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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® Most Literary Hotels List Is Announced

WASHINGTON, D.C. April 15, 2024 ----- Historic Hotels of America®, an official program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is pleased to announce its 2024 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America® Most Literary Hotels List. This selection of 25 storied and illustrious destinations highlights the authenticity and significance of historic hotels in American history and culture. They were selected for their connections to influential writers and literary movements, or for how they use literature and literary history to enhance the guest experience. Martin Luther King Jr. composed *I Have a Dream*—one of the 20th century’s most influential speeches—at a hotel in Washington, D.C., just before he delivered it to massive crowds. In the Roaring Twenties, a historic hotel in New York City hosted the city’s most “vicious” literary club: The Algonquin Roundtable. Farther south, Margaret Mitchell found a serene North Carolina inn where she could work on *Gone with the Wind*, and William Faulkner penned *The Sound and the Fury* at the same New Orleans hotel where he spent his honeymoon. To the west, historic hotels inspired John Prine, Thomas Savage, Anne Rice, Louis L’Amour, Willa Cather, and Oscar Wilde—to name a few. Four members of Historic Hotels of America are listed on the Literary Landmarks™ Register by the Friends of Libraries U.S.A. Other historic hotels were selected because they offer guestrooms with substantial libraries or fascinating library architecture. Many of the historic hotels on this list offer history tours for visitors to learn more about the hotel’s history, including the hotel’s literary past and cultural connections. Others have curated specialty guestrooms and suites dedicated to the lives and art of writers. The historic hotels on this list all share a commitment to preserving stories from throughout the ages and the places where history was made. Visitors are invited to discover and explore these places, all open to the public.

For more information, please visit [HistoricHotels.org](https://HistoricHotels.org) and [sign up](#) for the Historic Hotels of America Discover & Explore newsletter to stay up to date on new member hotels and offers.

### [Concord’s Colonial Inn](#) (1716) *Concord, Massachusetts*

Concord’s Colonial Inn in Concord, Massachusetts, is a charming Colonial-style hotel located within the Concord Monument Square–Lexington Road Historic District. It was once a series of three distinct buildings, one of which was the family home of American philosopher and author, Henry David Thoreau. Thoreau’s grandfather, John Thoreau, purchased the house in 1799 from the White family, who had built it in 1716. When John Thoreau Sr. died, his widow and two daughters began operating their home as a boarding house. In 1835, John Thoreau Jr. moved his own family, including his sisters, back into the house for the next two years while Henry David, his son, attended Harvard College. Henry David Thoreau stayed at the house while he was in and out of Harvard or teaching. The family sold the inn by the end of the decade. Thoreau went on to write enduring popular works like the essay “Resistance to Civil Government” (1849; also known as “Civil Disobedience”) and personal memoir *Walden* (1854). The Thoreau House is the most historic of the three buildings that became Concord’s Colonial Inn, which opened to the public as an inn in 1889. For visitors interested in learning more about Henry David Thoreau, the historic hotel is 1.5 miles from the Walden Pond State Reservation and cabin site where the writer lived between July 4, 1845 and September 6, 1847, and just 0.5 miles from the Concord Museum. Concord’s Colonial Inn was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2005.

### [The Willard InterContinental, Washington DC](#) (1818) *Washington, D.C.*

The Willard InterContinental, Washington DC is a Grande Dame in the U.S. capital known for hosting heads of state, due to its proximity to the White House, but the storied hotel has welcomed writers, poets, and intellectuals for over two hundred years. From Nathaniel Hawthorne to Mark Twain, this historic hotel has served as a creative sanctuary that continues to inspire. Several notable works with immense cultural and political significance have been composed at The Willard InterContinental, including “Battle Hymn of the Republic” by Julia Ward Howe and *I Have a*

*Dream* by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Howe, a writer and abolitionist, was inspired to write the “Battle Hymn of the Republic” during a trip to the capital in 1861. Moved by the music she had heard during a review of the troops, Howe returned to her guestroom at The Willard InterContinental that night and began to write. By morning, she had written the verses for a new song that served as the spiritual ode to the preservation of the Union. The song lyrics first appeared on the front page of *The Atlantic Monthly* in February 1862. It was an overnight sensation, becoming one of the most frequently sung tunes by Northern soldiers during the American Civil War. Just over a hundred years later, in August 1963, Dr. King composed his *I Have a Dream* speech in the hotel’s lobby on the eve of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The Willard InterContinental is within walking distance of the Lincoln Memorial, and Dr. King stayed at the hotel while he was in the city for the historic event. The Willard InterContinental, Washington DC was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2010.

### **Omni Parker House (1855) Boston, Massachusetts**

In 1877, while visiting Boston, Mark Twain told a reporter that he was staying “pretty near Heaven—not theologically, of course, but by the hotel standard.” Twain was a guest at the Omni Parker House, which opened in 1855 at the dawn of a golden age of American literature. Within weeks of its opening, the hotel attracted many of the greatest literary luminaries of the era, including Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., and Nathaniel Hawthorne. All of these men were members of the illustrious Saturday Club, which met at the Omni Parker House on the last Saturday of every month. Saturday Club members are commemorated in displays throughout the hotel and in meeting rooms that guests can reserve today. Though not in the Saturday Club, female writers also frequented the hotel; Louisa May Alcott and Harriet Beecher Stowe both have meeting rooms named after them. When Charles Dickens visited Boston during his 1867-1868 book tour, he made the Omni Parker House his home for five months. Vestiges of that tour are displayed today, including the original 8-foot-tall wooden door to Dickens’s suite, as well as the mirror that he used to practice dramatic readings of *A Christmas Carol* (1843), which was first performed in the United States at the Omni Parker House. Visitors can learn more about the hotel’s literary past by joining periodic talks and tours by Susan Wilson, historian and author of *Heaven, by Hotel Standards: The History of the Omni Parker House* (2014). The Omni Parker House was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2006.

### **The Sayre Mansion (1858) Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**

The Sayre Mansion in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was built in 1858 in the Gothic Revival style for Robert Heysham Sayre, chief engineer of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Sayre was an avid book lover who amassed a collection of 15,000 books. In 1898, he commissioned an addition to the mansion to house his vast collection. The three-story library boasted extravagant architectural features, and was one of the most impressive private libraries in the country at the time. Mr. Sayre proudly collected some of the rarest volumes and encouraged people to visit and borrow titles. He even employed a live-in librarian to organize and oversee the process. Two historic photographs on display in the hotel lobby feature the library and show Mr. Sayre and the librarian posing with the collection. Sections of the library are visible today in guestrooms 11, 20, and 21. In Room 11, guests can experience the soaring, 25-foot high cathedral-style, gold-toned plaster ceiling that adorned Sayre’s office in his library. Guests may notice a notch in the dome, which secured the spiral staircase leading to the catwalks that accessed the higher bookshelves. In addition to the library’s original vaulted ceiling and chandelier, the two-room suite offers two floor-to-ceiling bookshelves. Sayre’s library included a balcony that overlooked the sprawling bookshelves. The gold coffered ceilings in The Sayre Mansion’s Rooms 20 and 21 once served as the base of the balcony. Visitors may book a stay in a particular guestroom to appreciate the architectural features preserved from the original library. At certain times of the year, ghost tours are offered that take visitors into the home’s unique spaces. The Sayre Mansion was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2013.

### **The Strater Hotel (1887) Durango, Colorado**

Western and science fiction writer Louis L’Amour made The Strater Hotel in Durango, Colorado, his family’s retreat in the late 1960s and 1970s, and wrote many of his Sackett family novels there. Every August during that period, the family checked in to The Strater and L’Amour set up his writing desk in Room 222, which is now dedicated to him. L’Amour and his family would stay for a month at a time. Louis enjoyed this guestroom, as he could write on his typewriter while the ragtime piano below him played into the night, and as his children Beau and Angelique slept peacefully in the room next door. Room 222 is directly above the hotel’s famous Diamond Belle Saloon, where live ragtime music entertains guests. L’Amour once said that the music inspired his characters’ development. The drop-leaf table where he worked is still in Room 222. While the L’Amour family was staying at The Strater Hotel, the author divided his time between writing and hiking in the La Plata or San Juan Mountains. Former owner Rod Barker was a bellman at The Strater Hotel during this era. He recalls the annual arrival of the L’Amour family: “Louis was very easy to know and to like. He seemed to honestly enjoy the hotel staff and was friendly to all of us. We looked forward to

seeing the family each day for breakfast in the dining room. I also distinctly remember moving the trunk full of books and references that Louis brought with him in the family station wagon." The Strater Hotel was inducted as a Charter Member of Historic Hotels of America in 1989, and dates to 1887.

### **The Menger Hotel (1859) *San Antonio, Texas***

In 1882, 27-year-old Anglo-Irish poet and playwright Oscar Wilde traveled throughout the United States and Canada on a lecture tour titled, "The Decorative Arts." Comedic opera writers Gilbert and Sullivan wanted to introduce American audiences to the philosophy of Aestheticism, which Wilde could represent perfectly through his flamboyant clothing and poetic speech, because they needed a receptive audience for their new show *Patience*, about an "aesthete." Wilde, whose best-known works were still ahead of him, wanted fame. Over the course of 11 months, Wilde gave over 140 lectures on beauty and art. Beginning in New York City in January 1882 and ending there nearly a year later, Wilde stopped in cities and towns on a circuit across North America. When he arrived in San Antonio, Texas, on June 21, Wilde checked into The Menger Hotel—today a member of Historic Hotels of America—and spoke that night at the Turner Opera Hall. San Antonio's *The Evening Light* newspaper reported the day after his lecture that, "He was attired in a black velvet suit, ancient in design and picturesque in appearance; the coat and vest being cut a la courtier" and that he had a "nervous temperament." This historic hotel was added to the Literary Landmarks™ Register by the Friends of Libraries U.S.A. in 2000 for its part in hosting Wilde as well as William Sydney Porter (O. Henry), Sidney Lanier, and Theodore Roosevelt. The Menger Hotel was inducted as a Charter Member of Historic Hotels of America in 1989, and dates to 1859.

*Along with The Menger Hotel, two other Historic Hotels of America members—[Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa](#) (1852) in Mobile, Alabama, and the [Palace Hotel](#) (1875) in San Francisco—hosted Wilde in 1882. However, most of the inns and hotels where Oscar Wilde stayed during his 1882 tour have been demolished or repurposed.*

### **The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa (1876) *Riverside, California***

To understand how horror and religious fiction author Anne Rice was inspired by The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa in Riverside, California, one must first understand the drama and artistry of the historic hotel's architecture. Once a small boarding house, the lot was purchased in 1880 by Frank Augustus Miller, who set out on a six-decades-long project to build his beautiful hotel. The overarching architectural style is Spanish Colonial Revival, but there are soaring towers, flying buttresses, and ornate arcades that draw from Spanish Gothic, Moorish Revival, Renaissance Revival, and Mediterranean Revival styles of architecture. Miller traveled the world searching for art, textiles, rare antiques, and building materials to create his dream hotel. Christian iconography and antiques are found throughout the hotel. For example, wood paneling was imported from a Belgian convent. In the 2009 novel *Angel Time*, Rice uses the hotel as a refuge for her protagonist. Due to his circumstances, he is unable to travel to the European cities that he loves—Prague, Siena, and Vienna—but the main character reflects that the hotel gives him a similar atmosphere and fulfills his need to be among Medieval art and architecture. Rice stayed at the hotel several times while writing the book and its sequel, *Of Love and Evil*. She stayed in the hotel's Amistad Suite, which is featured in the story. To honor Anne Rice's legacy at the hotel, the suite is dedicated to her and another writer, Anne Cameron. Visitors can book the guestroom, which is under a hand-painted dome ceiling and features a large concrete fireplace. The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1996 and was designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

### **Hotel Monteleone (1886) *New Orleans, Louisiana***

Throughout its history, Hotel Monteleone on Royal Street in New Orleans has been a popular haunt for many prominent Southern authors and playwrights. William Faulkner honeymooned at the hotel with his wife, Estelle, in 1929. It was during this trip to the Hotel Monteleone that Faulkner penned his renowned novel, *The Sound and the Fury* (1929). Tennessee Williams wrote *The Rose Tattoo* (1951) at the Hotel Monteleone, and Ernest Hemingway used various locations throughout the hotel as the setting for his short story, "Night Before Battle." Hotel Monteleone also appeared in other literary works, including Erle Stanley Gardner's *Owls Don't Blink* (1942) and Eudora Welty's *A Curtain of Green* (1941). But some writers merely stopped by just to enjoy themselves. Truman Capote was a regular at the Carousel Bar, where he jokingly told its other patrons that he had been born inside the establishment. In recognition of the hotel's literary history, the Friends of Libraries U.S.A. added Hotel Monteleone to the Literary Landmarks™ Register in 1999. Family-owned and operated since 1886, Hotel Monteleone was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1999.

### **Hotel del Coronado (1888) *San Diego, California***

Children’s fantasy author L. Frank Baum first checked in at Hotel del Coronado in 1903, and he was a regular guest for years to come. Located on the coast in sunny Southern California’s village of Coronado, Hotel del Coronado opened in 1888 as a luxury oceanfront resort. It is recognizable around the world for its Queen Anne-style architecture, including its gorgeous red cupolas and towers that grace its spectacular rooftop. During Baum’s years wintering at “The Del,” he stayed in several different guestrooms and wrote three books in his famous *Oz* series while staying there. In 2024, guestrooms in the Victorian building are undergoing a restoration, and the hotel anticipates that at least one of the guestrooms where Baum stayed will be labeled and available for guests to book in 2025. To share this history with guests, the gift shop at Hotel del Coronado sells *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), Baum’s most famous work, and includes tales of Baum’s time at the hotel in its guided tours. One of the stories kept alive by the hotel is about a 1905 meeting between Admiral Caspar F. Goodrich and L. Frank Baum. It was dinnertime, and Admiral Goodrich was riding the elevator to the dining room with his family when Baum joined them and the elevator operator in the car. Baum’s jacket collar was lopsided, with one side turned up and the other turned down. “Allow me,” said the Admiral, as he kindly fixed Baum’s collar. Later that night, Baum boarded the elevator again to return to his guestroom. The elevator operator, a very young man, said to Baum, “Do you know who the gentleman is who turned down your coat collar? Why that was Admiral Caspar Goodrich, U.S. Navy.” Baum replied, “And do you suppose Admiral Goodrich knows whose coat collar it was that he turned down?” Hotel del Coronado was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2007, and it was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

### **Green Park Inn (1891) *Blowing Rock, North Carolina***

The historic Green Park Inn was established in 1891 to serve summertime visitors to Blowing Rock, North Carolina—a destination in the Blue Ridge Mountains known for its serene surroundings. Built from hearty American Chesnut and Heart Pine, the inn is a beautiful example of Queen Anne-style architecture. Attracted to the peace and quiet of this charming retreat, author Margaret Mitchell stayed at the Green Park Inn between 1926 and 1929 to work on her famous novel, *Gone with the Wind* (1936). She had started the novel in Atlanta, but traveled to the inn to continue working on it. Mitchell stayed in Room 233 at the Green Park Inn. Over a decade later, in 1937, Mitchell returned to Blowing Rock and resided at the Green Park Inn while serving as a guest lecturer at the Blowing Rock School of English. It was the same year that she received the Pulitzer Prize for *Gone with the Wind*. Green Park Inn was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2012.

### **The Algonquin Hotel Times Square, Autograph Collection (1901) *New York, New York***

Since its beginnings in 1901, The Algonquin Hotel Times Square, Autograph Collection, has hosted New York City’s artists and literati: writers, actors, producers, playwrights, critics, tastemakers, and publishers. Writers like H. L. Mencken, Maya Angelou, and Gertrude Stein called the hotel home when visiting New York, and the hotel is best known for hosting The Algonquin Round Table. In 1919, literary juggernauts including Dorothy Parker, Franklin P. Adams, Robert Benchley, Harold Ross, Robert E. Sherwood, and Alexander Woollcott met for lunch in the hotel’s Oak Room and inaugurated what they called the “Vicious Circle,” better known as The Algonquin Round Table. It was rumored to have been so much fun that they met the next day and kept meeting regularly for a decade to let off steam with similar minds while discussing writing projects, art, politics, and gossip. *The New Yorker* magazine was founded by Harold Ross in 1925 and influenced by the Round Table. By then, the Algonquin Hotel and the Round Table were synonymous. This historic hotel was added to the Literary Landmarks™ Register by the Friends of Libraries Association U.S.A. in 1996. Today, this literary history remains ingrained in the fabric of the hotel. The Round Table restaurant, named fondly after the famed group of writers, still inspires with a tasteful and modern take on American cuisine, serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner to hotel guests and locals alike. It is also an enduring tradition that the hotel lobby keeps a pet cat, named either Matilda or Hamlet—appropriate names for a literary hotel. Since 2017, Hamlet VIII has greeted guests from his cat tree in the lobby. The Algonquin Hotel Times Square, Autograph Collection, was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2023.

### **El Tovar Hotel (1905) *Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona***

El Tovar Hotel and its location on the edge of the Grand Canyon deeply influenced the writings of Zane Grey, one of America’s most prolific and popular early-20th century Western authors. Grey visited El Tovar Hotel in 1907, just two years after it was constructed by the Fred Harvey Company, and he was captivated by the vastness of the Grand Canyon, with its towering cliffs and deep gorges. The vista stirred his imagination and inspired him to explore themes of adventure, courage, and the untamed wilderness in novels like *The Vanishing American* (1925), *The Heritage of the Desert* (1910), and *The Call of the Canyon* (1924). By incorporating his impressions of the Grand Canyon into his stories, Grey hoped to transport readers to the dramatic landscapes of the American West, and his books helped to popularize the Grand Canyon as a symbol of the West. Today, El Tovar Hotel is considered the premier lodging facility at Grand Canyon National Park. Constructed of native stone and Oregon pine, this historic hotel was built as a destination resort and provides an air of venerable dignity. Located just steps from the rim of the

canyon, it is one of only a handful of Harvey House facilities still in operation today. To celebrate this famous literary guest, El Tovar Hotel offers guests the chance to stay in the Zane Grey Suite, complete with an attached sitting area and balcony, and appointed with unique wall art reminiscent of the author's works. El Tovar Hotel is part of Grand Canyon National Park, and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2012.

### **The Fairmont Hotel San Francisco (1907) *San Francisco, California***

Stay in a room with a view *and* a library at The Fairmont Hotel San Francisco, where guests can book the 6,000 sq ft Penthouse Suite that spans the entire eighth floor of the hotel, and has hosted kings, rock stars and presidents. The suite's library spans two stories, complete with a domed ceiling decorated with an original gold-leaf celestial map. There is even a secret passage behind one of the bookcases, through which Marilyn Monroe is rumored to have discreetly passed through after meeting with President John F. Kennedy. This unique suite spotlights the city's celebrated skyline, famous bay, and signature landmarks from large windows. Custom furnishings, hand-carved wood, and original artwork by famous artists like David Hockney accent the regal golds, purples, and blues, setting the tone of the suite's 1920s eclectic opulence. The library's holdings are from the private literary collection of a former owner of the hotel. Benjamin Swig lived in the Penthouse Suite with his family until his death in 1980. The following year, the residence was turned into an exclusive suite for guests. Most of the books in the Penthouse library were curated and donated by the Swig Family. Guests can book the Penthouse Suite, grab a book, and escape the mundane from the suite's private balcony, with sweeping views of the city and the bay. The Fairmont Hotel San Francisco was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2001.

### **The Plaza (1907) *New York, New York***

The Plaza in New York City has a rich history of hosting numerous authors and writers throughout the years. Many literary figures have stayed at The Plaza or frequented its renowned Oak Room and Palm Court, drawing inspiration from its luxurious surroundings and iconic ambiance. Notably, the hotel was a favorite haunt of authors F. Scott Fitzgerald and Zelda Fitzgerald, who were known for their extravagant lifestyle and often stayed at The Plaza during their time in New York City. Truman Capote, author of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958) and *In Cold Blood* (1966), was also a frequent guest at The Plaza in the 1960s, and he often held gatherings and parties in his suite, attracting other literary luminaries of the time. Famously, he hosted a legendary birthday bash—a masquerade ball known as the Black and White Ball—for *The Washington Post* publisher Katharine Graham in the Grand Ballroom in November 1966. Another author, Kay Thompson, resided at The Plaza in the 1950s and was inspired by her time there to create the mischievous Eloise character, the star of the *Eloise* children's books. Published in 1955, the first book in the series describes Eloise's life living with her nanny in one of the hotel's penthouse suites. The series follows her misadventures and escapades in the luxury hotel. Today, The Plaza offers guests the chance to book [The Eloise Suite](#), designed by Betsey Johnson. Located on the 18th floor, the suite is resplendently decorated according to the character's taste, and is equipped with a DVD player and Eloise DVDs, books from the series, a tea set and Eloise and Weenie dolls, and Eloise robes and towels. Guests also have the option to book an adjoining "grown-up" Edwardian Suite. This historic hotel was added to the Literary Landmarks™ Register by the Friends of Libraries U.S.A. in 1998. The Plaza opened in 1907 and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1991.

### **Hotel Boulderado (1909) *Boulder, Colorado***

The Hotel Boulderado in Boulder, Colorado, has been a magnet for creative talent for over a century, perhaps drawn to its dramatic mountain views and sunsets, the nostalgia of the lobby, or the importance of music in the small Western city that attracts musicians and songwriters. One of those visiting artists was folk singer/songwriter John Prine, who loved Hotel Boulderado and wrote songs influenced by his time in Boulder. In "Come Back to Us Barbara Lewis Hare Krishna Beauregard" on his album *Common Sense* (1975), Prine refers to the hotel:

*Can't you picture her next Thursday?*

*Can't you picture her at all?*

*In the Hotel Boulderado*

*At the dark end of the hall*

This album was released in 1975, before the hotel's North Wing was built, and mentions the dark end of the hall, which suggests that he stayed in the historic wing. Guests can wander down the hotel's long hallways lined with historic artifacts and curtained windows. Prine would return to stay at the hotel regularly for over 40 years until his death. Prine, who once told *The Guardian* in 2016 that he considered lyrics a unique form of

literature, was posthumously named Honorary Poet Laureate of Illinois in 2020. In 2024, Hotel Boulderado introduced a new music history tour that includes information about John Prine’s connection to the hotel. The hotel also partners with the University of Colorado and the Colorado Shakespeare Festival to ensure lodging for their visiting artists. Hotel Boulderado opened in 1909 and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1996.

### **The Otesaga Hotel (1909) Cooperstown, New York**

The Otesaga Hotel has a prime location in Cooperstown, New York, on the shores of Otsego Lake. Cooperstown is named for the family of James Fenimore Cooper, author of one of the first critically acclaimed American novels, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). The New York village where Cooper grew up in the 1790s inspired him to write “The Leatherstocking Tales,” a series of five novels—including *Mohicans*—about Natty Bumppo, an 18th-century European-American frontiersman often nicknamed “Leatherstocking” or “Hawkeye.” The world explored by the protagonist in the novels was drawn directly from Cooper’s own memories of Cooperstown. And just as Cooper drew inspiration from his hometown, Cooperstown has been inspired by its favorite author, as evidenced by the names of sites all around the village and most especially at The Otesaga Hotel. The dining room where The Otesaga’s famed breakfast is served is called Glimmerglass, and a smaller private dining room next door is called Fenimore. The hotel’s Hawkeye Bar & Grill, Hawkeye Spa, and Natty Bumppo meeting room all refer to the protagonist by name, and the resort’s Leatherstocking Golf Course is located between the hotel and the neighboring Fenimore Art Museum. The Otesaga offers a daily history tour, which guides visitors through the connections between the author and the region. The hotel can also recommend other sites around town, such as the Fenimore Art Museum, where visitors can learn even more. The Otesaga Hotel opened in 1909 and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1994.

### **The Andrus Hotel (1917) Dillon, Montana**

For more than a century, The Andrus Hotel has offered a charming retreat for guests and locals alike, with its central location in the Old Town neighborhood of Dillon, Montana. The town and the hotel both influenced the writings of Western author Thomas Savage, who moved to Dillon first as a teenager to attend high school in the early 1930s, and then returned in 1942 with his family. His experiences in Dillon and the surrounding area provided him with a deep understanding of the landscape, the people, and the culture of the American West, an understanding that is reflected in his novels. Professor Dr. O. Alan Weltzien, author of *Savage West: The Life and Fiction of Thomas Savage* (2020), wrote of Savage: “Savage possessed a photographic memory and he kept [reincorporating] The Andrus as a way to satirize local high society: the movers and shakers in the town several generations ago. He set scenes in the Hotel’s big lobby, dining room, and even an upstairs corner room and plainer room (along its west side) facing an alley. Of these locations, he most often used the lobby, an informal town center, to characterize old ranchers, traveling salesmen, and others.” Dillon and its surroundings served as the backdrop for several of Savage’s novels, including *The Power of the Dog* (1967), *The Sheep Queen* (1977), and *The Corner of Rife and Pacific* (1988). Readers can delve into the lives and landscapes of The Andrus Hotel through Savage’s enduring novels like *The Power of the Dog*, which was adapted into an award-winning movie in 2021 directed by Jane Campion. The Andrus Hotel opened in 1917 and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2021.

### **The Broadmoor (1918) Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Truman Capote and Harper Lee—two of the most famous American authors of the 20th century—visited The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Colorado, together in 1963. The pair were childhood friends who met when their families were neighbors in Monroeville, Alabama, and bonded over their shared love of literature. In the early 1960s, shortly after Harper Lee had submitted her final manuscript for *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960), she and Capote teamed up to research a grim news item that had intrigued Capote. The murder of a family in Holcomb, Kansas, became the inspiration for a series of articles by Capote and finally his nonfiction novel, *In Cold Blood* (1966). Together, they interviewed people who knew the family over the course of several years. The friends stayed at The Broadmoor at least once when they were in the region and were photographed there together in 1963. (The drive between Holcomb and The Broadmoor is about 4.5 hours.) *In Cold Blood* was published in 1966 and it instantly became a bestseller, a gruesome work of nonfiction famous for being one of the first popular works to blur the lines between journalism and literature. According to the resort’s historian, Truman Capote loved the hotel and visited on several occasions throughout his life. During the 1967 filming of the movie adaptation of *In Cold Blood*, Capote hosted dinners for his friends in the award-winning Penrose Room. As he left the dining room each night, he would say to the Maître d: “I want to thank you so much for being so kind to my dinner guests.” The Broadmoor was inducted as a Charter Member of Historic Hotels of America in 1989, and dates back to 1918.

### **La Fonda (1922) Santa Fe, New Mexico**

La Fonda's rich literary heritage is exemplified by its association with renowned authors and the profound literary works that have been crafted within its walls. Notably, the esteemed American author Willa Cather was inspired to write, and eventually penned her seminal novel, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927), during her stay at this historic hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This timeless work, set in the vast landscapes of the New Mexico Territory, captures the essence of the region's cultural and historical complexities, reflecting the unique atmosphere and inspiration found at La Fonda. In recent years, Santa Fe historian and author Garrett Peck has collected evidence of Cather's time at La Fonda for his forthcoming book about the author (*The Bright Edges of the World: Willa Cather and Her Archbishop*) and her time at La Fonda. She stayed there with her partner, Edith Lewis, in the summer of 1925, and for a full month in June 1926. In his upcoming book, Peck cites a 1931 interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle* as clear evidence that La Fonda was where the book was born. Cather explained to the reporter that the idea came to her in the night while she was staying at the hotel in 1925: "Then, before morning, the story was in my mind. The way of it was on the white wall of that hotel room in Santa Fe, as if it were all in order and color there, projected by a sort of magic lantern." The couple returned the following year and Cather, with Lewis's help, worked furiously on the novel from rooms at the hotel. *Death Comes for the Archbishop* was published the following year and is considered by critics to be one of the 20th century's greatest novels. La Fonda opened in 1922 and was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1991.

### **The Mayflower Hotel, Autograph Collection** (1925) *Washington, D.C.*

The night before his first inauguration as the 32nd President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt and his party were guests at The Mayflower Hotel, Autograph Collection in Washington, D.C. Steeped in presidential history, this historic hotel is situated on Connecticut Avenue, just a few blocks away from the White House. From Suites 776 and 775, Roosevelt perfected his historic First Inaugural Address, which sought to allay the fears many Americans felt as they experienced the Great Depression. The speech—at least portions of it—was written at the hotel. Roosevelt's arrival in the capital in March 1932 was a momentous occasion during a difficult era, and Roosevelt's inaugural speech was eagerly anticipated by millions of Americans. His powerful words, broadcast nationwide, delivered a positive message of hope and resilience:

This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.

The Mayflower Hotel, Autograph Collection was inducted into Historic Hotels of America as a Charter Member in 1989 and dates to 1925.

### **Hawthorne Hotel** (1925) *Salem, Massachusetts*

Hawthorne Hotel in Salem, Massachusetts, opened in the historic town's central neighborhood in 1925 and was named after author Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose life and works are closely associated with the town. The Hawthorne Hotel, which overlooks Salem Common and the Salem Witch Museum, is the perfect base for exploring Hawthorne's world. A walk around the Salem Common and Derby Street neighborhood takes visitors past Hawthorne's childhood home, the house where he wrote *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), the Custom House where he worked as a surveyor, and the iconic House of the Seven Gables—the backdrop for his famed novel of the same name. The hotel's history is intertwined with the arrival of artist Bela Pratt's 1910 sculpture of Nathaniel Hawthorne in Salem Common. The statue stood for nearly a decade at the front entrance to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and was acquired by the Hawthorne Memorial Association just as the hotel was preparing to open. With the arrival of the sculpture and the hotel's nearby location, the founders agreed to name the hotel after Hawthorne. Today, guests are invited to learn about Nathaniel Hawthorne's connection to Salem within the hotel, too. At the hotel's restaurant Nathaniel's, guests can order a modern take on his favorite bread pudding. A portrait of the writer is the centerpiece of the dining room, with framed plaques about his family, work, and life adorning the walls. In the hotel lobby, his popular novels are prominently displayed. In Spring 2024, the hotel is offering a "Literary Legacy of Nathaniel Hawthorne" package for guests who want to learn more. This package includes a guided tour of the House of the Seven Gables, a copy of *The Scarlet Letter*, a certificate for Hawthorne's favorite dessert, and a walking map highlighting Hawthorne's neighborhood. Hawthorne Hotel is part of the Salem Common Historic District and the hotel was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1991.

### **Inn on Boltwood** (1926) *Amherst, Massachusetts*

Two esteemed American poets are closely associated with the historic Inn on Boltwood in Amherst, Massachusetts: Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson. Opened in 1926 and owned by Amherst College, the inn was occasionally the home of Robert Frost during his time teaching at the college in the 1910s and 1920s. Frost stayed in Room 13, which was later changed to Room 6 after the inn's restoration and renovation in 2011. Frost gave his first lecture at the college in 1916, before the inn opened, and began staying at the inn when visiting Amherst to teach in the 1920s. Originally from San Francisco, Frost admired Amherst for its serene and picturesque settings, the kind that influenced much of his poetry.

Another writer honored at the hotel is the poet Emily Dickinson. In the 18th century, Dickinson lived and worked in Amherst her entire life. Although that life preceded the Inn on Boltwood, several of the inn's event spaces are named after Emily Dickinson and Samuel Fowler Dickinson, her grandfather and one of the founders of Amherst College. The inn is within walking distance of the Emily Dickinson Museum (also owned by Amherst College). Inn on Boltwood was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2011.

### **Omni Berkshire Place (1926) *New York, New York***

After waking up at New York City's historic Omni Berkshire Place, guests might be tempted to hum, "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" because this is the hotel where *Oklahoma!*—and a famous American theater duo—was born. The first musical collaboration between theater composer Richard Rodgers and lyricist and producer Oscar Hammerstein II emerged when they met at the hotel in Spring 1942 to discuss a project that became *Oklahoma!*. A grand hotel located between Madison and Fifth Avenue, artists and socialites have been known to make the Omni Berkshire Place their permanent address, and theatergoers would flock to its famous Barberry Room for dinner and drinks after a show. After Richard Rodgers's regular writing partner left the country, he pursued working with Oscar Hammerstein II on a new musical based on the 1931 play *Green Grow the Lilacs*. That spring, they met in the hotel's Barberry Room, now called Berk's Bar, to discuss an adaptation. From that meeting came the first Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, the wildly popular *Oklahoma!*, which ran on Broadway for five years and nine weeks. The hotel's presidential suite is named the Rodgers & Hammerstein Suite in their honor, with a plaque placed in the suite in 1972 by The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. Omni Berkshire Place, a member of Historic Hotels of America since 2010, dates to 1926.

### **The Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa (1927) *Sonoma, California***

Author Jack London is known for setting his novels, such as *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and *White Fang* (1906), in places far-flung from most of his readers, such as the South Pacific Ocean and the Yukon Territory, but Sonoma County, the home of the historic Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa, frequently appears in Jack London's works. London's formative years—and his final years, as well—were spent in Northern California. During the last years of his life, London reportedly wrote 1,000 words a day to finance his sprawling ranch atop Sonoma Mountain. London passed away in 1916, at the age of 40, and the resort hotel opened 11 years later. Now operated by the state of California as the Jack London State Historic Park and open to the public, London's ranch is a 15-minute drive from the Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa. Although London never visited the hotel, it honors him as a local historic figure and named one of the hotel's signature suites after the novelist. The iconic Spanish Mission-style resort offers guests the opportunity to stay in its Jack London Suite, which features décor inspired by the writer. Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 2014.

### **The Don CeSar (1928) *St. Pete Beach, Florida***

Nestled on St. Pete Beach in Florida, The Don CeSar is a beacon of luxury that opened at the height of the Roaring Twenties. Named for the chivalrous character Don César in William Vincent Wallace's 1845 opera *Maritana*, the grand resort hotel instantly attracted some of the era's biggest stars, including writers such as F. Scott Fitzgerald. One of the most recent among its celebrated literary connections is novelist Nicholas Sparks's 2022 novel, *Dreamland*. Sparks's work is about a young couple that meets right in front of The Don CeSar, and it weaves a narrative of love, loss, and redemption that resonates deeply with readers. The themes of the book echo the hotel's early lore. In the 1890s, future hotelier Thomas Rowe attended the opera *Maritana* where he met Lucinda, a beautiful opera singer. Thomas and Lucinda fell in love; he called her "Maritana," and she called him her "Don César," after the characters in the opera. But Lucinda's parents disapproved, and the lovers parted. Heartbroken, Thomas moved to Florida and founded The Don CeSar, a tribute to his lost love. While it is unknown if the hotel's romantic origins inspired Sparks, the author is a frequent guest of the resort. The Don CeSar was inducted as a Charter Member of Historic Hotels of America in 1989 and dates to 1928.

"Historic Hotels of America is pleased to announce The 2024 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Literary Hotels List during National Poetry Month this April," said Lawrence P. Horwitz, Executive Vice President of Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide. "This list of 25 authentic hotels underscores the value of historic places in literary history. Historic hotels are not merely locations where, by chance, writing happened. They are unique, with their own charming personalities, and offer the best in hospitality, which together encourage guests to be productive in their writing craft."



**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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