

# WHERE THE PALMS MEET THE PINES

ASHLAND SPRINGS HOTEL, A  
GRAND GATEWAY TO THE PACIFIC  
NORTHWEST AND A HISTORICAL  
STAYCATION DREAM COME TRUE

 BY KM COLLINS  
 PROVIDED BY ASHLAND SPRINGS HOTEL

Imagine traveling back in time, just shy of a century, and stepping into the tallest building between San Francisco and Portland: the grand Lithia Springs Hotel, in Ashland, Oregon. Towering at an extraordinary nine stories and touted as on par with the finest hotels in the east, in September 1925 the Lithia Hotel officially opened. What a glorious site it would have been to travelers headed north or south, crossing the border between Oregon and California.

After a stint of closure during The Great Depression and a change of ownership, in 1961 Lithia Springs Hotel was unveiled as the Mark Antony Motor Hotel. Refurbished with a swimming pool, coffee shop, dining room, and additional modern amenities, a contest was held to choose the new name. Given local Southern Oregon English Tudor architecture themes and the growing popularity of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the classic character and play namesake was a shoo-in. In the extensive restoration and expansion process, hotel proprietors were able to obtain National Park Service's Certified Rehabilitation preservation tax credit.

In 1978, during an off and on period of closure, Ashland Springs Hotel achieved incorporation in the National Register of Historic Places.

Fast forward to the year 2000, 75 years after first being built, new owners Doug and Becky Neuman of Neuman Hotel Group facilitated significant utility upgrades including air conditioning and a much needed elevator addition. They transformed the pool into an English Garden and adjacent naturally lit Conservatory and added design elements inspired by the 1920s Chautauqua lecture series and Lithia waters, original cultural draws which first enticed visitors to the hotel and town of Ashland. They renamed the building Ashland Springs Hotel.



Stepping into the Ashland Springs Hotel today, guests pass through a breathtaking Gothic and Beaux Arts exterior while finding a lovely warm and traditional European boutique interior. Elements like wall hangings of pressed French herbs, curiosity cabinets with seashells, birds, butterflies and plant specimens, and an English garden support the aesthetic of a naturalist's library or a staycation in luxurious old-timey Havana.

Karolina Lavagnino, director of sales and marketing for the hotel shares, "This historic landmark transforms you in time, brings you to simpler times when travel was fun and hotel stay was part of the adventure."

Because of its unique mood and magnetism in the Rogue Valley region, the hotel has attracted famous patrons such as countless renaissance actors and actresses performing in ongoing local theater and festivals: Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Martin Luther King III, Ann Curry, Keanu Reeves, Fabio, Steven Seagal, Helen Hunt, documentary filmmaker Morgan Spurlock, Ziggy Marley, Courtney Love, and bands like the Gypsy Kings, Chicago, and Tears for Fears.

As Ashland Springs Hotel approaches its centennial, it has much to offer every staycationer and guest from near or far.

If you're a historian, peruse the photography collection on the second floor. It spans every decade of hotel history and many images from iconic Ashland moments. After, ask the concierge about the ghosts in the building. Lavagnino mentions, "Supposedly we have had guests over the years mention that some friendly male ghosts have visited them at night. But nothing scary."

If you're a person of leisure, Lavagnino suggests enjoying a glass of wine or reading a book in the spacious lobby and Mezzanine. She also recommends trying a spa treatment at the hotel's Waterstone Spa or traveling up the road a short distance to Ashland Spring Hotel's sister property, Lithia Springs Resort. Here, among a beautifully sculpted landscape, you'll find amenities like a mineral water soaking pool and Wine Garden tasting room.

If you're a foodie, you won't want to miss Larks Home Kitchen Cuisine attached to the hotel and offering in restaurant dining, to-go options, and room service. "Larks restaurant showcases locally sourced and seasonal ingredients," says Lavagnino. "It's all about cooking from scratch. We take advantage of the abundance of produce, artisan producers, wines, nuts, and mushrooms that grow and are crafted in Southern Oregon and Northern California. Our Executive Chef Franco Console creates exquisite menus based on what is seasonally available." Larks is widely renowned and has won awards as a flavorful, authentic, farm-to-table dining experience.

If you like to get out and about, Ashland Springs Hotel is in the heart of downtown. Shopping, grabbing a cup of gourmet coffee or pint at a local microbrewery and strolling through the can't-miss Lithia Public Park are all convenient and close-by activities. If you have a vehicle, take a short drive to several wineries, Emigrant Lake, or many parks along the mighty Rogue River. The countryside in Ashland is especially gorgeous for afternoon drives, picnics and wandering through smaller hamlets like Jacksonville.



If you're a skier, don't forget to check out Mount Ashland which has a historic tale of its own to tell and trimmings on brand with English Tudor themes. After a day on the slopes, look forward to a nap in rejuvenating crisp white linens, a goose down comforter and French style quilts over an incredibly comfortable mattress. Indulgent fabrics, muted carpet and wall colors, a flatscreen for Netflix and chill, premium bath amenities and complimentary bathrobes all make for a mellow après ski recovery and ensure you'll be ready to do it all again the next day.

If you're a culture hound, time your stay at Ashland Springs Hotel with happenings at Oregon Cabaret Theatre and world-renowned events like the annual Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Other notable local seasonal events that draw a big crowd include the Brine, Brew & Barrel Festival, the Oregon Chocolate Festival, the Oregon Cheese Festival, the Ashland Independent Film Festival, Ride the Rogue Cycling Event, and Ride the Rim at Crater Lake National Park. With Ashland Springs Hotel as a basecamp, explore the best in culinary, performance arts, and sport by day, relax and recover in sophisticated comfort by night.

Finally, if you're planning a wedding or event, you won't want to miss the opportunity to bring elegance and old-world chic to your special day. The European-style charm infused in the Ashland Springs Hotel dramatic lobby entrance, Grand Ballroom, Palm Room, Crystal Room (featuring a six-foot wide crystal chandelier), and in total, 5,700 square feet of event space adds a rare and special kind of magic and memorability to wedding celebrations.

Ashland Springs Hotel embodies the ambiance of timeless refinement and taste. From the hotel's beginnings as a stately outpost between Oregon and California, to supplying access to the everlasting healing lithia waters to passers-through, the Ashland Springs Hotel has been a symbol of Southern Oregon's prominence, heritage, and cultural opulence for almost 100 years. Whether you live in Ashland, the Rogue Valley or far, far away, pack your bags, book a room and experience the je ne sais quoi of this towering Southern Oregon masterpiece.



**Ashland Springs Hotel**  
212 E Main St, Ashland | 888-795-4545

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