



THE INN AT
97 WINDER

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THE LARGEST HISTORIC MANSION IN DETROIT'S BRUSH PARK AREA OPENS AS A NEW, PRESTIGIOUS BED AND BREAKFAST INN

(Detroit, Mich.) After an extensive restoration, the largest historic mansion in Detroit's Brush Park neighborhood has reopened as The Inn at 97 Winder, an 11,000 square foot plus, three-story, 10-guestroom house.

Owners Ghassan Yazbeck and Marilyn Nash-Yazbeck spared no expense to restore the eight guestrooms, suite and loft suite of the 1876 home to reflect the luxurious glamour of its past. Each unique room is filled with the treasures of another age. Sumptuous fabrics from New York City and Europe adorn the windows. Antiques, art and precious furnishings speak to old-world European elegance with exotic African, Middleeastern and Asian flourishes. Most rooms feature marble or slate fireplaces.

Like a boutique hotel, each unique room of the inn combines an original design with a keen eye for sophisticated detail. In one third-floor room, for example, a Chinese screen becomes the headboard and star of the room. In a cozy second-floor room, an old-world European-style headboard features an elaborate carving of a roaring lion's head. In the spacious loft suite, a spiral staircase leads to a loft that is original to the house. Another room, however, has been designed as a very modern space that speaks to its style with crisp, clean lines, bright colors and an original, abstract painting.

The rooms at the inn have 12- to 14-foot ceilings, spacious, private bathrooms, high-speed internet and cable television. In the morning, guests will enjoy a full gourmet breakfast of choice. The first-floor common areas, designed for luxurious comfort, include three parlors, the main dining room, an intimate dining nook, second floor lounge, two heated porches, private rear and side yard/gardens as well as an adjoining private parking lot that is fenced and well-lit.

Future plans for the inn include a ground-floor conference and reception room to host business functions, parties, bridal receptions and other special events. The inn will also be the setting for upcoming VIP events. For the Yazbecks, both Detroit residents with a lifelong passion for art, antiques and stylish good living, their dream began in 1986 when they purchased the stately mansion.

Now, after completing a four-year restoration project, the Yazbecks continue a tradition that began in 1876 when John Harvey, a pharmacist, built the original mansion. At 22, Scottish immigrant John Harvey opened his first drugstore at the corner of Woodward Ave. and Grand River Ave. He remained there for more than 30 years until 1893 when he moved to a larger location at Woodward Ave. and High St. (Now the Fisher Service Drive).

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To design his home at 97 Winder St. (Then 51 Winder St.), Harvey employed architect John V. Smith who combined elements of Queen Anne and Mansard architecture to create the house. The cost of the home was \$15,000, a considerable sum at the time.

In determining the location, Harvey chose a premier address in Detroit's most prestigious community where many of Detroit's elite lived. Among the residents were department store king J.L. Hudson, lumber baron David Whitney and architect Albert Kahn. The neighborhood, developed mainly in the late 1800s, was affectionately called Little Paris as many of the homes were inspired by popular French designs of the period. John Harvey, however, was best known as a religious philanthropist who opened the Mission School of the Detroit Industrial School for poor children where he worked as the superintendent for 38 years. According to records from 1865, the students were often orphans of Civil War soldiers. Many were so poverty-stricken that the school became known as the "ragged school".

Initially, 16 students enrolled, but the number swelled to 99 within the first month. Students received one hot meal each day and younger pupils received warm clothes. Under Harvey's supervision, the school grew and gained statewide recognition for its role in educating the city's orphans.

Although John Harvey died in 1905, his widow remained in the house into the 1920s until Jesse Hobbs, an automobile worker, became the new owner. In 1938, the home became a rooming house. Additions included a new bathroom on the first floor under the grand staircase as well as partitions to the first-floor parlor and four of the upstairs bedrooms to create additional rooms.

With its gables, bay windows, octagon turret and mansard roof, The Inn at 97 Winder is a classic example of late 19th century Victorian architecture. Inside, the grand design and sumptuous decor reinforce its status as one of the largest, remaining Victorian homes of the 1870s in Detroit.

For more information or to make a reservation, contact The Inn at Winder at (313) 832-4348 or visit www.theinnat97winder.com.

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(Editor's note: If you would like to receive a private press tour, contact Jessica Walker at 810. 577. 7957. The Inn at 97 Winder is also available for fashion/photo shoots)