

RENTING + LIVING IN SOUTH LOOP

Downtown Apartment Company



Chicago's South Loop is an increasingly vibrant and often surprisingly historic corner of downtown's rental landscape. Boasting museums, a wide range of recreational opportunities, the South Loop is an ideal neighborhood for a certain breed of apartment seeker. With landmark attractions ranging from the Field Museum and Soldier Field to the Adler Planetarium, the Shedd Aquarium, McCormick Place Convention Center and even the ShowPlace ICON Theatre sitting right outside their doors, residents have virtually limitless entertainment options. Lake Shore Drive and the Congress Parkway are similarly easily accessible so commuting to other parts of Chicago from the South Loop is as convenient as it gets. On top of which, as with so many other downtown neighborhoods, construction cranes have been busily redefining the real estate landscape for a decade. Luxury penthouses and rental apartments have steadily replaced the industrial buildings that haven't already been converted into loft spaces.



The South Loop starts where downtown Chicago proper ends, extends south to Cermak Chinatown, east to Lake Michigan and West to the Chicago River. The neighborhood encompasses Printer's Row River City, the northern half of Dearborn Park, the Central Station development, the Prairie District, and even the northern growth of Chinatown. Following decades of neglect, the neighborhood has rapidly evolved into one of Chicago's hottest spots. As the new place to see and be seen, the South Loop is attracting trendier renters and becoming home to a host of hipster frequented bars and restaurants. Developers have practically attacked the neighborhood, snatching up whatever they can lay their hands on. Construction cranes are such a common sight that they're practically permanent fixtures and apartment buildings are being thrown up at startling speeds. The last decade brought more change to the South Loop than the last century and its future will clearly involve even more change.

What Attracts Renters to Chicago's South Loop

The South Loop is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Chicago. In its Gilded Age heyday a string of mansions, townhomes and sprawling green spaces along Prairie Avenue's "Millionaire's Row" housed 75 of the world's richest men. While not far away in the infamous Levee District gambling dens and bordellos thrived. Eventually Chicago's elite packed up and moved north into the area now known as the Gold Coast and morality crusaders managed to drive the Levee District's seedier element out and Chicago's then booming publishing industry in. The area fell into rapid decline after the publishers of Printer's Row went bust. It was all but abandoned until someone realized that those empty publishing house warehouses were perfect for conversion into loft apartments and the neighborhood began to attract writers and other artists eager to take advantage of the affordable downtown real estate along Dearborn. Today, downtown Chicago's real estate boom is attracting a wide range of renters to the South Loop, but the neighborhood has retained its eclectic vibe and has become a densely populated, tightly-knit, community.

Rent an Apartment in the South Loop Then Visit ...



Mercat a la Planxa – If you’re looking for an authentic taste of Barcelona – whether it’s tapas and paellas or seasonal sangrias – Mercat la Planxa is the South Loop spot you’re looking for. Their bacon-wrapped dates and sizzling shrimp are worth the occasionally longer than average waits and their flatbreads are a deliciously different take on traditional Catalonia cuisine.

Lawrence’s Fisheries – Lawrence’s serves up the tastiest fried frog legs, oysters, shrimp or catfish on the South Side, always accompanied by its beloved hot sauce. You won’t get bells or whistles, but you won’t do better than \$10 or less per pound of awesome seafood.

Overflow Coffee Bar – Here’s a community coffee shop with a mission to change the world. Not only does Overflow Coffee Bar feed its profits back into the South Loop, but also uses Fair Trade products, builds communities within the neighborhood and promotes volunteerism and local artists. Located at 1550 S. State St., Overflow is a must-try spot. Plus, you can pitch in and help change the world.

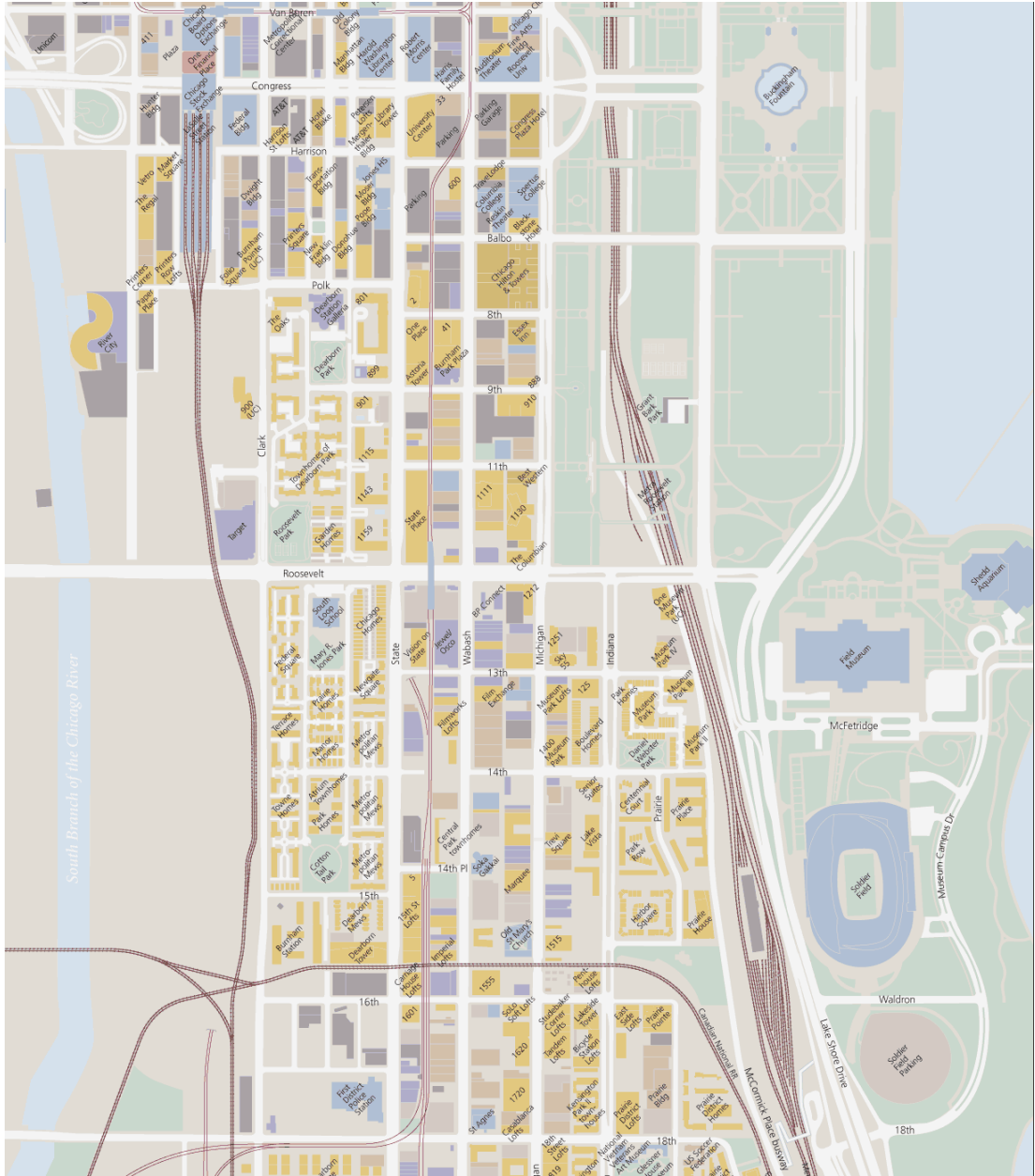
Café Bionda – Located at 1924 S. State St., here’s a café that’s definitely worth a visit. It’s a dual purpose lunch plus dinner restaurant and a To-go Sandwich Shop. Café Bionda specializes in reasonably priced traditional Italian dishes with made-to-order salads and specialty sandwiches.

Heelz and Hazel – Just two of the upscale boutiques that call the South Loop home. Heelz, is a small women’s shoe boutique for designer shoes from Italy. Hazel is a gift shop in the Taylor Street area, that sells note cards, women’s accessories, baby gifts, and candy.

The Bongo Room - If you’re looking for an “upscale” but family friendly breakfast, brunch or lunch spot in South Loop, The Bongo Room is it. Their fresh seasonal foods will definitely appeal to more sophisticated palates, while offerings such as their Chocolate Tower French Toast and White Chocolate Pretzel Pancakes will please and give a serious sugar rush for your little ones. Be prepared for a long wait on weekends if you don’t get here early enough because many families are already taking advantage of this not so hidden South Loop treasure.

Custom House Tavern – This is an upscale American tavern, Custom House delivers traditional fare in an innovative way. The sea scallop and veal sweetbread and short rib pot roast are both mouthwatering (not to mention generously portioned) while the assortment of appetizers and sides; including chicken liver pate, braised collard greens and potato boulangere, lend a touch of refinement to comfort food.





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