



CHICAGO  
**ARCHITECTURE**  
CENTER

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**Media Contacts:**

Sandy Antunez  
Public Communications Inc.  
[cruises@pcipr.com](mailto:cruises@pcipr.com)  
312.558.1770

Michael Queroz  
Public Communications Inc.  
[cruises@pcipr.com](mailto:cruises@pcipr.com)  
312.558.1770

Sinhue Mendoza  
Chicago Architecture Center  
[SMendoza@architecture.org](mailto:SMendoza@architecture.org)  
224.715.0387

**Official Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise aboard Chicago's First Lady  
Returns on April 1**

Tickets now on sale for the only cruise narrated by Chicago Architecture Center certified-volunteer docents, proceeds support CAC's education mission

**CHICAGO**, March 24, 2022 – Voted the #1 Boat Tour in North America (*USA Today Readers' Choice 2021 Awards*), the official [Chicago Architecture Foundation Center \(CAFC\) River Cruise aboard Chicago's First Lady](#) returns for its 29<sup>th</sup> season on Friday, April 1. Operated in partnership by [Chicago's First Lady Cruises](#) and the [Chicago Architecture Center](#) (CAC), the CAFC River Cruise is the only cruise narrated by CAC certified-volunteer docents.

The 90-minute CAFC River Cruise is lauded as a “must-do” Chicago activity by guests who leave the cruise inspired by 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. Guests often praise the CAFC River Cruise as the best way to see Chicago’s skyscrapers unobstructed due to the open-air, 360-degree view from each vessel’s top deck and at different angles that cannot be seen by foot.

As a fourth-generation family-owned and operated company, Chicago’s First Lady Cruises celebrates local businesses by offering guests the opportunity to purchase locally based food and beverages aboard its tours, such as [Revolution Brewing](#) craft beverages and the brand new Chicago's First Lady Bascule Blend, a coffee roasted and blended by Chicago family-owned [Metropolis Coffee Co.](#)

Each cruise is led by a CAC certified-volunteer, expertly trained docent who share their fascinating stories behind more than 50 buildings and 13 bascule bridges along the Chicago River, including the city’s third tallest structure, St. Regis (Vista) Tower, the refurbished riverfront Old Post Office and more. Volunteer docents undergo nearly 100 hours of rigorous training to become certified, plus an additional 12 weeks of study about Chicago’s “canyon of architecture” along the river. They join a cohort of more than 100 CAC certified-volunteer veteran docents who lend their expertise and unique perspectives to guests on the popular River Cruise.

A portion of proceeds from purchased CAFC River Cruise tickets support the CAC’s nonprofit educational mission. In pursuit of the CAC’s mission to inspire people to discover why design matters, the CAC produces programs for children, students, teens and families. [Teen Ambassadors](#), [Teen Fellows](#) and [Girls Build!](#) programs proactively advance diversity, inclusion, and representation in

STEM fields and ACED careers, while field trips, award-winning publications and online tools expand the CAC's reach into communities across and beyond the Chicagoland area.

### **Boarding Location and Details**

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).

The CAFC River Cruise remains committed to ensuring the safety of crew, docents and passengers by continuing COVID-19 safety and cleaning policies, which can be found at [CruiseChicago.com](https://www.cruisechicago.com).

### **Ticketing and 2022 schedule**

The 2022 season and daily tours begin Friday, April 1, for full information on departures and availabilities, please visit [CruiseChicago.com](https://www.cruisechicago.com). Tickets start at \$51.96 for the daytime river cruise. Tickets for the Evening River Cruises start at \$52.91.

Tickets can be obtained the following ways:

- Bypassing the box office with 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 daily, starting at 9 a.m., at 112 E. Wacker Dr., Riverwalk level
- In-person at Chicago Architecture Center Box Office, Friday - Monday, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., at 111 East Wacker Dr.
- By phone at 1-800-982-2787

Groups of 10 or more may reserve in advance by contacting the Group Sales Department at [groupsales@architecture.org](mailto:groupsales@architecture.org) or by calling 312-322-1130.

Passengers to the CAFC River Cruise can take advantage of visiting the award winning [Chicago Architecture Center](https://www.chicagoarchitecturecenter.org) for an additional \$5 and have seven days to visit the Center after their cruise date. This spring the CAC opens their largest exhibition in history on climate change [Energy Revolution](https://www.chicagoarchitecturecenter.org/energy-revolution).

Chicago's First Lady Cruises also offers private charter experiences aboard Lady Grebe, a vintage six-passenger yacht. Lady Grebe offers an intimate atmosphere for families, groups, visiting celebrities and more to explore the Chicago River from the comfort and privacy of their own 1961 vintage yacht. [Lady Grebe's private offerings](https://www.cruisechicago.com/lady-grebe) is available for groups of 2-6 passengers and depart Friday – Sunday at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Private cruise fees begin at \$595, and beverage service and a private CAC docent may be added with an additional fee.

For more information on Chicago's First Lady Cruises or the Chicago Architecture Center please visit [CruiseChicago.com](https://www.cruisechicago.com) or [Architecture.org/cruise](https://www.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/6mzu9yjygug0rI9/AADsw0V6CN6wk08x\\_bQmeH\\_Ca?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6mzu9yjygug0rI9/AADsw0V6CN6wk08x_bQmeH_Ca?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 29<sup>th</sup> 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 10 Best. For 87 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. Seven 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](http://CruiseChicago.com) or call 847-358-1330.

### **About the Chicago Architecture Center**

The Chicago Architecture Center (CAC) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1966, dedicated to inspiring people to discover why design matters. A national leader in architecture and design education, the CAC offers tours, programs, exhibitions, and more that are part of a dynamic journey of lifelong learning. Opened to the public in 2018, its riverfront location is in the heart of the city, where Michigan Avenue meets the Chicago River, featuring nearly 10,000 square feet of exhibition space with views of a century of iconic skyscrapers.

Through partnerships with schools and youth-serving organizations, the CAC reaches approximately 30,000 K-12 students annually, while teacher workshops provide educators with tools and resources they need to advance STEM curricula in their classrooms. Committed to serving under-represented communities in construction, engineering, and design professions, the CAC offers many of its education programs—and all of its programs for teens—at no cost to participants. CAC programs for adults and members include talks with acclaimed authors and practicing architects, in-depth presentations on issues and trends in urbanism, and classes unlocking subjects related to the built environment.