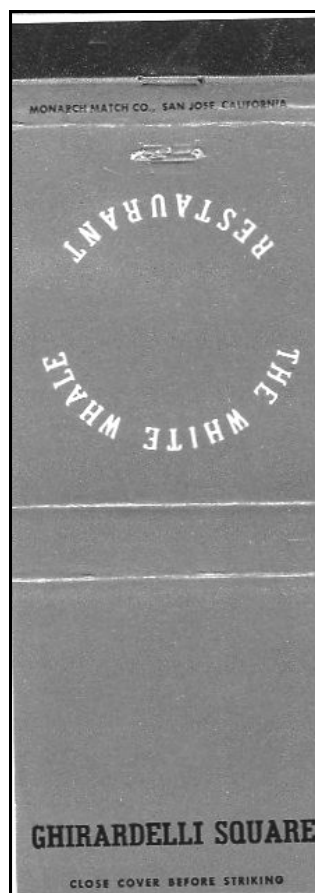
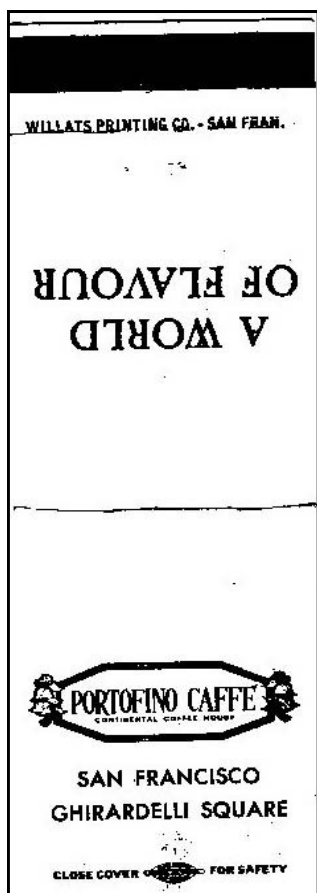


August 2008

Ghirardelli Square

by
Mike Prero

One of the showpieces of San Francisco, certainly anyone in Northern California is familiar with Ghirardelli Square. Here's a little background...Born in Rapallo, Italy in 1817, Domenico "Domingo" Ghirardelli learned about the confectionery and chocolate trade by the time he was 20. Uruguay and Peru were the first places he set up shop -- but tales of the Gold Rush were irresistible. In 1848, Domingo's neighbor, James Lick, packed up \$25,000, 600 pounds of Ghirardelli chocolate and sailed for the San Francisco Bay. A year later, Domingo followed him through the Golden Gate.





Domingo successfully opened stores in Stockton during the Gold Rush, but unfortunately did not fare so well with his future business endeavors. The Europa Hotel, -- one of the first hotels in Old San Francisco, -- burned in The Great Fire of 1851, along with everything Domingo owned in San Francisco. Four days later, another fire burned his Stockton properties to the ground.

Domingo's sons purchased an entire block of property for their headquarters in 1893 that overlooked San Francisco Bay. The property consisted of the Woolen Mill, the Apartment Building and many other buildings on the property. Domingo and his sons began a spectacular building program that included the Chocolate Building in 1899, Cocoa Building in 1900, the Clock Tower in 1911 and the Power House in 1915. Ghirardelli Square was the result and is now, of course, a San Francisco landmark.

