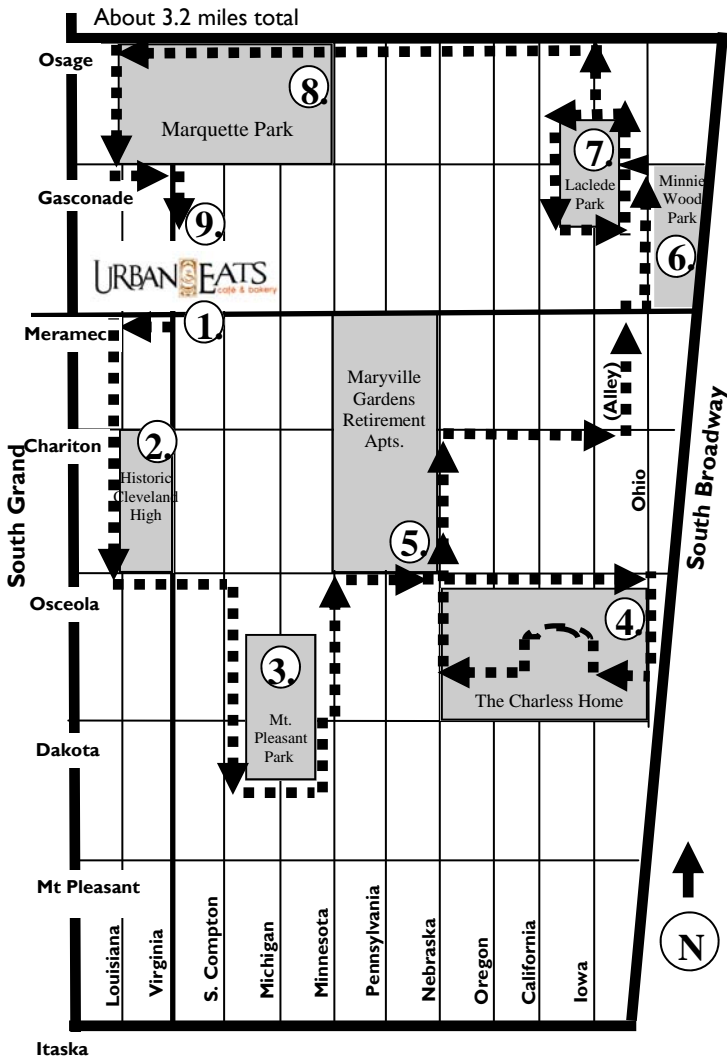


# Downtown Bike Tour

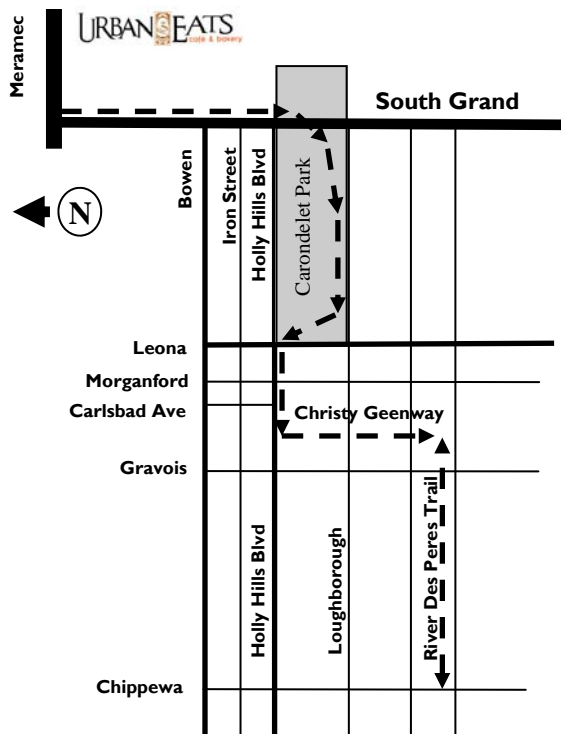
Discover an Urban Arboreal Wonderland



## An Additional Ride

to Carondelet Park, Christy Greenway and the River Des Peres Trail.

1. From Urban Eats Café, head West on Meramec 2 blocks to Grand. Turn Left, heading South.
2. Ride 2 miles to Carondelet Park, veering right onto the bike path entrance that runs almost parallel to S. Grand, taking the loop that runs past the lagoon, about 1 mile. You'll be going 3/4 of the route around and through the Park, paralleling Loughborough and Leona.
3. Turn off the bike trail on to Holly Hills, turning Left (West) onto Holly Hills, shortly after crossing Morganford. Go about 1 mile.
4. Turn Left onto the Christy Greenway heading South, about 1 mile, to the River Des Peres Trail.
5. Go Right (West) to the end of the trail, about 3 miles.
6. Turn around and come back! **About 16 Miles round trip.**



# Downtown Bike Tour

Discover an Urban Arboreal Wonderland

Narrative by NiNi Harris, copyright 2008

**P**arks are an integral part of the City of St. Louis. The concept of the public park evolved in Europe and the United States during the 19th century, simultaneous with the historic development of St. Louis. St. Louisans adopted the philosophy of the public park, establishing over 90 parks within our 61 square miles. From tiny pocket parks to 1,200 acre Forest Park, every resident has at least one park within walking distance.

In contrast, the suburban ideal cut up the park concept, each home having a larger yard that served as the resident's personal park space. As suburbs grew, however, there was a realization that public parks were important to individual quality of life and community life. In the city, the parks are not an afterthought, but focal points in neighborhood development and evolution.

Today our short route circles St. Anthony of Padua Parish and the Meramec-Virginia commercial hub. You will visit the four small parks that have provided greenery, ball fields, and swimming for generations of Downtown Dutchtowners.

1. Start your ride from Urban Eats Café & Bakery heading West on Meramec Street.
2. **Historic Cleveland High School** Designed by brilliant architect William Ittner, built in 1915. Over 100,000 Alumni and a multitude of community organizations have created the Alliance to Save Cleveland High and are working to turn this gem into a model for other St Louis Schools.
3. **Mount Pleasant Park** is a backyard park. Tucked away like a secret forest and playground, it is an extension of the backyards of the immediate neighbors. During the 1920s and 1930s, it was a popular destination for the children of the Polish settlement in Dutchtown, who spent summer afternoons playing hopscotch and jump rope here.
4. **The Charless Home** demonstrated its generosity during the Civil War by accepting refugees without questioning their allegiance. The home's patch of trees, like those in our mini-parks, is becoming continually more important to our ecosystem. The Charless Home has been serving St. Louisans in need since 1853. Now offering independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing, long-term care and rehab services for seniors,
5. For almost a century, the stone walls and shade-giving trees which frame the current **Maryville Gardens** retirement community, surrounded the original Maryville College, begun here in 1867.
6. Giant Sycamores line the South Broadway side **Minnie Wood Park** with its popular ball fields and playground. Many of our city's sycamores reached maturity and have been replaced. At one time, sycamores lined miles of our streets, planted by the city because of their ability to thrive despite air pollution caused by coal-burning furnaces.
7. **Laclede Park**, a hidden pocket park, was always public land. Before being set aside for park space, it was part of the commonfields jointly owned by the villagers of St. Louis.
8. Even before the Civil War, when this area was home only to a scattering of farmers, the site of **Marquette Park** was the location of the House of Refuge -- an orphanage and reform school. When the institution closed, the two city blocks were turned into park space, framed by tall growing trees, and offering fields and tennis courts and a giant swimming pool. Indirectly, the huge pool saved many lives, since it attracted many of the neighborhood children who otherwise spent summer afternoons wading and swimming in the swift currents of the nearby Mississippi.

9. You're back at Urban Eats Café, just in time to enjoy lunch or a smoothie! Or, for the intrepid cyclist, go on to the second leg of the ride... **see Other Side!**

To learn about NiNi Harris' series of architectural and historical walking tours of St. Louis City, see: [maryville.edu/academics/ced/](http://maryville.edu/academics/ced/) personal development or call 314-752-2304.

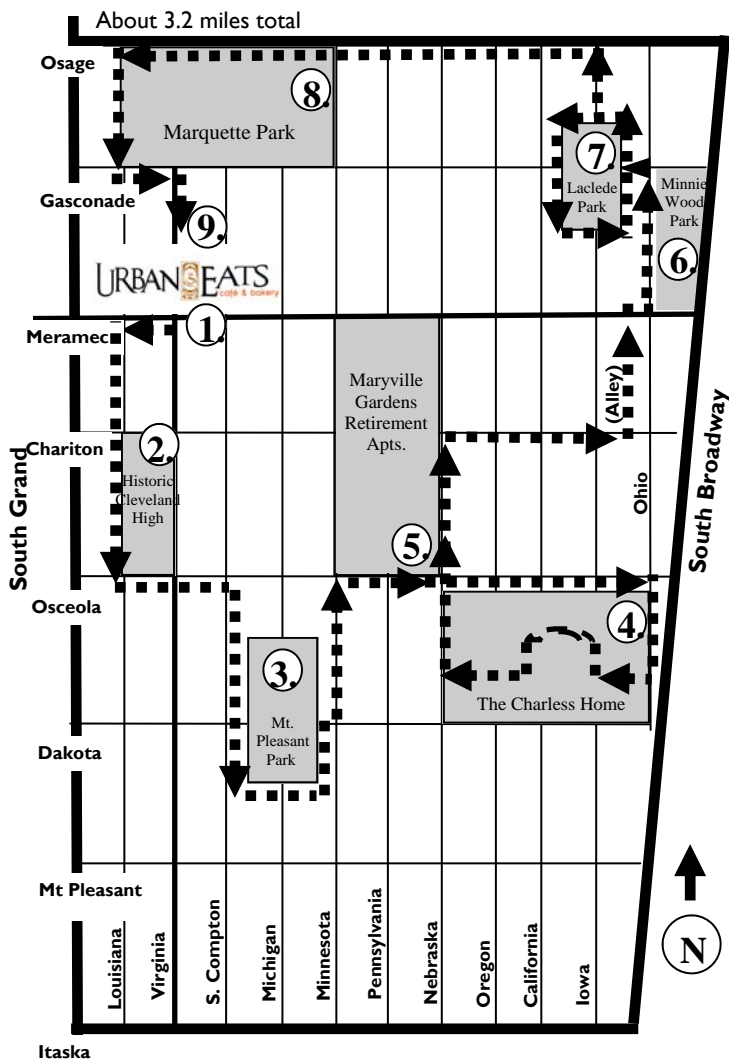
# Dutchtown Bike Tour

Discover an Urban Arboreal Wonderland

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Discover an Urban Arboreal Wonderland

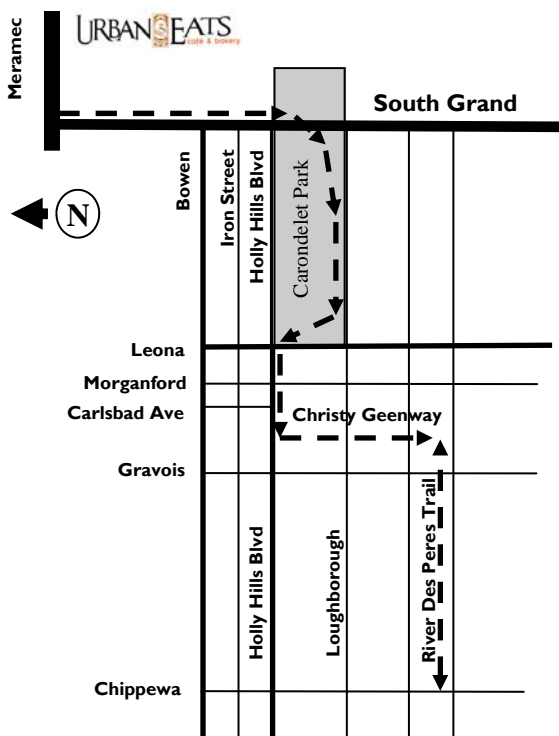
Narrative by NiNi Harris, copyright 2008



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