# Chicago named seventh best cultural city worldwide and only U.S. entrant in Time Out 2025 ranking



Chicago has recently gained a prestigious accolade, being named the only U.S. city to secure a place in Time Out's 2025 ranking of the world's best cultural cities, coming in at seventh overall. This ranking is based on a global survey that gathered insights from 18,500 respondents concerning the richness of their local cultural scene. Chicago's strong showing underscores its vibrant arts community and exceptional architectural heritage, attributes that locals take immense pride in.

The Windy City is particularly celebrated for its stunning skyline and public art initiatives, offering a cultural landscape that thrives outside traditional gallery walls. Christina Izzo, the interim editor at Time Out Chicago, noted that events like "Art on the Mart" are pivotal in showcasing digital artwork across downtown buildings. This year, Expo Chicago is set to further enrich the urban landscape by using billboards and public spaces to display bold artistic expressions, an approach that exemplifies Chicago’s commitment to accessible art.

In the wider context of cultural cities, Paris tops the list, with a staggering 95 percent of Parisians rating their city's cultural offerings as either "good" or "amazing." This distinction highlights Paris’s rich tapestry of cultural experiences, fortified by the forthcoming reopening of the Grand Palais, promising an exciting exhibition from Dolce & Gabbana in 2025. Meanwhile, Florence follows closely in second place, recognised as a "melting pot" of both Renaissance charm and contemporary creativity. The city will host Tracey Emin's striking exhibition at Palazzo Strozzi, further solidifying its status as a cultural hotspot.

Edinburgh rounds out the top three, buoyed by prestigious events like the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the Edinburgh International Festival, which draw visitors from around the globe. The city has also embraced modern artistic expression with the establishment of Europe’s first museum dedicated to contemporary Palestinian art, reflecting a growing cultural diversity that resonates with its historical legacy.

Beyond the top three, the ranking includes cities such as Cape Town, South Africa, which has been noted for its rich cultural heritage and arts scene, taking a leading position in other sources that emphasise its multicultural dynamism. Edinburgh’s and Florence’s standing in the ranking underscores a broader trend where cities with robust festival calendars and public arts initiatives are increasingly valued in the global cultural landscape.

In conclusion, while Chicago proudly stands out as the sole U.S. representative in this prestigious ranking, its recognition among a roster of iconic cities reaffirms its identity as a major cultural hub. The collective efforts of local artists, urban planners, and the community at large continue to foster a diverse cultural environment, promising residents and visitors alike a continuously evolving experience.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: 1, 2
2. Paragraph 2: 1, 2
3. Paragraph 3: 1, 4
4. Paragraph 4: 1, 5
5. Paragraph 5: 1, 3
6. Paragraph 6: 1, 3, 4
7. Paragraph 7: 1, 5

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/best-cities-culture-time-out-list-b2751797.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/best-cities-culture-time-out-list-b2751797.html> - An article from The Independent highlighting Chicago as the only U.S. city in Time Out's 2025 ranking of the world's best cultural cities. Chicago is praised for its stunning architecture and vibrant art initiatives, including the annual Art on the Mart and Expo Chicago events. The piece also mentions Paris, Florence, and Edinburgh as top cultural destinations, with Paris leading the list, followed by Florence and Edinburgh.
3. <https://www.timeout.com/travel/worlds-best-cities-for-culture> - Time Out's list of the world's best cities for culture, featuring Cape Town, South Africa, at the top, followed by Bangkok, New York City, Melbourne, and London. The article emphasizes Cape Town's multiculturalism and vibrant arts scene, including the International Festival of Public Art and AfrikaBurn event.
4. <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/01/16/travel/time-out-reveals-worlds-50-best-cities-for-2025/> - CNN's coverage of Time Out's 2025 ranking of the world's best cities, with Cape Town, South Africa, at number one, followed by Bangkok, New York City, Melbourne, and London. The article highlights Cape Town's rich history, cultural significance, and diverse offerings, including the International Festival of Public Art and Cape Point Nature Reserve.
5. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurabegleybloom/2025/01/29/the-50-best-cities-in-the-world-4-us-cities-made-the-list-ranked-in-a-new-report/> - Forbes' report on Time Out's 2025 ranking of the world's best cities, listing Cape Town, South Africa, at number one, followed by Bangkok, New York City, Melbourne, and London. The article notes that Chicago ranks number 11, highlighting its reputation as a major cultural hub with world-class institutions and a vibrant arts scene.
6. <https://dailynewshungary.com/time-out-new-ranking-budapest-2025/> - An article discussing Budapest's position in Time Out's 2025 ranking of the world's best cities, where it secured the 39th spot. The piece highlights Budapest's stunning architecture and vibrant cultural scene, including its blend of Gothic, Baroque, Art Nouveau, and Neoclassical styles, as well as must-visit spots like elegant bridges, rooftop cocktail bars, thermal baths, and Népsziget (People’s Island).
7. <https://www.timeout.fr/news/its-official-time-out-has-crowned-the-worlds-best-city-in-2025-011525> - Time Out's announcement of Cape Town, South Africa, as the world's best city in 2025. The article highlights Cape Town's high rankings in beauty, happiness, and food scene, with 97% of locals saying their city makes them happy, 95% rating its food scene highly, and 82% describing it as beautiful. The piece also mentions Cape Town's rich history, cultural significance, and diverse offerings, including the International Festival of Public Art and Cape Point Nature Reserve.