



«Stephanie Moore

"At first, I was tempted to move to West Des Moines," says Stephanie Moore, 25, who has called the East Village home for three years. "But I wanted to live somewhere special. Now, I couldn't really picture myself anywhere else in the city."

Besides entertaining in her apartment, grabbing a bite with friends at Noodle Zoo, and studying for the LSATs at Gong Fu Tea, the former Miss Iowa regularly jogs the streets of her neighborhood to train for the Des Moines Marathon.

"I love all the opportunities this neighborhood gives me," Stephanie says. "There is always something going on—art openings, new shops, or festivals. It's such a great location."

east village

In a city obsessed with malls and big-box retailers, the East

Village provides shoppers with specialty urban shopping and dining. Buy gourmet cheeses at Basil Prosperi, or browse the latest wedding fashions at Schaffer's.

Just a few years ago, the neighborhood lying in the shadow of the Capitol was mostly abandoned and shuttered, serving only as an eyesore. Now booming, the area has steadily welcomed new businesses—from Sticks Gallery to Noodle Zoo—and has become a gentrified neighborhood. Most importantly, it has an eclectic, urban atmosphere rivaled nowhere in the city.

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›Neighborhood population: 1,046

›The Hohberger Building at 502 E. Locust St. is one of only two cast-iron buildings downtown. The structure, built in 1898, was originally home to Woolworth's, a five-and-dime store.

›In 2004, the area was named runner-up in *Cityview's* "Best Local Trend" category, finishing just behind body piercing.

Amy Hassebrock opened her couture clothing store, Aimée, in the East Village in 2004, because, like the clothing she sells, she wanted her location to be special. "Every type of retail in the East Village is unique," she says. "People want to come here because the shopping and restaurants can't be found anywhere else in the city."

The East Village is developing its own flair, complete with a variety of events sponsored by the East Village Neighborhood and Merchants Association, including a holiday promenade and summertime street fairs.

KELSEY RAHN

›Baby Boomers

Think *Beverly Hills 90210's* hangout, The Peach Pit. If you like burgers or anything loaded with grease, stop here. Order breakfast until 11 a.m., and bask in the glow of neon lights that compound the dizziness of the black-and-white checkered tile floor.

313 E. Locust St., 244.9107

Village Life

The East Village is getting just the additions it needs to complete the area's transformation into a resident-friendly neighborhood: loads of new lofts, condos, and apartments. Here are the living options popping up in the East Village:

›East Village Square

The East Village Square brings 109 one- and two-bedroom apartments, including 21 ground-floor live-and-work lofts, to the neighborhood. Amenities include decks, tall ceilings, and unobstructed views of downtown, the river, and the Capitol. Look for ground breaking this summer and completion in late spring next year.

400 E. Grand Ave., Hatchdevelopment.com

›Soho Lofts

Each of these 32 lofts offers high ceilings, oversized windows, and heated underground parking. Other features include the Village Green, an open-air courtyard, and combined live-and-work units on the ground floor. Units range in price from \$137,000 to \$327,000—for a corner two-story penthouse—and plans call for the building to be open in June.

400 E. Locust St., Sohodevelopment.com



Steaming Hot Michael Feller, an owner of Gong Fu Tea, retrieves tea.

›Aimée

Expect only cutting-edge camisoles, shoes, and jeans at this shop, including European, Brazilian, and East Coast designer fashions. Stop by on Saturdays, and enjoy a complimentary glass of champagne.

432 E. Locust St., 243.0045

›Gong Fu Tea

Escape to this calming atmosphere, and sip on Ancient Happiness or Serenity Now, two of the most popular loose-leaf teas.

414 E. 6th St., 288.3388