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CHICAGO NAMED NATION'S #2 CITY TO VISIT BY CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER

City Moves Up in Publication's Annual Readers' Choice Award Poll;

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced Chicago has been named the nation's #2 travel destination in *Condé Nast Traveler's* 29th annual Readers' Choice Awards. Among the list of the nation's top large cities, Chicago moved up from last year's third place ranking, passing San Francisco. The news follows last week's announcement that the James Beard Awards are extending their stay in Chicago.

"Chicago is breaking tourism records and creating thousands of jobs that reach every corner of the city," Mayor Emanuel said. "This recognition shows that our efforts to bring even more visitors to the city are working and driving economic opportunities in Chicago's neighborhoods."

Due to a strong response from Chicago's food community, last week the James Beard Awards announced plans to extend their stay in Chicago to 2021 – four years past the planned end of their Chicago run. 2015 marked the first time that the James Beard Foundation held its annual awards ceremony outside of New York City, selecting Chicago as its first host city. The event draws visitors from across the country.

Last month Mayor Emanuel announced the return of the Chicago Architecture Biennial in 2017. The event is designed to build on the inaugural 2015 Chicago Architecture Biennial, which was the largest international exhibition of contemporary architecture in North America, attracting more than 530,000 visitors from around the country and world.

Chicago saw record tourism performance in the first three quarters of 2016, moving the city even closer to Mayor Emanuel's goal of 55 million visitors annually by 2020. In 2015 the city welcomed more than 52 million visitors, which supported an estimated 139,800 jobs. Direct spending by visitors last year reached an estimated \$14.9 billion - a 34 percent increase since 2010.

"As we continue to build awareness about Chicago and all the reasons that make it one of the greatest global cities, it is an honor to be given the distinction of being one of the best by Condé Nast's Readers' Choice Awards," Desiree Rogers, Board Chair of Choose Chicago said.

Condé Nast Traveler also named 20 Chicago hotels to the list of the nation's best hotels. The Virgin Hotel Chicago and Thompson Chicago claimed the #1 and #2 spots in the top ten list of best U.S. hotels.

The *Condé Nast Traveler* Readers' Choice Awards are the longest-running and most prestigious recognition of excellence in the travel industry and are commonly known as "the best of the best of travel." In the annual survey more than 300,000 dedicated readers – nearly twice as many as last year -- cast votes for 7,394 hotels, 606 cities, 500 cruise ships, and 236 islands.

The Readers' Choice Awards are announced in the November issue of *Condé Nast Traveler*, on newsstands nationwide on October 25, 2016. The full list is published online at www.CNTraveler.com/rca.

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About Choose Chicago:

Choose Chicago is the official destination marketing organization for Chicago, Illinois. Our mission is to bring regional, national and international business and leisure visitors to Chicago for the economic benefit of the City, the community and our membership. www.ChooseChicago.com

About Condé Nast Traveler

As the most discerning, up-to-the-minute voice in all things travel, Condé Nast Traveler is the global citizen's bible and muse, offering both inspiration and vital intel. Condé Nast Traveler is the most trusted and celebrated name in travel with 6 National Magazine Award wins and 26 nominations in its 28-year history. Advertising Age named Pilar Guzmán Editor of the Year in 2014 and CNTraveler.com attained 4 Webby Awards since 2015. www.cntraveler.com