

The Biltmore at Christmas

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Located in Asheville, NC, the Biltmore was built between 1889-95. It was originally on 125,000 acres, built by George Vanderbilt.

The Winter Garden





Winter Garden Ceiling



The Banquet Hall

George Vanderbilt was known for his generosity at Christmas. The tree, one of 67 throughout the house, imparted fragrant spruce throughout the room. The tree had to be taller than the chandelier. Gifts were often attached to the tree like ornaments.

Elaborate meals were served here, up to 7 courses and wine pairings from the vineyard on the estate.





Breakfast Room

Two Renoirs hung on the walls of this room along with George Vanderbilt's grandfather's portrait.

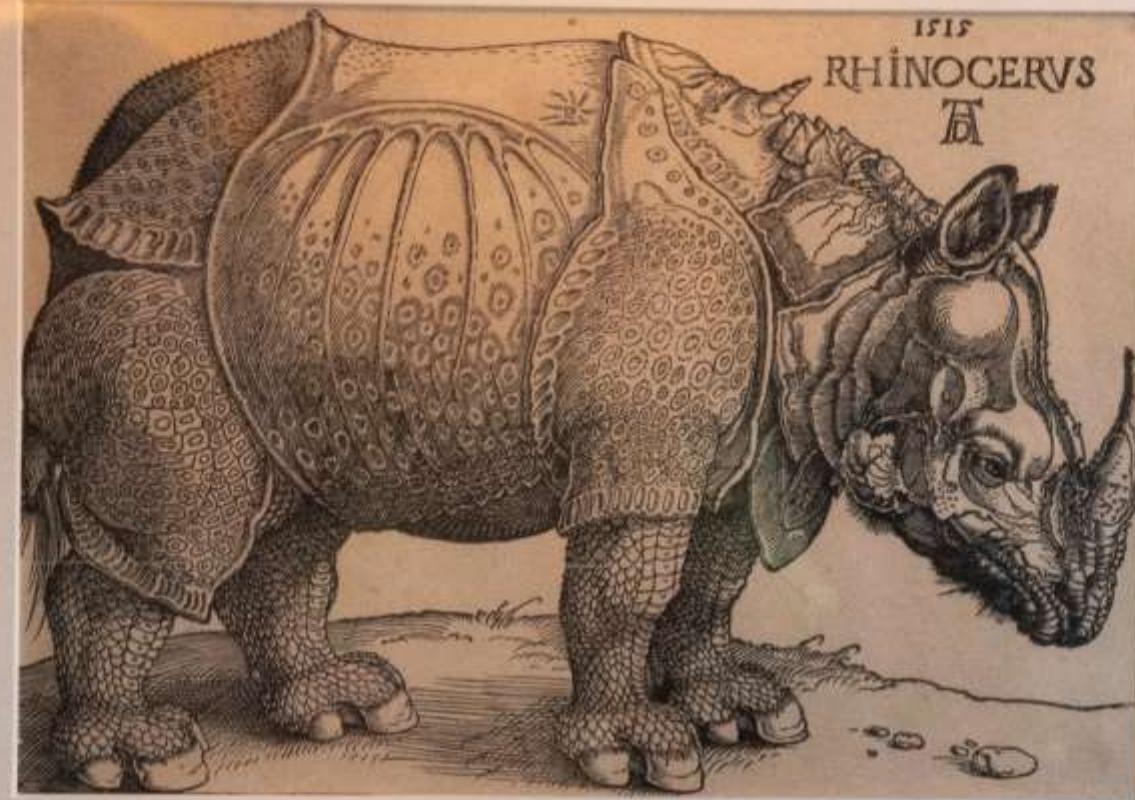


Salon



Intended to
be a salon,
but never
completed in
Vanderbilt's
lifetime.
Made into a
ladies' sitting
room

Original
Durer
(woodcut
artist)





Music Room

Over the
mantel,
an
original
Durer. It
took 190
separate
woodcuts
pieced
together

Loggia



The Vanderbilts and their guests enjoyed views of Deerpark and the Blue Ridge Mountains

Tapestry Gallery

1530's set of
tapestries,
Faith,
Charity, and
Prudence.
He has the
only one left
of the Faith
one. Portrait
of George
Vanderbilt,
and his mom
to the left.



Tapestry Gallery

Closeup

It takes 5 years to plan one of these tapestries, then 5 years to make it.



Tapestry Gallery

Cabinet



Library

22,000
books,
Vanderbilt
read over
3300 of
them.



Library

Eclectic
variety of
books in 8
languages.



Library
Napolean's
chess set



Library



Library



Ceiling Mural
Painted in 1720

Second Floor Living Hall

Almost lifesize
portraits of
Olmsted and
architect Hunt.
Olmsted
designed the
Vanderbilt
property and
also Central
Park and the
US Capitol
grounds.



Mr. Vanderbilt's Bedroom

Gold gilded
wallpaper,
baroque
style
furniture,
bed is raised
on-a
pedestal.



Mr.
Vanderbilt's
Bedroom

Mirror
shows
Vanderbilt's
custom
carved
Italian
marble claw
footed
bathtub.



Oak Sitting Room



This area joins the spouses' bedrooms. They relaxed and planned the day with the head housekeeper, which Edith needed to keep track of every guest and activities and meals.

Oak Sitting Room



Mrs.
Vanderbilt's
Bedroom

Oval shape,
her room
upon her
marriage at
age 25, Louis
XV style
furnishings.
Doors lead to
Lady's Maid
Room,
bathroom
and closets.





Third Floor Living Hall



Third Floor Living Room



Guests in nearby rooms came here to relax, listen to music before and after dinner.

Third Floor Louis the XV Hallway

Houses the
grandest
guest rooms
of the house





Claude Room

Paintings by
Claude
Lorraine, one
of
Vanderbilt's
favorite
artists

Tyrolean Chimney Room

Hand painted
18th century
Swiss porcelain
tile over
mantel. The
panel was in
bad shape
because it was
poorly taken
care of, and not
repaired well.
They did a lot
of restoration
work on it.



Louis XV Room

Edith gave birth and convalesced there. Others gave birth there too. They thought that room was chosen for the beautiful views.



Louis XV Bathroom

There were 43 bathrooms in the house, with flush toilets. For the year 1895, it was rare to have even 1 in the house.



There are no sinks because people still preferred to use washbasins in their rooms.

With the doors always closed, how could you tell which rooms were bathrooms? Under the doors there was white tile protruding out.

Stone Hallway

Seen here is one of the foundation walls. It took 2 years to build the foundation.

Foundation and footings extended down about 29 feet.



Halloween Room

Cornelia,
George and
Edith's
daughter,
married in
1924. 1925
she and her
husband
spent weeks
painting
walls for a
New Years
Eve Party.



Bowling Alley

Under the tapestry room, one of the nation's first private residence bowling alleys.

Dressing Rooms located down the hall

Female guests would change into appropriate bathing costumes. It was not decent to walk through the house in your bathing suit. There were no mirrors because your changing attendant would make sure you looked ok.



Swimming Pool

70,000 gallon indoor pool was heated and still has its original underwater DC lighting. Tiling vaulted ceiling was designed by Rafael Guastavino. Spring water was used so it came in icy cold, then it had to be heated. Vanderbilt did not know of chemicals and filtration, so the water couldn't be kept long.



Gymnasium
State of the
art.
Showers
were
needle
baths,
equivalent
to modern
shower
massages



A photograph of a vegetable pantry. The top half of the image shows several shelves filled with various canned goods, including soups, stews, and vegetables, arranged in a grid pattern. The bottom half shows a wooden barrel and a bag of flour in the foreground.

Vegetable Pantry

Used to store fresh fruits and vegetables.



Servants Bedrooms

Nice private
bedrooms, much
better than
conditions they
could get
elsewhere.

Vanderbilt paid
New York wages,
considered high.







Pastry Kitchen

The chef made elaborate desserts here, which was protected from the heat of the main kitchen

Rotisserie Kitchen

Meats such as venison and turkey and whole hog were prepared here to keep the smoke and grease out of the other kitchens.



Main Kitchen

Most prep work and cooking occurred here under direction of the chef, one of the most important staff positions in the house. He led a team of more than a dozen kitchen workers who were responsible for preparing meals ranging from staff breakfasts to gala dinners



Main Kitchen

The main clock at the stable.

When the minute hand moved, it would send an electrical signal to all of the clocks in the serving area.

That's how they all stayed in sync. Vanderbilt under most people could not afford watches.





Kitchen Pantry

Electric and manual
dumbwaiters raised trays to
the first floor butler's pantry
and to the floor above

Servants' dining Room

Up to 30 servants worked at the Biltmore House including a dining room maid, responsible for setting the table, serving the food and cleaning up after each meal.





Walk in
refrigerators.

Instead of
iceboxes or
spring houses
to cool food,
the Biltmore
has an early
form of
mechanical
refrigeration.
There were five
of these.



Main Laundry and Drying



Main Laundry and Drying

Laundresses worked every evening and had electric drying racks. The clothes were not cleaned here, since they were of silk and fine fabrics. This was for table linens and sheets.



Main Laundry and Drying

They used an
innovative
electric sheet
drying system







Billiard Room

Houseguests played dominoes and billiards and enjoyed refreshments here. There was ample seating for spectators.

Smoking Room

Male guests enjoyed after dinner cigars, pipes and brandy here.



Gun Room

Hunting parties were a popular pastime on country estates. Guests selected guns from Mr. Vanderbilt's collection to use on their excursions.



Grounds







Garden



Garden



Garden



Green House



Green House



Green
House



Green House



Green House



Gardener's House



Winery Tunnel



Winery



Shops!



A detailed architectural rendering of the Biltmore Estate's exterior. The building features multiple levels of light-colored stone veneer, intricate stonework, and decorative elements. Large arched windows and doors are prominent on the ground floor, while upper floors feature smaller windows with ornate frames and decorative ledges. A balcony with a detailed railing is visible on one of the upper levels. The roofline is complex with various gables and a prominent tower. A small evergreen tree is visible at the bottom left.

Steel, brick
with stone
veneer.
They
trucked in
Indiana
Limestone
!

The Gate
Shop at the
Exit –
Surprised to
learn that you
can do wine
tasting here,
where there
were NO
lines!!

