

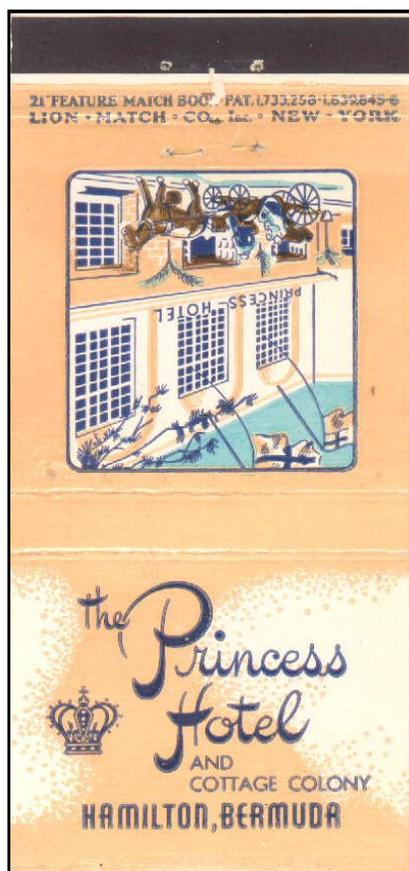
Historic Hotels!

XLIX: Bermuda's *Princess Hotel*

Fondly referred to by Bermudans as "The Pink Palace," The Fairmont Hamilton Princess opened its doors on January 1, 1885. Bermuda had gained international recognition two years earlier in 1883 when Princess Louise, the fourth daughter of Queen Victoria, visited for a winter retreat and called it "a place of eternal spring."

Harley Trott, a leading businessman at the time and head of Trott & Cox, the steamship agents and purveyors of meat for the British military, was determined to build a hotel that would attract affluent Americans, who would summer in the Berkshires and winter in Bermuda. Other seaside resorts were being built and a "posh" hotel would likely compete with other destinations like Palm Beach.

When the hotel opened, it was named "The Princess" in honor of the royal visit some years earlier. Incidentally, The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise in the Canadian Rockies was also named for Princess Louise. For many years, because the hotels were operating seasonally, summer employees from The Fairmont Banff Springs and The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise would work at The Fairmont Hamilton Princess during the winter months.



From the moment it opened, The Fairmont Hamilton Princess was considered the gem of the island. With long shady verandas and a blue slate roof, the four-story building comprised 70 rooms, each equipped with gas lights, hot and cold running water and a five-inch mirror to allow guests to primp before stepping out for the night. Thomas Cook Tours started to offer package tours out of New York to The Fairmont Hamilton Princess. Staff dressed in white jackets and waving pink handkerchiefs greeted luxury liners. As word got out, celebrities started to appear. Mark Twain, a regular at the hotel, loved to smoke cigars on the veranda while he signed autographs and recited poetry to adoring fans. One wartime "guest" at the hotel was said to have used its fish tank-lined Gazebo Bar as a motif in his novel. The famous guest was novelist Ian Fleming and the book, *Dr. No*.

In 1939, when the world went to war, The basement became an intelligence center. In 1959, under new ownership, the hotel was renovated: a new wing built and lounges added.

[courtesy of <http://www.princessbermuda.com/history.html>]

