outdoor patio, Sonos sound system, Snowsound acoustic panels, heated floors, whiteboards, partnerships with One Off Hospitality and Paramount Events.
Best for: Presentations, brainstorms and team building accompanied by Big Star tacos or studio.

THE PARK AT WRIGLEY
Address: Wrigleyville/1101 W. Waveland Ave.
Square footage: 31,000
Capacity: 3,000
Cost: Space rental fees start at $19 per person, food and beverage costs start at $45 per person.
Special features: Multiple spaces including a restaurant, conference room, open-air plaza and second-floor terrace, projectors and screens in each room, tours of the field and additional venues within the ballpark.
Best for: Game-day parties, large group events.

THE PLANT
Address: Back of the Yards/1400 W. 46th St.
Square footage: 7,775 inside, up to 20,000 outside
Capacity: 100 inside, 850 outside
Cost: Space rentals start at $1,200, catering starts at $12 per person.
Special features: Zero-waste events, food and beverages sourced on-site, catering kitchen, outdoor area with space to cook or bring in food trucks, repurposed historical artifacts, site tours.
Best for: A super-unique, eco-friendly event that mixes local history with sustainable technology.

REVEL MOTOR ROW
Address: 2400 S. Michigan Ave.
Square footage: 50,000
Capacity: 2,600
Cost: $5,000 to $25,000, with an average of $150 per person for food and beverage
Special features: 5,000-square-foot private courtyard, up to 20 event spaces to suit different groups and breakout events, meeting rooms with flat-screen TVs, a historic boardroom, a fully furnished two-story apartment with fireplace that can double as a greenroom.
Best for: Large indoor-outdoor bashes in a historic space.

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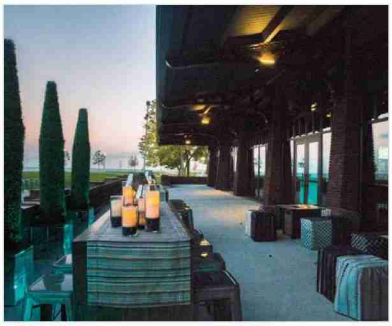
THE REVIVAL
Address: Hyde Park/1160 E. 55th St.
Square footage: 4,000
Capacity: 150 seated, 225 reception-style
Cost: Space rental $150 to $250, beverage costs start at $5 per person.
Special features: Stage, backstage dressing rooms, AV equipment including projector and screen, full bar, catering capabilities, adjacent outdoor patio, private comedy performances, comedy classes
Best for: Team bonding through comedy followed by drinks.

ROW 24
Address: Near South Side/2411 S. Michigan Ave.
Square footage: 2,300 main floor, 800 mezzanine
Capacity: 225 seated, 300 standing
Cost: Space rental starts at $2,500
Special features: Swarovski crystal chandeliers, sound system, 65-inch flat-screen TV, prep area with service entrance, greenroom, mezzanine balcony and a customized on-site beverage program.
Best for: Cocktail parties with a vintage vibe.

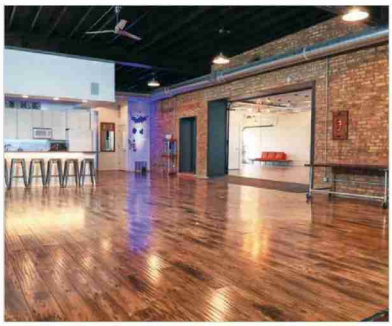
STRATFORD ON THE PARK
Address: Lincoln Park/2300 N. Lincoln Park West
Square footage: 3,000
Capacity: 160 seated, 200 reception-style
Cost: Cocktail receptions range from $40 to $80 per person, formal dinners from $80 to $150 per person.
Special features: AV equipment, views of Lincoln Park, outdoor patio, food and drinks from Lettuce Entertain You, fees inclusive of tables, linens and serviceware.
Best for: Elegant dinners and receptions.

STUDIO 6F
Address: Logan Square/2857 W. Diversey Ave.
Square footage: 1,400
Capacity: 100
Cost: Space rental starts at $2,250.
Special features: Catering kitchen, sound system, vintage and one-of-a-kind custom furniture, a curated selection of artwork, select list of vendors, outside vendors approved on a case-by-case basis.
Best for: Gallery shows, design-centric parties, intimate performance events.

THE TAVERN CLUB AT 333
Address: Magnificent Mile/333 N. Michigan Ave.
Square footage: 3,127
Capacity: 60 seated, 125 reception-style
Cost: Room rental $1,500 for three hours, beverage costs $20 to $42 per person. Inquire about discounts for nonprofits.
Special features: Rotating curated contemporary artwork, full kitchen, multiple televisions, skyline and lake views, meeting rooms and lounge area, discounted nearby parking on nights and weekends.
Best for: Company gatherings with breakout groups.



THEATER ON THE LAKE
Address: Lincoln Park/ 2401 N. Lake Shore Drive
Square footage: 12,500 inside, 6,000 outside
Capacity: 1,500
Cost: Rental rates start at $3,000.
Special features: Stage with modern lighting and sound, full-service restaurant and bar, outdoor lakefront patio, 6 acres of surrounding green space available for use.
Best for: Large reception-style celebrations, performances, creative outdoor events.



TRIGGER
Address: Irving Park/2810 W. Addison St.
Square footage: 4,500
Capacity: 150 seated, 200 reception-style
Cost: Space rental starts at $1,500 to $3,500, custom catering $30 to $50 per person.
Special features: Commercial restaurant-grade kitchen, warming kitchen, music system, two 42-inch rolling displays, mobile PA, eclectic furniture, lounge area, outside catering allowed.
Best for: Funky gatherings.

V. COLLECTIVE PENTHOUSE
Address: Near West Side/833 W. Jackson Blvd.
Square footage: 2,000 inside, 4,000 outside
Capacity: 250
Cost: $75 to $125
Special features: Skyline views, retractable windows, AV capabilities, outdoor terrace with fireplace, grilling station gardens, meditation lawn.
Best for: Well-appointed outdoor events that start with yoga and end with dinner.

VICEROY CHICAGO
Address: Gold Coast/1118 N. State St.
Square footage: 3,600
Capacity: 120 seated, 200 reception-style
Cost: Starts at $125 per plate, including beverages (in the Cedar Ballroom).
Special features: Large ballroom can be divided into two spaces, smaller executive boardroom with 75-inch smart TV, outdoor terrace, city views, menu by Boka Restaurant Group's Michelin-starred chef Lee Wolen.
Best for: Upscale gourmet dinners and receptions.

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