

# Oak Park

## ILLINOIS



**commitment**

**community**

**convenience**

**culture**

**education**

**entertainment**

**parking**

**public safety**

**recreation**

**refuse & recycling**

**special events**

**sustainability**

**contact**

**S**hopping, dining and entertainment options abound in Oak Park. With multiple distinct business districts, shoppers and diners can find just about anything they need or want within a short drive, bicycle ride or walk. The Village boasts scores of restaurants, many specialty shops and art galleries, coffee shops, and a mix of both national and local retail stores housed in accessible, attractive and often historic spaces.

The Downtown Business District is among the Village's largest retail areas, with its combination of local specialty stores and well-known national chain outlets, as well as numerous restaurants and a multiscreen theater. A walk down Marion Street from Lake is a step back to the turn of the 20th century along a brick street, bluestone sidewalks and granite curbs. This block of Marion Street is transformed into a town square with no traffic allowed for various festivals throughout the year. Nearby South Marion Street and Chicago Avenue add to the mix of restaurants and special service retailers in the area.

Meanwhile, a short stroll down Lake Street to Oak Park Avenue adds even more to one's choices. As Oak Park's first bonafide restaurant district, the area has an eclectic mix of eateries and neighborhood retail shops. The area is just steps away from Scoville Park, which is the site of weekend activities throughout the warm weather months.

Both the Downtown and Avenue districts also offer quick access to the CTA Green Line and a speedy ride to the City of Chicago and all of its attractions.

Move further south on Oak Park Avenue toward the Eisenhower Expressway and opportunities to shop and eat local are abundant as well. Hungry visitors can choose among several offerings, and later shop for the latest in environmentally friendly home products. This area of town, known by locals as South Town, is steps away from the CTA Blue Line, which whisks riders into the heart of Chicago in less than 15 minutes.

Further east along Harrison Street is the Oak Park Arts District, which offers unique shopping and dining opportunities, including live entertainment while one dines. A repertory theater on Ridgeland Avenue just south of Harrison Street features live stage

entertainment, as well as acting classes. This area also is within walking distance of the CTA Blue Line into Chicago.

The Village's other business districts, especially along Madison Street, Roosevelt Road and North Avenue, offer residents a range of eating choices, products and services as well. Madison Street also is home to the Village's longest-running stage theater.

Oak Park's places to go, choices to eat and things to do, are too many list. Better one discovers them on their own. To get started exploring Oak Park, visit the websites of the Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce ([www.oprfchamber.org](http://www.oprfchamber.org)), Downtown Oak Park ([www.downtownoakpark.net](http://www.downtownoakpark.net)) and the Oak Park Area Convention and Visitors Bureau ([www.visitoakpark.com](http://www.visitoakpark.com)).

### A Downtown Gem

The Lake Theater, designed by architect Thomas Lamb, opened in downtown Oak Park in the spring of 1936 with



a single screen and 1,420 seats. Over the years, much of the art deco style was painted over and a leaky roof had destroyed large expanses of the intricate plasterwork. An ambitious renovation project began in 1984 to restore the theater to its original charm, an effort that has truly never stopped. Walls have been redone, the vintage ceiling light relamped and additional auditoriums added. Today, the Lake Theater's lobby rotunda and seven auditoriums are a tasteful mix of vintage style and modern comfort and technology, including 3-D projection. The Lake Theater is a Classic Cinemas property.