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The Legendary Biltmore Hotel: A True Architectural and Design Gem with a Surprising History

Coral Gables, FL (September 2016) – Rising out of the lush and picturesque city of Coral Gables, The Biltmore Hotel is like a vision... a towering castle standing tall and strong, soaring against Miami's radiant skies. Imagine a dreamlike setting complete with exquisite, hand painted frescos on barrel vaulted ceilings, brilliant travertine floors, fine marble columns, intricate leaded glass fixtures, carved mahogany furnishings and lavish gardens. Then picture this all in the shadow of a spiraling Moorish Giralda tower. Is it a Spanish castle or a grand Venetian palazzo?

Although The Biltmore does resemble the finest in classic Mediterranean architecture, it is neither an Italian palazzo nor Iberian castle. Instead it's the centerpiece of George Merrick's dream of Coral Gables an elegant, stately suburb he called "The City Beautiful." The design team, Leonard Schultze and S. Fullerton Weaver where the architects of the impressive Grand Central Station in New York City. Combine Merrick's deep affection for Miami's tropical landscape with a high regard for Italian, Moorish and Spanish architectural influences, he realized his dream in the construction of this masterpiece.

Minutes from the hustle and bustle of downtown Miami and the sexy sparkle of South Beach, The Biltmore is a luxurious haven, a historic artifact that has enticed and lured the most discriminating travelers and jetsetters from around the world for the past 90 years. If The Biltmore's walls could talk, the stories they would tell about entertaining and indulging the desires of their most famous and notable guests. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor, the Roosevelts and Vanderbilts have stayed there. As well as Bing Crosby, Judy Garland, Babe Ruth, Oprah Winfrey and Oliver Stone. Among the Latin celebrities who have also enjoyed the world-class accommodations and service Thalia, Lucero, José José, Antonio Banderas, Carolina Herrera, Jennifer Lopez, Ricky Martin, Julio Iglesias and Gloria Estefan.

One of the most famous rooms of the resort is the Everglades Suite, also known as, the Al Capone Suite located in the historic tower. It is a one-of-a-kind two story suite that features hand painted ceiling depicting scenes from Florida's Everglades, 360 degree panoramic views of Coral Gables, and spacious living room area with a baby grand piano and dining room. Unlike most hotels who superstitiously omit the 13th floor, The Biltmore does not.

As the legend goes, the renowned gangster Al Capone ran a speakeasy here during the Prohibition Era for mobsters, wealthy snowbirds and bejeweled women. The private elevator allowed him the privacy to do as he wished and carry out his lavish affairs. It is said, rotating wall panels exposed gambling tables on one side and filled bookcases on the other. There was a top-secret stairwell that came in handy

during police raids to make a clean getaway. The suite was also the scene of the deadly shooting of Capone's bodyguard Thomas "Fatty" Walsh while the illicit casino was in full swing. The existence of bullet holes on the fireplace and walls are proof of the notorious history of the Everglades Suite.

As long and intriguing as The Biltmore's history is, today it is a magnificent place and a vital part of Miami's community. In keeping with traditional European grand hotels, old-world glamour and elegance resonate throughout the 273-room resort glittering underneath the Biltmore's centerpiece, a 93-foot copper clad tower, replicate of the Giralda Tower in the Cathedral of Seville, Spain. Designated a National Historic Landmark, it has earned the incredible honor in the Travel & Leisure Magazine "World's Best Awards 2016" ranking #67 on the Top 100 Hotels in the world and #3 in The Best Resort Hotels in Florida.

The Biltmore's design is considered "Mediterranean Revival" based predominantly on Spanish style with Moorish and Italian accents. Guests arrive at The Biltmore via an arched driveway that leads to an impressive façade. Throughout the 150-acre property, dotted with palm and banyan trees, gardens, pools, lakes and waterfalls guests will encounter majestic architectural adornments such as the grand lobby surrounded by double-story Corinthian columns supporting hand-painted coffered ceilings and gleaming terrazzo and colorful tile floors.

The Alhambra Ballroom is worth a visit to steal a glimpse of the intricately ornamented ceiling decorated in an Islamic style. The resort has a mammoth swimming pool, one of the largest in the world. The 12,000-square-foot full service spa is a sanctuary for personal peace and tranquility and a Bennessere health and wellness program offering over 100 group exercise classes in the state-of-the-art fitness center and wellness-oriented treatments

There are four restaurants and two bars at the Biltmore. Palme d'Or features a truly authentic fine dining French culinary experience prepared by Michelin starred and James Beard "Rising Star" nominee Chef Gregory Pugin. Outdoor dining is offered at Fontana where romance prevails, it's The Biltmore's lushly landscaped courtyard restaurant. With its center fountain and views of The Biltmore's Mediterranean architecture, Fontana offers a distinctly European charm and sophistication from sunrise until sunset. Foodies can wine and dine during the month of September in these restaurants and enjoy savings during Miami Spice Month. Casual dining is offered at Cascade and The 19th Hole restaurants.

Architectural and design aficionados and history buffs traveling to Miami in the upcoming month can immerse themselves in The Biltmore's luxury and endless amenities with their *End of Summer Savings* offers. Last minute-September getaways will offer savings of 20% of the best available rate starting at US\$199 per room, per night. Spa specials will have guests relaxing and rejuvenating with signature spa treatments at 50% off. In addition, visitors who plan on being in Miami for more than a week can take advantage of the *Stay 7 Pay 5 Package* enjoy seven nights at the Biltmore Hotel for the price of five. For more information on this specials and packages, please visit www.biltmorehotel.com.