HOTEL DES INDES

THE HAGUE

THE HOTEL DES INDES LEGACY

Where History Meets Luxury



Every great landmark has a story. Hotel Des Indes has been writing its own for over 145 years. Whether you are joining us for an overnight stay, a memorable dinner, our celebrated High Tea, or simply stopping by to admire our historic surroundings, we are delighted to offer you a glimpse into the rich history of Hotel Des Indes. We hope these stories enrich your visit and invite you to become part of our continuing legacy and history. Enjoy your journey through time.

On behalf of the entire team,

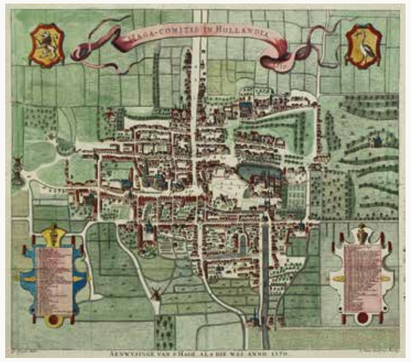
Yvonne van der Klaauw

GENERAL MANAGER

THE LEADING HOTELS
OF THE WORLD®

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1536 → **FROM PRESTIGIOUS PALACE** **TO LEGENDARY HOTEL** ← 1890



1536

WE OWE IT TO THE TREES

For the true beginning of the history of our hotel the location is of great importance. During a visit of Roman Emperor Karel V to Haga in 1536, he observed the city was overcrowded. Therefore, he ordered the residents of the Lange Voorhout to give up their front yards and make space for a prestigious walking avenue with rows of lime trees. Our beloved Lange Voorhout has been, for the last five centuries, the perfect avenue for a city walk. The Dutch verse "Liesje leerde Lotje lopen langs de Lange Lindelaan" is based on this avenue.

1588



GOLDEN AGE

The Middle Ages are officially over and The Netherlands was not yet the Monarchy we have today. The unity of the seven Provinces into the Republic of the Netherlands in 1588, with it's political center in the The Hague, marked the start of the Golden Age.

1751

PALACES, EVERYWHERE YOU LOOKED

Willem Bentinck with his Dutch, German and English noble descent was one of the most powerful figures in the 18th century in Holland. The drawing shows his city palace at nr.7, which gives us a good impression of the elite promenading the avenue Lange Voorhout.



1763

FAMOUS WOMEN ON THE AVENUE

Due to the Golden Age, also bankers and businessmen gained wealth and power. The picture shows the residence of the banker's daughter Adriana Huguetan. The building later became home to the National Library between 1819-1982 and seat of the supreme court. Picture taken by the Dutch explorer and first female photographer, Alexandrine Tinne (1835 - 1869). Alexandrine lived a few doors down from our hotel, her father lived in one of the houses that the Baron van Brienen purchased to build his palace.





1856

LATE TO THE PARTY

In the middle of the 19th century it was hard to find a place on the avenue that had not been turned into a city palace. Baron van Brienen, counselor to King Willem 3, still lived in one of the most beautiful estates of the city: Estate Clingendael. Although it had the grandeur of Versailles, the elite at the avenue found the estate too far away to visit van Brienen's parties. The palace was designed by architect Arend Roodenburg, to be a grandiose party palace in the city. Cost 1500 kilo of pure gold.

1877



A PALACE BECOMES A HOTEL

After the death of Baron van Brienen, the property is sold to Hotelier Francois Paulez who donates the building to his daughter. Together with her husband Friedrich J.G Wirtz, they transform the palace into a luxurious hotel. The name is inspired by the then famous Hotel des Indes in Batavia in the hope of attracting travelers from the previous Dutch East Indies. The washbasins in the rooms were not connected to a drainage system as there were 51 buckets for the dirty water. In the first week after the opening, more than 2,200 people came to marvel at the opulence and splendor of the hotel.

1881

OUR VERY FIRST GUEST

First at our dinner table was Dutch Master Painter Hendrik Willem Mesdag, who reserved a large table on the 26th of April 1881 in order to celebrate his Silver marriage with his wife Sientje and his closest friends.

Mesdag played an important role in the rise of "The Haagse School" as well his role in the development of the Pulchra Studio, Lange Voorhout nr. 15, an artist society and still prominent gallery.







1890

A BALL FOR THE AGES

Although the hotel was officialy opened on the 1st of May 1881, by a toast of Prince Frederick, 2 days later the famous Calicot ball, costume ball, calicot is unbleached cotton, really marked the opening.
The complete aristocracy of The Hague showed up dressed up as Greeks, Turks or in Renaissance style, contrasting the prince and princess in their more formal outfits.
Everwhere you looked where flowers and along the grand stairs candelabras filled with candles. In the ballroom, the Prince and Princess joined the traditional quadrille dances. Newspaper reports report the next day that the party lasted until 4am, which was, at that time, fairly unique.

A DOME TO TOP IT OFF

In the beginning of 1890 the building was expanded to 100 rooms in total, this meant "het Kalkstraatje", located left of the hotel forever disappeared. But even more radical was the placement of a huge light dome, covering the then still open hall giving the hotel it's famous lounge.



1881 →

ANNA PAVLOVA

THE DYING SWAN

← 1931



BALLERINA TURNS POPSTAR

At the end of the 20th century, famous composers, politicians and ballet dansers were like today's pop- and movie stars. The biggest ballet dancer of all time, was about to graduate from the Imperial School of Ballet (St Petersburg) at age 16.

PR PIONEER

Anna loved photo shoots with fancy dresses, costumes and her favorite pets. Her PR driven manager and husband Victor Dandré (married in 1924), made sure she made the front page wherever she performed.





ADORED BY ALL

Comedian Charlie Chaplin was one of many admirers. Rumour has it he never dared to express his real feelings for her.

SILK PAJAMAS IN THE SNOW

Almost turning 50, Anna decided to get some extra rest and head to the Côte d'Azur for an extended Christmas holiday. At the end of her holiday, she boarded a train to The Hague, where she would start her final tour. On the way from Cannes to Paris, the night train had an accident. Although Anna was unharmed, all passengers were forced to wait outside in the cold. It was a snowy evening and Anna was only wearing a thin jacket with silk pajamas.





DEATH AT DES INDES

While resuming her journey from Paris to The Hague, Anna became very ill. When arriving at Hotel Des Indes she requested her private doctor, Professor Valerski to join her. She had a serious pneunomia and required an operation. She had undergone surgery in order to withdraw water from her lungs but it was too late. She died that same night, early morning of the 23rd of January 1931 in the Japanese Salon of the hotel. Her final words were: "get my swan costume ready".

THE WORLD MOURNS

Once the word of her death got out, an enormous crowd gathered in front of our hotel, which showed the enormous popularity of Anna Pavlova. The next day, many theaters all over the world rose their curtains to an empty stage with a single spotlight, playing the music from the Dying swan for the swan who died.



1898

1905

SWAN MADE WOMAN

Anna Pavlova directly joined the Imperial Russian Ballet after her graduation, but only became a real start after choreographer Michael Fokine created the Dying Swan for her at her request. Anna adored swans, in the picture below you see Anna with her favourite swan Jack.





1911

WORLD TOURS

Anna was the first ballerina to start an European tour, together with her own ballet dance group.





PHILANTHROPIST

Anna loved animals and children, she had orphanages in Russia and France and raised money by organising charity events and concerts.

1931 (JANUARY)

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Anna's body was moved to a hospital in The Hague where she was placed in a coffin (see picture below). From there Anna made her last journey to London where the memorial services were held in the Russian Orthodox Church.





Anna Pavlova was cremated, and her ashes were placed in a columbarium at Golders Green Crematorium, where her urn was adorned with her ballet shoes (which have since been stolen.)

THE GRANDEUR OF THE ORIGINAL INTERIOR



A GLIMPSE

We are grateful Mr. Haller hired a photographer who captured the Louis XVI interior in 1907.



HAND COLOURED

You might wonder, are these photographs or paintings? The answer is both. With the abscence of colour photography, they had to be hand coloured.



A SOCIAL LOUNGE

The lounge was set-up in a way our guest could easily mingle.



POSTCARDS

All these hand coloured photographs where printed on postcards, handed out to our guest for them to send home. (free publicity)



LE SALON DE LECTURE

Staying at the hotel in the early days, meant much more than just renting a room, it was a place to unwind from long travels and meetings.



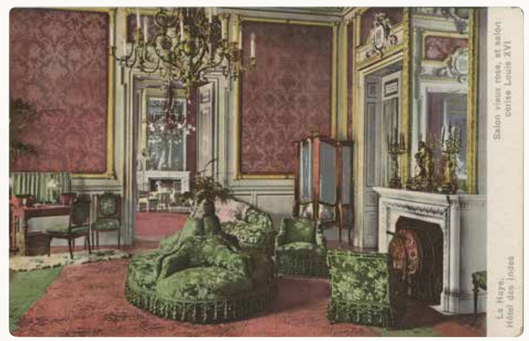
APPARTMENT OR HOTELROOM?

The standard room back then can be compared with our current suite; a separate bedroom and living room.



EMANCIPATION?

As men had their cigar lounge, women had a separate lounge to drink tea and martini's, smoke free.



THE LIVING ROOM

The real living room was upstairs where our guests would gather around the cozy fireplace.



SALON VERT LOUIS XVI

The “salon vert” is perhaps our favorite room; pink velvet furniture on green, lot’s of green.



BAR STYLE VIEUX-HOLLANDAIS

Our bartenders where amazed by this photograph of the bar; how where they able to keep that beautiful carpet clean?



SALON BLUE LOUIS XVI

Can you imagine a more elegant room than this?



WOULD YOU SEND IT?

This is perhaps the most suprising postcards of them all: wo would send a postcard home of the hotel bathroom?



BELLE ÉPOQUE

At the end of the 19th century, the world is changing in a rapid pace. The industrial revolution, innovation, development of new scientific and medical theories. Director FJG Wirtz leaves and his successor was Christian Friedrich Haller, pictured above. He did not have an easy start at the hotel, due to a setback in business.

(BATHROOM) INNOVATIONS

Every room in the hotel had a telephone/intercom connection from all rooms to the reception, and everywhere were sinks and baths with hot and cold running water. A hydraulic lift was built, it worked on the pressure of the dune water.





A SERENADE FOR PAUL KRUGER

Paul Kruger, the 5th president of the Republic of South Africa (Transvaal), was met by a choir of 600 singers, when he arrived at the train station in the Hague. He received this heroic welcome because of his strong resistance to the British empire. Since the Boers, the white colonist from Transvaal, initially resisted the abolishment of slavery, statues of Kruger in South-Africa are still subject of demonstrations upon this day. Paul Kruger stayed at Hotel Des Indes for a month.

OUR FIRST (MOVIE) STAR

Yvette Guilbert was a French cabaret singer, writer and one of the first movie stars in the world (first Cinema opened in Paris, 7 years prior.) Yvette stayed in one of our suites before and after she performed in Amsterdam.





A ROYAL BUTLER

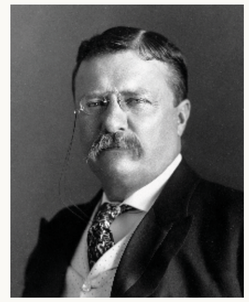
Although it's a queen (Margherita of Italy) who is stepping in her car in front of Hotel Des Indes, it's our butler on the right who seems to be the subject of this picture.

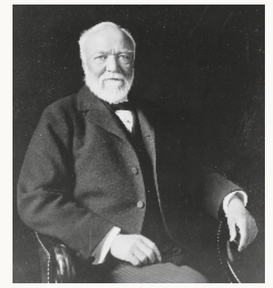
DES INDES TAXI SERVICE

The hotel purchased 2 Omnibus cars from the company Delahaye, branded with the name of our hotel. They were used to transport our guests around the city.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Stay of Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909 President USA). "Teddy" was one of the youngest presidents of the United States. The highlight of his visit to the Netherlands in 1910 was his encounter with Queen-mother Emma and the 1 year old Juliana.





ANDREW CARNEGIE & THE PEACE PALACE

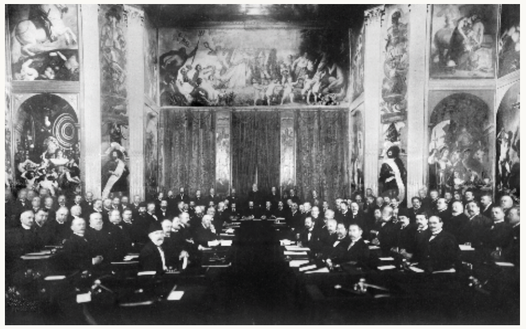
During the first peace conference in 1899, nations agreed the world needed an international court of arbitration, instead of fighting wars. Thanks to an enormous donation of "The King of Steel" and the richest man in the world, Andrew Carnegie, the beautiful Peace Palace was built. Until this day the International Court of Arbitration is located here. Before his visit to The Hague in 1913, for the opening of the Peace palace, Hotel Des Indes hosted a small army of private security staff which had to protect Andrew Carnegie from possible abduction.

1896 **1900** **1902** **1905** **1910** **1913**

1899

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE

At the initiative of Tsar Nicholas II the first international peace conference was held at Huis ten Bosch in The Hague, this resulted in the arrival of many government leaders, diplomats and journalists. The delegates stayed at Hotel Des Indes about 2 months. The hotel left quite an impression, as we can learn from our guestbook where sir Julian Pancelote (US ambassador) wrote: *"The peace conference will always be one of the most precious reminiscenes of my life; Nor shall I ever forget my stay in Hotel Des Indes where for two months our delegates have been overwhelmed with the kindness by it's aimable manager".*





BENJAMIN HARRISON

In a way, Tsar Nicholas saved our hotel. After the peace conference, governments around the world have always found their way back to us. For instance the 23rd president of the United States, Benjamin Harrison, later that year.

1901



A ROYAL MARRIAGE

On the 7th of February 1901, Queen Wilhelmina marries Prince Hendrik van Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Royalties from all over the world came to The Hague and many of them stayed at Des Indes. Among them, the Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich of Russia and his family.

THE ROYAL PALACE NEXT DOOR

Queen Mother Emma bought the property next door in 1896 from the estate of her late brother-in-law Prince Hendrik. She renovated it extensively before moving in in 1901, after the marriage of Queen Wilhelmina. Princess Juliana was born here on the 30th of May 1909.



1911



FRANZ FERDINAND

Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria stayed at Des Indes, 3 years before his death triggered the start of WW1.

1914

WW1

Ironically, just 1 year after the celebratory opening of the Peace Palace, and therewith the house of the International Court of Arbitration, the outbreak of the First World War paralysed the entire economy. This pushed the hotel to the brink of bankruptcy and the owners even considered to change the hotel to the office of the Nederlandse Uitvoer Maatschappij (N.U.M), which had taken over all the shares from Mrs Haller-Rey and her brother. Luckily, this was prevented by our government. They believed Hotel Des Indes was an essential venue for peace negotiations, together with the Peace Palace.

1919 → ONE BIG PARTY UNTIL THE CRASH ← 1939



PEACE AT LAST...

On the picture above, we see our guests celebrating the end of WW1 in the ballroom upstairs on the evening of the 12th of November 1918. In 1919, the hotel was sold to the state (which owned it until 1973). After a four-month closure, Hotel Des Indes once again served as the meeting point for fashionable The Hague. After the war, it took the world only half a decade to find its spirit and burst into the Golden Years of 1923-1929. Where, for the first time, many people gained wealth by trading on the stock market. Of more cultural importance, is the rise of dinner-dances and rhythmic music during the roaring 20's.



ALL NIGHT LONG

Unfortunately there were no party photographers at our hotel during this time, instead we scanned the newspapers and tax records in order to draw 'a picture'. During the Golden Years, there were daily afternoon concerts by the Russian Northstar Orchesta and every evening by the Bela Ruha Roma Band. Every Wednesday and Saturday evening, Sidd Philips & his Melodians performed and Des Indes became the spot to dance the Foxtrot and Charleston. Hotel Des Indes also introduced the first gigolo in The Netherlands, a dancer for ladies without male company.

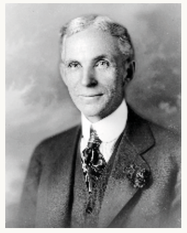


SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

In the middle of all that modern dance music, one of the greatest composers of classical music slept in Des Indes.

HENRI FORD

Henri Ford and his family stayed at Des Indes as he was to lay the first stone of the first Dutch Ford factory in Rotterdam. Part of the factory was already built, but at the ceremony Henri Ford was convinced the factory area was too small, leaving city officials stunned. A year later, Amsterdam was chosen for the new factory.





ON FIRE

On 02-08-1931 the festivities surrounding the 73rd birthday of Queen Mother Emma took place at Hotel Des Indes. The hotel contributed by hanging a life-sized 'E' with a crown in front of the window on the Lange Voorhout. However, a short circuit in the wiring of this party lighting caused a major fire.

BUILD BACK BETTER

After the fire, Henri Rey decided to add an extra floor (3rd floor) by splitting up the original 2nd floor. If you are in front of the hotel, you will notice the way the original window frames are cut in half.



LIGHT IN THE DARK

The highlight of the 30's in Des Indes was the engagement party of Princess Juliana and her future husband Prince Bernhard, in December 1936.

1919

1922

FRAUD

23 December – Director Christian Friedrich Haller and his wife Marie Fréderique Rey were arrested for forgery against the government and municipality (fraud 200,000 guilders.) The couple was detained at the detention center in Scheveningen. After the verdict in 1923, Henri Eugene Rey (Mrs M.F. Rey's brother) became the sole director.



1923



THE PERFECT HOST

Henri, known for his love for extravaganza, turns out to be the perfect host of Des Indes during the roaring 20's. And although Henri is a big spender, he manages to make Des Indes profitable again. Even after spending 55.000 guilders on musicians from all over the world, decorations and dancers for his parties and fashion shows, in 1925 alone. This was more than double the rent that year. Henri also became the Consul General of Monaco. On the picture above, we see Henri in Hotel Des Indes together with the Olympic team of Monaco of 1928 (during the Olympic Games in Amsterdam.)

The picture on the right, shows Henri in front of the hotel, together with Prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia.

1926

DANCE BAN PROTEST

The introduction of rhythmic dance was seen as shocking by the public (mainly religious) it was seen as such a danger, that in the local council meeting on the 10th of december 1926, a council member proposed a city wide ban on dancing. Of course our regular (dance) guests where horrified and replied to the council with a letter.



1928

1929



THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON REPARATIONS

Following The Treaty of Versailles (1919) and the 1921 London Schedule of Payments, Germany was required to pay 132 billion gold marks ($33 billion USD) in reparations to cover civilian damage caused during WW1. A decade later matters where still not resolved, resulting in The Hague Conference on Reparations. Hotel Des Indes was, once again, part of this historic international conference.

1930

1931

WHAT GOES UP, MUST GO DOWN

After the first Wall Street crash in 1929, the world entered The Great Depression. On the picture below the French minister Louis Loucheur arrives at Hotel Des Indes to join negotiations at the 2nd reparations conference. Just a month after the big crash, which made Germany as good as bankrupt, speaking about financial reparations by Germany was useless.



1933



CHARLES LINDBERG

Charles Augustus Lindbergh was an American aviation pioneer, military officer, author, inventor, and activist. He visited our hotel in 1933.

1934

1936

WILLIAM HEARST & MARION DAVIES

William Hearst was a media tycoon, the inventor of tabloid journalism and a democratic congressman. William was an obsessive art collector and loved the Dutch Masters. During the 30's, William was a regular guest at Des Indes while he visited galleries and art shows. The first time William visited Des Indes, his mistress Marion Davies (movie star) accompanied him. Marion was the love of his life, they were together for 30 years.





DES INDES DURING WORLD WAR 2



10-05-40

A DEADLY START OF THE WAR

Because director Henri Rey is also Consul of Monaco, his government decides Henri and his family need to flee to England. During his drive to Hoek van Holland, his wife is hit by a bullet in the head, after the driver ignored a military order. On their return to The Hague, she died of her injuries in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Plein. Acting director at the time was Mr. J.A. van der Werff.

The picture above shows the dropping of the first german soldiers north of The Hague.

14-05-40

WINKELMAN SURRENDERS

General Winkelman was, after our government and our Queen fled to London on the 12th of May, not just the commander of the Dutch armed forces but also our 'Head of State'. On the 14th of May, Rotterdam was almost entirely destroyed by German airplanes bombing the city. The Nazis threatened General Winkelman to destroy The Hague, Amsterdam and Utrecht as well if he wouldn't surrender, leaving General Winkelman no choice. From his headquarters at nr. 7, a few doors down from Hotel Des Indes, he surrendered on the 14th of May.



15-05-40



KURT F. IRRGANG

If we tell the history of our hotel during WW2, we can't leave out the remarkable story of Kurt Irrgang. Kurt worked for our hotel for almost 40 years and was, for many guests the reason Des Indes felt like coming home.
Kurt, born in Thüringen (Germany) in 1914, moved to Brussels when he was 16 to attend the Hotel School. After his graduation, Kurt moved to The Hague to start as a lobby boy in Hotel Des Indes. After a few years, Kurt married a Dutch woman. Weeks before the Germans invaded the Netherlands his wife gave birth to twin boys.

(On the picture left we see Kurt, many decades later, working as a sommelier)



THE GERMANS ARRIVE

On the early morning of the 15th of May, the first German forces entered the city and drove directly towards Hotel Des Indes to meet count Julius von Zech, who was the German envoy to The Netherlands. He was held captive at Hotel Des Indes by the Dutch armed forces. On the picture above, we see German soldiers at the Lange Voorhout in May 1940.



WEHRMACHT HOTEL

The Nazis directly took over Hotel Des Indes. Mr. Van der Werf (who was covering for Mr. Rey during that time) remembers a machinegun was directly placed in the hall and a bust of Hitler was brought into the hotel to be placed at our reception. This was immediately rejected by Mr Van der Werf. To his own suprise, the rejection was accepted by the German soldiers. Since the Germans chose their military (Wehrmacht) headquarters also at the Lange Voorhout (nr. 38), our hotel unfortunately became know as the 'Wehrmacht hotel'.

KURT SENT TO THE EAST FRONT

The arrival of German forces at Hotel Des Indes was a disaster for Kurt Irrgang. He was summoned to directly join the German Wehrmacht. He was separated from his wife and new-born's and directly sent away to the East front, forced to fight the Russians. During the last stage of the war, Kurt was captured by the Russians in Czechoslovakia and sent to an imprisonment camp in Siberia, a trauma he would rarely speak about. He was released by the Russians in the winter of '47-'48, being able to return to his wife and children in The Hague.

Directly after the war, the regional office of the Wehrmacht is transformed into the temporary office of the British.



05-05-45



LIBERATED AT LAST

Immediately after the war American troops settled in at the hotel. Prime Minister Churchill and General Montgomery were among the first guests of Hotel Des Indes after the liberation.

10-10-45



GENERAL EISENHOWER

Eisenhower is welcomed as a hero during his liberation tour through Europe. Here he arrives at the Palace in The Hague where he is met by Queen Juliana. In the background, we see Hotel Des Indes where he would stay.

1946

THE LOST SON RETURNS

The son of Henry Rey comes back from London to take on his father's legacy at the hotel. Jean-Jacques had a passion for technical innovations, he for example introduced a pneumatic tube system, through which hotel orders where transported between the different departments like the Front desk, Kitchen and Administration. He also invented the tapwater foot paddle controls in the toilets, next to staircase in the Lounge.

1947

KURT RETURNS TO DES INDES

After his return, he could start directly at his beloved Hotel Des Indes and worked his way up to become one of the best maitre d'hotels we have known. After the war, people who collaborated with the Germans were chased down and convicted. Kurt, as a German man, who was forced to fight for our enemy, was invited back to our hotel. After years of patience, he finally got rewarded with the Dutch citizenship in 1956.





THE TABLES HAVE TURNED

After the capitulation of Japan, at the end of WW2, the Republic of Indonesia was declared. In the following years, The Netherlands tried to regain power by military force over the once held Colony. On the 30th of January 1948, the UN delegation had lunch with the Dutch prime minister dhr. L.J.M Beel at Hotel Des Indes right after they had visited Indonesia for negotiations.

EISENHOWER RETURNS

The North Atlantic Alliance was founded in the aftermath of the Second World War. Its purpose was to secure peace in Europe, to promote cooperation among its members and to guard their freedom. Dwight Eisenhower was the first NATO Commander. As commander of the NATO, he often visited the member states. On the picture below he has just arrived at Hotel Des Indes.





THE GREATEST PIANIST

Already a prodigy at the age of 4, Rubinstein played for audiences around the world for more than 80 years. There is no pianist in history that played with such grace and ease as Arthur played the music of Chopin, which seemed to have been written for him. Did he play our piano in the Lounge on that summer evening of the 21st of June 1954?

UNDERGROUND RESTAURANT

The opening of an easy going restaurant, The Copper Kettle, in the cellars of Des Indes, was judged by many as very unusual. The white tables cloths were replaced by the farmer style block pattern. In this underground restaurant, guest could enjoy a more relaxed atmosphere, which became very popular during the fifties.

BHUMIBOL

Bhumibol Adulyadej (1927-2016) was the longest-serving, and richest monarch in the world. King Bhumibol of Thailand became wildly popular for his commitment to the poor. King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit hosted a gala dinner at Hotel Des Indes. In the picture below we see Kurt Irrgang holding the chair of Queen Juliana and behind Prince Bernard a young Princess Beatrix is entering.





ROYAL TRADITION

Carriages might be old fashioned in many countries but in the Netherlands we still love this tradition. The Lange Voorhout, where the hotel is located, has always been the center of the route on which the Royal carriages toured many Heads of State around the city, during their official state visits. Today we only use the carriages on Prinsjesdag, the day the Cabinet presents their budget plans for the next year, which is always the 3rd Tuesday of September.

1948 1951 1954 1955 1960

1950

A SPECIAL FIRST LADY

On the picture below we see Eleanor Roosevelt together with Queen Wilhelmina during her visit to The Hague. We had the privilege to host many great leaders throughout our history, but Eleanor is one that we hold dearest. It was the headmistress of a private school in England, who inspired a 15-year-old Eleanor to become political and socially aware. But it was her husbands (and later president) Franklin D Roosevelt's progressive stands on women rights, plus his immobility due to polio disease, which enabled Eleanor to become politically active. What started out as the fight for equal rights for women, lead to heading the committee which drafted the Universal declaration of human rights at the UN.



1954



LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

In 1955 Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, stayed at the hotel for several months. Most memorable were the 2 uniformed guards, always seated (in specially designed chairs) alongside the Emperor's hotel room door. During his stay, Selassie hosted a dinner for Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard during which part of the hotel was declared "territory of Ethiopia".

WALTER LIPPMANN

American writer, Walter Lippmann stayed in Hotel Des Indes during a holiday with his wife Helen. His most influential work, would be his book called "Public opinion" (1922). It is a critical assessment of functional democratic government, especially of the irrational and often self-serving social perceptions that influence individual behavior and prevent optimal societal cohesion.



1955



JOSEPHINE BAKER

She was the first black woman to star in a motion picture, an exotic dance icon of the roaring twenties, decorated for her work in the French resistance during WW2, on the forefront of the civil rights movements and creator of her own rainbow tribe. Josephine dreamed of a world without racial indifference, therefore she adopted 12 orphanage children, all of a different race. She loved animals as much as children, petting a cheetah, monkeys and a dog. When she booked two connecting rooms at Hotel Des Indes, we expected her to bring one of her children, instead she brought her monkey.

1962

ALL ARE CREATED EQUAL

By now you probably have figured out that, in the way we tell our history, we want to celebrate all the inspiring woman who have stayed in our hotel. Eunice Kennedy Shriver, was a pioneer in the worldwide struggle for rights and acceptance for people with intellectual disabilities, and founder of the special Olympics. This was a separate human rights (and emancipations) fight on its own, and the reason Eunice was visiting The Hague. Eugine, in the middle of the picture, was also the sister of Robert & John F. Kennedy.



1971



THE LAST MEETING

For years, Prime Minister Barend Biesheuvel and his cabinet gathered in Des Indes for their weekly meeting. For their last meeting, the hotel was not just the location, but also the main subject on the agenda. After more than 50 years, the Dutch government decided to sell Des Indes. The hotel was closed and 61 people were fired.

1972 →

THE YELLOW GRAND DAME

← 2022

1972

NEW OWNER NEW STOVE

Real estate contractor Julius Verwoerdt takes over Hotel Des Indes. He bought Des Indes for 1.380.000 guilders, just 40.000 guilders more than the State paid 50 years earlier. The hotel was extensively renovated, after the contractor took over, the kitchen equipment (still running on coal until then) was replaced as well as the central steam heating which was barely operational.

1974



A MILLION DOLLAR BILL

Directly after the renovations, which cost the new owner a fortune, Hotel Des Indes presented, to one of our guests the largest invoice ever, an invoice of over one million guilders. It was thanks to a dispute between the Spanish government and a multinational, which was on trial in Dutch Court. The Spanish delegation lived in Des Indes for over a year, and had a lavish spending pattern. The head of their delegation, started his daily routine with a breakfast containing 2 portions of caviar and some of the finest Champagne.

1976

THE DES INDES COUNCIL

The Des Indes Council was the name of a series of meetings in the 70's and 80's, between the main Dutch political parties; VVD, PvdA and D66. The first (secret) meeting was organized in 1976 by the JOVD, the youth organization of the VVD. As most meetings took place in Des Indes, the name of the Des Indes Council was born. The Des Indes Council eventually resulted in the first purple cabinet. The term purple cabinet refers to a cabinet composed of liberal parties and social democratic parties, without the participation of Christian Democrats. This name can be explained by the fact that purple is the political mixture of blue liberalism (in the Netherlands) and red social democracy. This way they formed a government in which topics like sex, marriage, abortion, and euthanasia could be discussed within the Cabinet.

1979

A GAME OF CHESS

Antoly Karpov stayed in our hotel while he joined a grandmaster chess tournament. 5 years later, the biggest chess rivalry in history started during the world championships, where Antoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov played an epic 48 games lasting match. Antoly Karpov was the Kremlin's favourite and later became a member of the Duma himself while Garry Kasparov was a fierce Kremlin critic and even left Russia in 2013.



1982

MOVIE SET

The famous Dutch movie director Paul Verhoeven, recorded parts of the movie "the Fourth Man" in Des Indes.

HEALTH SPA

The well-known spacious wine cellar, was converted into a health center and spa.

1985



AUDREY HEPBURN

Audrey was in The Hague to attend the film & fashion gala of UNICEF in the Metropole theatre.
The picture shows Audrey signing our guestbook.

1987

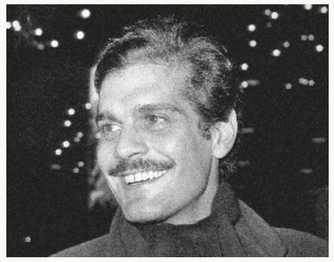


LOVE, SEXY & LATE

When Prince stayed at Hotel Des Indes during his Love & Sexy tour, he felt very much at home, always rushing to be on time for his own concert and forcing his driver to ignore speed limits and pass traffic jams, using the emergency lance on their way to the venue in Rotterdam.

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

Omar Sharif was the George Clooney of the 20th century. Not just because they share the same enchanting effect on women, but they looked alike, so much that it was Clooney, who portrait Sharif in the biopic about him. There was one thing Sharif loved more than women and making movies: playing bridge. He would easily cancel both if there was a bridge tournament he could attend. And as Hotel Des Indes hosted "The Sunday Times Bridge tournament" Omar Sharif was in our midst. Sharif played with Prince Claus at the opening match of the tournament.



1988

MICHAEL JACKSON

Michael Jackson, was our guest when he was in The Netherlands for his Dangerous tour. Before his concert, he passed by the Sophia children's hospital with a cheque worth 100.000 guilders, for their new playroom. He made sure to meet all children, who were too sick to leave their beds.

1992

THE ICONIC YELLOW

Due to a long awaited, and costly (28 million) renovation, the hotel had to completely close down. The renowned French interior architect Jacques Garcia, famous for his classical style, aimed to restore Des Indes in its original glory and character. Did Garcia bring back the original interior style of the hotel (louis XVI), or did he perhaps go back a century too far? (Louis XIV). His choice to give the façade its iconic yellow, was spot on though; We can't imagine it to be any other color.



2002



PIM FORTUYN

Pim Fortuyn was a regular guest at the hotel. Fortuyn was a professor and political commentator before he moved into politics. In his columns Fortuyn was a fierce critic of the "purple coalition cabinet" (1994 – 2002). During his campaign in the months before the election, the clash with the political establishment intensified mainly because of his view on immigration. Ten days before the national elections, Fortuyn had a political debate with Mr. Melkert in Hotel Des Indes, in the same room the "Des Indes Talks" took places 25 years prior. The next day Pim Fortuyn was assassinated at the Mediapark in Hilversum after attending a radio show.

2004



MINI ME

Madurodam is a miniature park and tourist attraction in the Scheveningen district of The Hague. It is home to a range of 1:25 scale model replicas of famous Dutch landmarks, historical cities and large developments. Hotel Des Indes has been added to Madurodam in 2011 as one of the main historical buildings of The Hague

2009

DAILA LAMA

The spiritual leader of Tibet, the Daila Lama, met during his stay at Des Indes, Minister of foreign afairs Maxime Verhagen. Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende, made the decision not to meet the Dalai Lama as he is a spiritual and not a political leader, and meeting him might pose an "irresponsible risk" for relations with China.



2011

WHO DID WE FORGET?

Some famous guests we also welcomed the past years were Mick Jagger, Roger Moore, Bob Dylan, Neil Armstrong, Jimmy Carter, Neil Diamond, Meg Ryan, Mata Hari, Keanu Reeves, Bono, Tony Blair, Jacques Chirac and Bishop Tutu. But as important for our heritage as the icons of politics and culture who stayed with us, are those who served them. Some became icons themselves, like our doorman Antonio Marreiros who left in 2022 after over 35 years of service.



2021



COALITION AGREEMENT SHOW

On the 15th December 2021, the four political party leaders, Mark Rutte, Sigrid Kaag, Gert-Jan Segers and Wopke Hoekstra were guests in a special broadcast of OP1. Live from Hotel Des Indes, they explain the content of the new coalition agreement and the difficult road to get there.

2022

PRESIDENT OF PORTUGAL

In February 2022 we welcomed the President of Portugal, Mr Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa.
He inaugurated a special exhibition featuring works by artist Paula Rego at the Kunstmuseum in The Hague.



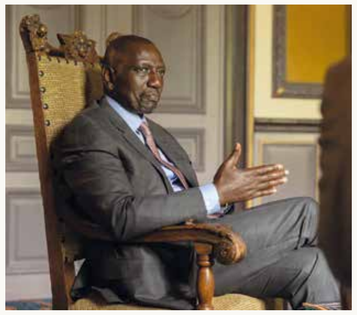
2022



PRESIDENT OF SENEGAL

President Macky Sall was in the Netherlands on 5 and 6 September 2022 for the Africa Adaptation Summit and several technical visits focused on climate adaptation, water management, and agriculture.

2023



PRESIDENT OF KENYA

On 8 May 2023, President William Ruto held a diplomatic "causerie" in the Salon Van Brienen at Hotel Des Indes during his two-day official visit to the Netherlands. The visit formed part of a broader diplomatic programme that included meetings with King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima at Noordeinde Palace, discussions on the Africa Climate Action Summit, and meetings with the Global Center on Adaptation in Rotterdam.

2023

LAURYN HILL

29 July 2023, the Reggae Rotterdam Festival at Rotterdam Ahoy. It was billed as an exclusive European show for the 25th anniversary of The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill. Before going solo, she was a member of the legendary hip-hop trio Fugees alongside Wyclef Jean and Pras Michel.



2024



KING OF SWEDEN

As part of a Swedish business delegation visiting the Netherlands, His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden stayed at Hotel Des Indes in May 2024. The visit formed part of a broader programme aimed at strengthening economic and diplomatic relations between Sweden and the Netherlands.

2024

THE EMIR OF QATAR

His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, visited The Hague 24 June 2024 as part of an official state visit to the Netherlands. Accompanied by Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim Al Thani, the Emir was welcomed by King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima at Noordeinde Palace. The visit focused on strengthening diplomatic, economic, and strategic cooperation between Qatar and the Netherlands.



2024

ROYAL DELFT X HOTEL DES INDES

Collaboration with Royal Delft to create a unique Dutch festive ornament for the grand Christmas tree in the hotel's majestic lounge.





2025

RICHARD GERE

Richard Gere visited The Hague, he attended and spoke at the Tibetan National Uprising Day events on 10 March 2025 as chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet.



2025









RENOVATION

In 2025 our renovation seamlessly blends timeless elegance with modern comfort. All guestrooms have been redesigned. While the Lounge, Restaurant, Bar and Reception have been thoughtfully modernized to meet today's expectations, carefully preserving the hotel's distinctive historic character and refined design.





2025







NATO SUMMIT

During the Nato summit in The Hague on 24 & 25 June 2025, we hosted the President of Romania, Mr Nicușor Dan & Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni of the Italian Republic.

2025

OPENING CHAMPAGNE LOUNGE

The Anna Pavlova Champagne Lounge, opened in December 2025, is an exclusive lounge where history, character, and refinement come together. The space pays tribute to two remarkable women who left an enduring legacy in the world of Art and Champagne: Anna Pavlova, the most celebrated prima ballerina of her time and a cherished regular guest of Hotel Des Indes. Louise (Madame) Pommery, the visionary woman behind the Champagne House Pommery, whose name remains synonymous with elegance, innovation, and excellence.



2026





ROYAL FASHION SHOW

Hotel Des Indes once welcomed His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand during their historic state visit to the Netherlands in 1960, a milestone in more than four centuries of Thai-Dutch relations. More than six decades later, Thailand returns to this landmark not in ceremony alone, but in creative dialogue. Past and future meet under one roof. On April 9 2026, during an impressive Fashion Show, the Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana Rajakanya, unveils CHUD THAI (Thai National Costume) through the ages, weaving history, craft, and identity. A visionary cultural moment that positions Thailand's national costume at the forefront of contemporary global design.

HOTEL DES INDES

THE HAGUE

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR STORY

Where History Meets Luxury












As you have reached the final page, we hope you have enjoyed discovering the remarkable people, memorable moments, and rich heritage that have shaped Hotel Des Indes for more than 145 years. History is never complete; it continues to be written every day.

With every guest we welcome, every celebration we host, and every memorable stay we create; a new chapter begins.
Thank you for taking the time to explore our story. Most importantly, thank you for becoming part of it. Whether your visit lasts a few hours or a few days, you have added your own page to the continuing legacy of Hotel Des Indes.

We look forward to welcoming you again and creating many more memories together.

THE ENTIRE TEAM OF HOTEL DES INDES

THE LEADING HOTELS OF THE WORLD®

HOTEL DES INDES

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