

ARCHITECTURE

Identifiable by its red brick exterior with stone trim and wrought iron details, The Plaza Hotel boasts character in bunches. Designed in 1925 by architect George W. Adams, the building claims countless classic Art Deco features. Machine-age streamlining and sleek geometry is emphasized around every corner. From the European character at check-in to the original tile floors symbolizing peace and hope that predate 1925, walking into The Plaza Hotel is an experience found nowhere else in the city.

Because of the timing of construction, the Great Depression played a huge role in the final style of the project. The tight budget composed the second phase of Art Deco, complete with more subdued colors and unornamented accessories. The juxtaposition of two phases of the same Art Deco trend under one roof makes The Plaza Hotel a fascinating artifact in Milwaukee, and U.S., history.



HISTORY OF THE PLAZA HOTEL

1925 TO NOW



HISTORY

Built in 1925, The Plaza Hotel was originally constructed as two buildings. Influenced largely by the lavish Roaring Twenties, the trendy Art Deco architecture immediately became a fixture on Milwaukee's Lower East Side.

The building trudged through the Great Depression, saving money on paint by coloring the walls white and grey instead of flashy pigments. It did its part during World War II, serving as one of Milwaukee's first bomb shelters, as well as providing cots for sailors traveling through Milwaukee. In 1950, a seemingly reserved lunch counter was installed, and Café at the Plaza was born, a vibrant local Milwaukee treasure.

In 1984 the building, along with its rich history, was sold to the Crichton family. Only the second owners the building has ever had, the Crichtons still own and run The Plaza Hotel to this day.

01 THE PLAZA HOTEL WAS BUILT IN 1925

- The hotel was (and still is) Art Deco European down to the last detail, from the etched glass to the geometric carpeting to the large potted plants.
- Established early in the hotel's development, the Café originally played the role of Tea Room and gathering spot for guests.

HAPPENINGS OF THE ROARING 20'S

- The beginning of the Jazz Age and dance styles gained national popularity.
- A technological boom introduced everything from the Model-T to the vacuum cleaner.
- Women gained the right to vote in 1920 and started participating in the economy.

02 THE PLAZA FROM 1930-1950

- Instead of withering away during the Great Depression, Art Deco morphed into a different aesthetic for both pragmatic and conceptual reasons, providing a stark contrast in the style seen throughout today.
- In the current Café space or, as it was known back then, the Tea Room, cots were lined row by row to house traveling Navy sailors looking for respite from World War II.
- The Tea Room became a full-service café in 1950 with a counter installed that still hosts a good cup of coffee and conversation every day.

03 THE PLAZA TODAY

- All rooms feature a fully furnished kitchenette for four including bakeware, cookware, Keurig coffee maker and coffee and tea services.
- Free WiFi and flat-screen TVs available in every room, just like they drew it up in 1925.
- Custom spa treatment available from professional physical therapist by appointment.

ORIGINAL ELEMENTS

- The colorful tile floors are all from the day the lobby and café areas were open.
- Of course, the lunch counter is a fan favorite.
- Vintage wall sconces for lighting fixtures in the hallways are exact replicas of the originals.
- Mythological tile work and European-style etched glass doors in the Café haven't changed since day one.

TODAY

Continuing to renovate and restore, The Plaza Hotel strives to preserve many of the original historic allures while including modern amenities and the latest technology. A classic "walk-up" European-style hotel, it's as eclectic as it is charming. From the original 70-year-old café counter (yes, it's the same one) to the wrought iron staircase (don't worry, we'll help with your bags), The Plaza Hotel is a true neighborhood boutique hotel and Milwaukee cornerstone.

