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FOR GREAT SPOTS
IN CHATHAM AND
MORE SHOPPING
PICKS BY
NOTABLES



SHOP CRAWL BY ROSALIND CUMMINGS-YEATES

The Southeast Side's Chatham community has boasted a solid reputation for thriving small businesses and strong community involvement for decades. Banks, real estate offices and neatly mowed lawns line the neighborhood, but underneath the conventional facade lies a fashionista's paradise.

MAXINE'S BEAUTY MAGIC BOUTIQUE

1613 E. 87th St., (773) 221-8308

For 35 years, Maxine's has ruled one-stop shopping on the South Side. Noted for stylish shoes that go up to size 12 and attention-grabbing suits and pants sets, discerning women can score a dress, shoes, purse and pantyhose, all under one roof.

"We're the difference between dressed and well dressed," said supervisor Sekun Walker. The shop offers something for every

taste, from strappy white Carlos Santana sandals with crystal embellishments for \$85, to a show-stopping white linen dress with trumpet hem, paired with a jacket with crochet inserts for \$245. There are racks of skinny leg jeans and capris dipped in sequins and embroidery, as well as a corner filled with dazzling straw hats in sorbet colors. Perhaps the real attraction that has kept generations of women flocking to Mazine's is the solicitous service. Joyce, Alma and Shenita work the store like a personalized showroom, anticipating style preferences and whipping out options before you have to ask.

Hours: Monday-Saturday, 10-7pm, closed on Sunday.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

1714 E. 87th St., (773) 978-1200



With a family rich in entrepreneurial spirit and retail know-how, Melanie Wahley knew exactly how to make her shop stand out. Specializing in natural fibers and pieces with a breezy, funky, flair, Essential Elements has served a loyal clientele who crave unusual fashion for two decades. "We provide functional clothing in linens, gauzes and cottons that were only available in North Shore boutiques," said Wahley. Filled with a riot of texture and muted tones, the intimate emporium features jewelry, purses and clothes for a relaxed lifestyle. With Bob Marley playing in the background, you can browse through a Tenile White tangerine-col-

ored silk and linen with fishtail skirt for \$470, a Skiff continuous hand-knitted, black piece designed to be draped various ways with a big shiny diaper pin for \$220 or a Tano red patent leather purse with ruching and string bows for \$143. Jewelry by local designer Takara tops off everything with chunky amber and bone earring discs for \$75. You can also pick up whimsical knickknacks such as jewel-toned, blown glass, key chains for \$28 or Martha's Crib magnets painted with cheeky phrases like "No woman ever shot a man while he was cooking dinner."

Hours: Monday-Friday 11-7pm, Saturday 10:30-7pm, closed Sunday

BJ'S MARKET & BAKERY

8734 S. Stony Island, (773) 374-4700

Serious shopping requires a serious meal and BJ's serves up generous portions of cafeteria-style soul food that will satisfy any appetite. Indulge in the signature mustard-fired catfish, roasted turkey wings or the salmon croquettes with sides of greens and candied sweet potatoes. Or try a bowl of the seafood gumbo, just don't skip on the peach cobbler for dessert.

Hours: Monday-Thursday 11-9 p.m., Friday-Saturday 11-10 p.m., Sunday 11-8 p.m.