

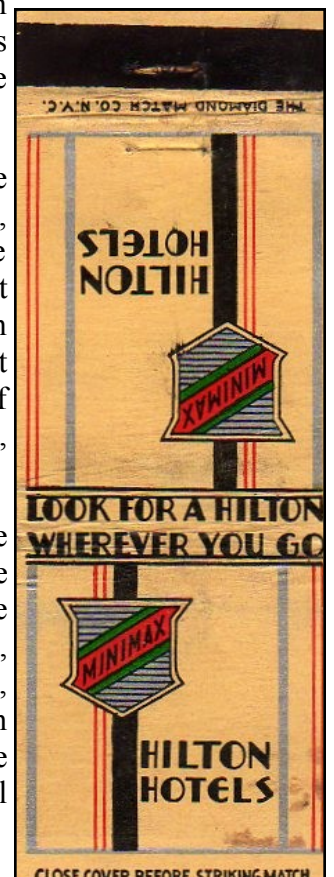
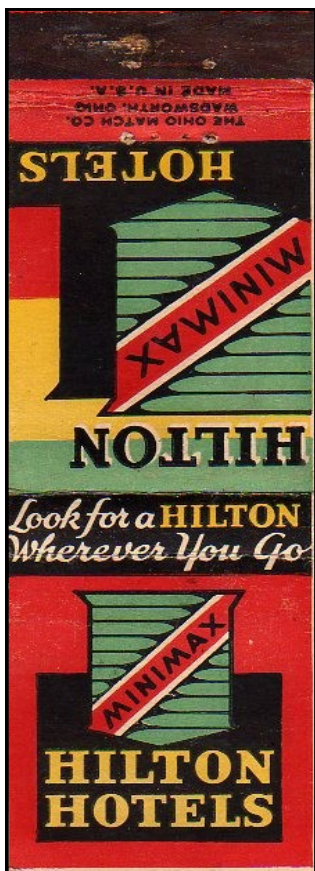
HILTONS

by
Mike Prero

With more than 250 properties, approximately 102,000 rooms worldwide, Hilton Hotels Corporation is one of the most recognized companies in the hospitality industry. Hilton's portfolio includes such well-known hotels as The Waldorf-Astoria, NYC; the Washington Hilton and Towers, The Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, the Las Vegas Hilton, the San Francisco Hilton and Towers, and The Hilton Hawaiian Village.

In 1919, Conrad Hilton purchased his first hotel, The Mobley, in Cisco, Texas, while on the way to buy a bank! In 1925 he built the first hotel to carry the "Hilton" name, "The Hilton," in Dallas. Expanding outside of Texas for the first time, Hilton purchased the lease on The Sir Francis Drake in San Francisco, in 1938. In 1943, Hilton became the first coast-to-coast hotel chain in the United States with the purchase of two hotels in New York City, **The Roosevelt** and **The Plaza**, and thereby also became the first coast-to-coast hotel chain.

Hilton then became the first hotel company to list on the New York Stock Exchange on June 23, 1947. When the Caribe Hilton opened in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1949, the company became the first international hotel chain. And, when the same hotel became a casino, in the same year, Hilton created the first hotel-casino. It was the Hilton chain that also came up with the first hotel gift shop. Quite impressive!...and the flow of covers from this premier hotel chain has been just as impressive.





There are lots of great covers to be pursued in this category: long series, exotic locations, a variety of fancies. But, the real Hilton treasures are the “Minimax” covers, formed from Hilton’s early theme of “Minimum Cost/Maximum Service.” Such covers will bear the “Minimax” logo, as shown on p.1, and they’re not easy to find!

A breakdown of numbers to give you an idea of what there is in this category—the great collectors of the past could boast the greatest collections: the late Frank Lawton had 3,521 Hiltons in his collection, and 611 of them were from foreign locations. The late Bob Oliver had 1,016 non-stock Hiltons, and Jim Moffett had some 22 Minimax covers. John Williams, OH, and Dan Bitter, OK, have done various Hilton listings, and the IMC bulletins are a good source for Hilton info.

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