



HISTORIC HOTELS

OF THE ROCKIES

Receiving Presidents While the West Was Won

The Historic Hotels of the Rockies organization recounts a number of notable presidential visits over the past one hundred years.

Rocky Mountain States, USA (October 23, 2009) - Ever since the Office of the President was created, it has been important for the country's leader to travel as a part of his commitment to the American Dream. When the American West was still wild, presidents had need and reason to visit and to be educated on the great expansion across the continent. Several members of the Historic Hotels of the Rockies have hosted a series of presidential visits over the last hundred years played a primary role in shaping this heritage.

One of the most frequent visitors to the West was Theodore Roosevelt. Long before he became President, he was traveling in the West and writing books about the adventures, the opportunities and the lifestyle. In 1898, When the United States entered what later became known as the Spanish-American War, the call was sent out across the still relatively new nation for troops. Twenty-one riflemen, cowboys in their real lives, were sent from the territory of New Mexico and this contingent became the infamous Rough Riders who successfully led the charge up San Juan Hill. Teddy Roosevelt was the Colonel of that brigade. In 1899 the Rough Riders held their first reunion at the "Belle of the Southwest", the Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas, New Mexico, and Roosevelt attended.

Another favorite destination for Theodore Roosevelt was the Historic Hotel Colorado in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, calling it the Western White House in 1905. This elegant neo-Italianate structure overlooks the Colorado River and the world's largest natural mineral hot springs pool, and was conveniently on a major railroad line. Roosevelt was an avid outdoorsman, and as President he began the national preservation of wild lands by designating national forests, bird sanctuaries and national monuments. In 1905, the Hotel Colorado became home to the President of the United States and his assistants for a three-week bear hunt. According to legend, the teddy bear was created at the Hotel Colorado for Mr. Roosevelt after a day of unsuccessful bear hunting. The maids pieced together a toy bear out of cloth and presented it to him, and the rest is history.

Theodore Roosevelt made many trips West, and over the course of his relatively short life he enjoyed stays at other Historic Hotels of the Rockies besides the Plaza and the Hotel Colorado. He was a guest at several Wyoming properties including The Occidental Hotel in Buffalo, the Irma Hotel in Cody, and also at the Nagle Warren Mansion in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Roosevelt's successor as President of the United States, William Howard Taft, also believed it essential to travel around the country, and during his tenure he visited the Hotel Colorado in Glenwood Springs and the Nagle Warren Mansion in Cheyenne.

The Historic Hotel with the most Presidents registered is the Hotel Alex Johnson in Rapid City, South Dakota. After the completion of Mount Rushmore, this first-class accommodation hosted Calvin Coolidge, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan.

All members of the Historic Hotels of the Rockies are proud of their many years of registered guests, whether famous or infamous, and each hotel staff will have tales to relate about how different visitors left their mark. More information and individual hotel websites are available at Historic-Hotels.com.

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About Historic Hotels of the Rockies

An eclectic collection of vintage properties, the Historic Hotels of the Rockies resurrect the glory days of the late 1800's and early 1900's. For detailed information on each hotel, go to www.historic-hotels.com.

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