

THE ENTWINED HISTORIES

of the

COUNTRY CLUB PLAZA & RAPHAEL HOTEL

The Country Club Plaza of Kansas City is known as the first shopping center to accommodate automobiles in America. A few steps down is the Raphael Hotel, originally built as the Villa Serena Apartments.

Since the 1920s, both have evolved while remaining true to their historic roots in this sophisticated center for dining, shopping and culture.

Tale Of Two Histories:

THE COUNTRY CLUB PLAZA & RAPHAEL HOTEL



Country Club Plaza



Raphael Hotel

LATE 1890s

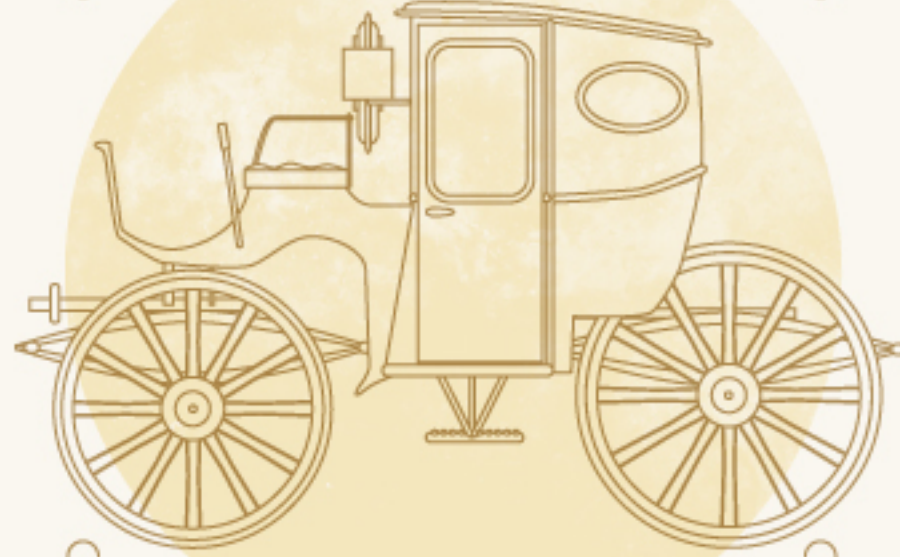
The land's history of commerce extends back to its original use as a brickyard/quarry and dairy farm. The Sunset Hills Gardens sat on the property until the Villa Serena Apartments were built.



1900s

1907

J.C. Nichols acquires land originally known as Brush Creek Valley. Upon announcing his new property, the public dubbed it as "Nichols' Folly" since the area was seen as undesirable at that time.



1920s



The Country Club Plaza opens as the nation's first suburban shopping district, bringing in much business and success.

1927

McCanles Building Company purchases three lots for upscale and luxury apartment buildings inspired by the Spanish and Mediterranean motifs.



The Plaza becomes the first suburban shopping center in America designed to accommodate the automobile.



The nine-story Villa Serena Apartments open, attracting the most affluent Kansas citizens. The buildings' construction cost was \$600,000, equating to over \$8 million in today's currency.

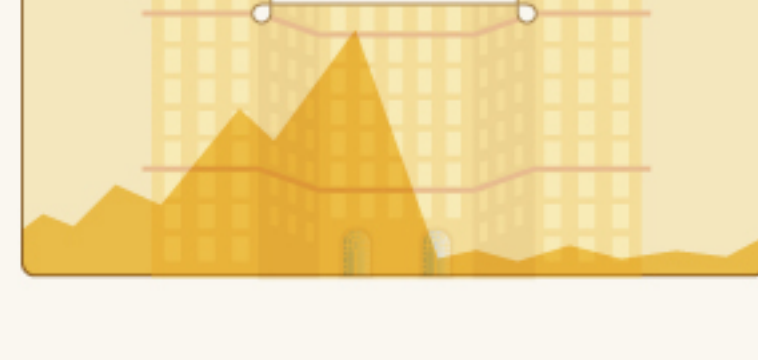
1929

McCanles develops and builds the Locarno and Riviera apartments just to the east of the Villa Serena.

1930s

1931

Jack Henry Clothing is founded and later becomes one of the oldest stores on The Plaza.



The Great Depression causes luxury apartment rates on The Plaza (including Villa Serena) to sink to as little as \$50 per month.

1932

The Plaza Art Fair, first held in 1932, has been held annually ever since and is one of the nation's oldest and largest juried art shows, attracting thousands of patrons each year.



The area's concept of a mixed-use development targeting affluent residents was patterned after that near New York's Central Park.

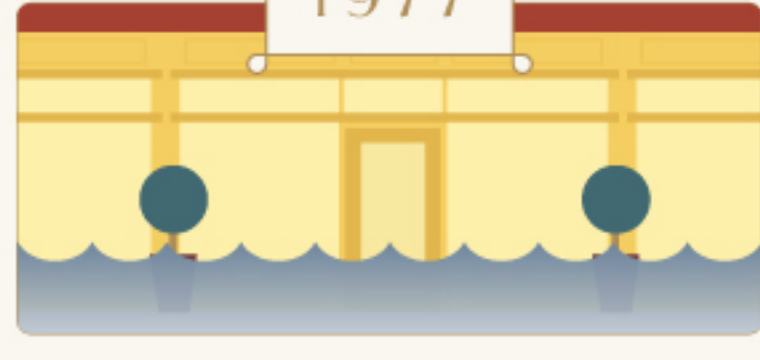
1970s

1970

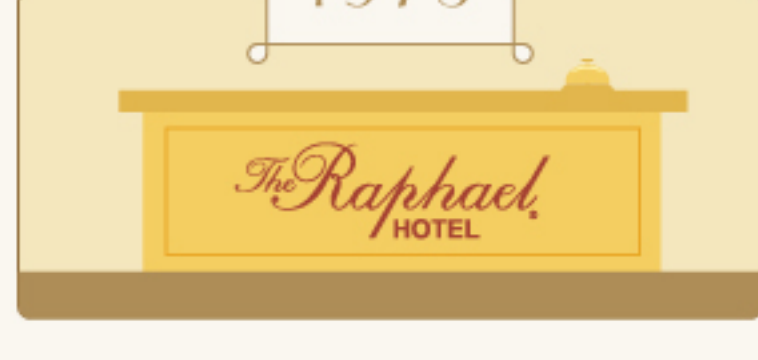
Management repositions The Plaza with luxury hotels to combat competition from new suburban shopping malls.

1974

J.C. Nichols purchases the apartments and repurposes the complex into a hotel.



The 100-year flood that struck The Plaza on September 12 was one of the most defining moments in Plaza history. A total of 23 lives were lost in the flood and Plaza businesses suffered an estimated \$58 million of damage.



The building is reborn as the Raphael Hotel, with the renovation faithfully preserving its historic features. The hotel is immediately successful, pioneering two now-popular niche categories: boutique hotels and all-suite hotels.

1976

The Raphael Restaurant opens.

1990s

1998

J.C. Nichols Company merges with Highwood Properties in North Carolina, which now runs The Plaza.



2000s

2005

Lighthouse Properties purchases the Raphael Hotel.



First extensive restoration of the property since its original conversion. Renovation includes all-new infrastructure and decor.

2009

Raphael Hotel's property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2008

The Country Club Plaza celebrates the longest life of any planned shopping center, as noted by Andrés Duany in the *Community Builder: The Life & Legacy of J.C. Nichols*.



The Raphael Restaurant was remodeled and re-branded as Chaz on The Plaza.

2012

The Plaza's legendary JJ's wins final Grand Award of Excellence Wine before a tragic explosion and fire destroys the building in 2013

2011

The Raphael Hotel is designated as a Marriott Autograph property.

TODAY

The Country Club Plaza is home to more than 150 shops and has year-round entertainment and events. The ornate Raphael Hotel stands tall as a landmark and remains Kansas City's most-recognized example of Italian Renaissance Revival-styled architecture.

Experience the very best of Kansas City's history and culture!

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The Raphael HOTEL

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HOTELS