

DID YOU KNOW?

The Panamonte: 112 Years, Three Generations, One Famous Kitchen

Boquete's first hotel opened in **1914** as the five-room Hotel Wright, built by Joseph "Pop" Wright, a retired Texas railroad conductor. Early guests included Charles Lindbergh, Admiral Richard Byrd (who finished his Antarctic memoirs there), and the Rockefeller brothers.

In **1946**, Swedish journalist **Vera Janson de Elliot** and her husband Captain Hans Elliot bought the hotel and renamed it the **Panamonte**. It has stayed in the family ever since: daughter **Inga Elliot de Collins** ran it from 1979 and made it Panama's first ecotourism hotel, and since her passing in 2018 it belongs to her son, **chef Charlie Collins** — called the "father of Panamanian gastronomy," who has cooked state banquets for the last five presidencies, including the 1999 Canal handover. Guests over the years: Richard Nixon, Ingrid Bergman, Sean Connery, and the Shah of Iran.

New chapter: in **January 2024**, **Grupo VerdeAzul** — the group of banker and former Minister of Economy **Alberto Vallarino**, owners of Buenaventura Resort — joined as an investment partner, with the Collins family still at the helm. The Mayani family are also long-time shareholders.

Sources: panamonte.com/nuestra-historia, La Prensa (25 Jan 2024), Grupo VerdeAzul, Panamá América (2005, 2014), Hotel Panamonte on Facebook.