

10 Things You HAVE to do in Chicago this November

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Halloween is behind us and all we can think about is the turkey and all its fixings we have coming. Hold off on slipping on your turkey pants just yet – Chicago is keeping us busy while we wait for that savory goodness. From gator encounters to miraculous journeys with dapper rabbits, read on for our Editor's picks for family fun to make it a November to remember.



photo: World Pet Association's Aquatic Experience

(1) [Gator Encounters for the Reptile Lovers](#)

Get up-close and personal with alligators at the world's only traveling gator experience, Gator Encounters, at the World Pet Association's Aquatic Experience. Show attendees can interact with gators at a touch tank and see new live octopus and piranha tanks. Check the website for details on the Kids Aquarium Contest where entrants are challenged to design an aquarium that reflects their personality.

When: Nov. 6-Nov. 8

Hours: various dates (check show schedule), 10:30 a.m.

Where: Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center, 1551 Thoreau Dr. N., Schaumburg

Cost: \$25/family; \$10/person; free for ages 4 & under

Online: aquaticexperience.org

(2) [LEGO Star Wars Day](#)

May the Force Be With You at LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Chicago for LEGO® Star Wars™ Days. Help build a large model of Yoda to display in the Center, make themed creations, complete in themed speed build competitions, take photos with life-sized LEGO Dart Vader and LEGO R2-D2 and participate in the MINILAND Scavenger Hunt. In addition to all that fun, you'll have a chance to win prizes and giveaways.

When: Nov. 7-8

Hours: noon-7 p.m.

Where: LEGOLAND® Discovery Center, 601 N. Martingale Rd., Schaumburg

Cost: starts at \$13.50

Online: legolanddiscoverycenter.com

(3) National Neighborhood Toy Store Day

Help local mom-and-pop toy stores across Chicago celebrate National Toy Store Day! Check in with your favorite toy shop to find raffles, giveaways, demonstrations, character visits, games and displays of the season's hottest toys.

When: Nov. 14

Hours: Check the hours of your favorite small toy store

Where: Independently owned toy stores across Chicago, check with your favorite!

Cost: Free

Online: redtri.com/chicago/neighborhood-toy-store

(4) Secrets, Lies, and Superspies: Fall Youth Circus

The Actors Gymnasium Youth Circus presents: Secrets, Lies, & Superspies. Leading a double-life can be tough, especially when all of your friends are doing it too! Join the world's finest secret agents, who have no idea that their civilian best friends are actually their colleagues until a power-mad villain plots to turn them against each other. Will their friendship prevail or will the secrets and lies destroy them all? This mission- should you choose to accept it- includes: espionage, acrobatics, live rock music, comedic spyjinx, and DEADLY LASERS!

When: Nov. 14-15, Nov. 21-22

Hours: Sat., 4:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.; Sun., 3 p.m.

Where: The Actors Gymnasium, 927 Noyes St., Evanston

Cost: \$15/adults; \$12.50/ages 12 & under

Online: actorsgymnasium.org

(5) The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane is the story of a very dapper china rabbit named Edward Tulane who gets lost at sea, bounces from person to person and decade to decade until the audience is shown a true miracle, and Edward discovers the transformative power of love. Stuart Carden returns to CCT after his critically acclaimed debut outing last fall with Leo Lionni's Frederick.

When: Now through Nov. 15

Hours: Various showtimes

Where: Ruth Page Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn St., Magnificent Mile

Cost: \$10-\$39

Online: chicagochildrenstheatre.org

(6) Get Lost in the Magical World of Alice in Wonderland

Chicago Kids Company – Theater for Children (CKC) presents Alice in Wonderland, a musical adaptation of the classic tale! Discover the magic of Wonderland alongside Alice. Meet characters who grow “curiouser and curiouser,” including the White Rabbit, Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the Cheshire Cat, and the Queen of Hearts.

When: Various dates through Nov. 25

Hours: 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Where: Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St., Chicago

Cost: \$12

Online: chicagokidscompany.com

(7) Play On! Chicago Toy and Game Fair

Navy Pier is hosting the 13th annual Chicago Toy and Game Fair! Preview and play with toys and games from around the world and meet Toy and Game Inventors! Check out the PAW PATROL Bus, Lifesize Tonka Truck, Giant Jenga, Settlers of Catan Tournament, Star Wars Lunch, GameTruck, Stage Events, Magic, Giant Bubbles, Contests, Giveaways, Maker Stuff, Game Café, Mascots, Laser Tag, Ride-on vehicles, Adventure Sandwich, Characters, ChronoBomb, Electronic Petting Zoo, Puzzle Hunts, Robotics, Young Inventor Challenge, and so much more!

When: Nov. 21-22

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Where: Navy Pier Festival Hall A, 600 E. Grand Ave., Navy Pier

Cost: \$10/adults; \$5/children; free for ages 3 & under

Online: chitagfair.com

(8) The Snoopy Snow Ball

Celebrate the season with this ultimate holiday experience, including a private performance of A Charlie Brown Christmas at the Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place and a delectable lunch reception, just steps away at the Ritz-Carlton and a meet-and-greet with the Peanuts gang. Enjoy musical entertainment and dancing, live and silent auctions for grown-ups and crafts and activities for kids.

When: Nov. 22

Hours: 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Where: The Broadway Playhouse, 175 E. Chestnut St., The Magnificent Mile

Cost: \$125/single tickets; \$450/family of 4

Online: emeraldcitytheatre.com

(9) McDonald's Thanksgiving Day Parade

Ring in your holiday season with the 2015 McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade! Enjoy gigantic balloons, the nation's finest marching bands, majestic horses, festive floats, incredible performance groups, celebrities, and even an appearance from Ronald McDonald ® and Santa Claus! Individual Sponsorships for the VIP Experience are available, check out the website for details. Can't make it down to State Street? Enjoy #ChicagosParade at home by watching the live broadcast on WGN 9 Chicago or WGN America.

When: Nov. 26

Hours: 8 a.m.-11 a.m.

Where: State St., Congress to Randolph, Downtown Chicago

Cost: Free

Online: chicagofestivals.org

(10) Holiday Fun Farmsgiving

Angelic Organics Learning Center invites families to mingle with and care for their livestock and makes gifts with materials from the farm.

When: Nov. 28

Hours: 10:30 am.-2:30 p.m.

Where: Angelic Organics, 1547 Rockton Rd., Calendonia

Cost: \$20

Online: learngrowconnect.org

Big plans for November? Tell us all about it in the Comments below!

—Maria Chambers