



TRAVEL + LEISURE

Top 50 Best Hotel in the World
Top 3 Inn & Small Hotel in USA

CONDENAST TRAVELER

Top 100 Hotel in the World
Top 15 Hotel in USA

The Willcox was built in the late 19th century for well-to-do Yankees seeking warmth, light and high society. [Aiken](#) was popular with the swells and dandies of the Gilded Age and they came in such numbers every winter that the town was called the "Winter Colony." Great dances were held and ballrooms glittered with candlelight. Old rivals, fiercely competitive but impeccably polite, settled their differences on the polo field. Grand picnics in [Hitchcock Woods](#) were laid out with silver, crystal and linen. Politicians, royalty and captains of industry often visited The Willcox.

The far-reaching reputation of the Southern inn was built on its atmosphere, impeccable service and excellent cuisine. Famous guests included Winston Churchill, Harold Vanderbilt, W.R. Grace, Elizabeth Arden and Count Bernadotte of Sweden. Legend has it that Franklin Delano Roosevelt rode his private train car to the back door and slipped in quietly. It also is well

documented that the Prince of Wales was regretfully turned away during [Master's week](#) because there was no room.

As grand and graceful as ever, The Willcox continues to draw international guests who enjoy first-class service, gracious accommodations, excellent cuisine and the magic of historic Aiken, South Carolina — unforgettable experiences that won The Willcox a 2012 and 2013 World's Best Hotel Award from *Travel and Leisure*, a Best 50 in the U.S. Small Hotel Award in 2011 and a 2012 Best of the South Award, both from *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine.

The hotel's owners also received a Good Earthkeeping Award from the S.C. Hospitality Association for its green-friendly practices and a Stewardship Award for outstanding upkeep of a key historic property from the Historic Aiken Foundation. Local fans repeatedly have voted it the best hotel in town.

[Click here for the complete history »](#)

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