

FAIRMONT OLYMPIC SHINES LIGHT ON HISTORIC ELEMENTS OF STORIED PAST

First Chapter of Historic Hotel's Major Restoration Project Set to Open April 30, 2021



SEATTLE, Wash. — Soulful landmark. New passion. Located in the heart of the city since 1924, Fairmont Olympic is Seattle's iconic hotel and the home away from home for many generations. On April 30, 2021, our timeless landmark evolves for a new era when we unveil our grand transformation and shine a light on a few historic elements of our storied past – original flooring, ornate chandeliers and new history walk.

Restoration of Original Flooring:

During the initial phase of the restoration, some of The Olympic Hotel's original terrazzo and marble flooring were uncovered on multiple staircase and staircase landings. This original flooring was hand-laid by artisans from Italy in 1924 when the hotel opened and was hidden by carpeting for over half a century. This original historic flooring was repaired, restored and refinished to its original splendor.

- For a look into the uncovering and restoration of the original flooring, [click here](#).

Relocation of Ornate Chandeliers:

The Olympic Hotel's most celebrated and ornate crystal chandeliers are those from The Georgian Restaurant and Spanish Ballroom. Crowning statements of elegance, grace and glamour, these historic chandeliers have presided over decades of celebrations and momentous occasions. It was of utmost importance for the hotel to retain these treasures from the past during the grand restoration, so they continue to be a part of the hotel's historic story for centuries to come.

Weighing close to 300 pounds each, The Georgian's historic chandeliers were carefully dismantled; removing, labeling and carefully wrapping each individual crystal. Following a full restoration, the chandeliers were meticulously reassembled to their original brilliance and placed in their new location, the foyer adjacent to the Spanish Ballroom. The Spanish Foyer is a fitting place for their relocation, as this space in 1924 was the Assembly Lounge, a gathering place for Seattleites.

- For a behind-the-scenes look at the relocation of our ornate crystal chandeliers, [click here](#).

Meticulously Curated History Walk:

Paying tribute to The Olympic Hotel's rich heritage and history, the new *history walk* wraps around the Mezzanine level. Through old photographs, newspaper articles, historical documents and artifacts such as the first guest registry and guest correspondence letters, these visual elements give a glimpse into the early days of our iconic Seattle hotel.

- For a glimpse into the meticulously curated history walk, [click here](#).

HISTORIC QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE OLYMPIC HOTEL

- The land where The Fairmont Olympic Hotel now stands was initially deeded by Arthur Denny in 1861, when it was the original site of the University of Washington.
- After the University outgrew its original home and moved to its present location, a theater known as the Metropolitan Theater was built on a portion of the site and opened in 1911.
- In 1921, further plans were initiated for a proposal to build a grand hotel that would wrap around the theater on three sides, encompassing an entire city block.
- In 1922, plans for financing the hotel were formulated by a group of nearly 400 prominent citizens known as the "Community Hotel Corporation." A bond drive was organized so that anyone could take part by investing in the venture. Public response to the proposal was tremendous, and Seattleites purchased \$100 bonds and raised \$2.7 million dollars for the hotel.
- *The Seattle Times* held a contest with a \$50 prize to whoever submitted the best name for the hotel, chosen by the board of the Community Hotel Corporation. 3,906 entries were submitted and one name, submitted in several variations, pleased the committee the most. They settled on The Olympic, for which 11 entries had been submitted and the first submitted won the prize.
- The Olympic Hotel opened on December 6, 1924. Total cost of construction was \$4,574,000. The original architect was George B. Post & Sons, New York.
- Opened during the Roaring '20s, the grand hotel began its presidential history by hosting President Hoover during his term. Since then, nearly every president and most presidential candidates have checked into the hotel.
- The Olympic Hotel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.
- The hotel underwent a full restoration in the mid-1980s to bring the original guest room count of 756 down to 450 rooms with nearly half of the rooms as suites.
- Fairmont Hotels & Resorts assumed management of the hotel on August 1, 2003.
- A \$25 million renovation in 2016 by Parker-Torres Design Inc. refreshed all guest rooms and corridors.
- The current \$25 million renovation features a fully transformed lobby anchored by a new lobby bar and updated event spaces (opening April 30, 2021). Later this year, the project will unveil a new culinary flagship and introduce an intimate spirit drinker's enclave. Spanish design studio Lázaro Rosa-Violán (LRV) created the interior vision and design for the hotel and worked in tandem with Parker-Torres Design Inc. who designed the meeting rooms.

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For further information contact:

Kristy Mendes
Director of Public Relations
Fairmont Olympic Hotel
kristy.mendes@fairmont.com

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