



THE ST. ANTHONY
A LUXURY COLLECTION HOTEL

San Antonio

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A GLIMPSE THROUGH THE YEARS OF SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST LUXURY HOTEL

A Historical Timeline of The St. Anthony, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Antonio

- 1909** Successful cattlemen, businessmen and friends Augustus H. Jones and B.L. Naylor pour their vision and hearts into opening San Antonio's first luxury hotel, The St. Anthony. The men believe that San Antonio was destined to become an important tourist destination, and a luxury hotel would not only help make this dream come true, but also take advantage of the influx of wealthy people coming to the city.
- The site of the hotel once served as irrigated farmland for Mission San Antonio de Valero, better known as the Alamo.
- The hotel's original tower features 210 rooms. The hotel's concept is credited to the Hot Wells Hotel manager, F.M. Swearingen, who later manages The St. Anthony Hotel. On February 15, The St. Anthony's first advertisement appears under a heading "San Antonio's Leading Hotels," listing it above the Menger on Alamo Plaza and Hotel Losoya.
- 1910** Quickly after opening, The St. Anthony partners engage architect J. Flood Walker to design a second eight-story tower. The addition opens in January, expanding The St. Anthony to a richly furnished, 430-room hotel boasting mahogany furniture and fine tapestries. Rooms include "local and long distance telephones, lavatory and toilet, steam heat, circulating ice water, electric lights and the best furniture and equipment money can buy". Rooms without a bath cost \$1.50 a day and up, while rooms with a bath are \$2.00 and up.
- 1913** Augustus H. Jones, serving as mayor of San Antonio at the time, dies in the lobby of The St. Anthony.
- 1915** T.B. Baker, head of the Baker Hotel Company, purchases 230 shares of hotel stock to become part owner of The St. Anthony. Hotel stationary lists San Antonio as "The City of Sunshine and Flowers". Baker sells his hotel shares in 1930.
- 1924** W.N. Robinson of Kansas City, Missouri a leading American hotelier, buys the hotel from the St. Anthony Improvement Company and the St. Anthony Company, according to the independent executor of the Naylor and Jones estates.
- 1926-1927** The cast and crew of "Wings" makes The St. Anthony home while shooting the American silent war film on-site at Kelly Field in San Antonio. Hotel guests include a "Who's Who" of 1920s Hollywood, with Clara Bow, Gary Cooper, Richard Arlen, Charles "Buddy" Rogers, Jobyna Ralston and El Brendel staying at the hotel. The movie went on to win the first Academy Award for Best Picture at the first annual Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences award ceremony in 1929, the only fully silent film to do so.
- While making "The Rough Riders", director Victor Fleming is also a hotel guest.
- 1934** Newlyweds Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson enjoy supper on the roof of The St. Anthony. Lyndon would later start his political career in 1937 when he was elected to the U.S.

Congress. The couple also belonged to and often entertained friends in The St. Anthony Club, the hotel's private club established in 1959.

1935 In the depths of the Great Depression, the hotel faces difficult times. The St. Anthony begins to deteriorate, and the bank eventually forecloses on the owners sometime before 1935. Ralph W. Morrison, civic leader and rancher, purchases the hotel in 1935 for \$475,000.

1936 The St. Anthony Hotel becomes the first fully-functioning air conditioned hotel in the world. In another first, Morrison adds "phantom doors" to the hotel's entrances on Travis and Navarro Streets. The "magic eye" doors were the only ones in the state.

The hotel's new roof garden, the Rainbow Terrace, opens. The new terrace is one of the largest dance floors in the South.

Morrison purchases "Monarch of the West", a glorious 7-foot-tall painting by Irish artist James F. McCan and places the piece in a prominent place in the hotel's lobby décor. Morrison pays \$40,000 for the piece, which had been on display at San Antonio's Municipal Auditorium. He is invited to put it in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., but chooses to keep it at The St. Anthony. Its specially-designed frame is finished with 22-carat gold leaf, shellacked over to give it a finish.

1937 Morrison pays \$27,000 for a Steinway piano reputedly built in 1924 for the Russian Embassy in Paris that was ultimately located at the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. He purchases it from the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and places it in Peacock Alley, where string ensembles entertain twice daily, seven days a week. While the exact date of Morrison's purchase is unknown, pictures in Peacock Alley feature the piano as early as 1937.

1939 First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt stays at the hotel while she's in San Antonio to give a lecture in nearby Municipal Auditorium, better known today as the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts.

1941 Morrison hires San Antonio architect John W. Marriott to unite the hotel's two towers into a single structure, which later becomes a project where Morrison builds and opens a third, 10-story tower. The renovations create a new main ballroom, christened the Anacacho Room in honor of Morrison's Spofford, Texas, ranch. The name comes from the Anacacho Hills, named by local Native Americans whose word for sunrise and sunset was "anacacho".

Morrison oversees the lobby's renovation and gives it the name "Peacock Alley".

Morrison also adds an innovative motor lobby that features a drive-through registration desk where guests could check themselves in, then retire directly to their room to change before entering the main lobby. Guests' registration information is delivered to the hotel front desk via pneumatic tube so that guests arriving via motor coach never have to visit the front desk. The motor lobby includes a gas station so that attendants could fill up guests' cars and charge it to the guests' room bill.

1948 Ralph Morrison dies at the hotel and ownership of the hotel transfers to the Ralph W. and Louise Morrison Trust.

1959 The St. Anthony hires internationally recognized decorators and design engineers, Dorothy Draper and Associates of New York, to remodel the hotel in a \$1 million renovation. Draper transforms two of the hotel's rooms into The St. Anthony Club, a posh private club that furthers the hotel's prestige. Home to some of the city's biggest business deals, such as the planning of HemisFair '68, and Red McCombs' purchase of the San Antonio Spurs, the St. Anthony Club is where Southwest Airlines' original triangular route of San Antonio to Dallas

to Houston is first sketched on club napkin.

- 1960** "The Alamo" premieres in San Antonio and star John Wayne stays at The St. Anthony. A cocktail reception for 900 is held in the hotel's Anacacho Room. Stars from the film including Wayne, Richard Widmark, Chill Wills, Frankie Avalon, Linda Cristal, Pat Wayne and Richard Boone are all in attendance. Legend has it that John Wayne once used the hotel's laundry chute to exit The St. Anthony without being noticed by press.
- 1966** The hotel completes a 10-year renovation and redecoration project. The project includes the addition of the hotel's serpentine stairway with intricate grillwork.
- 1968** Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey stays at the hotel. Republican rival Richard Nixon is turned away as the hotel is too full to accommodate his campaign staff. Other notable politicians using the hotel over the years include Lyndon B. Johnson (a member of The St. Anthony Club), Ronald Reagan, Robert Dole, George H.W. Bush and George McGovern.
- 1971** San Antonio financier William Ochse purchases the hotel from the Morrison Trust. Under Ochse, the lobby cocktail lounge is redecorated, restaurants moved and enhanced, suites enlarged, meeting rooms refurbished, kitchen upgraded, mezzanine modernized and the Anachacho Room remodeled.
- 1974** Keeping up its tradition of showcasing cutting-edge technology, the hotel is computerized, and checking in and out become extremely simple transactions.
- 1978** The American Automobile Association gives The St. Anthony its Four-Diamond Rating, one of the highest honors a hotel can earn.
- 1981** In April, William Ochse sells The St. Anthony to New Jersey-based Inter-Continental Hotels Corporation. In August, Inter-Continental Hotels, a subsidiary of Pan American World Airways Inc. is sold to Grand Metropolitan Ltd. of London.
- 1982-1983** The hotel closes for a \$27 million remodel in 1982 and officially reopens 11 months later as The St. Anthony Inter-Continental in 1983. After local uproar and a letter writing campaign, the hotel's name is changed back to The St. Anthony. The renovation includes the addition of a rooftop pool.
- 1986** On September 26, The St. Anthony Hotel is listed on the prestigious National Register of Historic Places, recognizing cultural resources worthy of preservation. The hotel is honored for its historic importance to commerce, with its period of significance of 1925 to 1949.
- 1988** Fu Investments Inc. of San Francisco and Hong Kong buys The St. Anthony under the St. Anthony Operating Company. The name reverts to The St. Anthony Hotel. San Francisco-based Park Lane Hotels International operates the hotel.
- 1994** The St. Anthony undergoes a major multi-million dollar renovation of its hallways, lobbies, meeting rooms, pool deck and its 350 rooms, including 42 grand suites.
- 1996** Park Lane Hotels International and Crowne Plaza Hotels announce The St. Anthony will fly the Crowne Plaza flag as of March, although Park Lane retains ownership. The name becomes the Crowne Plaza St. Anthony Hotel.
- 1998** In January, American Property Management Inc. of Albuquerque, New Mexico, purchases the hotel. In November, the name becomes The St. Anthony Hotel—A Wyndham Grand Heritage Hotel and the hotel is ultimately marketed as "The St. Anthony Riverwalk Wyndham Hotel".

- 2001** The hotel's new owners are New York-based Apollo Investments partnered with Prescott Realty Group.
- 2006** The hotel undergoes multi-million dollar renovation, repositioning to compete with San Antonio's newer downtown properties. The hotel's 350 rooms, lobby, restaurant and bar are refurbished.
- 2007** Washington Holdings forecloses on the hotel during the Great Recession.
- 2010** The hotel falls into receivership as revenues plummet in a year when many Texas hotels struggle.
- 2011** The Prism Management Group includes "Riverwalk" in the hotel's name.
- 2012** A partnership of several San Antonio businessmen purchases the hotel with the intent to re-introduce it as a premiere hotel. Sixth-generation San Antonian Clyde Johnson IV and fourth-generation Brandon Raney spearhead the revival of the "Queen of San Antonio". An extensive, multi-million dollar renovation is planned. San Antonio-based BC Lynd Hospitality operates the hotel.
- 2013** After a 21-year absence, The St. Anthony's beloved Steinway grand piano returns to Peacock Alley. The gilt bronzed, hand-crafted piano was bought in auction in San Francisco, where it had been since the early 1990s. Sid Greehey, majority owner of the hotel, offered the winning bid and graciously loans the piano to the hotel.
- 2014** Thanks to the renovation's commitment to restoring The St. Anthony to its true roots, the hotel is the first in San Antonio—and one of the first in Texas—to receive the Texas Historic Preservation Tax Credit. Passed by the Texas Legislature in 2013, the program offers a tax credit when renovating a certified historic structure. While the hotel will have plenty of new, modern plumbing and wiring systems, the renovation will maintain the hotel's original 1909 architecture in the main lobby.
- The renovation honors the history of The St. Anthony, returning the stairs off of the lobby and the registration desk to their original locations. The hotel's front doors are from a revolving door that once graced the hotel.
- The hotel becomes the official hotel of the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, hosting all of the entertainers and celebrities scheduled to appear at the Tobin.
- 2015** **July:** The hotel unveils "Dusting Off A Legend: The St. Anthony Hotel", a new book that 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 celebrities, employees, guests and notable San Antonians, as well as stunning photographs and details of the hotel's past.
- October:** The hotel's grand re-opening celebrates its return to elegance as The St. Anthony, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Antonio.

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 210-354-9244 or visit www.thestanthonyhotel.com.
#TheSt.Anthony #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.