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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**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Hearst Castle in San Simeon, now a California state park, offers a glimpse of the high life lead by William Randolph Hearst. Though originally planned as a small bungalow at the family's favorite campsite, Hearst's building project grew and grew. Julia Morgan, the renowned San Francisco architect, gracefully coped with the continuous revisions to the project. Hearst had a love of art and style and the money to follow his fancy. Kastner, a member of the Hearst Castle staff and a student of its art, combines the history of the castle with details about its inhabitants and its builders in this splendid book. The pages are peppered with historic photos, architectural drawings, correspondences, and details of the castle's features and its art. You can practically smell the opulence of the place. Strongly recommended for regional collections and large public libraries across the country. (Final photos and index not seen.)DKaren Ellis, Nicholson Memorial Lib. Syst., Garland, TX Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Hearst Castle, as the California home of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst was unofficially called, is one of the top tourist draws in the country, a fact that is easy for readers to

appreciate as they luxuriate in the pages of this exceptionally vibrant text-and-photo history of the house. The Hearst estate, formally called La Cuesta Encantada ("the enchanted hill"), overlooks the gorgeous California coast, halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. In this unforgettable setting, Hearst, with architect Julia Morgan at his side, built and added onto and reconfigured his estate over a period of nearly three decades, from 1919 to 1947, and in the process collected artwork here in the U.S. and in Europe not only for display purposes but also as integral parts of the design structure. Kastner allows Hearst more credit as a sensitive collector than most critics have usually given him. Two major points are made here; that the relationship between Hearst and Morgan, his architect, was an especially productive and mutually satisfying one, and that Hearst Castle is not a "freak" of a dwelling but very much a "representative example of the American country-house tradition." Kastner proffers a delicious taste of the social life that guests enjoyed under the roof at Hearst Castle in Hearst's heyday, particularly after the advent of Hearst's beloved mistress, actress Marian Davies, who was a loving and lovable hostess. This book's brilliant match of words and illustrations results in a marvelous tour of the premises and an engrossing history.

Brad Hooper  
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A thoroughly enjoyable exposition of the Castle's building and decorating project and of W. Hearst's and Julia Morgan's collaboration. Julia was an amazing person, handling enough responsibilities to keep several people busy, not to mention coping with Hearst's endless changes. Hearst himself was also amazing, being involved in the design and construction of two other mansions as well as the "Castle". In addition, he seemed to know every piece in a collection that required six warehouses and three other properties to store! For anyone planning to see the Castle, reading this book first will add greatly to the tours.

Lot of historical photos, some very good contemporary photos. If anything is the matter with this book, it's the content! I've been to Hearst's Castle as a kid and was overwhelmed by it. On paper, it's not nearly as exciting. And now that I'm somewhat more grown-up, it's really rather garish. It's better as a slight history book with pictures of a garish house in progress! Still, I'm glad I purchased this and got it out of my system. The cover is NOT representative of the grace and style of the castle.

I recently toured the Hearst Castle and took as many photographs as I could. However, given the renovations underway, the large number of visitors, the enormity of some of the rooms, the brief

time allotted for taking photos, and the need for a wide-angle lens in many situation (I don't have), it was not possible to adequately do so. Another problem - remembering the names and progeny associated with many items, including some of the rooms. Thus, this book helps fill that need. Great detail and background is provided. It is not a book to sit down with a read through - rather one to take a bit at a time.

Wasn't what I Expected binding was loose and it was full of leaves pressed in it and little gold painted leaves gold speckles were stuck on the pages

It's a nice book for the price and anyone who has been there will appreciate it. Some clown was complaining about the B&W photos but they were taken in the 20s and 30s, digital photography was a few years off. Hearst is a fascinating subject and truly one of a kind.

Having toured Hearst Castle, there is so much to see and remember that it is wonderful to have a detailed account of my time there. I looked at several books- the architect, Hearst life, and even the Castle. I found this one to have the most photos and more closely fit the information conveyed on the tours.

I bought the book after visiting Hearst Castle. It's well worth buying for: 1. Visitors to the Castle, as a valuable aide memoir; 2. Anyone contemplating visiting the Castle. Before you visit, it's difficult to comprehend its size and beauty! 3. Anyone interested in the story of Randolph Hearst and the Castle.

Fantastic coffee table book with beautiful pictures! A delightful way to peruse the castle and learn its fascinating history from the comfort of home. This was given as a thank you gift after visiting the property and its wonderful photography brings it all back in vivid detail. Would definitely recommend!

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