



# Chicago hotels perfectly suited for kids and families



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Traveling with kids can be difficult. Finding the right hotel can make all the difference.

To make things easier, many hotels offer welcome bags to help keep kids entertained or offer discounts to local museums. More importantly, many of the hotels on this list have an indoor pool to help tire the kids out.

If you are looking for luxury, try the Four Seasons Hotel Chicago or the Ritz-Carlton Chicago, the city's two top family hotels. For five-star amenities for three-star prices, consider the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel, which offers an unheard of 25-lap outdoor pool with twin version indoors. The boutique-style Hotel Palomar means kids get a goldfish in their room and other unusual extras. If you're more budget conscious, the Residence Inn Chicago Downtown/River North, Embassy Suites Chicago-Downtown, Hampton Inn & Suites Chicago Downtown or Omni Chicago Hotel might be better bets.

Here are some kid-friendly hotel recommendations from local parents who have stayed in downtown Chicago and other city experts.



**INTERCONTINENTAL CHICAGO**  
MAGNIFICENT MILE

This landmark Magnificent Mile hotel is famous for its 1920s, Gatsby-era architecture. It's especially popular with traveling families because of its reasonable prices and its huge, Junior Olympics-sized indoor swimming pool on the 14th floor. The rooms are located in two towers - the Executive Tower is more upscale than the Grand Tower. The hotel's location can't be beat, as it's smack-dab in the center of Michigan Avenue, surrounded by great shopping and near the Chicago River. There's a Starbucks in the lobby, as well as a health club and spa. Concierge service, a 24-hour business center, and fog-friendly accommodations are also available. Splurge for dinner at the adjacent Michael Jordan's Steak House.



## **TRUMP INTERNATIONAL HOTEL & TOWER CHICAGO**

RIVER NORTH

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The hotel owned by the President of the United States treats kids like dignitaries. At check-in, kids get a "welcome pack," that includes age-appropriate goodies like a stuffed animal, coloring book or hat. Other pluses include kiddie cocktails, no-tear bath products and nanny services. Families will enjoy the 75-foot by 25-foot heated indoor pool with a sauna and steam room. Swim lessons can be booked for a fee. The spa also has services for children, and its excellent restaurants have kids menu items. Trump International Hotel & Tower is located on the Chicago River near Michigan Avenue, offering one of the most beautiful view of the city. Tip: Ask for a room facing the river for the best views.



## **OMNI CHICAGO HOTEL**

MAGNIFICENT MILE

The Omni Chicago completed an \$11 million renovation in 2015, updating the popular all-suites hotel along the Magnificent Mile. The spacious two-room suites are perfect for families visiting the nearby American Girl Place. There's a special American Girl package with lots of extras, including a special doll bed which they can take home. Even if the dolls aren't your thing, this hotel has many family-friendly features and a great location. At check-in, kids receive free milk and cookies the first night, complimentary backpack filled with crayons, coloring activity page and fun item. There are two rooftop sundecks, a fitness center, and a small indoor swimming pool. A breakfast buffet is offered daily at its onsite 676 Restaurant.



## **RESIDENCE INN CHICAGO DOWNTOWN / RIVER NORTH**

RIVER NORTH

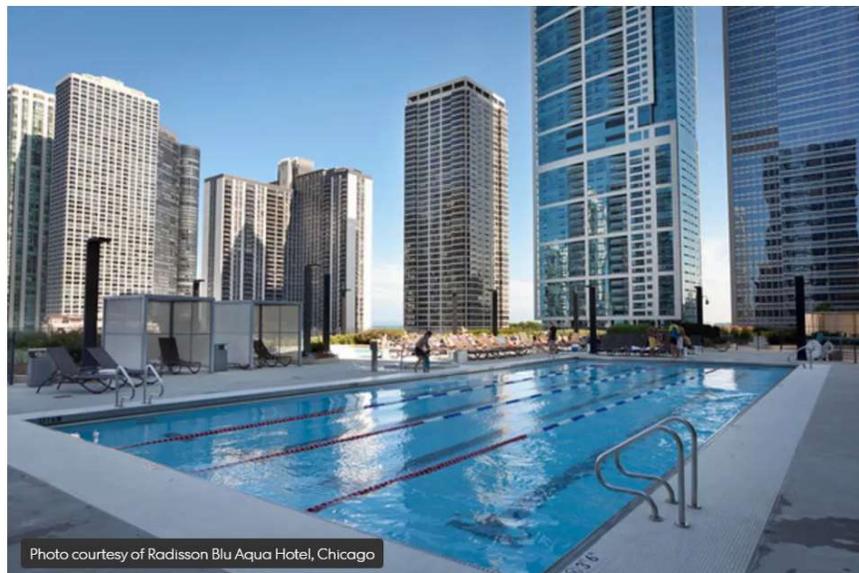
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The Residence Inn chain, which has a few downtown locations, is a good value for families. Parents like the one bedroom apartment-style suites that include a king size bed that is in a separate room from a fully equipped kitchen and a pullout couch. Call in advance and they'll order your groceries for you and have them stocked in your kitchen. The hotel has an indoor pool and whirlpool, a 24-hour fitness center, and families can borrow board games from the front desk. Wi-Fi is free, and the hotel is pet friendly. Families also rave about the complimentary buffet-style breakfast that includes hot and cold items like waffles and eggs. The happy hour offers dinner-style snacks. Tip: Two-bedroom suites are available but they tend to book up fast so call in advance.

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## RADISSON BLU AQUA HOTEL CHICAGO

DOWNTOWN



This modern hotel located near Millennium Park is a hidden gem, especially for sport enthusiasts. (Think 5-star amenities for 3-star prices.) There's an 8,000 square foot fitness facility that includes a 25-yard lap pool. Outdoors, there's a kids splashing pool plus a hot tub, 1/5 mile running track, sundeck, fire pits, cabanas and a dedicated yoga space. The location is also ideal for biking along Lake Michigan. Many parents will book suites with two connecting rooms (king connecting to two queens). If you request it, they'll set up a little tent for the kids with a blue teddy bear, coloring books and other special treats. Wi-Fi is free. Tip: Book a room on a Business Class floor--for a small upcharge, families have access to a free hot breakfast, snacks and refreshments.

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## PALOMAR CHICAGO, A KIMPTON HOTEL

RIVER NORTH

Let the kids "babysit" a goldfish through Palomar Chicago's popular "Guppy Love Program." The goldfish will be brought to the room and the children can take care of it for the duration of their stay. This modern, boutique Kimpton hotel also has many other family-friendly features. At check-in, kids receive a draw-string bag with items like a coloring book, towel and beach ball, depending on the season. The hotel's River North is close to Michigan Avenue shopping and offers complimentary bike rentals, pint-size animal print bathrobes for younger kids and a yoga mat in every room. There's a 24-hour fitness center and 17th floor indoor pool with a sundeck. The hotel also has an excellent on-site restaurant, Sable Kitchen & Bar.

**4**

## **HAMPTON INN & SUITES CHICAGO DOWNTOWN**

RIVER NORTH

There are a half-dozen Hampton Inn & Suites around downtown Chicago, and they're all clean, comfortable, no-frills, and have free Wi-Fi and a large, complimentary hot breakfast buffet. It's one of the best values for families traveling to Chicago. Most Hampton Inns have pools, hot tubs and saunas. Many parents opt for a suite, with a separate kitchen/living area. The downtown hotel is four blocks from shopping on Michigan Avenue and close the Red Line's Grand stop on the "El" train. (Tip: since this hotel is located across the street from a fire station, ask for a room that is on an upper floor facing away from Illinois Street). A new Hampton Inn West Loop is a block from the Ogilvie Transportation Center and Union Station (for Amtrak and Metra trains).

**3**

## **EMBASSY SUITES CHICAGO DOWNTOWN**

AIRPORT - JMH

Parents love this hotel because no matter what room you book, you always get a two-room suite. That means mom and dad can send their kids to bed while they close the door and hang out in their room's separate lounge area. Included in the budget-friendly hotel price is a free cooked-to-order hot breakfast, including made-from-scratch omelets. Throughout the day, there's a complimentary reception of soft drinks, a full bar (not just beer and wine) and snacks like nachos or pretzels and dip. There's also a pool, a 24-hour gym and two Italian restaurants Osteria Via Stato and Pizzeria Via Stato onsite. Wi-Fi is free. This River North location is three blocks west of Michigan Avenue's Mag Mile. Tip: There is a sister location, Embassy Suites Chicago Downtown/Lakefront, which is walking distance to Navy Pier and Maggie Daley Park - a great place for little ones.

**2**

## **FOUR SEASONS HOTEL CHICAGO**

MAGNIFICENT MILE

After swimming in the 83-degree skylit indoor pool, kids can have the "Ice Cream Man" visit the room for make-your-own sundaes. Teens can take a complimentary pizza-making class. These are among the family-friendly offerings at this luxury Chicago hotel. In the Kids Clubroom, adults can supervise as the kids play foosball, board and video games, or do arts and crafts. The spa even has services geared toward teens and children. Yet, this is still a very upscale hotel, with an extensive art collection that includes pieces by Andy Warhol and Henri Matisse. Babysitting can be arranged at least 24 hours in advance through the concierge.

**1**

## **THE RITZ-CARLTON, CHICAGO**

MAGNIFICENT MILE

Families visiting Chicago love the Ritz-Carlton hotel. Located in the Water Tower Place mall on Michigan Avenue, in the hub of downtown's most touristy area, it's walking distance to Oak

Street Beach, American Girl Place, the John Hancock Observatory, and many other attractions. The four-lane indoor lap pool has specific children's hours, and the 24-hour fitness center offers a variety of classes like yoga, pilates and Zumba. Parents can have "The Candy Man" visit their room between 4-6 p.m., and let the kids pick out a few pieces of candy from the glass jars. Kids ages five and up can bake cookies with the chef in the hotel's massive kitchen (for a small additional fee), which are delivered to the room (with milk!) as soon as they come out of the oven. At check-in, children can "pick up a friend" from a toy-filled wagon. If requested in advance, a small tent can be set up in the spacious rooms, and they can provide DVDs and popcorn.