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THINGS TO DO | *Go On An Adventure*

# Evanston

BY DAWN REISS

This diverse and charming college town is a popular suburb thanks to its close proximity to Chicago. There's good reason Apartment Therapy named Evanston one of the coolest suburbs in America. Although Northwestern University is a major draw, its lakefront, mom-and-pop restaurants, cultural attractions and quirky offerings provide a lot to explore on Chicago's North Shore. Here are a few places to get started.



Alley Gallery

Photo by Teresa Parod



## EAT

### HEWN

1733 Central St., Evanston

Nosh on breads made from organic stone-milled flours and grains at this women-owned bakery. From sprouted buckwheat and challah to brioche and Holmenkollen rye, it's all fermented with wild yeast, many from unique blends and heritage varieties of wheat from Midwest farms. Try the sticky buns, croissants, scones, seasonal galette, biscotti, monkey bread and cinnamon brioche.



## PLAY

### LITTLE BEANS CAFE & PLAY SPACE

430 Asbury Ave., Evanston

Need a break? This play space lets your kids (0-12) run around and explore. Bring socks (shoes stay in cubbies for the littles) and gym shoes (for the older ones). The Little Beans Village is geared at kids 6 and under and filled with miniature buildings like a general store and camper as well as self-propelled cars and other fun toys. For older kids, there's an indoor ninja warrior course, a half court gym for basketball, karate and a kid karaoke spot. There's also a "Serious Slime Room" created by two moms who appeared on Shark Tank, and a cafe that serves pastries and sandwiches with coffee, beer and wine.



## EXPLORE

### LIGHTHOUSE BEACH AND GROSE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

2611 Sheridan Road, Evanston

Although swimming is closed during the off-season, the sand portion of the beach is open daily, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., regardless of the time of year. The Grosse Point Lighthouse grounds are open for exploration all year but due to the pandemic, tours inside were still suspended at press time. A virtual tour is available on its website.

### ALLEY GALLERY

2319 Thayer St., Evanston

Created by artist Teresa Parod, colorful murals of flowers, purple elephants, outer space and other vibrant images line garage doors in Evanston alleys. It started with Parod painting her garage door, and then neighbors asking for more. Drive through the alleys between Thayer Street and Isabella Street as well as Park Place to see the artwork. See more art at [teresaparod.com](https://teresaparod.com).



## SHOP

### BOOKED

506 Main St, Evanston

This child-focused bookstore even has a miniature door for kids to enter through. Pre-pandemic there were regular story times. There's also a small adult section. It has reopened to in-person shopping, but online orders can also help this sweet bookstore survive. **CP**

### GETTING THERE:

Evanston is a quick ride out of the city on the CTA Purple Line or an absolutely lovely drive if you use Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive and Sheridan Road, hugging Lake Michigan.