



THE WHITEHALL HOTEL

Chicago's True Independent Boutique Hotel

**A CHICAGO HERITAGE THAT
BEGAN OVER 70 YEARS AGO...**

The Whitehall Hotel possesses a rich history, which is treasured in this city, as well as enchanting.

In 1928, the shoreline of Lake Michigan was one block west of Michigan Avenue. Lake Shore Drive began at Oak Street and the Drake was but four years old. The tallest building in Chicago at the time, The Palmolive Building, was nearing the brink of completion on the corner of Michigan and Walton. Positioned on the peak of the Palmolive Building was the revolving Lindbergh Beacon, an extremely powerful light that could be seen from miles out in the lake and a remarkable distance into the city.

The new building anchored Michigan Avenue to the north along with the Tribune Tower and Wrigley Building, which were both built in the early 1920's. This continuous construction actively marked the beginning of one of the most exciting shopping boulevards in the United States--later dubbed as "The Magnificent Mile." It was to be a mile that would rival Fifth Avenue in New York and the Champs Elysées in Paris. It heralded an unprecedented growth of Chicago's famed Near North Side.

The old line Chicago families, whom built their fortunes in meatpacking, retailing and mail order businesses, moved from the South Side to the new and fashionable North Side. Businessmen whose offices relocated to the new office buildings on Michigan Avenue sought homes in what was rapidly becoming Chicago's most elite neighborhood. The tree-lined, quiet streets that lead to Michigan Avenue became the most sought-after home sites in the city.

One of those streets was Delaware Place. It had all the sought-after amenities the well-to-do looked for: close proximity to the lake, convenience to fine shopping, elegant new restaurants, abundant tree-lined streets, prestigious private schools and within walking distance to Chicago's finest Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Jewish houses of worship.

It was here that one of Chicago's first luxury high-rise apartment buildings was built. The site selected was formerly the gracious family estate of the William's family whose wealth originated from the lumber and building supply industry.



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Designed by Eugene H. Klaber, Ernest A. Grunfeld, Jr. and Lowenberg & Lowenberg Associates, this extravagant apartment house featured lavish residences of three and four bedrooms. There were only three apartments on each floor. The unique feature to apartment buildings of that era was the fine restaurant on the lobby floor.

The building at 105 East Delaware Place soon became home to Chicago's leading citizens from the world of business. It was established as the precedent of sumptuous apartment buildings on the streets just off Michigan Avenue.

The building retained its dominance until the emergence of Chicago's suburban towns and villages to the north-- Evanston, Wilmette, Winnetka, Glencoe, Highland Park and Lake Forest when the Northwestern Railroad began to provide regular rail service to these communities.

Two events changed the nature of the elegant apartment building at 105 East Delaware. The first was the Great Depression. By 1932, almost half of the residents of the building had left. The lavish floor layouts became a series of smaller units, which were called "efficiency apartments." The second event was the mid 1950's conversion of the building into a hotel called The Whitehall, which featured guest rooms with built-in kitchens equipped with mini refrigerators and stoves.

In 1972, the building was purchased from Sidney and William Keller and converted into a world-class luxury hotel. The acquisition included the Putnam Building, headquarters of the worldwide publishing firm. The first floor housed part of the Whitehall Club. The upper floors, which featured a classic, wrought iron circular staircase, was the home of the well-known Dick Lewis Advertising Art Studios. The studio's space was converted into the hotel's executive and sales offices. It was a massive, multi-million dollar undertaking. The two-year mammoth project had but one objective: to create an elegant, small hotel reminiscent of England's luxurious and charming hotels, taking full advantage of the Whitehall name.



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Under the Keller Brother's personal management, the famed private restaurant had become an established landmark for Chicago's business and society leaders. Its existence continued after The Whitehall became what was hailed as "one of the most luxurious hotels in the United States." Older Chicago residents remember The Whitehall Club for something other than its fine cuisine. Legend has it that The Whitehall Club was either the first or the second restaurant to serve alcoholic beverages after the repeal of prohibition in 1932.

The Whitehall Hotel re-opened to the public in 1974 with a gala dinner at which Jack Benny entertained. Guests from the United States and throughout the world quickly recognized its unique charm and character. The intimate warmth of the wood paneling throughout the lobby and restaurant truly reflected its European heritage. It soon became a world-renowned hotel.

In November of 1992, the Yens began an intricate and extensive renovation of the hotel. They embarked on a two-year, \$25 million dollar project to restore The Whitehall Hotel to its original splendor. It re-opened on November 11, 1994 and quickly became recognized as a world-class hotel, with an uncommon, distinctive charm and ambiance. During the grand reopening in 1995, March 24th was proclaimed "The Whitehall Day" in the state of Illinois by the Honorable Richard Edgar, Governor.

In 2006 The Whitehall embarked in its newest renovation of all guest rooms and hallways. A \$6 million dollar renovation was completed that greatly enhanced the hotel but still kept the same feel and charm that it has had for the past .

Today, The Whitehall is the Chicago hotel of choice for leaders in business, entertainment and society. The merits of The Whitehall earned the recognition of Fortune Magazine when it was named "one of the eight great small hotels in the United States." Travel & Leisure magazine added its acknowledgment of the hotel's excellence by selecting the Whitehall as "one of Chicago's five great hotels."



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Today, The Whitehall Hotel provides its guests with a rich tradition of unsurpassed service, with unequaled charm and intimacy. Its 221 rooms, including eight sumptuous suites, are decorated with fine furnishings and modern amenities.

Without question, The Whitehall Hotel enjoys an international reputation as one of the great intimate luxury hotels in the United States.