



HISTORY SHEET

In the early 1900s, the city of Boulder was already a prosperous and refined city, home to the University of Colorado and a hub for the Chautauqua educational movement.

The boom, caused by gold and silver mining was over, but tourists now flocked to the "Athens of the West" because of its cultural advantages, natural beauty and accessibility by train. The people of Boulder realized that they needed an upscale hotel that would accommodate these sophisticated visitors. The cities' business people sold stock to their fellow citizens and formed the Boulder Hotel Company to build a spectacular hotel that would do justice to their cosmopolitan city.

The name they picked for the hotel was a combination of "Boulder" and "Colorado," so no guest would ever forget where they had stayed. Local architects William Redding & Son designed the five-story brick and red sandstone building, blending Italian Renaissance and Spanish Revival styles. The result was splendid. The stained-glass ceiling that crowns the atrium was constructed with cathedral glass imported from Italy and echoes other open court hotels such as the Belle Epoque Palace Hotel in San Francisco. The hotel's marvelously unique details include Spanish-style arched windows, bracketed cornices, and iron railings and curved gables throughout. The curved cherrywood staircase starts in the lower level at the speakeasy-style bar, License No. 1, and climbs all the way to the fifth floor, high above 100-year-old mosaics in the lobby floor. A stunning balcony has become a beloved spot for countless weddings, with views of the lavishly appointed mezzanine and historic stained-glass ceiling.

The city celebrated the birth of their new hotel with a New Year's Eve Gala in 1908. The next morning, on New Year's Day 1909, Hotel Boulderado opened for business. To this day, the hotel throws an epic New Year's Eve party to celebrate their official birthday.

Progressive local politics and the Women's Christian Temperance Union made Boulder a dry city in 1907, nine years before Prohibition. Boulder remained dry until 1967, when Hotel Boulderado became one of the first businesses within the city limits to obtain a liquor license -- which is why the underground, speakeasy style bar is called License No. 1.

Hotel Boulderado has always been the meeting place for the most important people of the era. Celebrity guests over the years have included everyone from Ethel Barrymore and Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., to Clarence Darrow, Helen Keller, Robert Frost, Benny Goodman, and Louis Armstrong.

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The hotel has lived many lives, but always served as the heart and soul of the city. The latest restoration has ensured it surpasses even its original grandeur, retaining its dashing Victorian style, while also featuring all the amenities and luxuries of the 21st century.

Today, Hotel Boulderado is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a City of Boulder Landmark. You can learn more about the hotel's history through intriguing exhibits tucked throughout that give a taste of bygone life in Boulder, or by taking an award winning self-guided tour of the 3rd floor of the historic wing.

These historic accolades, along with the vibrant social scene that the Hotel Boulderado is known for today, make it a beloved destination for guests and locals alike. The warm welcome and attentive service that the hotel is famous for are a reflection of the cities' status as the "Happiest Place to Live" in the United States (*National Geographic*, October 2017).

Stop into Hotel Boulderado and ride the original Otis elevator in the lobby—still operated by a member of the staff—or sip on a signature cocktail in our historic lobby, and imagine all of the personalities and events that have shaped the hotel and the city of Boulder, knowing you are now a part of it all.

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