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These Are the Most Expensive Homes Sold in Chicago in 2012

While Chicago's median home prices are bottoming out, big-ticket prices are soaring. The year even set a new record for the highest amount ever paid for a Chicago residence.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: (ALL PHOTOS) TODD URBAN

(From left) Gold Coast Co-op, Park Tower Aerie, and River North Condo

The area's most expensive homes scaled new heights last year, statistically and literally. Three of the six priciest sales were in skyscrapers, including a Park Tower spread that sold for \$15 million, the most ever paid for a Chicago residence. Meanwhile, a North Shore lakefront mansion went for \$12.3 million, making 2012 the first year since 2008 that the area saw two deals top \$10 million. While this probably doesn't signal a quick bounce in the broader housing market—"the upper end is another world," explains Chezi Rafaeli, a Coldwell Banker agent (he sold 1 and 6 below)—it's an encouraging sign that people with plenty of cash want to invest it here.

1. \$15 million: PARK TOWER AERIE

Ken Griffin, CEO of hedge fund firm Citadel, and his wife, Anne, bought the 66th floor at 800 North Michigan Avenue in November. (They already owned the penthouse.) It boasts 7,900 square feet of living space and a 660-square-foot terrace with knockout views of the lake and the skyline.

2. \$12.3 million: WINNETKA MANSION

On December 31, an unidentified buyer rang in the new year by snapping up a six-bedroom Mediterranean-style mansion, which had last sold for \$7.1 million in 2005. Built in 1928, it overlooks the lake and has a large swimming pool.

3. \$7.5 million: GLENCOE NEWBIE

Built in 2007, this 13-room French provincial house languished on the market as its would-be buyers worked out the financing. Among the amenities: a remote-controlled elevator that descends to a private beach on Lake Michigan.

4. \$7.5 million: BARRINGTON HILLS ESTATE

In July, this 70-acre property—which includes a 30,000-square-foot house, two golf holes, and a fish-stocked pond—sold for barely half of what the sellers were first asking.

5. \$6.6 million: GOLD COAST CO-OP

This nine-room beauty at 209 East Lake Shore Drive (a 1924 Beaux Arts building designed by Benjamin Marshall) was extensively restored by previous owner Michael Alper, founder of the retail chain Dollar Bills.

6. \$6.4 million: RIVER NORTH CONDO

Originally priced at \$7.9 million, an 8,100-square-foot home on the 47th floor of the Fordham (25 E. Superior St.) has only three bedrooms—but five terraces and a movie theatre.



... And the Highest Farther Afield

Most of the sales at left were in Cook County (the Barrington Hills sale was in McHenry County). Tops in four other nearby counties:

DuPage County

\$4.6 million: BURR RIDGE MANSION

In March, former White Sox slugger Jim Thome bought this seven-bedroom stone house on two acres (pictured above).

Kane County

\$1.9 million: ST. CHARLES ESTATE

The 11,000-square-foot Hollywood-style manse on seven acres features a tennis court, a pool, and gardens.

Lake County

\$4.9 million: LAKE FOREST RANCH HOUSE

This 7,500-square-foot house with five bedrooms abuts Lake Michigan and a village park.

Will County

\$1.2 million: NAPERVILLE COTSWOLD

Sold in December, a five-bedroom house in the Woods of Rivermist subdivision has a library and a game room.