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# HISTORIC HOTELS *of* AMERICA

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National Trust *for* Historic Preservation®

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## **The 2024 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America® Best of Adaptive Reuse List Is Announced**

WASHINGTON, D.C. May 22, 2024 ----- Historic Hotels of America®, an official program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is pleased to announce The 2024 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Best of Adaptive Reuse list. A popular and creative approach to historic preservation, “adaptive reuse” saves unused historic buildings from demolition by rehabilitating and renovating them for a new purpose. Travelers can visit many historic inns, resorts, and hotels in the United States today because their owners chose to reimagine historic buildings in sustainable and creative ways. At Historic Hotels of America, adaptive reuse hotels offer travelers an immersive, authentic, and *fun* way to experience their next trip.

Released during Preservation Month, The 2024 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America® Best of Adaptive Reuse list spotlights 25 richly preserved historic buildings that were not originally built to be hotels. Historic Hotels of America guests can spend the night in former factories where Ghirardelli chocolate and world-class cork products were produced, or make a historic Masonic temple their home base while exploring New Orleans. One historic hotel featured on the list is a former junior high school that embraces its past with “hall pass” guestroom keycards and signature cocktails like the Prom Queen. Another historic hotel featured on the list is a former train station that curates train-car-themed suites, named after ticketing agents who once worked there. Others offer dining inside a historic bank vault and historic smokestack. These hotels are living proof that historic buildings can serve contemporary needs while preserving their timeless character.

This month, the nation’s leading preservation nonprofit is shining a spotlight on the ways in which history and heritage are preserved in the United States, and on the people who are doing this important work. The theme this year honors “People Saving Places.” For more information, please [visit HistoricHotels.org](https://www.historichotels.org) and [sign up for \*Discover & Explore\*](#) to stay up to date on news and special offers.

## El Convento Hotel (1646) *San Juan, Puerto Rico*

### ***Former Carmelite Convent***

Located in the historic walled city of Old San Juan, El Convento Hotel was built over 350 years ago to be a Roman Catholic convent for nuns of the Carmelite Order. The land was donated to the order by Doña Ana Lanzós, a wealthy widow, in the early 1600s, but construction was delayed while labor and material resources were redirected to build the city's fortifications. In 1646, King Phillip IV of Spain approved the convent, and San Juan finally had its beautiful new convent. Debuting as the “Monasterio del Señor San José de la Orden de nuestra Señora del Carmen” in 1651, the convent welcomed three nuns from Hispaniola as its first residents. For nearly 250 years, the convent was one of the Caribbean’s major Catholic facilities, often providing support to the Catedral Basilica Menor de San Juan Bautista—the second-most historic cathedral in the Americas. In 1903, the convent closed. The Bishop of Puerto Rico determined that the convent was too expensive to maintain, and the building faced an uncertain future for 50 years. In the mid-20th century, Robert Woolworth stepped in and invested in a complete rehabilitation of the building, ultimately transforming the aged convent into a stunning, boutique hotel. Reborn as El Convento Hotel, it soon emerged as one of the most popular vacation destinations in all of San Juan. In fact, numerous celebrities—including Rita Hayworth and Truman Capote—were among the first guests to step inside. Further restorations and renovations have rejuvenated the building’s historical and structural integrity, revitalizing the Spanish-style design features of the original convent, such as the architectural details throughout the building’s façade. Among other historic features, a 300-year-old Spanish nispero fruit tree remains in the historic courtyard. El Convento Hotel was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1999.

## Kings Courtyard Inn (1853) *Charleston, South Carolina*

### ***Former Mixed-Use Commercial Building***

The welcoming Kings Courtyard Inn was established in the mixed-use historic Blum Building, which encompasses 192-198 King Street in downtown Charleston, South Carolina. The Blum Building was constructed in 1853 by Colonel J. Charles Blum and was designed by Francis D. Lee in the Greek Revival style of architecture, with Egyptian-style architectural details. This building transformed Lower King Street, changing the neighborhood from single-family homes to mixed-use buildings, with retail trade, rental units, and hotels. Establishments like “F. Petit Confectionary” and “Fancy Goods” and “Mrs. Evan’s boarding house” opened in the 1850s. Over the years, the building saw various occupants and uses, reflecting the evolving needs of Charleston. By the mid-20th century, it had accommodated many different businesses, including a bicycle shop and a skating rink. Despite experiencing periods of neglect, the building's architectural significance endured, and it was lovingly restored to its former glory in 1983. The effort to rehabilitate the building was led by Charleston businessman Richard T. Widman, Founder of Charming Inns®. Original lightwells were transformed into courtyards, and 34

guestrooms were appointed with 18th-century reproduction furniture. The building's stunning, oversized windows, and its stylized columns and delicate ironwork, which were added around the turn-of-the-century, were all meticulously preserved and can be seen at the inn today. The preservation work accomplished at the Kings Courtyard Inn resulted in contemporary comfort for guests, while making the building's architectural significance and its role in the city's heritage accessible to visitors. Kings Courtyard Inn was inducted as a Charter Member of Historic Hotels of America in 1989.

### **Cork Factory Hotel** (1865) *Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*

#### ***Former Cork Factory***

Cork Factory Hotel in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, was once the home of Lancaster Cork Works and the Armstrong Cork and Kerr Glass companies. Built in 1865, the Lancaster Cork Works factory contributed to the region's manufacturing identity, and its infrastructure helped Thomas M. Armstrong, the founder of the world's largest supplier of cork-related goods in the 1890s, expand into the region in 1895. Armstrong named the factory the Lancaster Closure Plant, where the manufacturing of cork gave way to insulated corkboard, fiberboard, and then linoleum products. The Lancaster factories proved so effective in producing the new goods that the entire Armstrong Cork Company completely relocated to Lancaster in 1929. By the mid-20th century, the Armstrong Cork Company was one of the most powerful corporations in the United States, and employed 800 workers at the Lancaster factory. In 1969, the company sold its Lancaster complex to the Kerr Glass Manufacturing Corporation, who retained most of the workforce and honored existing labor contracts. In 2000, the glass factory closed, and a real estate developer transformed the historic brick building into Urban Place, a mixed-use community with offices, restaurants, storefronts, and upscale apartments. One wing of the facility was transformed into a luxurious boutique hotel, which opened in 2009 as the Cork Factory Hotel. Visitors to Cork Factory Hotel can enjoy the restored factory's original brick interior walls and exposed wood ceilings, along with the luxury of a modern hotel. Cork Factory Hotel was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2010.

### **The Inn at Leola Village, Est. 1867** (1867) *Leola, Pennsylvania*

#### ***Former Amish Tobacco Farm***

Nestled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, The Inn at Leola Village, Est. 1867, is a collection of charming 19th-century farmhouses, barns, and other buildings that once supported a historic tobacco farm, but is a romantic destination today. Starting with the construction of the first farmhouse in 1867, this farm cultivated tobacco for the cigar factories in the nearby city of Lancaster. The farm operated until the late-20th century. By 1999, the buildings were abandoned and threatened with demolition, but were saved when preservation-minded caretakers acquired

the land. The new owners transformed the village's several barns, tool shed, two smaller farmhouses, and main farmhouse into a boutique hotel, The Inn at Leola Village, Est. 1867. The team meticulously converted the tobacco barn into a handful of signature suites, showcasing vaulted ceilings and rustic post-and-beam construction. The Wine Cellar Suite in the lower level of the historic Bard House offers guests a unique guestroom with exposed stone walls, an arched reading nook, and exposed beams—as well as an oversized whirlpool tub, luxury king-size bed, and fine appointments. The inn offers contemporary guests the best qualities of Amish life in the 19th century, blended with today's modern comforts and luxury offerings, like an award-winning spa. The Inn at Leola Village, Est. 1867 was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2001.

### **Atheneum Suite Hotel** (1879) *Detroit, Michigan*

#### ***Former Seed Company Warehouse***

Originally a seed company warehouse in Detroit, Michigan, when the city was considered to be the “Seed Capital of the World,” Atheneum Suite Hotel offers contemporary travelers 173 elegant suites with views of the city's skyline. The business's history can be traced to 1856, when businessman Dexter Mason Ferry established his seed-growing company in Detroit, and opened a large warehouse complex on the corner of Monroe Street and Beaubien Boulevard in 1879. The most historic portion of the surviving building dates to 1886, when a newer, grander warehouse was designed by architect Gordon S. Lloyd, who drew inspiration for a new Romanesque-style warehouse from Marshall Field's Wholesale Store in Chicago. Debuting as the largest industrial structure in Detroit at the time, the building stood eight stories tall and featured a marvelous brick façade with limestone trim. The ornate warehouse served as the company's headquarters for decades. By the 1950s, the company expanded into world markets as the Ferry-Morse Seed Company and moved its business operations away from Detroit, leading to the closure of its historic warehouse. In the 1980s, businessman Jim Papas, a Greek immigrant with deep connections to the neighborhood, acquired the site and planned to build an upscale hotel. He recognized the building's rich heritage and directed the renovations to preserve the building's architectural integrity. Papas and his team transformed the Ferry-Morse Company's warehouse into a multi-use urban mall known as Trappers Alley, establishing the Atheneum Suite Hotel at the same time. Part of the historic Greektown neighborhood, the Atheneum Suite Hotel was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2023.

### **La Posada de Santa Fe** (1882) *Santa Fe, New Mexico*

#### ***Former Family Home***

Set on six beautifully landscaped acres in Santa Fe, New Mexico, La Posada de Santa Fe was originally constructed as a private family home. La Posada's history harkens back to the arrival of German immigrant Abraham Staab and his wife, Julia. The Staabs arrived in Santa Fe in the

mid-1850s, after making the arduous journey along the Santa Fe Trail. Their grand family home, now part of a luxury resort in downtown Santa Fe, was completed in 1882. When Abraham passed away in 1913, the house remained a private residence until the 1930s, when the new owners transformed the mansion and adjacent land into a hotel with casita-style guestrooms, calling it La Posada Inn. At the time, Santa Fe was a major stop along historic Route 66, which many Dust Bowl refugees used to travel to California during the Great Depression. New motels, restaurants, and service stations popped up along the route to support the increasing traffic during this era. Although many of these establishments have disappeared, La Posada de Santa Fe has offered fine hospitality ever since, with millions of dollars invested in preserving its 19th and 20th century historic details, while modernizing accommodations throughout the years. For example, in 1987, several historic stables and sheds were converted into new casita-style guestrooms. Ten years later, a larger investment transformed La Posada de Santa Fe into a sprawling, world-class resort, with new facilities like a spa and conference space. More updates and restorations were made in 2013, when the hotel changed ownership once again. Beloved for over 140 years, the historic 1882 Victorian era Staab residence, and surrounding 1930s Pueblo Revival-style casitas, are a fascinating way for guests to discover New Mexico's rich history. La Posada de Santa Fe was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2019.

### **Fairfield Inn & Suites Madison Historic Eagle Cotton Mill** (1884) *Madison, Indiana*

#### ***Former Cotton Mill***

Located on the banks of the Ohio River, Fairfield Inn & Suites Madison Historic Eagle Cotton Mill was built in 1884 as a cotton mill. Local builders Robert Rankin and James White constructed the Eagle Cotton Mill in 1884 to bolster Madison's manufacturing economy. They used money raised through local subscriptions to purchase and relocate equipment from a Pennsylvania mill, and by the turn of the twentieth century, the mill was the city's major industrial plant, with 400 employees producing muslin, canvas, and twine. The mill ceased operations during the Great Depression, and the building housed other manufacturing operations for another 50 years, producing shoes, canvas military goods, ice cream carts for vendors, and refrigerators. Despite its prime location, the building fell into disrepair, and was even listed on Indiana Landmarks' 10 Most Endangered places list in 2013 and 2014. Preservation-minded investors soon saved the building, carefully renovating and restoring it. On the outside, the façade remains mostly the same, as a masonry company repaired more than a million original bricks, and new windows were installed within the original frames. Inside, the building retains its original wooden beams, where visitors can see where factory workers carved their names, and the names of their loved ones, into the wood. Original wood from the mill's historic stairs was repurposed and installed as a statement wall behind the lobby bar. Complementing these historic features, the interior design and artwork highlight the building's history. When the Fairfield Inn & Suites Madison Historic Eagle Cotton Mill opened, it won the Indiana Landmarks Renaissance Award, recognizing its physical and subsequent economic revitalization. Fairfield Inn & Suites Madison Historic Eagle Cotton Mill was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2023.

### Napa River Inn (1884) *Napa, California*

#### ***Former Warehouse***

Napa River Inn is a historic hotel on the Napa River in California's verdant Wine Country. However, this riverfront getaway has not always been a boutique hotel. Napa River Inn was known as the Hatt Building for decades, and served a variety of purposes before its most recent transformation. In 1882, Captain Albert E. Hatt, a German immigrant, decided to invest in a plot of land at the corner of Main Street and Fifth Street in Napa, where he built a massive multipurpose warehouse that became a success. Local merchants used the warehouse to store goods, and the warehouse provided space for Alma Hogan Hatt, Albert's wife, to open a restaurant. On the second floor, the Hatts added a skating rink, library, and dining area. After the Hatt family moved on, the building served as a granary and mill for local farmers for approximately 50 years. After a period of uncertainty in the late 20th century, an investor acquired the building in 1992 with a plan to transform it into a stunning hotel, worthy of the beautiful Napa Valley, while preserving the facility's rich architectural integrity. The Hatt Building debuted as the Napa River Inn in 2000. Today, guests can stay in guestrooms with exposed brick walls that are original to the warehouse, and can even book Captain Hatt's Suite, complete with a fireplace and clawfoot slipper bathtub. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places and once named as one of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Napa River Inn was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2004.

### Ledges Hotel (1890) *Hawley, Pennsylvania*

#### ***Former Glass Factory***

Perched on the edge of Wallenpaupack Creek in Hawley, Pennsylvania, amid the breathtaking scenery of the Pocono Mountains, Ledges Hotel is a tranquil destination with a fascinating industrial history. The five-story Federal-style building dates to the 1890s, when it served as the J.S. O'Connor American Rich Cut Glassware Factory, one of the largest of its kind in the United States at the time. Founded by an Irish immigrant, the factory on Wallenpaupack Creek was water-powered, and one of the county's biggest employers. In 2011, family-owned Settlers Hospitality Group acquired the building to develop a hotel and restaurant that would preserve the aesthetic of this historic building, constructed with Pennsylvania Bluestone. Wood from the trusses of the adjacent Bellemonte Silk Mill was repurposed into modern beds and tables for guestrooms. Décor in the hotel's restaurant, Glass, includes original glass mold prints from the factory, as well as historic images from its factory era. Wood from a fallen 250-year-old copper beech tree was used to create a live edge bar and tabletops for the dining room. A part of the hotel known as "the ruins" was converted into an outdoor lounge space. This area is a guest favorite, and allows visitors to see a portion of the original factory building, where the



architecture blends seamlessly with the surrounding natural rock ledges and waterfall. Merging modern design and amenities with historical integrity and environmental sustainability, Ledges Hotel was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2013.

### **Fairmont Heritage Place, Ghirardelli Square** (1893) *San Francisco, California*

#### ***Former Chocolate Factory***

With history as rich as the chocolate that funded it, the historic clock tower building at San Francisco's Ghirardelli Square has been home to the Fairmont Heritage Place, Ghirardelli Square since 2008. The residential-style, all-suite private residence club allows owners and guests to experience one of San Francisco's most iconic tourist destinations. Many of the hotel's guestrooms feature the factory's original brick walls, as well as breathtaking views of the San Francisco Bay and city skyline. The building was established in 1893, when chocolatier and Italian immigrant Domenico Ghirardelli purchased an entire city block known at the time as the Pioneer Woolen Mill complex. The Ghirardelli Chocolate Company grew exponentially at the end of the 19th century, and the family hired architect William S. Mooser to renovate the entire complex. In the 1960s, the chocolate company moved to San Leandro, leaving a chocolate shop to carry on the legacy at Fisherman's Wharf. But the history of San Francisco's chocolate business lives on through the creation of Ghirardelli Square, a commercial area that preserved the original brick building and architectural details while inviting in new boutique shops and restaurants. Set on the San Francisco Bay, Ghirardelli Square has since become one of San Francisco's most cherished attractions, charming thousands of visitors every year. The historic Fairmont Heritage Place, Ghirardelli Square was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2016.

### **The Kendall Hotel** (1894) *Cambridge, Massachusetts*

#### ***Former Fire Engine House***

The origins of The Kendall Hotel in Cambridge, Massachusetts, harken back to the height of the Gilded Age. During the 1890s, the neighborhood of Kendall Square had rapidly emerged as one of Cambridge's most industrialized areas. Due to the neighborhood's growth, city officials extended a branch of the Cambridge Fire Department to the area. Engine 7, the new station, moved into a state-of-the-art engine house in 1894. Designed by architects R.J. Fitzgerald and S.D. Mitchell of Boston, it contained numerous technological innovations, including advanced steam pumps, coal bunkers, and a novel fire engine. It was one of the region's first single-purpose fire stations, and the Engine 7 Firehouse served Kendall Square until 1993. At that time, the historic Engine 7 moved to a new, modern headquarters. Left abandoned, the fate of the engine house appeared bleak until two preservationists made it their mission to save it. Charlotte Forsythe and her husband, Gerald Fandetti, petitioned the City of Cambridge to transform the

former fire station into a boutique hotel. The city agreed, and sold the building to the couple. In 2000, renovations began to transform the fire station dormitories into modern guestrooms, and the firehouse into the hotel's restaurant. The renovations also restored the building's architecture, and the new owners took great pains to ensure that the fire station's architectural integrity remained intact, as evidenced by their meticulous work revitalizing the building's iconic cupola. Today, the décor is a creative and eclectic mix of historic fire station memorabilia and motifs, Victorian antiques, and contemporary art. The Kendall Hotel was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2004.

### **St. Louis Union Station Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton** (1894) *St. Louis, Missouri*

#### ***Former Train Station***

On September 1, 1894, St. Louis's iconic Union Station—the future St. Louis Union Station Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton—opened its doors. Local architect Theodore C. Link led its design: a magnificent, sprawling complex that stood as a masterpiece of American architecture. Link planned the Grand Hall to resemble a passageway inside a medieval castle; the walled French city of Carcassonne was his inspiration. Ornate details that can still be seen today proliferated throughout the space, such as spectacular gold leaf, wide stained-glass windows, and wall carvings made from Indiana limestone. A stunning, 65-foot-tall, barrel-vaulted ceiling crested the Grand Hall, anchored by a beautiful, wrought-iron chandelier. One of the United States' largest and busiest train terminals at the time, Union Station was home to 22 railroads and 32 tracks in its heyday. Today, the transportation complex has undergone a renaissance that restored and respects its heritage. St. Louis Union Station Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton is at the center of an award-winning family entertainment destination within the historic Victorian-era train terminal. The hotel's guestrooms, meeting and event space, and Grand Hall have been fully renovated and expanded. Clock Tower Suites have train-themed décor, and each guestroom door is marked with the name of a railroad ticketing agent whose offices were once in that section of the building. The train shed is now the St. Louis Aquarium at Union Station. Other entertainment at the complex includes the St. Louis Wheel, carousel, and mini golf. In the Grand Hall, where visitors can watch a 3D light show, the original stained glass and ornate plasterwork have been restored. Designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, St. Louis Union Station Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1991.

### **The Lodge at the Presidio** (1897) and **Inn at the Presidio** (1903) and *San Francisco, California*

#### ***Former U.S. Army Housing***



Built in the shadow of the iconic Golden Gate Bridge, The Lodge at the Presidio is San Francisco's nearest hotel to the bridge and was constructed in 1897. Close by, the historic Inn at the Presidio has the distinction of being the first hotel to open within the Presidio of San Francisco, a 1,500-acre national park site, and was constructed in 1903. These historic destinations are part of Presidio Lodging and welcome guests today, but they originally served as accommodations for officers and enlistees in the U.S. Army. The brick Colonial Revival building that houses the Inn in at the Presidio, Pershing Hall, was named for General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, who served at the Presidio of San Francisco and was commander of the American Expeditionary Force in France during World War I. The Lodge at the Presidio was known as Montgomery Street Barracks and the first unit to occupy it was Battery F of the Third Artillery Regiment, as well as two companies of infantry and a troop of cavalry. When it opened, a newspaper wrote that "The accommodations for the men will be equal to those of a first-class hotel and contain all the modern improvements for health and comfort." Working with the Presidio Trust, Presidio Lodging opened the former military buildings to the public in the 2010s. The hotels both underwent environmentally sensitive restorations, adhering to the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards for historic properties and the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED standards. Most of the buildings' original features—including the exterior, hardwood floors, doors, light fixtures, and staircases—were preserved. Guests can learn about the hotels' history through the curated art collections and historical exhibits at each location.

### [Chicago Silversmith Hotel & Suites](#) (1897) *Chicago, Illinois*

#### ***Former Artisan Workshop and Retail Building***

Steps from Chicago's Millennium Park, the Magnificent Mile shopping district, and cultural attractions like the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Silversmith Hotel & Suites is located in the city's historic Jewelers Row District. Constructed in 1897, this Romanesque Revival-style skyscraper was originally the Silversmith Building, and was built as part of a construction boom that followed an influx of jewelry dealers, designers, wholesalers, and storefronts to the neighborhood. Two large jewelry corporations—the Gorham Manufacturing Company and the Benjamin Allen and Co.—had commissioned the Silversmith Building in 1896, and hired Peter J. Weber of D.H. Burnham & Company to design it. Weber designed a spectacular facade that displayed some of the best architectural motifs in the Loop, incorporating round brick columns and terra cotta tiling. In addition to the Gorham Manufacturing Company and Benjamin Allen and Co., the building was quickly occupied by jewelers. Tenants wanted to work in the central court that provided ventilation and natural light, which was ideal for hammering silver and crafting elaborate jewelry designs. In 1995, the hotel's jewelry tenants moved on, and the hotel was converted into a beautiful hotel. Two years later, the building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and commercial history. Today, this boutique hotel from the Gilded Age nods to its heritage through lustrous silver and crystal decor, and offers guests contemporary, spacious guestrooms featuring 12-foot ceilings. Chicago Silversmith Hotel & Suites was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2016.

## [The Union Station Nashville Yards](#) (1900) *Nashville, Tennessee*

### ***Former Train Station***

The Union Station Nashville Yards was originally a train station, home to the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. Constructed in 1900, the building was once home to a ticket counter, barber and shoeshine stand, a waiting parlor for ladies, a carriage entrance where luggage and supplies were dropped off and brought into the station, a newspaper stand, and an open-air entrance. Union Station served as Nashville's primary train station until passenger service was discontinued in the late 1970s. With the building facing demolition, the community rallied to preserve it. Nashville's "Save Our Station" movement was a success: the U.S. Secretary of the Interior designated the historic train station as a National Historic Landmark, and it opened as a hotel in 1986. Its most recent restoration and renovation was a multimillion-dollar investment in 2023. Today, many of the station's original stone, Richardsonian Romanesque-style architectural and design features have been preserved. Original features to look for include the clock tower, adorned with a statue of Mercury, and the lobby's limestone fireplace, a popular place for couples to exchange wedding vows since 1915. The station's original flooring was exposed during a recent renovation and can be seen in the lobby bar. The hotel has also preserved reliefs on the fifth floor, where this artwork tells the history of human transportation up until 1900. The guestrooms pay homage to the building's history with leather belting reminiscent of vintage luggage trunks, architectural elements inspired by Pullman train cars, antique burnished brass accents, and designs that combine the prominent Art Deco style of the station's heyday in the 1920s with the original Romanesque Revival-style architecture of the station. Specialty accommodations include two luxurious suites: the Conductor's Presidential Suite and a bachelorette-style suite that draws inspiration from first-class sleeper cars. The Union Station Nashville Yards was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2015.

## [The Inn at Diamond Cove](#) (1910) *Portland, Maine*

### ***Former U.S. Army Fort and Barracks***

A beautiful island located in the waters east of Portland, Maine, The Inn at Diamond Cove has been a fixture on Great Diamond Island for decades, and many of its historic buildings date to the early 20th century. The U.S. Army established a military complex called Fort McKinley in the late 19th century, and in 1910, the Army Corps of Engineers expanded the fort with barracks, including a two-story Colonial Revival-style building known as the Double Barrack. Fort McKinley served as the linchpin for the imposing Harbor Defenses of Portland for decades, including during both World Wars. The fort also temporarily lent its munitions to units serving overseas during World War I, specifically offering some of its mortars to act as pieces of railroad artillery. Today, the historic Double Barrack—as well as other buildings like the Quartermaster's Storehouse—are part of The Inn at Diamond Cove. After the fort was decommissioned in the

1960s, the historic buildings fell into disrepair. It was not until the 1990s that an entrepreneur came in to restore the fort, transforming it into a resort community and transforming the Double Barrack into a boutique hotel and the Quartermaster's Storehouse into a restaurant. The Inn at Diamond Cove has been a favorite destination among Maine's holiday retreats since. It has also continued to function as the centerpiece of Great Diamond Island's resort community, which has entertained cultural heritage travelers interested in exploring the area's rich history. The Inn at Diamond Cove is listed in the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2023.

### **JW Marriott Savannah Plant Riverside District** (1912) *Savannah, Georgia*

#### ***Former Power Plant***

By the beginning of the 20th century, Savannah, Georgia, emerged as one of the region's fastest-growing communities. To meet the modern city's demands for electricity, Savannah officials commissioned the development of a sprawling power plant and station along the Savannah River in 1912. For nearly 100 years, Riverside Station helped power Savannah. The plant closed in 2005, its future uncertain, but the Kessler Collection—a collection of hotels known for their elevation of art and design in hospitality—acquired the decommissioned power plant in 2012, and invested millions into transforming the plant into a magnificent hotel. The former power plant debuted as the JW Marriott Savannah Plant Riverside District in 2020. The exterior retains the power plant's iconic twin smokestacks and brick exterior, and the interior was repurposed with the addition of hotel guestrooms, restaurants, shops, and other mixed-use commercial spaces. “We wanted to maintain as much of the existing power plant as possible by finding ways to reveal the history and authenticity of this building,” Diana Kessler, Creative Director, Kessler Design Studio, said of this adaptive reuse project. “When a guest experiences the property, there are many architectural and design details that pull from the history of the power plant.” Today, films, tours, and history exhibit walls tell the story of Riverside Station at the hotel. Guests will discover repurposed steel benches and refinished brick throughout the property: 575,000 pieces of historic brick from the original building were cleaned and used in the rehabilitation. At Stone & Webster Chophouse—named for the plant's original architects—guests can dine inside the core of a century-old smokestack. JW Marriott Savannah Plant Riverside District was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2022.

### **21c Museum Hotel Lexington** (1914) *Lexington, Kentucky*

#### ***Former Bank Building***

The 21c Museum Hotel Lexington dates to 1914, when the Fayette National Bank constructed its headquarters in Lexington, Kentucky. Desiring a grand high-rise, Fayette National Bank hired the well-known architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White to design its new headquarters. In

2012, 21c Museum Hotels—a hotel collection known for adapting historic buildings to use as hotels and arts spaces—acquired the former bank building and hired architectural firms based in New York and Pittsburgh to adapt the Beaux-Arts-style bank building into a hotel. The creative team produced a hotel building that combined contemporary design with the restoration of the building’s Ionic columns, marble walls, Tennessee Pink Marble flooring, and vaulted ceilings. 21c Museum Hotel Lexington opened four years later. Today, the building is both a luxury hotel and a contemporary art museum, welcoming both visitors and the local community to enjoy its curated exhibitions and cultural programming. At the hotel's restaurant, Lockbox, the Fayette National Bank Building’s original safe deposit vault remains intact and has been reimagined as an intimate private dining room for guests to enjoy. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 21c Museum Hotel Lexington was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2019.

### [Hotel Grinnell](#) (1921) *Grinnell, Iowa*

#### ***Former Junior High School***

Built in 1921, Hotel Grinnell was originally the Grinnell Junior High School. Designed by the prominent Des Moines-based architectural firm Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, the Classical Revival-style building lived its first life as a public school, part of a larger complex of school buildings. After the school closed in 1978 and much of the complex was demolished, the surviving junior high school building served as a municipal office building for the city. In the early-21st century, an ambitious entrepreneur invested in the building. Meticulously restored and redesigned, Hotel Grinnell was reborn in 2017 as a modern, eco-conscious boutique hotel, as well as a dining and event destination. The boutique hotel seamlessly weaves its history into every guest's experience, ensuring an unforgettable stay. The front desk was the principal’s office in 1921, and guestrooms are the building’s former classrooms, with original maple hardwood floors and lofty ceilings. Guests receive room keys designed as "hall passes," can review a "primer" detailing the many amenities at the hotel, and are given a necktie to use as the “do not disturb” door hanger. The school’s theater, now an event venue, has a soaring coffered ceiling which was painstakingly restored to its former drama, and a grand staircase that leads up to the hotel’s luxury penthouse suite, originally the dressing room above the stage. Periodic Table, the hotel's restaurant, offers signature cocktails with names like Lunch Lady, Prom Queen, and First Crush. The school’s old locker rooms are now bunk rooms with 10 beds each—designed for big families, wedding parties, or children's slumber parties—and some of the original wood locker room benches are found throughout the hotel. Historic Hotel Grinnell was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2023.

### [Haywood Park Hotel, Ascend Hotel Collection](#) (1923) *Asheville, North Carolina*

#### ***Former Department Store***

The historic Haywood Park Hotel, Ascend Hotel Collection was built in 1923 to provide Asheville, North Carolina with a larger downtown location for its luxury department store, Bon Marché. Asheville's new Bon Marché location was famous for attracting dignitaries and celebrities from around the world when it opened. During the Roaring Twenties, downtown Asheville saw flappers, speakeasies, Prohibition violations, and the popular dance of the time, the Charleston. The Bon Marché offered sophisticated fashion options to locals and visitors alike. Another luxury department store, Ivey's, took over the building decades later, and operated there until 1975. The building's second life was realized in 1985 when—after significant renovations and careful attention to details in the restoration—a Classical Revival-style hotel opened its doors to welcome Asheville visitors. Combining the iconic heritage of Asheville's first department store with a beautiful, modern boutique hotel, the Haywood Park Hotel, Ascend Hotel Collection, honors its rich heritage through its hospitality and style. Guests are encouraged to explore the hotel lobby, which displays a vintage 1929 Ford Model A and historic photographs from the same era—as well as mannequins donning historic fashions and accoutrements that would not look out of place at Bon Marché a century ago. Haywood Park Hotel, Ascend Hotel Collection was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2011.

### [The Emily Morgan San Antonio - a DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel](#) (1924) *San Antonio, Texas*

#### *Former Medical Arts Building*

In 1924, real estate developer Clifton George and architect Ralph Cameron decided that the prosperous, growing city of San Antonio needed a medical arts building. Medical arts buildings were a new concept for the era, a large building for doctors and other medical professionals to practice their various specialties. Rival cities like Dallas and Houston had their own medical arts buildings, inspiring George and Cameron to invest in a triangular plot of land near the historic Alamo. Two years later, the medical arts building—the future Emily Morgan San Antonio – a DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel—opened. It debuted as a 13-story skyscraper, the tallest building in the city at the time, adorned with Gothic Revival-style motifs. Cameron had masterfully incorporated many Gothic-inspired architectural elements throughout his design, including a steeply pitched mansard roof, terra cotta detailing, and a chateau-inspired corner tower. Perhaps the most notable Gothic architectural features are the façade's gargoyles, many of them posing to show a series of ailments. The building was a success for many decades, and it received a new lease on life when it was acquired by hoteliers in 1984. They restored and renovated the building, and converted the building into a hotel. It was named The Emily Morgan Hotel as an homage to the legend of Emily Morgan, a woman who, according to the legend, helped the Texans win the Battle of San Jacinto in 1836 by seducing Santa Anna. Today, The Emily Morgan San Antonio – a Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, provides its guests with some of the city's best hospitality and proximity to the Alamo. Not only have guests continued to find its charming guestrooms to be among the finest in the city, but they have also enjoyed its proximity to prominent historical attractions like the Alamo. The Emily Morgan San Antonio – a Doubletree by Hilton Hotel is

listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Alamo Plaza Historic District, and it was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2015.

### **Hilton New Orleans/St. Charles Avenue** (1926) *New Orleans, Louisiana*

#### ***Former Masonic Temple***

In New Orleans, Louisiana, the history of the Hilton New Orleans/St. Charles Avenue can be traced directly to the founding of the state's first Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in 1845. Louisiana's Freemasons established their headquarters, abandoned it, and then returned in the 1890s. After their third attempt at a Masonic Temple failed to come to fruition in the late-19th century due to poor planning, there was renewed interest in building a permanent home for their lodge. Interest turned into action after World War I, and Masonic leadership commissioned the construction of a new Masonic Temple. The grand building debuted as a stunning 18 story, 100,000 sq ft skyscraper with three elegant ballrooms, a 1,000-seat theater, and a sprawling ceremonial chamber called the Grand Chapel. The architect pulled inspiration from the previous temple's Gothic-inspired eclectic style, albeit in a more modern, nuanced form. Perhaps the most magnificent component of the building's overall appearance was the mixture of antique cypress and pine that were used for the interior walls. The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons occupied the building until 1992, when the lodge moved, and the Masons sold the building to hoteliers. After surviving Hurricane Katrina, the hotel was restored and reintroduced to the city as the Hilton New Orleans/St. Charles Avenue. Today, the hotel offers event space in the historic Grand Chapel, a beautiful event space with restored hand-carved wood ceiling details, colorful stained-glass windows, and original light fixtures. At the hotel restaurant, Luke, guests can enjoy a relaxing atmosphere among the historic carved-wood bar, hardwood floors, and vintage metal-panel ceiling. Hilton New Orleans/St. Charles Avenue was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2015.

### **21c Museum Hotel St. Louis** (1926) *St. Louis, Missouri*

#### ***Former YMCA***

21c Museum Hotel St. Louis is a beautiful surviving example of early Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) architecture, as directed by the organization's Building Bureau. Nearly a century before the 21c Museum Hotel St. Louis opened its doors to guests, the building was known as the Downtown YMCA Building. Constructed in 1926 for St. Louis, Missouri's new YMCA branch, the building served local members of the YMCA. The St. Louis YMCA was designed, in large part, by two noted St. Louis-based architects, Louis LaBeaume and Eugene S. Klein, who worked with the input and approval of the national YMCA's Building Bureau. The Building Bureau was formed in 1915 to ensure architectural uniformity for every official YMCA location in the early 20th century, and they instructed the architects to include rooms for athletic



activities and short-term housing. LaBeaume and Klein met those requirements, and also added their own touches, which can be seen in many of the building's intricate details and Renaissance Revival-style architecture. By the 21st century, the YMCA had moved out of the building, and the building fell into disrepair. In 2018, help came in the form of entrepreneurial real estate developers, who invested in the historic structure and hired architects to transform it into a boutique hotel and art gallery. The developers preserved the building's architectural integrity, ensuring that its heritage remained intact for future generations to appreciate. In its new life, the building kept its community-centered roots by providing a space where travelers and locals can come together to experience contemporary art exhibitions, local cultural programming, and shared meals. Many aspects of the building's original architecture can be seen today. On the lower level, the YMCA lap pool has been restored and renovated as part of the Locust Street Athletic Club, where guests and members can admire the intricate tilework. On the second floor, the former basketball court retains its distinct style and flooring, but it is now used as event and exhibition space for the property's innovative contemporary art programming. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2014, 21c Museum Hotel St. Louis was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2023.

### [Hotel Warner](#) (1930) *West Chester, Pennsylvania*

#### ***Former Movie Theater***

During the Golden Age of Hollywood, communities and studios invested in opulent theaters across the United States to show the latest form of entertainment: motion pictures. In 1930, Warner Bros. Pictures selected West Chester, Pennsylvania, to be the location for a magnificent Warner Theater, a 1,650-seat venue that included the auditorium, as well as a restaurant and shops. The Warner Theater in West Chester was designed by the architectural firm Rapp & Rapp of Chicago, one of the leading designers of early-20th-century movie palaces. Rapp & Rapp famously designed over 400 movie theaters, including the Majestic Theater in Dubuque, Iowa (1910), the Chicago Theatre (1921) and Oriental Theatre in Chicago (1926), and the Paramount Theatre both in New York (1926) and Aurora, Illinois (1931). The design included a magnificent two-story foyer and a three-story tower that supported the marquee. The Warner Theater opened in 1930 with a screening of *The Life of the Party*, a musical comedy starring Winnie Lightner. The theater closed in 1984, and efforts to preserve the building were incomplete: the historic façade and lobby areas survived, but the auditorium was demolished. Investors acquired the building in the early-21st century and restored the historic portions of the Warner Theater while constructing a complementary hotel tower behind it. Hotel Warner opened its doors in 2012. Today, the original theater lobby, with its ornate period staircase, is now a gorgeous Art Deco-style hotel lobby, and a new tower behind the historic theater offers luxurious guestrooms. The Marquee Bar and Lounge serves craft beers, wine, and signature cocktails. Hotel Warner is centrally located, close to the town's restaurants and boutiques, and it is the only hotel in the historic downtown area. Hotel Warner was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2016.

## The Graylyn Estate (1932) *Winston-Salem, North Carolina*

### ***Former Family Home***

The Graylyn Estate in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was built in 1932 to be the country estate of Bowman and Nathalie Gray. With over 60 rooms, it was one of the largest private homes in North Carolina at the time. Hiring a young architect named Luther Snow Lashmit, the Grays established a magnificent estate, located on more than 85 acres, that blended Norman, Gothic, Renaissance, and Classical architectural styles. Nathalie and her sons gifted the estate to Wake Forest University in 1946, and in 1984, the university's Board of Trustees agreed to transform the estate into a boutique hotel and conference center. Today, guests of Graylyn Estate have the rare opportunity to eat, sleep, and play in the home's original spaces. Guests can dine in the home's original Adam-style dining room, and can play chess, read, or work remotely in the Gray family's original library, which is still adorned with rare French wood-paneling installed by the Gray family. Many guestrooms are in the family's original sleeping quarters, including Mr. Gray's Room and Mrs. Gray's Room. Many special events and receptions are held in The Atlantis Room, the sea-themed space of the home's original indoor pool. Guests may add a guided history tour to their stays. Many of the historic public spaces are open to guests throughout their stay. Self-guided tours of the estate are available through a photographic timeline in the lobby, or by picking up a copy of *A Story of Graylyn* to read. The Graylyn Estate was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2016.

“Historic hotels preserve the past to serve the present, making them a beacon of sustainability, as well as fantastic destinations for solo travelers searching for new experiences, couples in need of a romantic getaway, and families setting out to make lifelong memories,” said Lawrence P. Horwitz, Executive Vice President, Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide. “Historic Hotels of America applauds forward-thinking investors and hoteliers who see potential in historic buildings, as well as the guests who choose to stay at historic hotels. At Historic Hotels of America, the 'people saving places' are the guests, hotel staff, and the hotels' communities, who support these special places throughout the year.”

### **About Historic Hotels of America®**

Historic Hotels of America® is the official program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for recognizing, celebrating, and promoting the finest historic hotels in the United States of America. The National Trust for Historic Preservation was chartered by U.S. Congress in 1949 and is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The National Trust for Historic Preservation is leading the movement to save places where our history happened. To be nominated and selected for membership in this prestigious program, a hotel must be at least 50 years old; designated by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as a National Historic Landmark, or

listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; and recognized as having historical significance. Of the more than 300 historic hotels inducted into Historic Hotels of America from 45 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, all historic hotels faithfully preserve their sense of authenticity, sense of place, and architectural integrity.

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