



Power Breakfasts Fly Under the Radar

Crain's

January 28, 2008

When money and power meet over coffee, there's no place better than the dining rooms of Chicago's swanky Peninsula and Four Seasons hotels.

"I eat there quite a bit," says Richard Tomlinson, managing partner of Skidmore Owings & Merrill, of his morning business meetings at the Pen. "There's lots of sunlight, and I always see people I know." Breakfast brings the city's biggest names to smaller restaurants, too.

Wishbone remains a hot spot for Oprah Winfrey and her entourage. State Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias as well as Pat Ryan Jr., CEO of business intelligence software company First Look, go there, too.

"When someone else calls the meeting, we go to the Four Seasons," Mr. Ryan says. "If I plan it, we go to Wishbone. I like the Four Seasons, but when I go I feel like I'm at a wedding because I see so many people I know."

On weekends, the 900 Shops' Oak Tree sees its share of high-profile regulars, among them millionaire stockbroker Chris Gardner, and auctioneer Leslie Hindman huddling with her pal, consultant Debbie Bricker.

Saturday brunch at Gibsons wouldn't be the same without Neal Zucker, Linda Johnson Rice, Desiree Rogers and Valerie Jarrett — all business executives involved in this year's political scene. They often run into Duchossois Inc. CEO Craig Duchossois hunkered down in a booth with Howard Bernick, former CEO of Alberto-Culver.

Real estate executive Fred Latsko prefers Pierrot Gourmet, just off Michigan Avenue at street level in the Peninsula, where an interesting collection of business executives — many from the retail community — enjoy coffee and warm French pastries.



Duchossois

Latsko

"People go to the Four Seasons or Peninsula (dining rooms) for business meetings. But if you want to be discreet, you go downstairs," Mr. Latsko says. "That's where deals are done."