

A Look at the New Wrigley Mansion

Written by Written by Melissa Larsen

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For 80 years, The Wrigley Mansion has been a treasured presence in Phoenix. Thanks to a recent makeover (from fresh furnishings to the Mansion's new French chef), the beloved landmark is set to share its legacy with generations to come.



In 1929, construction began on The Wrigley Mansion, a 24-room estate in the Biltmore area of Phoenix, for chewing-gum mogul, William Wrigley Jr., and his wife, Ada. In fact, the Mansion, which boasted more than 16,000 square feet at the time, was a 50th wedding anniversary from Wrigley to his wife.

Though Wrigley passed away in the home in 1932, the family continued to own and visit The Wrigley Mansion for 40 years after his death. They took immaculate care of the property—right down to the doorknobs. Over the years, Hollywood celebrities, dignitaries and even presidents made stops at the historic site. More recently, the Mansion has hosted Garth Brooks and Jordin Sparks.

However, the one person that the Mansion might have made the biggest impression on was the late George Hormel, or Geordie, as he was called. Upon hearing that the Mansion was set for demolition in 1992, Geordie's wife, Jamie, recalls her husband rushing to the bank to save it and even being advised by his lawyer to not purchase the property. Geordie had fond memories of the Mansion, and "he wanted [others] to be able to come inside and see what it is all about," Jamie says. "It is a Phoenix point of pride."

Not only was he able to save the landmark, but Geordie created memories for Valley dwellers who would regularly stop by for Sunday brunch to hear him play for hours at the Mansion's Steinway piano (one of only two in the world). "So many times he would come here for Sunday brunch, and he would meet people and take them back to the house for dinner," Jamie says. "He was such a people person. He loved people—every kind of person. He loved people and their stories." Even on vacation, Jamie says Geordie would want to head back to the Mansion in time for Sunday brunch. The Hormel couple's children even recall some of their most cherished early memories taking place on Mansion grounds. Geri, who was only a year old when her parents purchased the Mansion, recalls sliding down the sloping hills surrounding it on white dinner napkins.

Since Geordie's death in 2006, Jamie has kept the Mansion fresh for its 50,000 yearly visitors while also honoring its traditions and history. "It already has a legacy," says Paola Embry, CEO of The Wrigley Mansion. "[The goal is to] maintain that legacy. [Geordie was] someone that made a difference, and Jamie is maintaining that legacy by investing more into the property. It isn't just a personal thing. It is for the people."

Most recently, The Wrigley Mansion underwent a bit of a facelift this fall. Apart from a new wine membership and the welcoming of a new chef (see sidebars), the Mansion received a fresh coat of paint, new landscaping, fresh furnishings and an extensive wine cellar addition (it can now hold 12,000-plus bottles, including Geordie's private label offerings).



WINE AND DINE

One of the most noteworthy changes to The Wrigley Mansion this fall was putting a fresh face, Stephan Germanaud, in the kitchen. The new executive chef has completely revamped the Mansion's lunch, dinner and award-winning brunch menus, which now reflect the Californian-Mediterranean style of the historic building as well its Wrigley Chicago heritage.



4 to try during your next Wrigley Mansion stop.

The Wrigley's Chicago-Style Wagyu Beef Hot Dog A poppy-seed bun, mustard, sweet relish, onions, tomatoes and shredded lettuce accent this delish Chicago staple. Perfect for an after-work happy hour.

Seared Salmon with Goat Cheese-Mascarpone Mousse, Watercress and Shitake in a Truffled Crepe Few eats are as elegant as truffles,

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and this innovative dish is aromatic and a true treat for any seafoodie.

Wrigley's Stone-Oven Pizza Regardless of the topping (cross your fingers for roasted duck, though), Chef Germanaud's thin-crust, crispy pizza du jour takes an all-American staple and kicks it up several luxurious notches.

Wrigley S'mores "Martini" This picturesque dessert features layers of traditional s'mores ingredients served in an oversize martini glass. To top it off, lightly toasted marshmallows, two graham crackers and sweet little wooden spoons for serving.



MEMBERS ONLY

Though a membership is required to dine at Geordie's, enjoy The Wrigley Mansion grounds or host a celebration at the historic site (the club caters to everything from an intimate rehearsal dinner to a 1,000-person prom), the landmark prides itself on being a welcoming atmosphere—an atmosphere that anyone is invited to be a part of. "Geordie was inclusive," Jamie says. "He would want everyone to feel welcome and comfortable." As such, he strived to make memberships accessible for anyone.

Trial Membership \$3 per household and valid for one month. Benefits include dining privileges for lunch, dinner, brunch and happy hour. Also applies to tours, during which guests are schooled on the site's rich history, as well as provided interesting information about the Wrigley and Hormel families.

Social Membership \$10 per household and valid for one year. Benefits include complimentary valet parking for the card-holder; member events; discount at the gift shop; and dining privileges for lunch, dinner, brunch and happy hour.

Wine Membership \$50 per household and valid for one year. Benefits include complimentary valet parking for the card-holder; discount at the gift shop; special wine prices (for instance, a bottle of Staglin Salus 2006 would be \$245 for a non-member or \$159 with wine membership); member-only events; and dining privileges for lunch, dinner, brunch and happy hour.