

Pedal Oak Park

Oak Park Bike Tour

Revised 2026

The first stop is in front of the Home and Studio.

You don't have much time to spend at each stop, so please pick the best facts that fit with the overall story you are trying to convey to your guests. We expect the tour to return to the Home and Studio within 2 hours, so please watch your time and perhaps save additional comments for the end.

Be cognizant of traffic and guest safety. This tour will leave rain or shine, so please be dressed for inclement or cold weather. The tour operates rain or shine, but we do not start it if it is raining heavily or there is severe or threatening weather. In most cases of heavy rain or threatening weather, simply waiting till it passes is our usual strategy. If it is just lightly raining and the forecast looks promising, we will begin.

Safety Instructions for Tour Interpreters of the Pedal Oak Park Tour

- Set a leisurely pace and look behind you regularly to be sure that your group is keeping up with you.
- Instruct your guests to ride on the right side of the street, in single file, as close to the curb as possible. Check this often by looking behind you while you ride.
- At stoplights, **(you must stop and wait for all red light to change to green)**, wait for everyone to cross together. Don't leave some of your group behind when the light changes.
- While interpreting at the tour stops, be sure the group is clear of the driving lane and is as gathered as close to the curb as possible. **Bikes can be parked by the curb or on the parkway, (do not block sidewalks with bikes). If necessary, remind guests to not cross any property lines or step on any landscape.**
- At tour stops that are on busy streets like Chicago and Augusta or at Unity Temple, gather your group on the sidewalk during your interpretation to keep them safely out of traffic.
- **Do not ride on any sidewalks, including the one in front of the Home and Studio.**
- **Follow all traffic rules, including stopping at all stop signs and red lights.**

- **Model good safety behavior by wearing a helmet. A helmet and a bike can be provided to you at no cost, if necessary.**

To begin the tour, meet at the Home and Studio, where you will be greeted by a FLWT Guest Relations staff member or intern.

After the tour introduction, walk the bikes west on the sidewalk along Chicago Ave. to the corner at Forest Ave. for the first stop.



Stop 1

Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio (1889/1898) Frank Lloyd Wright
951 Chicago Avenue

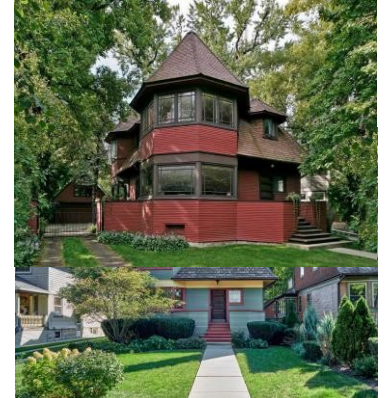
- Wright lived and worked here from 1889 to 1909
- Restored to 1909 by the Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust
- Home facing Forest Avenue, is shingle style with strong use of geometric shapes
- Studio facing Chicago Avenue is long low structure using cube and octagonal shapes for drafting room at east, rectangular center entry and octagonal library to the west Changed by Wright in 1911 before he left to begin work on Taliesin in Wisconsin

For the next stop, walk the bikes west on the sidewalk along Chicago Ave. and stop at 1027 Chicago Avenue to take in all three of the houses on the next stop.

Stop 2: Robert Parker House at 1019 Chicago Ave., Thomas Gale House at 1027 Chicago Ave. and Walter Gale House at 1031 Chicago Ave.

(This is treated as one stop, not three separate stops.)

- All three of these houses were designed by Wright in the early 1890s.
- The Robert Parker and Thomas Gale Houses are referred to as his “bootleg houses,” because he designed them while working for Adler and Sullivan, which violated his agreement with Sullivan.
- Wright designed them in his home office, which is now the boys’ and girls’ bedrooms.
- Though still Victorian in style, they show that Wright was working with geometric simplicity as opposed to complex historic esthetics (Froebel Blocks).
- The Walter Gale House is not a bootleg, and is considered by some to be Wright’s first independent commission based on date of contract (others consider his first to be the Winslow House in River Forest)
- The Walter Gale House was built on the foundation of a speculative dwelling designed by architect L.D. Beman that was never completed. This explains the chimney’s non-central location in contrast to the earlier Parker and Thomas Gale Houses.
- On the Walter Gale House (1031 Chicago Ave.), notice the windows grouped in a band around the turret. Wright called these windows “light screens,” and this concept will figure prominently in his future Prairie designs.
- Fun fact, look at the west elevation for similarities to Wright’s own house.



About the Gales:

- The brothers Walter and Thomas Gale were the grandsons of Abram and Sara Gale.
 - In around 1838, Abram Gale purchased and developed the 320-acre lot which, thirty years later, was subdivided into what is now Galewood, the Chicago neighborhood just north of Oak Park.
- Edwin Gale (Walter and Thomas’ father) was a friend of Joseph Kettlestrings.

Go back to Forest Ave. Turn right (south)

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Stop 3: Direct guest attention across the street to the William & Frances Cole Copeland House, 400 Forest Ave.

- Constructed in 1875, the Copeland house was built in the Italianate style.
- Wright remodeled the stable in 1908, the original structure was converted into a garage. The steeply pitched roof was lowered and replaced by a hipped roof, the loft was converted into a living space for the chauffeur-caretaker.
- FLW remodeled the house in 1909. He proposed 4 schemes for the exterior of the house, none of which were completed, except for the first-floor interior. The interior was remodeled following a new esthetic in total contrast with the house's original Italianate style.
- The hipped roof, dormer and roof extended eaves were completed before Wright left Oak Park in 1909. The rest of Wright's radical exterior design was never realized. Architect

Hermann van Holst was hired by Wright to complete all his outstanding commissions. Van Holst completed the exterior work with minor simplifications to the original Italianate house.





Hills DeCaro



Nathan G. Moore House



Heurtley House

Continue south on Forest and stop in front of the Heurtley House (318 Forest) and cover the next three houses at once.

Stop 4

Edward & Mary Hills/Thomas & Irene DeCaro House, 313 Forest Avenue

- Mary Hills was the daughter of Nathan Moore.

- Moore purchased several properties south of his home, which included the Victorian Frank S. Gray house designed by Charles Miller, built in 1883.
- Moore commissioned Wright to renovate the Gray house in 1901 as a future wedding present for his daughter Mary. The work was not completed until 1906, after Wright's first trip abroad to Japan in 1905.
- In 1975 a fire destroyed the second floor. Then-owners Tom and Irene DeCaro restored the house to FLW's original drawings. Because of this restoration, the house is now known as the Hills-DeCaro House.
- Wright's design moved the house 90 feet south, rotated it 90 degrees and completely remodeled the Victorian exterior:
 - The roofline, with irregular levels, emulates Japanese temple forms.
 - The new entrance is inspired by the shape of a Japanese Samurai helmet.
 - The original exterior is now clad in cement stucco with wood trim emphasizing the idea of folding planes,
 - Grouping of windows, no vertical downspouts (water free falls from the corners to concrete basins at the ground), hints of the horizontal lines of a Prairie house.
- The small, free-standing garden structure on the side yard to the right was relocated here from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition where it served as a ticket booth.
- Behind the booth is a recreation of a Wright designed pergola. The original structure was designed for the Moore house in 1906. The pergola extended from Moore's greenhouse to what you see today.



From the same position, redirect guest attention to the Nathan Moore House, 333 Forest Avenue

- Nathan Moore, an attorney, insisted on an English Tudor-style home, which Wright designed and built for him in 1895. *Wright reluctantly gave Moore an English style design, but he stated, "never has an English Tudor style home met a porch along its façade."*
- Moore's existing 1886 house on the lot was moved west to Superior St.
- Wright's design placed his house on the north edge of the lot, following Moore's request for a separate home-office entrance from Superior Street. The main entrance faces south, allowing the residential part of the house to open to a large garden with a warm southern exposure.
- The original 1895 Wright's designed house was almost destroyed by a fire on Christmas Eve in 1922. Wright rebuilt the house in 1923. Charles E White Jr. supervised the work.
- The original 1895 design had traditional English aesthetic, (guide can point to the original stable to the south-east as an example of the original design)



- In his 1923 design, Wright brought a wide variety of influences. He was particularly interested in Mayan architecture, here, he used Mayan and Japanese motifs, as he had in the 1923 Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan, and the 1921 Hollyhock House in Los Angeles, CA.

Arthur B. & Grace Heurtley House, 318 Forest Ave

- Built in 1902
- This is a prime example of Wright's Prairie style which emphasizes the horizontal line of the Prairie.
 - The broad chimney
 - The hipped roof with extended eaves
 - The banding of windows with their connecting sills
 - The bricks are laid in projecting and recessed courses with recessed contrasting horizontal mortar joints and vertical flush brick color joints to accent the horizontal
 - No vertical downspouts, water free falls from the corners to concrete basins at the ground
- The chimney is low and broad, and its position tells you that the fireplace is in the center of the house. The hearth is the spiritual core of Wright's houses, the center of family life.
- The roof acts like sheltering arms over the base of the house. The position of the windows just below the eaves helps the roof seem to "float" above the walls (an effect best seen at night).
- The long thin band of leaded glass casement windows forms what Wright called a "light screen." The exquisite decorative glass provides ornamentation and a measure of privacy to the interior.
- A prow shaped low wall frames the Romanesque arched entrance, sheltering the offset front door. The entrance is realized by what is called "Wright's path of discovery"
- Note that the living spaces for the family are on the second floor. A common feature of Wright's Prairie designs
- Wright designed every aspect of the Heurtley house, from the building itself down to the furniture and rugs of the interior.





Continue south on Forest to the Thomas House

Stop 5

Frank Thomas House, 210 Forest Avenue

- Built in 1901, commissioned by James Campbell Rogers as a wedding present for his daughter.
- The house was built on the original site of the Grace Episcopal Church. The three-story Victorian row houses on the south predate Wright's design.
- It is considered the first of Wright's Prairie houses in Oak Park.
- In this small lot, although a three-story structure, by using the entire width of the lot, Wright emphasizes the horizontal nature of a Prairie style design like the Heurtley.
- A "T"-shaped plan, with the dining room extension on the south, takes advantage of the afternoon light and the view of the woods across the street. The front landscape was designed to slope up toward the face of the building to reduce its apparent height. There are no windows on the first floor facing the street. The entrance is framed by planter walls toward a roman arch that hides stairs leading to the second-floor main entrance.
- Wright integrated the interior with the exterior using ribbon windows that create a wall of glass. Featuring gold leaf and intricate, flower-like motifs, the windows are among Wright's most exquisite. They open the interior space to the natural environment.

Note: point out the Egon Weiner sculpture at the NE corner of Austin Gardens – southwest corner of intersection



Reverse route and go north on Forest to the Beachy House

Stop 6

Peter A. Beachy & Emma Susan house, 238 Forest Avenue

- Designed in 1906, after FLW returned from his first trip abroad to Japan.

- An original structure in gothic revival style, on the north side of the lot, was completely engulfed by Wright's design.
- Wright extended the interior space with the extension of the terrace to the south, blurring the boundaries between exterior and interior, expanding the living space, taking advantage of the breeze, the lawns, and warm southern exposure.
- Like the Hills-DeCaro house, the Japanese influence appears in the design of the roof. Notice that there is no art glass, Wright chose wooden muntin's in the windows, like Soji screens.
- Comparing this house with what we have seen, Wright uses multiple materials, red clinker brick, cement stucco, concrete sills, and heavy timber trim. Also, planters are incorporated in the architecture, bringing nature into the design.
- Typical of Wright's Prairie buildings, the front door is unobtrusively tucked away on the north side of the house.



Proceed north on Forest Avenue; turn right (east) onto Elizabeth Court to the Gale House

Stop 7

Laura Robeson Gale House, 6 Elizabeth Court

- Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1905 for the widow of Thomas H. Gale, for whom Wright built several commissions. Completed in 1909, the house was designed and constructed during the same time as Unity Temple. The flat roof and overhangs relate to the Unity Temple design.
- The Laura Gale house is unique when compared with other houses of this period and perhaps forecasts Wright's 1935 masterpiece, Fallingwater, located near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- Wright had to work within a limited budget and lot size when designing this house, yet he created a functional and intriguing abstract structure.



- The high walls flanking the front corners of the house form a complex pattern of intersecting planes and levels delineated by wood trim. The leaded glass is minimal.
- Wright's designs would influence a generation of European architects and designers who discovered Wright's work through the Wasmuth Portfolio, published in Germany in 1910. This two-volume monograph of Wright's buildings and projects featured many of the Prairie style buildings we have seen on this tour, which were designed at Wright's Oak Park Studio.

Proceed east on Elizabeth Court, through the cul-de-sac. Turn left (north) on Kenilworth. Proceed north on Kenilworth, crossing Chicago Avenue and through the school yard to the Oscar Balch House.



Stop 8

O.B. Balch House (1911) Frank Lloyd Wright

611 N. Kenilworth

- Plan is similar to the Cheney House
- Designed to assure privacy
- Mr. Balch was one of only two Oak Park clients who engaged Wright's services after his return from Europe

Note: Hemingway's boyhood home is across the street at the NW corner





Proceed north on Kenilworth and turn right (east) onto Augusta; cross Oak Park Avenue, to the Harry S. Adams house.

Stop 9

Harry S. Adams House (1913) Frank Lloyd Wright

710 August

- Prime example of prairie style with a plan of linear arrangement of spaces
- The last of Wright's prairie style homes and designs in Oak Park. Wright was already living in Wisconsin
- Harry Adams was the manager of a stationery business in Chicago – Eaton, Crane and Pike



Continue east on Augusta and turn right (south) on East Ave. to the Martin House

Stop 10

William E. Martin House (1903) Frank Lloyd Wright

636 N. East Avenue

- The house's verticality is reminiscent of the Fricke House, (3 stops ahead on this tour) but the floor plans are different
- The property was extended to the south in 1908 with extensive formal garden
- William Martin was president of the EZ Polish Company of Chicago
- William's brother Darwin Martin, principal of the Larkin Company of Buffalo, NY was so impressed with this building that it resulted in commissions to Frank Lloyd Wright of an office building in Buffalo and a series of 6 structures, which include the Darwin Martin House in Buffalo, one of Wright's great designs of the period, and Graycliff, Darwin Martin's summer residence in Derby, New York.



Henry C. Goodrich House

Continue south on East Avenue to the Goodrich and Cheney houses

Stop 11

Henry C. Goodrich House (1895) Frank Lloyd Wright

534 N. East Avenue

- Roof profile borrowed from one of the traditional Japanese roof types

- Premonitions of Wright's future prairie style in narrow, horizontal clapboards rising to a string course and the horizontal band the links windows and accent the overhanging roof
- Harry Goodrich, a Chicago inventor, made a fortune on a tuck-maker attachment for sewing machines



Stop 12

Edwin Cheney House (1903/1904) Frank Lloyd Wright

520 N. East Avenue

- This house is a prime example of Wright's prairie style with a formal and axial plan
- Points of interest include:
 - Exterior – 2 color mortar to accent horizontal
 - No downspouts – free fall gutters to “dish drains”
 - Typical hidden entry
 - Raised living level with work areas in lower level
 - Broad chimney with built-in skylight to allow daylight into back corridor
 - A private compound protected by high walls
 - Interior – Biaxial plan with corridor separating sleeping areas from public areas
 - Similar in plan to the Heurtley House (1902)
 - Living room doors open to exterior deck – interaction with nature



Reverse and go north on East Avenue, then turn right (east) onto Iowa and then right (south) onto Fair Oaks to the Fricke House.

Stop 13

William G. Fricke House (1901) Frank Lloyd Wright

540 Fair Oaks Avenue

- A “cubistic” design similar to Rollin Furbeck (the next stop on this tour)
- Approach to the entry is a progression of a 90 degree turn
- On the south side of the house a pavilion like porch connected by a covered passageway has been demolished for the adjacent brick residence
- House was purchase in 1907 by Emma Martin who commissioned Wright to complete minor alterations and the garage
- Transition period for Wright with 3 stories



Continue south on Fair Oaks to the Rollin Furbeck House.

Stop 14

Rollin Furbeck House (1897) Frank Lloyd Wright

515 Fair Oaks Avenue

- Wright designed this house 6 months after the one he built for Rollin's brother George at 223 N. Euclid
- Both were wedding presents to the brothers from their stockbroker father, Warren
- Octagon is again expressed during this period
- Unusual off-center entry porch with its star-section sixteen sided columns
- Spacious interior porch with open plan and earliest use of "picture window"
- Transition period for Wright with 3 stories



Continue south on Fair Oak. Turn right (west) onto Chicago Avenue and then left (south) onto Euclid to the Roberts House and Stable

Stops 15 & 16

Charles E. Roberts House (1896) Frank Lloyd Wright remodeling

321 N. Euclid Avenue

- Original House 1879 by Burnham & Root, interior remodeling in 1896 by Frank Lloyd Wright
- Roberts, President of the Chicago Screw Co. supported and nurtured Wright in his early years
- His son, Chapin, went to Hillside Home School run by Wright's aunts in Spring Green, WI

Charles E. Roberts Stable (1896) Frank Lloyd Wright

317 N. Euclid Avenue

- Originally located in the back of the Roberts House at 321 N. Euclid
- Moved by Charles E. White, Jr. in 1929 and remodeled into a residence
- Thought to have been originally built or remodeled by Frank Lloyd Wright



Continue south on Euclid to the George Furbeck House

Stop 17

George W. Furbeck (1897) Frank Lloyd Wright

232 N. Euclid Avenue

- Front entrance altered by the enclosure of the front porch in 1920
- Octagon pepper pots – octagon shape common to other structures of the period – i.e. studio 1897
- Built as a wedding present by W. F. Furbeck for his son George
- George and his new wife resided in the house for 6 years, until 1903
- George Furbeck was an early electrician and later in the coal business

Note: The Dole-Cheney Mansion at 220 N. Euclid was designed by Charles White in 1913 and the McCready House next door 231 Euclid was designed by Robert Spencer in 1913.



Continue south on Euclid. Turn right (west) onto Ontario, cross Oak Park Avenue in the pedestrian crosswalk, then turn left (south) onto Kenilworth to Unity Temple.

Stop 18

Unity Temple (1905/1908) Frank Lloyd Wright

Lake Street and Kenilworth Avenue

- Constructed of reinforced concrete, exposed aggregate
- Major restoration from 2015 to 2017
- Religious space on the north side, light from above by skylights and clerestory windows of art glass
- The community house on the south is linked to the church by the center lower entry hall that is typical of Wright's indirect entrances
- Explain that Unity Temple is open for tours – call first because the tour hours vary. Unity is closes at Noon on Saturday and is not open for tours on Sunday.

Proceed north on Kenilworth and return to the Home and Studio.