

# LA Observed

## PHOTOS FROM INSIDE HOLLYHOCK HOUSE TODAY

BY KEVIN RODERICK

[http://www.laobserved.com/archive/2017/06/photos\\_from\\_inside\\_hollyh.php](http://www.laobserved.com/archive/2017/06/photos_from_inside_hollyh.php)



*Looking through the dining room into the kitchen of Hollyhock House. LA*

June 10, 2017

In honor of architect Frank Lloyd Wright's 150th birthday, the keepers of his celebrated Hollyhock House in Barnsdall Park are allowing photographs inside the home this weekend only. Photos by visitors are usually forbidden. I stopped in Saturday morning and pointed my camera in a few directions. Visitors on Sunday's self-guided tours can also take pictures. After that, the prohibition goes back on.

The lighting isn't great for photos and, if you are going, take note that you don't get to actually go into the nicer rooms. So the angles aren't ideal. Visitors are kept out of the living room, dining room and kitchen, which all would have been nice to see from within. You don't get to see the upstairs bedrooms at all. But it's a good introduction to the house for \$7 (they don't accept cash) and there are knowledgeable docents on hand.

For those who don't know the story of the first Frank Lloyd Wright home in Los Angeles, or its patron Aline Barnsdall, here's 12 things you didn't know about Hollyhock House from the Getty's Iris blog in 2015. Sample:

Hollyhock House is a gorgeous Mayan Revival style house with 17 rooms and 7 bathrooms. Oil heiress, theater producer, single mother, and social activist Aline Barnsdall commissioned the house, and it was originally intended to be part of an avant-garde arts and theater complex known as Olive Hill, now known as Barnsdall Art Park. Barnsdall tapped Wright for the job when she bought Olive Hill in 1919. Wright was hired to design multiple buildings, but he only finished the plans for Hollyhock House before being fired. He wasn't on the job long enough to see the house completed in 1921.



This project marked a transitional moment for Wright, as it heralded the end of his prairie style home period. It also marked a turning point in the history of modern architecture in Los Angeles; the house's construction brought three seminal architects—Wright, Rudolph Schindler, and Richard Neutra—to the city. All three went on to create iconic buildings throughout Los Angeles, defining California modernism in the process. It's one of the many L.A. treasures listed on [HistoricPlacesLA.org](http://HistoricPlacesLA.org), a historic preservation resource from the City of L.A. and the Getty Conservation Institute.

Also this: "In 1989, the building was used as the Piranha Temple in the cult classic 'Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death.'"

Here's a quick briefing too from the Hollyhock House website.

"Hollyhock House is Frank Lloyd Wright's first Los Angeles project. Built between 1919 and 1921, it represents his earliest efforts to develop a regionally appropriate style of architecture for

Southern California. Wright himself referred to it as California Romanza, using a musical term meaning “freedom to make one’s own form.”

"Taking advantage of Los Angeles’ dry, temperate climate, Hollyhock House is a remarkable combination of house and gardens. In addition to the central garden court, each major interior space adjoins an equivalent exterior space, connected either by glass doors, a porch, pergola or colonnade. A series of rooftop terraces further extend the living space and provide magnificent views of the Los Angeles basin and the Hollywood Hills."



"Selecting a thirty-six acre site known as Olive Hill, Wright and Barnsdall worked together to develop a plan that included a home for Barnsdall and her young daughter, two secondary residences, a theater, a director’s house, a dormitory for actors, studios for artists, shops and a motion picture theater.

"But because of financial and artistic differences, only the main home and two secondary residences were built. The secondary structures include Residence A (extant) and Residence B (demolished to make way for apartments in 1948)."

"Hollyhock House takes its name from Aline Barnsdall’s favorite flower. At her request, hollyhocks were incorporated into the decorative program of the house, and stylized representations of the flower are found on the roofline, walls, columns planters and furnishings.

"In 1927, Aline Barnsdall gave Hollyhock House and eleven surrounding acres to the City of Los Angeles for use as a public art park in memory of her father, Theodore Barnsdall."



In 2012, Hollyhock House underwent an extensive restoration. It is the only Frank Lloyd Wright residence in Los Angeles open to the public. It's open for self-guided tours Thursdays through Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Hollyhock House is a National Historic Landmark and has been nominated to be placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Here's an online brochure from the city Department of Cultural Affairs:

<http://culturela.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Hollyhock-House-Reopening-Brochure-PDF.pdf>

f