



## Ukrainian Village Remains Hot After 2016 Redfin “Hottest Neighborhood In The United States” Award

*Lilia Zaparaniuk of Vintage Realty shares insight into this hot Chicago ‘hood.*

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04/04/2019

Ukrainian Village, a neighborhood on the near west side of Chicago, was voted the hottest neighborhood in the United States by Redfin in 2016, to the surprise of longtime resident and realtor Lilia Zaparaniuk of Vintage Realty. Born and raised in Ukrainian Village, Zaparaniuk grew up on a block that she describes as “tough.” When the neighborhood got really bad in her teens she moved to Oak Park before returning to the Village after getting married. “My entire life happened in eight square blocks between Damen and Western and Chicago and Division,” she said. Zaparaniuk’s father started his real estate law business in Ukrainian Village. Thinking that she would follow in his footsteps, she went to law school before ultimately deciding to join the other side of the spectrum. She joined Wicker Realty for two years to get experience and opened Vintage Realty in 1990, specializing in the neighborhood she grew up in: Ukrainian Village. From her perspective, the nod from Redfin comes at a surprising time. “Ukrainian

Village has not changed much in the last ten years, so for me and other residents of the area, it was interesting that it was named the hottest neighborhood in the country now,” said Zaparaniuk. “Twenty years ago is when the neighborhood really began improving. Many families came in then, settled and never left. When those folks started to die off, people from Bucktown and Wicker Park began trickling in because prices were cheaper in the Village and there was more vacant land available for new construction.” Since the Redfin article ran, Zaparaniuk has seen an influx of inquiries from renters wanting to move into the neighborhood—but home sales for the area have largely remained the same. “Prices had been creeping up for several years, depending on the type of property, and haven’t changed much since the article came out,” said Zaparaniuk. “If it’s a special, rare property, then the prices are much higher. For example, if you’re looking for a landmark single family on a prime lot on Hoyne Avenue, you’re looking at \$2 million. It’s also a hotspot for investment properties. Many clients that bought in the Village 15 years ago are looking to buy again since they made such a great investment then.” With the high demand for rentals in the area, Zaparaniuk suggests working with one agent—preferably someone with connections in the neighborhood to help get a good deal. She also encourages people to not rely on online real estate sites because the prices and information are typically inaccurate. “I recently sold my house in Ukrainian Village and one of the sites listed it as being sold in foreclosure, which was not the case,” she said. “The only reliable resource is the MLS.” When asked what makes Ukrainian Village such a hotspot, Zaparaniuk says that it’s all about the community. “There’s no doubt that the West Loop is a cool neighborhood, but when you walk around there, you don’t feel like it’s a community like in Ukrainian Village,” said Zaparaniuk. “Here, it truly feels like everyone knows your name. You’re friends with the neighbors and it feels like a family.” She also highlights the proximity to great restaurants, bars, coffee shops and more. “I love the Dollop coffee shop on Augusta Boulevard, Francesca’s and Nando Milano Trattoria,” said Zaparaniuk. “But my favorite spot is the patio at Tuman’s Tap and Grill [on Chicago Avenue]. Every time I’m out there, I talk to a handful of people walking by. You just can’t beat the Ukrainian Village community.” According to Bloomberg.com, home prices in Chicago are up 3.5 percent, which has resulted in a trend of Chicagoans renting properties instead of buying. A representative from Nestpick, a website that aggregates furnished apartment rentals across the United States, shared data with ESTATENVY via email about the most popular neighborhoods from a rental standpoint. Nestpick scraped the values of 1,813 listings in Chicago over the last quarter, and determined that the neighborhoods with the highest number of family apartments for rent are Lakeview, Logan Square and the South Loop. Whether you’re buying or selling, Chicago’s beautiful lakefront path, history of rich culture, and dining and nightlife scenes, coupled with its still-affordable price points when compared to other big cities, make it a great choice for singles and families alike.