

RECEPTION  
SNOOP



36 The Knot

**sky times**

Watch the sky change from day to night through the glass dome of Harold Washington Library Center's Winter Garden.

# 10 timeless venues

Trends come and go, but beautiful ballrooms and gorgeous gardens will never go out of style. Here, 10 venues that will always be at the top of our must-visit list. BY MEGHAN OVERDEEP

## 1 harold washington library center 400 S. State St., Chicago;

(312) 747-4130; [ChiPubLib.org](http://ChiPubLib.org)

The 756,640-square-foot Harold Washington Library Center is the largest (and one of the grandest) public library building in the world. With vaulted ceilings, marble floors, elaborate aluminum gables and five-story arched windows, this neoclassical wonder has been dropping jaws since 1991. Host a glam night of dinner and dancing for 400 beneath a 52-foot glass paneled dome in the building's crown jewel—the ninth-floor Winter Garden. Also, its convenient South Loop location means out-of-town guests can squeeze in some sightseeing.

## 2 genesee theatre 203 N. Genesee St., Waukegan;

(847) 406-3152; [GeneseeTheatre.com](http://GeneseeTheatre.com)

Roll out the red carpet at Genesee Theatre—an old-Hollywood landmark fit for the silver screen. Exchange your vows on the gilded cinema's 4,600-square-foot stage, and show your love story on the full-size movie screen before it's lifted to reveal your fully lit reception space. Too dramatic for your tastes? The grand lobby, with two winding staircases and a dazzling 18-foot Baccarat crystal chandelier, is also available for ceremonies. Pro tip: Pause for pictures beneath the vintage marquee, complete with your names in lights!

## 3 metropolitan club 233 S. Wacker Dr., Chicago;

(312) 626-2916; [MetClubChicago.com](http://MetClubChicago.com)

In case one is not enough, this iconic Loop spot has three luxe wedding spaces to choose from. On the 66th floor with panoramic downtown views, the Oak Room can accommodate 240 guests and has an entire wall of etched glass, which can be lit in any color. For a cozier affair, the East Room on the 67th floor has equally breathtaking views and can seat up to 110. Or for a more relaxed Sunday reception, go with The Globe—this restaurant enjoys similar views and is perfect for parties of 130. >>

## 4 orchard ridge farms

6786 Yale Bridge Rd., Rockton;

(815) 629-2220; [OrchardRidgeFarms.com](http://OrchardRidgeFarms.com)

For a rural country affair with all the style and class of the big city, The Pavilion at Orchard Ridge Farms is sure to please. Its accommodating staff will help you make the most of the space and recommend the best local vendors to pull your day together. Picture exchanging your vows pondside beneath two stately oak trees before moving inside to the rustic 10,000-square-foot pavilion for a reception beneath its vaulted wood ceiling and four gold chandeliers.

## 5 the signature room at the 95th

875 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago;

(312) 787-9596; [SignatureRoom.com](http://SignatureRoom.com)

Touch the sky at The Signature Room, which has been sitting pretty on the 95th floor of the John Hancock Center for 20 years. The airy, Art-Deco-inspired space features elegant wood details and floor-to-ceiling windows with 360-degree views of the entire city, including the Magnificent Mile and Lake Michigan. The venue consists of six rooms that can be separated by mobile air walls, which allow the space to accommodate both small and large groups (up to 150 guests) for dinner and dancing. Don't know where to start? An in-house event team boasting a combined 138 years of experience will ensure that you'll be in good hands from start to finish.

## 6 the woman's club of evanston

1702 Chicago Ave., Evanston;

(847) 475-3800; [WCOFE.org](http://WCOFE.org)

We dare you to set foot in the ballroom at The Woman's Club of Evanston and not fall in love with its soaring barrel-vaulted ceiling, shining hardwood floors, intricate molding and vintage chandeliers—it even has an adjacent sunroom perfect for cocktails and mingling. The historic building, which was built in 1913, can accommodate a guest list of 220 and a full band. The ballroom's built-in stage is perfect for your favorite musical act.



**wooden wonder**  
The Pavilion at Orchard Ridge Farms is 100 percent rustic elegance.

## 7 the ivy room

12 E. Ohio St., Chicago;

(312) 645-7760; [IvyRoomChicago.com](http://IvyRoomChicago.com)

After an enchanting ceremony in the ivy-drenched, European-inspired Hidden Courtyard, invite your guests (up to 200) to a night of dinner and dancing in The Ivy Room's timeless ballroom. The event space offers clean lines, neutral décor, original 1930s maple floors, French doors and Juliet balconies that give character to the fresh space.

## 8 villa d' citta

2230 N. Halsted St., Chicago;

(312) 771-0696; [VillaDCitta.com](http://VillaDCitta.com)

There's a lot to love about this charming Lincoln Park mansion—a fabulous location with old-world Tuscan charm plus modern conveniences. Have an intimate ceremony in the Mediterranean-style grotto while guests look on from the balcony above. This cozy, boutique bed-and-breakfast is best suited for smaller affairs of 60 to 70, and to avoid day-of travel logistics, you and your wedding party can enjoy a weekend-long stay.

## 9 chicago botanic garden

1000 Lake Cook Rd., Glencoe;

(847) 835-5440; [ChicagoBotanic.org](http://ChicagoBotanic.org)

Why stop at bouquets when you can get married among more than 2.4 million plants? Outdoor ceremony spaces include the The Krasberg Rose Garden, which comes alive with 5,000 rose bushes, and the romantic English Walled Garden. There are plenty of grassy spots for a tent, but for extra peace of mind, the indoor options are just as beautiful.

## 10 fountain blue

2300 Mannheim Rd., Des Plaines;

(847) 298-3636; [FountainBlue.com](http://FountainBlue.com)

You can breathe easy after you pass off the more daunting planning tasks to Fountain Blue's catering gurus. Its new space, Lions Gate Pavilion, is a knockout—the climate-controlled tent has crystal chandeliers, a dance floor and sits steps away from the ceremony gazebo.

**click>>** Find more venues near you at [TheKnot.com/chicago](http://TheKnot.com/chicago)