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FIESTA HISTORY COMES TO LIFE AT THE ST. ANTHONY

San Antonio's Annual Party Takes on a Royal Air at the "Queen of San Antonio"

SAN ANTONIO (April 2016) – Springtime in San Antonio brings more than just wildflowers—it also means that it's time for Fiesta to bloom in full force, taking over the Alamo City for 11 days of celebrations, parties, festivals, parades and more. Fiesta, a celebration that embraces and reflects San Antonio's rich and diverse culture, is marking its 125th year in 2016 and the entire city is ready to mark the occasion. There's nowhere better to bask in the Fiesta spirit than The St. Anthony, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Antonio.

The St. Anthony and Fiesta: Two Peas in a Royal Pod

San Antonio's biggest party of the year and the "Queen of San Antonio" share a history going back to when the hotel first opened its doors in 1909. Fiesta has humble roots in the Alamo City, beginning as a way to honor the memories of heroes of the Alamo and the Battle of San Jacinto. That commemoration still takes place, but over the past 125 years it has grown into a celebration of the growing culture and diversity of San Antonio as well.

When The St. Anthony first opened its doors, Fiesta was in full force, though not quite as elaborately as the myriad of celebrations that have expanded to fill 11 days of April. Once it opened, San Antonio's first luxury hotel quickly became an integral part of the merry making that marks both the Texans' victory at the Battle of San Jacinto and the coming of spring.

The St. Anthony has graciously hosted Fiesta royalty, balls and celebrations for years. From the queen's reception after her coronation to the King's Ball following the crowning of King Antonio, The St. Anthony continues to be interwoven with Fiesta. This connection to a piece of San Antonio history is something that guests to the Alamo City can experience firsthand when they stay at The St. Anthony.

A Hotel Fit for a Queen

Since its earliest days, The St. Anthony has played an instrumental role in Fiesta, serving as host to a reception for the Order of the Alamo queen and her court following their traditional coronation ceremony. These queens reign over extravagant courts of duchesses, 12 from San Antonio itself and 12 from out-of-town. Beautifully costumed, they dance at balls, ride in parades and wear ever more elaborate and expensive gowns as Fiesta continues to grow. While the coronation celebration has rotated to other hotels around San Antonio over the years, The St. Anthony's Anacacho Ballroom provides a unique space to showcase the exquisitely designed gowns worn by the members of the court each year.

The post-coronation celebration is an opportunity for families and the royal court, accompanied by their escorts, to get an up close look at these stunning gowns. For example, in the 1960s, the duchesses' trains

Book It: Fiesta and Its Colorful History Make a Terrific Combination

The tales behind of The St. Anthony could fill a book—and in fact they do: "Dusting Off A Legend: The St. Anthony Hotel" tells the colorful history of The St. Anthony, recounting the hotel's milestones during its more than 100 years as the "Queen of San Antonio". The book shares first-hand accounts of the hotel's history from notable San Antonians, celebrities, employees, and hotel guests as well as striking photographs and details of the hotel's past, including a fabulous array of Fiesta photos.

The book, which is displayed in each of the hotel's 277 guestrooms and suites, is \$50 and is available for purchase at the hotel. Guests of The St. Anthony can book a history tour to learn more about the hotel and its ties to Fiesta during their stay by visiting the hotel's concierge.

hung from the Anacacho Room's second story balcony for inspection by their guests. The classic style and luxury of The St. Anthony provided the perfect backdrop to accent the brilliant, vibrant colors of the San Antonio royalty.

The subtle reminders of the lavish celebrations that occurred during the queen's post-coronation reception are not limited to the Anacacho Ballroom, though. Dresses from these celebrations helped inspire part of the décor installed during the hotel's meticulous renovation and restoration. Fiesta dresses also now adorn the walls of The St. Anthony in the form of photographs: historic photographs of these magnificent dresses and receptions from past Fiesta celebrations hang in many of the guest rooms and hallways throughout the hotel.

Texas Cavaliers Choose The St. Anthony

Over the early years Fiesta royalty has included King Cotton, King Selamat (tamales spelled backwards), King Omala (Alamo spelled backwards) and King Antonio. By 1926, John Carrington formed the Texas Cavaliers, a new male organization, with the goal of keeping alive the memory of the pioneers, whose courage and daring horsemanship won this wilderness for civilization. The St. Anthony has maintained a strong relationship with this historic organization since the early years. In the mid 1930s, St. Anthony owner Ralph Morrison brought in 40 riding horses that he stabled at the Saddle Club for use in a Cavalier tournament. During that period, too, the hotel had a King's Suite where Cavaliers enjoyed dinners and listened to NBC Radio's popular *Parade of Stars* program, during which famed host-announcer Graham McNamee "greeted" the king.

As the organization progressed and grew with the city of San Antonio, one of their main purposes during the Fiesta celebration became choosing King Antonio. The investiture of the king is a highly celebrated event that takes place in front of the Alamo the first Saturday of Fiesta. During the ceremony the King Antonio is welcomed by the mayor and given the key to the city, and later that day he and the Cavaliers attend a lavish celebration known as the King's Ball.

This most austere affair given by the Cavaliers, has been held at all major San Antonio hotels, but for years was hosted by The St. Anthony. By 1971, the group had established its "hospitality room" in the hotel's Cavalier Room. A King's Room had been at the hotel as early as the 1930s, and the past king's portraits were hung there. The portraits now hang in the Cavalier Room at The St. Anthony, a room not reserved exclusively for Cavalier functions, but a place of honor for the Cavaliers which offers a true glimpse of the Cavaliers' rich history and the history of the city itself.

Renovations Reveal and Honor Fiesta History

After meticulous renovations, The St. Anthony has re-emerged as a jewel in the crown of one of the most culturally affluent cities in the country. Known as "The City of Sunshine and Flowers", one need only stroll through the streets of downtown San Antonio during the month of April to get a sense of the vibrant culture that beats through every vein of this unparalleled city.

The renovations were able to not only blend the timeless, classic design of The St. Anthony with a luxuriously modern touch; they brought to life the centuries of San Antonio and Fiesta history literally written in its halls. After stepping into The St. Anthony Hotel, Fiesta history simply comes to life in the form of glorious photographs, sketches, custom carpet designs—not to mention the ballrooms themselves. One of the most poignant examples of this is the distinctive collection of historic black and white photographs from Fiesta celebrations spanning the past century framed to delight the eye. On each floor they tell a different chapter in the story of the famed past of The St. Anthony hotel, and its prominence in the city for which it was named.

The photos and decorations that adorn the rooms of The St. Anthony are at once referential to the historic role the hotel has played and continues to play in San Antonio's annual springtime celebration. Guest corridors feature collections of historic photography and Fiesta dress sketches that showcase the close that Fiesta and The St. Anthony Hotel have enjoyed over the years. The custom carpet design throughout the hotel is a stylized and oversized floral pattern in grey scale tones, referencing the Battle of the Flowers in a modern manner.

The St. Anthony and Fiesta share rich and vibrant histories that in some ways mirror the ascension and growth of city of San Antonio itself. After the recent renovations and grand re-opening of San Antonio's first luxury hotel, there is no better place in the Alamo City to stay and experience the cultural phenomenon that is Fiesta than at The St. Anthony.

About The St. Anthony, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Antonio

A Texas jewel reborn, crafted from the dreams of two Texas cattlemen in 1909, The St. Anthony, a Luxury Collection Hotel, was the first luxury hotel in San Antonio and has remained one of the finest expressions of Texas hospitality for more than a century. Featuring 277 guest rooms and suites, as well as more than 31,500 square feet of indoor and outdoor meeting and event space in the heart of downtown San Antonio, The St. Anthony is an unrivaled classic reborn with contemporary glamour and opulence. The hotel's timeless elegance and tradition, fused with stunning city views and modern design, serve as the epicenter of San Antonio's social scene, including its sixth-floor outdoor pool and tenth-floor rooftop lounge, as well as the storied St. Anthony Club, a cocktail lounge with historic tales to share, Rebelle, San Antonio's newest culinary destination, and Haunt, a bar offering classic cocktails inspired by the haunting legends of The St. Anthony. For reservations or for more information, contact 210-227-4392 or visit www.thestanthonyhotel.com. #TheStAnthony, #TexasJewelReborn

About The Luxury Collection Hotels & Resorts

The Luxury Collection® brand is comprised of world-renowned hotels and resorts offering unique, authentic experiences that evoke lasting, treasured memories. For the global explorer, The Luxury Collection offers a gateway to the world's most exciting and desirable destinations. Each hotel and resort is a unique and cherished expression of its location; a portal to the destination's indigenous charms and treasures. Magnificent decor, spectacular settings, impeccable service and the latest modern conveniences combine to provide a uniquely enriching experience. Originated in 1906 under the CIGA® brand as a collection of Europe's most celebrated and iconic properties, today The Luxury Collection brand is a glittering ensemble of nearly 100 of the world's finest hotels and resorts in more than 30 countries in bustling cities and spectacular destinations around the world. The Luxury Collection includes award-winning properties that continuously exceed guest expectations by offering unparalleled service, style and class while celebrating each hotel's distinctive heritage and unique character. All of these hotels, many of them centuries old, are internationally recognized as being among the world's finest. For more information, please visit www.luxurycollection.com. #theluxurycollection