



L.L. Bean Heads to Chicago  
Feb 25, 2008 1:05 PM

In its first retail expansion outside the Northeast corridor, L.L. Bean in September will open a store in the Chicago area. The outdoor gear and apparel merchant is planning a 30,000-sq.-ft. store at the Arboretum at South Barrington, a suburb northwest of Chicago.

Why Chicago? The cataloger says that the Chicago area is one of its largest markets. The new store, which will employ about 125 people, will include an L.L. Bean Outdoor Discovery School, where experts instruct on the finer points of such sports as kayaking and fly-fishing.

What's more, the store will be built to U.S. Green Building Council's LEED standards. L.L. Bean's seventh "green" store, the Chicago location will incorporate creative use of recycled and reclaimed materials as well as energy efficient heating, cooling, and lighting systems.

Founded in 1912 as a catalog, Freeport, ME-based L.L. Bean began opening stores outside of Maine in 2000. It currently operates 10; the merchant plans to have 32 stores in place by 2012.

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