

Historic Downtown Winter Park

A Walking Tour

1. Central Park

Park Avenue between New England & Garfield Avenues

Inspired by the New England villages of their boyhoods, founders Loring Chase and Oliver Chapman planned hotels, homes, churches, commercial and civic buildings around a central town square. Your tour of Winter Park begins from New England Avenue walking north through Central Park.

Enter the Rose Garden through a vine-covered pergola at the south edge of the park. Walking north you'll find the Veterans Fountain, donated by the Winter Park Board of Trade in 1920 to honor those who served in World War I.

Near the train depot find the memorial honoring Charles Hosmer Morse, the businessman and philanthropist who deeded central park to the City in 1881.

Cross Morse Boulevard and locate the "Emily Fountain." It was sculpted by Czech-American artist Albin Polasek. Polasek and his wife Emily resided in Winter Park and she donated the piece to commemorate the Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival. This concludes your Central Park walk.

2. Winter Park Railroad Stations

When Loring Chase first visited the area in 1881, there was only an open railroad platform, surrounded by palmettos and tall pines. He could view a few crude cabins near the intersection of what is now Park Avenue and Morse Boulevard. The next year, a Victorian style railroad station, the very first building in the new town of Winter Park, was dedicated. The present station was built in 1962 and serves Amtrak passengers who alight in the heart of Winter Park.

3. Ergood's Store

102 Park Avenue, North

Winter Park's first building along Park Avenue was built in 1882 as a dry goods store owned by Robert White Jr. and John R. Ergood. Over the years many other businesses shared the building. The upper story served as the town hall, school, and post office and for Sunday services. In 1908, Dr. Jerry Trovillion purchased the building, established a drug store, installed the first soda fountain in town, and added a tin ceiling. The original two-story wooden structure has undergone numerous changes but the outside stairs can still be seen today.

4. Parkwood Building

102 Park Avenue, South

When the Parkwood Building was constructed in 1912, it was the second brick building in Winter Park.

5. The Lincoln Apartments

189 East Morse Boulevard

The 42-unit Lincoln Apartments were built in 1926 during the height of the Florida Land Boom. It was the first large apartment building constructed in Winter Park, and the architecture reflected the popularity of the Spanish Mission style in Florida. In 2003, the original Morse Boulevard façade of the Lincoln was preserved and incorporated into the current First United Methodist Church multi-purpose building.

6. Knowles Cottage

232 North Knowles Avenue

Knowles Cottage is one of three houses built by Francis B. Knowles in 1886-87 for sale to winter visitors. The house has heart pine siding and has changed very little. Behind this cottage you will see the Osceola Lodge.

7. Osceola Lodge
231 North Interlachen Avenue

Osceola Lodge was also built by Winter Park pioneer, Francis B. Knowles in 1882. Originally surrounded by orange trees and a white board and wire fence, it is part of a ten-acre parcel which includes Knowles Cottage, and the green space that extends east to the shore of Lake Osceola. In 1904, it was purchased by Charles H. Morse who added to the house and renovated it with some Craftsman style details.

8. First United Methodist Church
125 North Interlachen Avenue

The original church was organized in 1885 at this location. The Wesleyan Building fronting on Morse Boulevard was completed in 1949 and the larger sanctuary building in the 1960s.

9. *Winter Park Scenic boat Tour – 312 East Morse Boulevard

Boat tours of the Winter Park chain of lakes have been popular since the 1880s. The Scenic Boat Tour began showing off the city's lakes in 1938. It is a wonderful way to see the homes and parks along Lakes Osceola, Virginia, and Maitland as you glide through the Venetian and Fern Canals.

10. First Congregational Church of Winter Park
225 South Interlachen Avenue

The church was organized in 1884 by Rev. Dr. Edward P. Hooker, who later became the first president of Rollins College. The present neoclassical style church sanctuary was built in 1924 to replace the 1885 sanctuary.

11. All Saints Episcopal Church
338 East Lyman Avenue

The church was established in town in 1886. In 1942 architect Ralph Adams Cram designed the Gothic-Revival sanctuary and today it is on the National Register of Historic Places. (Cram also designed Saint John the Divine Church in New York City and chapels at Princeton University, Yale, and Notre Dame, as well as the Knowles Memorial Chapel on the Rollins College campus.)

12. Original Winter Park Library
338 East Lyman Avenue

The construction of the Old Winter Park Library was completed in 1902 at a cost of \$2,000. When the new city library on New England Avenue was completed in 1979, All Saints Episcopal Church purchased the building.

13. The Woman's Club of Winter Park
419 South Interlachen Avenue

In January 1915, sixteen women met at Osceola Lodge, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Morse, and formed the Women's Club of Winter Park. Organizations like this club reflected the changing role of women in American civic, social, and business life. Mr. Morse donated the land for the clubhouse, designed in the neoclassical style by architect Percival Hutton and built in 1921. The Woman's Club of Winter Park was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

14. Colony Theatre
329 Park Avenue, South

The Colony Theatre opened in 1940 to a movie-obsessed public. As suburban multi-screen theater complexes became popular in the 1980s, the building was converted into an arcade with shops and restaurants. In 1999, the Pottery Barn completely renovated the interior and still displays the Colony neon marquee.

15. Park Plaza Hotel

307 Park Avenue, South

In 1922, the Hamilton Hotel opened its doors to winter resort visitors and local guests. By the late 1970s the building was renovated and renamed The Park Plaza Hotel but still retains much of its historic appearance and its charming balconies, lobby and elevator are reminiscent of the 1920s.

16. Union State Bank

300 Park Avenue, South

This two-story retail and apartment building was built in the early 1920s and included the Union State Bank. It was one of only two local banks that survived the Great Depression.

17. Henkel Building

214 to 218 Park Avenue, South

One of the many buildings built in the 1900s Florida Land Boom, the brick Henkel Building originally featured upstairs apartments and a grocery and drugstore below. Winter Park's favorite five and dime store, Cottrell's, operated here until closing in the mid-1980s.

18. 202 Park Avenue, South

This solid brick building was built in 1916 by Walter Schultz.

19. The Pioneer Building

152 Park Avenue, South

Built in 1884 by Winter Park's first mayor, Robert White, the Pioneer Building was home to Ward's Grocery and Feed Store. Originally a white frame structure with a tin roof, it has been extensively altered through the years.

20. 146 to 150 Park Avenue, South

Originally the Bank of Winter Park and a post office, this 1911 building later became the Golden Cricket gift shop. During the 1970s to 1990s, it housed an exquisite restaurant that featured Tiffany windows.

21. Earl Building and Morse Block

This is the 1886 site of the Earl Building. In 1917, Charles H. Morse built this structure to house his company, The Winter Park Land Company which marketed land to northerners. It is the oldest continuous business in town.