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Hearst Castle: The Biography Of A Country House



Synopsis

The story of Hearst Castle, the Californian estate of newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst. This book chronicles the evolution of the estate, with its pools and collection of fine art and antiques. It also includes stories of the famous parties hosted by Hearst.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Harry N. Abrams; 1st edition (2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0810934159

ISBN-13: 978-0810934153

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 1 x 12.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

Ever since the estate at San Simeon became the property of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, anyone can pay to see it and take the various tours through Hearst Castle. It's worth the trip down from San Francisco; if you can't make it, there is now [_Hearst Castle: The Biography of a Country House_](#) by Victoria Kastner, with photographs by Victoria Garagliano. As befits its larger-than-life subject, this is a big book with gorgeous pictures, but the pictures are within a very helpful historic text, so even if you have seen the house, there is much to learn. There have been tourist picture books of the house before, but this is the first book to tell the house's full story. The story largely concerns the partnership between the architect Julia Morgan and her famous client. Miss Morgan is regarded as the first woman architect of any prominence in America. She and Hearst worked on the huge castle, adjacent guest houses, pools, and gardens over three decades. She had responsibilities even for his zoo animals, and he was essentially her patron. They were superbly able to work together, and to have obvious fun in accumulating and displaying the riches illustrated in this book. Morgan put up with Hearst's changeability, with every building turning out quite differently from how it was first planned. Given his impulsiveness and the span of time of

construction, it is astonishing that the site has any architectural unity, but she managed to make it a real showplace. The book also documents the entertainments held by Hearst's lover, Marion Davies, with whom he had a longstanding, loving, and happy affair. She was a perfect hostess at the Castle; guests and staff loved her.

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