

# The 12 Best Bakeries In Chicago

*Few things evoke pleasant feelings and old memories quite like the smell of a fresh loaf of bread. "“Good bread,” James Beard wrote, “is the most fundamentally satisfying of all foods; and good bread with fresh butter, the greatest of feasts.”"*

*Chicago and the outlying suburbs have more quality bakeries than we can handle—a good problem. While we could have listed more of our favorites we decided to narrow our picks for the best bakeries in Chicago to an even dozen. (Let the bakers have that extra one.)*

*Please debate, dissect and discuss this list as you're wont to do.*



*Photo credit: Chuck Sudo/Chicagoist*

## **Pleasant House Bakery**

Many places serve pot pie in Chicago, but Pleasant House Bakery in Bridgeport is the true master of the British royal pie. The modest counter sits beneath a chalkboard menu alongside a rustic and sparse dining area. Pleasant House sources top quality ingredients, harvesting as much

from their own garden as possible. But what really makes Pleasant House so fantastic is the unbelievable pie crust: golden, flakey and crisp yet yielding. We recommend trying the steak and ale pie and the scotch egg. If you're unfamiliar with the latter, it's an egg wrapped in meat then deep-fried. This BYOB eatery is also conveniently situated next to Maria's, a craft beer Mecca and bar but if you're staying sober you can also go for a house made soda. —**Erika Kubick**

*[Pleasant House Bakery](#) is located at 964 W. 31st St.*

### **Little Goat Bread**

If you want to start taking bread seriously then go to Little Goat Bread, the bakery of Stephanie IZARD's goaty restaurant empire. Head baker Greg Wade hand bakes his various creations daily, working 18-hour days without breaking a sweat. The bread selection varies from classics such as the country sour dough to more unique combinations of flavors like the fat bread with smoked duck fat, pickled mustard seed and beer. Buy a loaf or enjoy one of their eclectic and adventurous array of sandwiches, such as the tuna with giardinera and cheez-its on a potato bun. Those buns, by the way, are unreal. Of course, no bakery is complete without a good cup of coffee and Little Goat serves each café drink with a double shot of Stumptown Coffee. —**Erika Kubick**

*[Little Goat Bread](#) is located at 820 W Randolph St and 131 N Clinton Ave (in the French Market)*

### **Delightful Pastries**

Delightful Pastries made Chicagoist's lists of the best doughnuts in Chicago on the strength of their pazcki but their exceptional baking goes beyond Polish doughnuts. They also make outstanding breads, danishes, cookies, cakes and other sweets. Try a slice of their marble pound cake with a cup of piping hot black coffee. Delightful Pastries also offers [baking classes](#) so you can improve your skills at home. —**Chuck Sudo**

*[Delightful Pastries](#) has three locations at 5927 W. Lawrence Ave., 1710 N. Wells St. and in the Chicago french Market at 131 N. Clinton Ave.*

### **Hoosier Mama Pie Company**

If not for Hoosier Mama Pie Company, Ukrainian Village/West Town residents' holidays just wouldn't be the same. The line that busts out the door of this tiny storefront on Chicago Avenue days prior to Thanksgiving and Christmas is just one indication of the quality and popularity of these pies. Another is the menu. This writer has never had an easy time choosing just one baked good here. Of course there are always the classics—apple, blueberry, etc.—but a rotating menu with seasonal ingredients makes every trip to the quaint, '50s style shop different. Right now, pear and pecans pepper the menu. Don't miss the savory pies either. A pork, apple and sage creation or classic chicken pot pie will provide much needed heartiness on chilly nights like these. Also, I've never been disappointed with anything at Hoosier Mama's that involved sour cream. Do I have you confused as to what to try first yet? Good. — **Katie Karpowicz**

[Hoosier Mama Pie Company](#) is located at 1618 ½ W. Chicago Ave. downtown and 749 N. Chicago Ave. in Evanston.

### **Rose's Cafe and Bakery**

Rose's is one of the only dedicated gluten-free baking facilities in the area, and the quality and variety of its baked goods definitely makes it worth the trip up to Evanston. The cafe has a full menu of salads, sandwiches, wraps, personal pizzas and quiche, so come with an empty stomach when you stop in for your gluten-free baked goods. Rose's has something for everyone. A full display case teases you with cookies, brownies, bars, cakes, cupcakes, croissants and eclairs. Then don't forget the pita, pizza crust, bagels, dinner rolls, challah rolls, French bread and multi-grain seeded bread. Did you catch all that? If you've ordered a gluten-free pita or hamburger bun at a restaurant in Chicago, chances are they ordered it from Rose's. And it's not just for gluten-free folks. The facility is 100 percent peanut free and offers many vegan options. There's no restriction in your diet after you pay a visit to Rose's. — **Jennifer A. Freeman**

[Rose's Cafe and Bakery](#) is located at 2901 Central St. in Evanston.



### **Floriolo**

Floriolo Bakery is Chicago's own sweet fairy tale come true. Owner Sandra Holl started as a vender at farmers markets working out of a shared kitchen. Thanks to persistence, luck and some of the best shortbread in the world, she now has one of the best bakeries in America. That's not just us saying so; *Bon Appetit*, Martha Stewart, LTHForum and the Tribune agree. Pretty much anything from their pastry case will be the best in town, but seriously; that shortbread. If it's on the menu, just get it. Don't forget their savory selections, either—the simple Parisian sandwich on a homemade baguette makes even the worst day a little brighter. —**Anthony Todd**

*[Floriolo Café and Bakery](#) is located at 1220 W. Webster Ave.*

### **Bruno's Bakery**

When I'm looking for a fresh loaf of bread for a sandwich or for sopping up any remaining pasta sauce, chili, soup or stews I head to this longstanding Bridgeport Bakery best known for its sour rye, the contrast between the slightly tart sourdough and the sharp sweetness of rye. They also make a straight sourdough, pumpernickel, classic rye and sunflower bread that have golden crusts and light, fluffy dough inside. In fact, I need a loaf of sour rye right now. —**Chuck Sudo**

*Bruno's Bakery is located at 3341 S. Lituania Ave.*

### **Bot Bakery**

The promise of a freshly made waffles at the Logan Square Farmer's Market has pulled me out of bed many a Sunday morning. Have you seen Betty and Bot Bakery at the market with her waffles and deep dish pizza? Maybe you didn't know everything from Bot Bakery is gluten-free and vegan. But now that you do know, I promise you won't be able to tell the difference. This winter you'll also be able to scoop up some mini gingerbread houses, mini stollen and chocolate-covered potato candy. If you can't make it to the Logan Square Farmer's Market, or other seasonal markets and holiday events, you can also find Bot Bakery treats at Delicious Cafe, Green Grocer and Food Smart. But if you see Betty with her waffle maker, beg her for a fresh one. — **Jennifer A. Freeman**

*[Bot Bakery](#) is located at the Logan Square Farmer's Market and other local grocery stores.*

### **Peerless Bread & Jam**

One of the early success stories to come out of The Plant, the vertical indoor farm located in Back of the Yards, is this bakery specializing in small-batch seasonal jams and preserves and whole-grain naturally leavened bread. Peerless sources their ingredients directly from local farmers in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana and Michigan. They mill the grain in-house and bake their breads in a wood-fired oven. The result is some of the best bread you'll find in Chicago —**Chuck Sudo**

*[Peerless Bread and Jam](#) is located at The Plant, 1400 W. 46th St. You can also buy their products at Green City Market and the 61st Street Farmers Market.*

### **Bang Bang Pie Shop**

We love a slice (or two or half of the pie) from Bang Bang but what we wake up craving every weekend morning is their dense buttery biscuits. This small shop that was born out of a food truck has been offering up a good education on what makes a simple excellent pie. From fruit to cream and even savory options, the from scratch recipes are rich and delightful. But their biscuits are simply perfection. The amount of butter may not be good for your heart but our taste buds don't seem to mind. Served warm these massive biscuits have a fluffy yet sturdy inside and the perfect slight tang of buttermilk. We love them alone but also with the homemade preserves offered up as well. And recently the shop has added biscuit sandwiches, although you need a fork if you want to avoid a mess. Once again, we never seem to mind. It's the perfect spot to fill up on breakfast, grab a slice for later and the best place to learn that butter is your friend. — **Lisa White**

[Bang Bang Pie Shop](#) is located at 2051 N. California Ave.



### **Weber's Bakery**

Whether you're looking to satisfy a sweet tooth or find a nice loaf of bread this Southwest side staple can fill your need. From bread to kolacky to doughnuts and coffee cakes, Weber's specials are guaranteed to fulfill any budget. Try the sauerkraut rye bread, their chocolate cake doughnuts, buttermilk poundcake and "grandpa rye" bread, a three-pound loaf swimming in caraway and perfectly suited for Dagwood sandwiches. —**Chuck Sudo**

[Weber's Bakery](#) is located at 7055 W. Archer Ave.

### **Dinkel's**

This shop nestled between Roscoe Village and Lakeview has been going strong for 91 years and family-owned for four generations. They make amazing pastries and doughnuts (although the latter wasn't enough to warrant inclusion on our best doughnuts list) but the quality is beyond

compare. If you like your bread loaded or are simply a stunt eater order the Burglaur, a carbohydrate bomb loaded with egg, bacon, spinach, cheese and pesto that will have you fighting to stay awake at your desk until lunch. —**Chuck Sudo**

*Dinkel's is located at 3329 N. Lincoln Ave.*