

# Chicago Tribune PRINTERS ROW



A child visits the play area at Anderson's Bookshop in Naperville, one of the Chicago area's many independent bookstores.  
KERI WIGINTON/TRIBUNE NEWSPAPERS PHOTO

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## Off the chain 10 independent bookstores worth a stop for holiday shopping

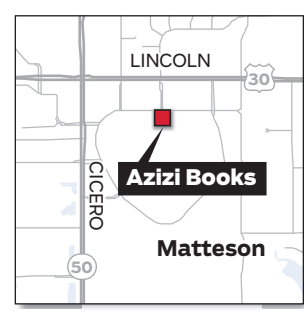
BY COURTNEY CROWDER  
Tribune Newspapers

The shelves of a bookstore hold the perfect gift for those on your holiday list, no matter their interests or hobbies. And for people who prefer not to shop online or at large chain bookstores, the Chicago area has an ample supply of independent stores. We've picked 10 of the best, each with features that set them apart. So whether you live in the suburbs — north, south or west — or in the city, there's a place not far in which to do your literary hunting.

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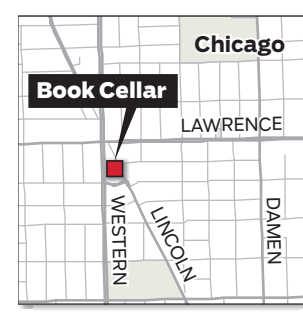
**Anderson's Bookshop**  
Anderson's Bookshop, in west suburban Naperville's bustling downtown, is known for hosting literary superstars and celebrities promoting their newest books. The details of upcoming author appearances are posted on the shelves under the appropriate books. Visitors can buy a book and make a date to attend the author's talk; keep in mind that there may be an admission charge and you might want to get tickets in advance.  
123 W. Jefferson Ave., Naperville; [andersonsbookshop.com](http://andersonsbookshop.com); 630-355-2665



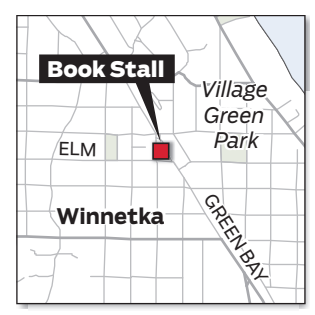
**Azizi Books**  
Azizi (a Kiswahili word meaning rare, precious or treasured, according to the store's website), in Matteson's Lincoln Mall, predominantly carries books by African-American writers, including collections of inspirational tomes, urban fiction titles and African-American children's books. A children's story time is 11 a.m.-noon Saturdays. Azizi has just reopened in a larger space on the mall's second floor near Carson Pirie Scott.  
258 Lincoln Mall Drive, Matteson; [azizibooks.com](http://azizibooks.com); 708-283-9850



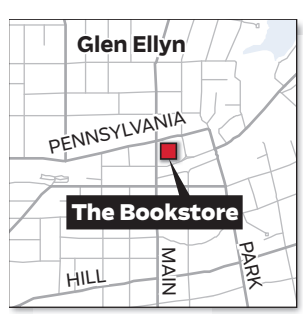
**Barbara's Bookstore**  
Barbara's Bookstore in the heart of the University of Illinois at Chicago is easily identifiable by the window drawings of authors and their quotes about reading. It caters to UIC students with comfy couches, tables and a big bargain section. Barbara's is an independent chain with six Chicago-area locations, plus six in O'Hare International Airport and one in Boston. It has the heart of an indie store but the capabilities of a chain; employees can find a book at another store for patrons to purchase the same day, for example.  
1218 S. Halsted St.; [barbarasbookstore.com](http://barbarasbookstore.com); 312-413-2665



**The Book Cellar**  
As the name of this Lincoln Square store suggests, you can enjoy a glass of wine here along with the literary selections. The wine bar, which also offers beer and some light dining fare, makes this a good place to host a book club discussion. The store has a strong collection of cookbooks and food writing and a section featuring Chicago books, many by authors who are invited by the store to participate in its monthly local author nights.  
4736-38 N. Lincoln Ave.; [bookcellarinc.com](http://bookcellarinc.com); 773-293-2665



**The Book Stall at Chestnut Court**  
Located near the Winnetka Metra station, this is a perfect bookstore for city dwellers who want to shop local in the suburbs. Within walking distance are plenty of other locally owned shops and eateries. The store carries a varied selection of audiobooks, including new best-sellers, and a full stock of travel books.  
811 Elm St., Winnetka; [thebookstall.com](http://thebookstall.com); 847-446-8880



**The Bookstore**  
Independent bookstores are all about fostering community, and this downtown Glen Ellyn store took that to heart by being one of the first bookstores to participate in the Glen Ellyn Bookfest, which began in 2010 and is held annually in June. The Bookstore makes a point of displaying local authors' work. A case in point: A slim volume titled "Stories from Glen Ellyn's Past — Volume 1: 24 Tales of Murder, Mayhem, Infidelity, Pranks and Other Intriguing Tidbits of Glen Ellyn History," edited by Anne Balogh and Dan Anderson.  
475 N. Main St., Glen Ellyn; [justthebookstore.com](http://justthebookstore.com); 630-469-2891



**Quimby's**  
Quimby's in Chicago broadens one's view of literature with its wide collection of comics, zines, ephemera and small press-published material. The store also will sell almost any zine or book on consignment; authors need only drop their published material off with a consignment form, which can be found on the store's website. This is a good place to find something for the person who has read everything; allow plenty of time to survey the store's collection, and don't be afraid to ask the well-informed employees for help.  
1854 W. North Ave.; [quimbys.com](http://quimbys.com); 773-342-0910



**Seminary Co-op Bookstore**  
It's easy to get lost in bookish bliss at the Seminary Co-op Bookstore, in the basement of the Chicago Theological Seminary in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Customers looking for something specific are advised to pick up a floor plan at the front desk to navigate the crowded shelves. The store is home to a catalog of 150,000 academic titles. This location is one of three Seminary Co-op Bookstores, the others being 57th Street Books and the Newberry Library Bookstore.  
5757 S. University Ave.; [semcoop.com](http://semcoop.com); 773-752-4381



**Town House Books**  
Town House Books in St. Charles has a homey feel, with several rooms, rug-covered floors and a cozy — if nonfunctional — fireplace. It also has the attached Town House Cafe, which serves breakfast and lunch. In keeping with the homelike atmosphere, there is a good collection of cookbooks and gardening titles.  
105 N. 2nd Ave., St. Charles; [townhousebooks.com](http://townhousebooks.com); 630-584-8600



**Women & Children First**  
This store, on Chicago's North Side, has a large selection of titles on issues important to the lesbian, gay and bisexual community. The back of the store is dominated by the children's section, which has a varied inventory of board books for babies, picture books and chapter books for beginning, middle and young adult readers. The store's selections on child care and parenting also are in the back.  
5233 N. Clark St.; [womenandchildrenfirst.com](http://womenandchildrenfirst.com); 773-769-9299