

South Shore Walk
1.25 miles



Start

Finish

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Jackson Park

Jackson Park Highlands

South Shore Cultural Center

South Shore Nature Sanctuary

Yacht Harbor

La Rabida Children's Hospital

Jackson Park Outer Harbor

Children's Hospital

South Shore

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South Shore Walk

The first to populate South Shore were German truck farmers who raised vegetables on small farms for sale in what was then the distant city. When the area was annexed to the city in 1889, city services extended into South Shore, spurring residential development. The opening of the University of Chicago and the World's Columbian Exposition in Jackson Park in the 1890s also had a huge impact on the entire South Side Lakefront. The 1890s and early 1900s saw South Shore's evolution into a full-fledged middle and upper middle class neighborhood. The 1906 founding of the South Shore Country Club established a popular social anchor for the area and contributed additional cachet to the South Shore community.

The Jackson Park Highlands came into being on August 3, 1905 as an eighty acre subdivision whose initial development was spearheaded by Chicago alderman, lawyer and real estate entrepreneur, Frank Bennett. The majority of houses, built between 1905 and 1940, reflect the rich and diverse forms and fashions of American residential architecture for 20th century single-family homes before WWII.

The Jackson Park Highlands is notable for its well preserved residential architecture for a formative time in American Residential Architecture. At the turn of the century, architects tended to follow one of two courses, either reviving styles of the past or working in styles that were innovative and progressive. Revivalist architecture reached its height of architectural excellence during the first 29 years of the 20th century, when Beaux Arts schooling provided traditionally trained architects of great skill, and the stock market had not yet eliminated most of their clients.

As you walk up and down the streets, you will see New England, Southern, Spanish and Dutch Colonial, English Tudor, Cotswold Cottage, French Provincial, Mediterranean Villa, Foursquare, and newcomers like Prairie and International styles. Many have matching two story "auto sheds" down their driveways. (From the Preliminary Staff Summary on the Jackson Park Highlands District submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, October 1988)

Do a quick drive by (red dotted line) of these two notable sites before starting the tour of the Jackson Park Highlands.

1.) 7121 S. Paxton Av., Allan Miller House

1915 John Van Bergen, Architect

This house is notable as it is the only known work of Van Bergen left in Chicago. Van Bergen was a disciple of Frank Lloyd Wright and one of the most important contributors to the Prairie School of Architecture. Also notable in this house is the remarkable state of preservation. Probably no other Prairie School house in Chicago remains in as pristine condition as the Allan Miller house.

2.) 2132 East 72nd Street, St. Philip Neri Church

1928 Joseph W. McCarthy, Architect

The church is a testament to the rapid growth of the South Shore neighborhood in the early years of the 20th century, when a dramatic growth in the population of German and Irish Catholics caused a rush of speculative building. Through the church may today appear decidedly traditional, at the time of its construction it was thought to be a great adaptation to its location and function and its style became known as "South Shore Gothic, 1928."

Here are some notable homes in the Jackson Park Highlands. I just picked a couple from the [Chicago Landmark Designation Report](#) . You may want to research others from this report to add to your walk.

3.) 6909 S. Cregier Ave., Cotswald Cottage

Phillip Maher, Architect

Phillip Maher incorporated the details of a picturesque English rural house type, the Cotswald Cottage, which is identified by its steeply sloping roof made of simulated thatch.

4.) 6734 S. Bennett Avenue, Distinctive and featured on the 1922 cover of the Chicago Architectural Exhibition catalogue.

1917 Zimmerman, Saxe and Zimmerman, architects

While most houses were either traditionally academic or progressively modern, this house is an adroit amalgamation of stylistic references from both major trends. The long, low lines of this one story house, which mimic the flat horizontal lines of the Midwestern Landscape, are directly derivative from the Prairie school pioneered by Frank Lloyd Wright. The horizontal rows of windows, the massive masonry porch supports and the flattened pedestal urns are also Prairie style trademarks. From the California Craftsman style of Greene and Greene, which like the Prairie style was inspired by the Orient, come the multiple roof planes and peaked roof line of the two front gables. Turning to the past, the architects employ false Tudor half-timbering for a decorative effect, and a Renaissance classical balustrade bands the front terrace.

5.) 6826 S. Euclid Ave, one of the first homes in the Highlands

1905 Greek Revival

This style has had a lasting attraction to Americans since the early days of the republic when it was promulgated in particular by Thomas Jefferson. With their democratic ideals and institutions, Americans felt themselves natural heirs to ancient Greek and Roman traditions as well as their architectural forms. The classic Greek Temple front is seen on court houses, capitol buildings as well as middle class houses.

6.) 6801 S. Bennett Ave., Beaux-Arts Classicism

Phillip Maher, Architect

The style takes its name from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where some of America's most prominent architects had studied. Its grandiose use of classical forms was employed to great

popular success at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 and became an ideal medium to express corporate wealth or civic pride.

7.) 6841 S. Bennett Ave.

1915, Harlev & Aga (from AIA Guide to Chicago)

Among the unusual features of this eclectic house are brickwork that imitates half-timbering and terra-cotta plaques (more commonly found on commercial buildings) stuck like postage stamps on the piers.

8.) 6956 S. Bennett Ave., archetype of the International Style

1926, Paul Schweikher, Architect

Of all the early twentieth-century styles – Prairie, Craftsman, Art Deco – that deliberately rejected past history and sought to be timely and modern, the most radically iconoclastic was the International Style of the 1930s. Many of the world-class architects of European origin who also worked in the United States, among them Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Marcel Breuer, initiated their practices working in the International Style, generally characterized by a stark simplicity devoid of applied ornamentation. Ribbon windows were an important trait of this style as were corner windows in which the glass was mitered without any corner support. Other design features were flat roof tops and smooth, uniform wall surfaces.

Return to your car on Cregier Ave. and head over to the South Shore Cultural Center.

9.) South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore Dr.

1906, 1919, 1916, Marshall and Fox, Architects

The South Shore Cultural Center was originally designed as a private club, the South Shore Country Club, by the architectural firm of Marshall and Fox. The architects renowned for their hotel and apartment building designs throughout the Chicagoland area, Marshall and Fox are best known for their design of the Drake and Blackstone Hotels. They constructed the original South Shore Club House in 1906 in the Italian Resort Style, resembling a summer palace. Of the original structure, the only remaining portion is the ballroom (now Paul Robeson Theatre) on the south end of the existing building. In 1916, after expansion in membership and social importance in Chicago, the old clubhouse was moved to the south section of the grounds and became the golf club house (no longer in existence). Marshall and Fox were hired again to design a new clubhouse.

For decades, the South Shore Country Club was a playground for Chicago's rich. In the 1960's, the club was abandoned and fell into disrepair. Over the next few years, community activists pushed to have the club restored and in 1974, the Chicago Park District purchased the club for \$10 million. The site became listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. In 1984, the Chicago Park District rehabilitated the club house using interior color schemes developed by the original architects, Marshall and Fox.

Today, the South Shore Cultural Center is one of the Chicago Park District's most significant historical sites. The center sits on 58 acres of land and is a common space for weddings, banquets and cultural activities. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama had their wedding reception here.

The Parrot Cage Restaurant, run by the Washburne Culinary Institute also is housed here.
From Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference Parks Committee