

= Hotel Valley Ho =

Hotel Valley Ho is a historic hotel in Scottsdale , Arizona . Also called the Valley Ho and , for 28 years , the Ramada Valley Ho , the hotel was originally designed by Edward L. Varney , a student of Frank Lloyd Wright . It first opened in 1956 with a forward @-@ looking and futuristic design . Movie stars and famous baseball players stayed , and the building quickly became known for its trendsetting guests and its fashionable atmosphere . The success of the venture resulted in expansion in 1958 , with two additional two @-@ story wings of guest rooms extending to the north . Though initially proposed by Varney , a central tower of guest rooms , rising over the lobby , was not built .

The property was bought by the Ramada hotel chain in 1973 , and was redecorated to cover the 1950s design , seen at the time as outdated . No longer in vogue , but centrally located , the hotel remained prominent for years , and hosted conferences , business meetings , and vacationers . Under Ramada management , however , the property began to show a lack of maintenance , and its popularity declined . It closed in 2001 and its demolition was considered when no purchase offers were received . Admirers of the hotel 's exemplary architecture and its local history rallied to save it , and it was placed on the Scottsdale Historic Register .

In 2002 , the hotel was bought by Westroc Hotels & Resorts and underwent a renovation , which was completed in 2005 . Conceived anew by the architectural firm Allen + Philp , a seven @-@ story tower with guest rooms and condominiums was built above the lobby , in the spirit of Varney 's proposal . New restaurants were incorporated , including a retro @-@ chic seasonal @-@ American restaurant ( ZuZu ) , and a Trader Vic 's franchise at the northeast end of the property ( closed in 2011 ) . The hotel 's original jet @-@ age design was restored as much as possible , augmented with 2000s @-@ era fixtures .

The Hotel Valley Ho is a AAA " Four Diamond Award " winner and a member of " Preferred Hotels & Resorts " . Author and architect Alan Hess called the hotel " one of the best @-@ preserved mid @-@ century hotels in the country " .

= = History = =

Robert and Evelyn Foehl were the first to conceive of the hotel . Robert Foehl trained at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles , California . He then bought the Hotel San Marcos in Chandler , Arizona . Following that , he managed the Jokake Inn in Scottsdale . Evelyn Foehl managed the Hacienda del Sol in Tucson as one of the few women in the hotel business . The two established a core of investors to build a new hotel on an 8 @. @ 86 @-@ acre ( 3 @. @ 59 ha ) site in Scottsdale and to design it , they hired Edward L. Varney , one of the most prominent local architects of the time . Varney set the hotel around a central pool lounge and used extended horizontal lines in the wings where rooms included air conditioning for year @-@ round operation , a first for Scottsdale . A curving porte @-@ cochere with abstract Southwestern designs in cast concrete opened onto a high @-@ ceiling lobby which gave guests a " sense of arrival " , a feature often used by Frank Lloyd Wright . The tall lobby connected the guests to a restaurant , a lounge , a nightclub , and the central pool . The interior design was conceived and executed by interior architect Thelma Hawkins , the director of Barker Bros. Phoenix Studio of Interior Design . The project was completed on December 20 , 1956 at a cost of \$ 1 @. @ 5 million , an amount equivalent to \$ 13 @. @ 1 million in current value .

Varney added an unusual feature for a hotel of the time : a parking lot . The parking lot afforded guests the personal comfort and freedom of pulling their car up very close to their rooms . This was the first motor resort in Scottsdale .

The Foehls held a contest in March 1956 to name the as @-@ yet @-@ uncompleted hotel . They specified that the name should have a " westward flavor " like its parent , the Westward Ho in Phoenix . The winning name " Valley Ho " was selected because the location was at the periphery of Paradise Valley , an affluent area , and because the identical " Ho " connected the new hotel with the older one in Phoenix . Later , it was discovered that ho means " you are welcomed here , this is

a friendly place " in a local aboriginal American language .

The Foehls knew many in the Hollywood film industry , and a number of film stars stayed at the hotel . In late December 1957 , Robert Wagner and Natalie Wood celebrated their wedding reception at the hotel . Bette Davis , Roy Rogers , Bing Crosby , Frankie Avalon , Humphrey Bogart , Betty Grable , Janet Leigh , Marilyn Monroe , Zsa Zsa Gabor , Ingrid Bergman , Cary Grant , and Tony Curtis were known to have stayed there . Sometimes late at night , Jimmy Durante would come down from his room to play the piano in the lounge for other sleepless guests . The Foehls ran the hotel very closely ? they lived on the premises .

Local Scottsdale corporation Motorola used the hotel to house its transferred employees while they looked for permanent residences . Some of the baseball players , coaches , and managers taking part in the spring training Cactus League of Arizona stayed at the hotel , including Joe DiMaggio , Ted Williams , and Leo Durocher , the latter requesting Room 103 every time he visited , for its nearness to the lobby . Chicago @-@ based sports reporter Dave Hoekstra writes that he and his " Bleacher Bum " colleagues did not have enough money to stay under the same roof as the baseball players they were watching , and instead crowded into rooms at the Safari motel next door ( since razed ) . Hoekstra notes that , throughout the 1960s , " the Ho was the high @-@ roller place in the Sun Valley " .

The Valley Ho competed favorably with the Safari Hotel , erected about the same time east of Scottsdale Fashion Square . Both hotels offered premium hospitality , and helped Scottsdale expand its public image . With the Valley Ho an immediate financial success , in 1958 Varney designed and built two more wings of guest rooms to the northwest of the original complex . The same materials and style were employed on the expansion buildings , but instead of single exterior corridors with rooms to one side , the added wings loaded central corridors with rooms on both sides . Another Scottsdale landmark hotel , the Mountain Shadows Resort , opened the following year , in 1959 . These three tourist havens reflected a desired cosmopolitan and exotic feel on Scottsdale .

= = Renovation = =

In 1973 , Robert Foehl died and Evelyn Foehl sold the hotel to Ramada , a hotel chain . The Ramada managers remodeled the hotel , stripping out and covering much of what they considered an outdated interior . The hotel was named Ramada Valley Ho . Though it remained a fashionable location for a while , its original character was largely absent and it began to suffer from neglect and disrepair . It continued to host conferences and business meetings , such as the Natural Health , Aromatherapy and Herb Conference & Trade Show in early 2000 , and the Arizona LANBasher 's League party in early 2001 . Later that year , the hotel closed and was put on the market . Plans for its demolition were considered when no offers were made . To protect it , Alan Hess wrote a letter detailing its importance , and a successful campaign was mounted in Scottsdale to place it on the Scottsdale Historic Register in recognition of its significance to city history and its architectural connection to the past . To save it from demolition , business partners Scott Lyon and Bill Nassikas of Westroc Hotels & Resorts bought the property and undertook an extensive renovation and building addition that eventually cost \$ 80M . Evelyn Foehl died in August 2003 , two years after the hotel was closed for renovation .

The local Scottsdale architectural firm Allen + Philp accepted the task of renovation , and in researching the hotel 's history , they found that in the 1950s , Varney had originally intended a tower of guest rooms to rise above the central lobby , a feature that was not built at the time . Allen + Philp designed a seven @-@ story tower for the purpose of giving the new hotel owners a chance of greater financial viability . Architect Mark Philp said of the project , " We worked to stay true to the spirit of the original . " Interior designer Cole @-@ Martinez carefully updated the decorations and furnishings with " one foot firmly in the present with subtle salutes to the past " . Chicago reporter Hoekstra happily noted that the renovation retained the original " Jetsons @-@ in @-@ the @-@ desert flavor " . The hotel re @-@ opened on December 20 , 2005 , exactly 49 years after its first grand opening .

## = = Amenities = =

The hotel operates one restaurant and has a wide selection of guest rooms and suites in addition to over 30 luxury condominiums for permanent residents . The condos range from 1 @, @ 450 to 2 @, @ 400 square feet ( 135 to 223 m<sup>2</sup> ) . The location is 15 minutes by car from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and from Arizona State University . Hotel Valley Ho earned a " Four Diamond Award " from AAA each year 2007 ? 2009 , and after passing the " Standards of Excellence " was invited to join Preferred Hotels and Resorts in 2006 . The Valley Ho is a top @-@ ten @-@ ranked Scottsdale property on TripAdvisor.com , topping even the renowned five @-@ star Phoenician Resort . In a nod to " Mad Men , " the widely acclaimed television series that takes place largely during the Valley Ho 's original heyday , one TripAdvisor reviewer noted : " Don Draper would approve . "

Centrally placed in the main lobby , ZuZu is a restaurant that offers seasonal American food . Executive Chef Charles Wiley compared the hotel restaurant renovation project with its long , curving counter , soda fountain and pie case to the careful rebuilding of " an old Harley @-@ Davidson , " with new features complementing vintage ones . Food and drinks are also served at the OH Pool Bar + Cabanas .

There are 21 large studio rooms which feature a bathroom separated only by a curtain . Eleven cabana rooms overlooking the pool come with a double @-@ sized patio . Two executive suites and three terrace suites include an 800 @-@ square @-@ foot ( 74 m<sup>2</sup> ) balcony or patio .

Since its renovation , Jamie Foxx , Eddie Van Halen , and Korn have stayed at the hotel , and Robert Wagner has returned from time to time .

## = = Architectural style = =

The Hotel Valley Ho is a striking example of the mid @-@ century modern architectural style . Varney 's use of masonry , cast and poured concrete , natural stone , and wide expanses of glass make for a close connection between the building and its environment . Stone floor and wall patterns link the exterior entry and the lobby , as does the extension of the redwood ceiling . The hotel is now considered one of the finest examples of organic architecture . Rooms in the two adjacent wings added in the late 1950s are unusual , and remarkably forward @-@ thinking even by mid @-@ century design standards , for their high nine @-@ foot @-@ ceilings . The prevailing trend at the time of original construction was low @-@ ceiled rooms , in some cases with ceilings only seven feet above ground level , but the Valley Ho 's rooms feel exceptionally roomy and airy thanks to its original decision to buck design trends .

The repeated horizontal rows of V @-@ shaped burnished red concrete forms resemble abstract arrowheads . These precast forms , extending horizontally , give a modest " Southwestern " or " American Indian " flavor to the building .

During the renovation , walls and coverings were stripped away to reveal 1950s features . Drywall was removed from guest room walls to highlight the original masonry bricks . Walls partitioning the central lobby were torn down to open up Varney 's intended connection between the indoor and outdoor public spaces . Concrete columns in the lobby were stripped of mirrors added by Ramada so as to show their original design .

The hotel offers a 90 @-@ minute architectural tour , available by appointment and led by experts from Ultimate Art & Cultural Tours of Scottsdale . The tour is focused on the hotel 's design and Hollywood past , and includes a look inside some of the restored rooms , a walk around the grounds , and a stop at the Sky Line Rooftop for wonderful views of Phoenix and Scottsdale .