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The Cloud Camp lodge at The Broadmoor is located atop Cheyenne Mountain.



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The Broadmoor at 100: what drew celebrities, presidents, royalty to this Colorado Springs resort

- The 'Grande Dame of the Rockies' made it to the travel bucket lists of the wealthy soon after it opened in 1918 thanks to its legendary founder Spencer Penrose, and it is his passion for sport and nature that still attracts visitors today

BY **KIT BERNARDI**

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What is it? Opened in 1918, the "Grande Dame of the Rockies" has 784 guest rooms and suites, including those in two brownstone homes and 44 cottages.

The resort's 5,000 acres also encompass three wilderness properties. Hollywood stars, presidents, foreign dignitaries and royalty have all stayed here, but perhaps the most storied figure in The Broadmoor's history is its founder, Spencer Penrose, a mining entrepreneur and local legend. His passion for sport and nature shape guest experiences to this day.

Tell us more about this fella. In 1920, Penrose pulled off a publicity stunt that put his resort on the travel bucket lists of the wealthy. He invited 60 East Coast hoteliers for an all-expenses-paid stay. Dubbing themselves the Hundred Million Dollar Club, the



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group's spirited sporting events and soirées are documented in the Hotel Bar, in framed thank you notes, photographs and murals.

Look for Penrose's pet monkey playing with ... um, a marble? Nope. That's one of the man's glass eyes. He had two for the same socket; a clear one for business dealings and a bloodshot one, which he popped in ahead of drinking bouts. The eyeballs are now on display in the lobby, near Bottle Alley, an exhibit of 1,100 empty bottles from Penrose's pre-first-world-war liquor stash. He stored bottles in underground caverns and beneath floorboards in his home, El Pomar, which is in the grounds and open for guided tours.

What else is there to do? Golf, tennis and swimming are all well catered for, and guided, outdoor adventures include falconry, fly fishing, biking, rock climbing and horse riding. The longest zip line at Broadmoor Soaring Adventure measures 550 metres and propels human missiles across rugged South Cheyenne Canyon at more than 45 miles per hour.

A complimentary shuttle takes guests the 15km to Seven Falls, next to The Broadmoor's Restaurant 1858 (a log cabin whose name references the year the Colorado gold rush started). An easy walking trail leads to the falls, which tumble down 380-metre canyon walls.



Spencer Penrose. Picture: The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs



A rappelling course at The Broadmoor. Picture: The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs

Founded to house the Penroses' menagerie, the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo now contains 700 animals, including North America's largest giraffe herd; all 17 of them. And then there's the Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun, where Penrose and his wife are entombed. It was dedicated to Rogers simply because the actor/cowboy/humorist died while the 30-metre tower that would be the Penroses' final resting place was being built – and no, the couple's tombs are not on view.

Everywhere seems to have an art collection, these days – does The Broadmoor? But, of course! The first thing guests notice at the front desk is a vibrant Maxfield Parrish painting of the hotel. It's one of more than 175 museum-quality artworks from resort owner Philip Anschutz's collection on show at the resort.

Where can we get a good feed? All over the place. For European fine dining there's The Penrose Room, where jacket, reservation and air of superiority are all required. Summit pairs seasonal cuisine with the wines displayed in its revolving 500-bottle glass tower while the dishes prepared tableside, such as pepper steak flambé, at The Grille are paired with golf course-mountain views.

Seafood restaurant and steakhouse La Taverner is known for its raw oyster bar; Ristorante Del Lago for its wood-fired pizza; and Parisian-inspired Café Julia for its chocolates.



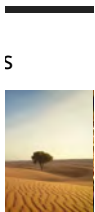
Hotel Bar at The Broadmoor. Picture: The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs

And drink? Although The Broadmoor opened during Prohibition, friends in the Transport Department ensured Penrose received regular deliveries of “gasoline” – code for alcohol. The clubby Hotel Bar is the resort’s historic watering hole, with decor documenting Penrose’s passion for ... errr ... his fuel. Elsewhere, English tavern Golden Bee buzzes nightly with ragtime piano performances and singalongs.

What is the accommodation like? High ceilings, sprawling marble bathrooms and sitting areas make guest rooms feel like European apartments, some with fireplaces, and most enjoying lake and mountain views. Wilderness property Cloud Camp, atop Cheyenne Mountain, consists of 12 luxury cabins and a seven-guestroom lodge.



The dining room at the Cloud Camp lodge. Picture: The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs



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Ten finely appointed cabins make up the Ranch at Emerald Valley, in the Pike National Forest. When not trying to land “a big one” along the Tarryall River, Fly Fishing Camp guests kick back in seven restored 1880s miners’ cabins.

What’s the bottom line? Rates start at US\$295 a night. Suites range from US\$680 to US\$9,035 in the summer, less in the winter. All-inclusive rates apply at the wilderness properties: a nightly US\$825 per person at Fly Fishing Camp; US\$900 at Cloud Camp; and US\$1,050 at the Ranch at Emerald Valley.