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## *News*

### **Kansas City's historic boutique hotel story leads**

**The Raphael packages open door to unique Kansas City travel experiences.** Voted one of Travel+Leisure's T+L 500 World's Best Hotels, The Raphael attracts leisure travelers with distinctive Kansas City hotel deals and specials. The hotel is noted for its portfolio of destination-rich packages that showcase unique Kansas City area attractions and that appeal to a wide range of travelers' interests -- from romantic escapes to girlfriend getaways to historic journeys into the city's past.

**The Raphael's signature restaurant and lounge evolving as a destination dining establishment.** Chaz on the Plaza's reputation as a top Kansas City restaurant has been fueled by regional media reviews, testimonials and TripAdvisor ratings. Chaz embraces the unique culture, history and spirit of Kansas City through its cuisine, décor and music. Menus feature a distinctive brand of modern, regional American cuisine. Chaz signature favorites include fried green tomatoes, Savannah-style crabcake, shrimp and grits, and a steak that stands out even in a city renowned for great steaks. It is a prime beef tenderloin, hand-cut and wet-aged for 40 days to make it flavorful and fork tender. The atmosphere is warm and clublike, but with an energetic vibe. A commissioned giclée on canvas depicting a terra cotta warrior standing guard at the Plaza's Sister Cities International Bridge and a one-of-a-kind original photographic mural that layers Plaza architectural landmarks in a montage give guests a sense of history and place. Chaz Lounge, a popular Kansas City music venue justly respects KC's rich jazz heritage, but goes beyond to showcase other genres that have risen out of the arts community. Live music is performed Tuesday through Sunday evenings. The lounge is also noted for its wine selection and for its happy hour specials.

**The Raphael a Kansas City architectural landmark.** Originally developed and constructed by McCanles Building Company, the nine-story brick building opened as the Villa Serena Apartments in 1928. Alonzo Gentry, a noted local architect of the time, was commissioned to design the building to attract affluent Kansas City residents. He chose the ornate Italian Renaissance Revival style as a Mediterranean complement to the Spanish/Moorish architectural style of the nascent Country Club Plaza. Signature features include hand-made wrought iron

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gates and twin canopies adorning the entrance to the hotel. Lobby features that have been preserved since the building's opening include the travertine marble floor and the ornate mahogany-paneled ceiling. Adhering to preservation standards has earned the property a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Raphael is a member of National Trust Historic Hotels of America.

### **Kansas City's rich jazz history continues to unfold in historic Country Club Plaza hotel.**

Jazz enthusiasts have been "goin' to Kansas City" for its famous jazz since the 1920s. Back in the day they came to hear modern riffs on the original New Orleans jazz by legends like **Count Basie**, Big Joe Turner and Charlie "Bird" Parker in smoky clubs and speakeasies. Today they come to hear the idiom articulated by current legends like smooth jazz pioneer Max Groove, Angela Hagenbach, and Joe Cartwright at one of the premier Kansas City jazz clubs, located in the historic Raphael hotel on the posh Country Club Plaza.

**Property with a Micheneresque history.** The property on which The Raphael stands has borne witness to Kansas City's march of progress since the mid-1800s. Viewed through the eyes of history, the property was destined to be fertile earth for nurturing enterprise. In the 1890s, it was purchased as part of a larger parcel by a Swiss immigrant named Swarz who transformed it into a dairy farm. In the early 1900s, dairyman Swarz, whose descendants still operate as dairymen in the region, sold the property. The tract of land now occupied by The Raphael operated as a quarry known as the Lyle Brickyard. The tract was eventually replatted as the Loma Linda subdivision. In 1919 Sunset Hills Garden, a nursery and floral shop, was built on the site. The shop was later moved to Westwood Hills subdivision where it continues to be occupied as a residence today.

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