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[venue SPOTLIGHT]

How much do you really know about this venerable venue? On the eve of its 140th anniversary, we went straight to the source and got the inside scoop on the secrets of the Palmer House Hilton, as relayed by Publicity Director Ken Price.

- 1 The hotel was actually a gift from Potter Palmer to his wife Bertha, because when he first met, when she was only 18, she was in her 40s.
- 2 Palmer House Hilton was the first building to break ground again after the great Chicago Fire of 1871, had nearly destroyed the city (and the hotel's first location at Gerry and State).
- 3 It's the longest consecutive running hotel in North America with three different construction phases, the hotel never closed its doors.
- 4 The penthouse was voted one of the Top 100 in the world by *Time* Travel magazine and is the only penthouse in Chicago to receive this accolade.
- 5 The upcoming movie *Cartagón* (with Matt Damon and Sierry Di Palencia) was filmed here.
- 6 It's one of only 26 Grand Palace Hotels still remaining in North America.
- 7 Born, Judy Garland and Frank Sinatra performed for an audience in the Empire Room, and the famed singer club was known to launch many star careers.
- 8 The Empire Room was recently used to film scenes for *Hilary Swank's* new show *EMM*.
- 9 The first income-tax conceived here when Bertha Harlow Palmer wanted to design an anti-trust to travel or picnic desert.
- 10 Because of Bertha, Chicago has the largest collection of French Impressionist art outside of Paris, after all 222 of her paintings were donated to The Art Institute of Chicago upon her death.
- 11 The elaborate ceiling set in the main lobby was painted by French artist Louis Jarry-Nogé.
- 12 The hotel has an impressive vault of all its historical artifacts housed on the third floor.
- 13 The only bronze sculptures created by Louis Comfort Tiffany are on display here.
- 14 Potter Palmer was the first to create an early model of the elevator, inspired by steam locomotives.
- 15 Palmer House Hilton was the first hotel in North America to use electricity after Potter Palmer feared the use of candles could cause another Chicago Fire.
- 16 The staff today speaks more than 40 languages to welcome world-class travelers.
- 17 Potter Palmer was the first in the world to borrow \$17 million to build the hotel in 1871.
- 18 Bertha Harlow Palmer was the first to lead the way for women's rights and pioneered the 9th Amendment, the 1st individual birth control at the World's Fair of 1893.
- 19 The Johnson House is the best left chandelier's grand with 15000 fire-crystal Czech crystals.
- 20 Parker Lado Lipp restored the ceiling set in the main lobby in 1995—he is also noted for having restored the Sistine Chapel.

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PALMER HOUSE HILTON
www.palmerhousehilton.com

20 Things You Don't Know About ... PALMER HOUSE HILTON

BY KELINA PRADANI // PHOTOS COURTESY OF PALMER HOUSE HILTON