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**Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise (CAFC) aboard
Chicago's First Lady Named "#1 Boat Tour in North America"**

CHICAGO, June 24, 2021 – Chicago is now home to the #1 Boat Tour in North America, according to [USA Today 10Best Readers' Choice 2021 Awards](#). The [Chicago Architecture Foundation Center \(CAFC\) River Cruise aboard Chicago's First Lady](#) was the only Chicago boat tour nominated for the award and officially named the "Best Boat Tour" in North America out of 19 competitors from around the nation. Initial nominees were selected by 10Best editors and the top 10 winners were determined by popular vote online.

"It's an honor to be named the best boat tour, not only in Chicago, but in North America by readers all over the country," said **Holly Agra, President and CEO of Chicago's First Lady Cruises**. "We are extremely grateful for all of the 10Best voters and for our Chicago's First Lady and Chicago Architecture Center teams, who work tirelessly to ensure that all of our guests have a great experience. This is a win for our entire city and we invite visitors and residents to come and experience Chicago's First Lady's custom designed vessels and see what makes Chicago's architecture so special."

The CAFC River Cruise aboard Chicago's First Lady is a 28-year partnership between [Chicago's First Lady Cruises](#) and the [Chicago Architecture Center \(CAC\)](#). The 90-minute cruise is also ranked the #1 boat tour in Chicago based on [TripAdvisor user reviews](#) and the only architecture river cruise narrated by CAC certified-volunteer docents, who inspire guests with their passion for and knowledge of the city's rich architectural history.

"We're thrilled to be chosen by the public, as the best boat tour in the country," said **Lynn Osmond, President and CEO of the Chicago Architecture Center**. "We're excited Chicago is open and this recognition kicking off the official start of summer adds to the momentum. There isn't anything like our partnership with Chicago's First Lady where together we provide a world class experience with our docent guides telling the vibrant history of Chicago through its architecture and bring each and every river cruise to life."

The cruise inspires guests to appreciate the city's wide variety of architectural styles—which glide by during travel up and down all three branches of the Chicago River—including art deco, neoclassicism, mid-century modernism, and postmodernism. The 2021 season features exciting new buildings with cutting edge design elements continuing to rise along the river including the recently completed St. Regis (Vista) Tower, the city's third tallest structure; the refurbished riverfront Old Post Office; and two of the three new skyscrapers at Wolf Point.

A portion of proceeds from CAFC River Cruise tickets purchased support the CAC's nonprofit educational mission to inspire people to discover why design matters. The CAC produces annual programs for children, students, teens and families that reach more than 35,000 young people each year in Chicagoland, across the country and around the world; these programs, including *Girls Build!*, are designed to reach underserved communities.

Boarding Location and Details

All cruises depart from the Chicago's First Lady dock on Chicago's Riverwalk at Michigan Avenue and Wacker Drive and offer unparalleled, Instagram-worthy photo opportunities. Guests enjoy the experience with spacious open-air top deck seating, with 360-degree views of Chicago's glittering skyscrapers, and include climate controlled interior salons with large oblong windows, upscale restrooms, and full-service bars.

The CAFC River Cruise aboard Chicago's First Lady departs from the Michigan Avenue Bridge at Wacker Drive on Chicago's Riverwalk just three blocks north of Millennium Park. A blue awning marks the entrance to the stairway leading to the Chicago Riverwalk docking area. Discounted self-park is located at 111 East Wacker Drive. Guests with limited mobility may find an ADA ramp located at Chicago's Riverwalk at State Street and Wacker Drive, and limited mobility drop-off directions can be found at [CruiseChicago.com](https://www.cruisechicago.com).

Ticketing and 2021 schedule

Tickets start at \$51 for the daytime river cruise. Daytime river cruises depart hourly beginning at 10:00am through 6:00pm. Tickets start at \$54 for evening river cruises departing on weekends, Fri-Sun at 5:30pm, 6:00pm and 7:00pm. For an additional \$5, guests may add a visit to the Chicago Architecture Center for a close in-person look at global skyscraper exhibits as well as the City Model featuring more than 4,500 downtown Chicago buildings.

Tickets can be obtained the following ways, including bypassing the box office with advance e-ticket purchases at [ticketmaster.com/rivercruise](https://www.ticketmaster.com/rivercruise) (highly recommended option due to tour popularity); in-person at Chicago's First Lady Cruises' dockside box office, located at 112 E. Wacker Dr., Riverwalk level; in-person at Chicago Architecture Center Box Office (Friday – Sunday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.), located at 111 East Wacker Dr; and by phone at 1-800-982-2787.

Groups of 10 or more may reserve in advance by contacting the Group Sales Department at grouptours@architecture.org or by calling 312-322-1130. Chicago's First Lady Cruises' fleet of

yachts may be chartered on a private basis complete with custom food, beverage and a docent-led tour.

The CAFC River Cruise remains committed to ensuring the safety of crew, docents and passengers by continuing COVID-19 safety and cleaning policies in alignment with Chicago's Department of Public Health and Federal CDC mandates.

For more information on Chicago's First Lady Cruises or the Chicago Architecture Center please visit [CruiseChicago.com](https://cruisechicago.com) or [Architecture.org/cruise](https://architecture.org/cruise).

Visuals

High-resolution photos and videos of the CAFC River Cruise, private charters and the Chicago Architecture Center can be found here:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/53u3g4fdsdni5gt/AABda5U2_NIN1ZYBJTXGtNvFa?dl=0

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About Chicago's First Lady Cruises

Docked on Chicago's vibrant Riverwalk, Chicago's First Lady Cruises is a critically-acclaimed Chicago experience that connects Chicago locals and visitors alike to the city's rich architectural history and breathtaking beauty through the official Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise and as a first-class venue for private events. This year marks the 28th anniversary of the Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise. The tour was recently named the "#1 Boat Tour in North America" by USA Today's 10Best. For more than 86 years, Chicago's First Lady Cruises and its sister company, Mercury, Chicago's Skyline Cruiseline, have been a cornerstone of Chicago's vibrant Riverwalk. Both cruise lines are fourth-generation family-owned and operated, and committed to enviro-friendly practices for continued sustainability. Six of Chicago's First Lady Cruises luxury yachts are available for private charter cruising and special events, complete with food and beverage for groups of two to 250 people. All vessels are operated by a U.S. Coast Guard-licensed captain and crew. For more information and for cruise schedules, visit [CruiseChicago.com](https://cruisechicago.com) or call 847-358-1330.

About the Chicago Architecture Center

The Chicago Architecture Center (CAC), formerly the Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF), is a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to discover why design matters. As an education leader in architecture and design, the CAC is a hub for everything architecture in Chicago, offering tours, programs, exhibitions, field trips, curricula, and online tools that are part of a dynamic learning journey for all ages. Proceeds from the CAC's tours and retail store, as well as from grants, sponsorships and donations, support this educational mission. Visit architecture.org to learn more and follow @chiarchitecture and #chiarchitecture on social media.