

OMNI HOTELS & RESORTS

the king edward | toronto

The Crystal Ballroom at The Omni King Edward Hotel Fact Sheet

Location: The Omni King Edward Hotel is located in the heart of Toronto, steps away from key attractions, entertainment and dining areas. The Crystal Ballroom is located on the 17th floor.

Address: 37 King Street East, Toronto, ON M5C 1E9

Phone: Main: 416-863-9700; Concierge: 416-863-4110

Website: <http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/toronto-king-edward>

Twitter: @KingEddyHotel

Facebook: @OmniKingEdward <https://www.facebook.com/OmniKingEdward>

Instagram: @omnikingedward <https://www.instagram.com/omnikingedward/>

General Manager: Christophe Le Chatton

Executive Chef: Daniel Schick

History of the Crystal Ballroom

As Toronto flourished and became a central economic hub, so did its impact on international travellers and Canadian culture. The King Edward hotel was built in Toronto, Ontario in 1903 boasting an unparalleled luxury and elegance for its time. Its central location on King Street East in the city's vibrant downtown core meant that shops, theatres and various forms of entertainment for Torontonians and travellers from all around the world, were just around the corner. The King Edward became a pinnacle of Toronto's culture providing new lavish experiences with the most modern amenities.

The story of the Crystal Ballroom begins with the roar of the twenties at a time where society was changing rapidly. It was built as part of the hotel's 18-story expansion in 1922, with the design led by architectural firm Esenwein & Johnson of Buffalo, NY. The expansion included a beautiful ballroom on the 17th floor, appropriately named after its adorned crystal chandeliers - the Crystal Ballroom. This would become the city's most sought after space for grand society affairs. The expansion also made the King Edward the largest hotel in Canada, at the time.

As the times changed and the Toronto hotel scene flourished, competition grew and the Crystal Ballroom closed in 1979. It required a substantial financial commitment to renovate and restore the space and bring it up to code. It wasn't until Omni Hotels & Resorts acquired the property in 2013 that a true revival of Toronto's crown jewel was set to take place.

The revival of the Crystal Ballroom will bring Toronto's elegant galas, weddings, and important functions back into the space. It will once again host elegant affairs of high societal, political and financial affairs for generations to come.

Crystal Ballroom Special features:

- The venue's ornate and spectacular moldings, 8-metre high coffered ceilings and magnificent floor-to-ceiling windows, offering panoramic views of the city, remain central features
- The floor of the pre-function space is finished in mosaic-like porcelain
- A new permanent bar was introduced and its design will reflect the timeless detailing of the original era
- The Crystal Ballroom carpet will be reminiscent of designs from the early 1920s but render a contemporary fashion
- Updated chandeliers and wall sconces will vary from the original, but will include ornate crystal elements
- Orchestra balcony
- Full catering kitchen
- Located on the 17th floor of The Omni King Edward Hotel

Re-Design:

The Crystal Ballroom's restoration has been heavily influenced by its original interior featuring old-world charm enhanced by modern style and luxury. The design elements stay true to the original designs from the early 1920s, but are rendered in a contemporary fashion. Updated chandeliers and wall sconces will vary from the original, but include ornate crystal elements.

Parties responsible for the design of the Crystal Ballroom:

Omni Hotels & Resorts Design Team
 Moncur Design Associates Inc.
 ERA Architects

Size & Capacity:

The 6,500 square foot space has a banquet capacity of 300.

Bookings are currently being made and the space will officially open as of early spring. Please contact our team through our website at omnihotels.com or by phone at 416-863-9700 to arrange a personal consultation.

Did you know?

- The \$6.5 million dollar renovation for the Crystal Ballroom is larger than the initial investment of \$6 million dollars to build the hotel in 1903.
- The King Edward had its own in-house big band orchestra. It was called Romanelli and his Syncopated Swingers. Romanelli was a Toronto-based talent, originally mastering the violin and later becoming internationally recognized for his music. The space was also graced by many very famous big bands from the 1920s to '40s including Count Bassie, Duke Ellington, Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, and Benny Goodman.
- The space was not only favourable to celebratory moments related to parties and galas, it was also a venue which brought people together to promote international innovation and development. It was on April 12, 1955 where the Salk Polio Vaccine proved effective. On this day nearly 700 doctors, technicians and nurses crowded the Crystal Ballroom at the King Edward Hotel to watch the historic news report on two dozen TV sets installed specifically for the occasion. With the news, mass immunizations for millions of Canadian and American schoolchildren and their parents immediately got under way. The Salk Polio Vaccine had proven safe and 80 to 90 per cent effective in tests on children across the United States and Canada.
- More recently, and prior to beginning the renovation in 2015, the space had been used as a beautiful backdrop for various photo shoots. Toronto's own Drake and Canadian comedy and

sitcom stars of Schitt's Creek, Eugene Levy, Dan Levy, Catherine O'Hara, have all been photographed in the space. Canadian TV personality Cheryl Hickey used the Crystal Ballroom for her personal maternity photos.

Memorable Events:

- **December 18, 1924** - The first time a Lieutenant Governor of Ontario attended a Christmas party of the Empire Club was when His Honour Lieutenant Governor Cockshutt and Mrs. Cockshutt were entertained in the Crystal Ballroom
- **August 8, 1927** - The Prince of Wales (later the un-crowned King Edward VIII, the Duke of Windsor) and British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin were entertained with a lavish state dinner
- **March 5, 1928** – CKGW's first radio broadcast from the Crystal Ballroom. It became the most powerful radio station in Canada, offering mining news, weather, and music featuring Luigi Romanelli and the Radio Syncopaters. It eventually moved, and was acquired by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in 1937.
- **March 6, 1934** - City of Toronto's official Centennial Luncheon
- **1939** - Senator Frank O'Connor founder of Laura Secord Candy in Canada, received a remarkable testimonial dinner, which had a crowd overflow the hall and the head table was filled with the chief representatives of the king, the government and the city including Mayor Ralph C. Day
- **May 11, 1953** - The King Edward Hotel celebrated its 50th anniversary
- **April 12, 1955** – Salk Polio Vaccine proved effective and safe for 80% to 90% of children across Canada and the US. Nearly 700 doctors, technicians and nurses crowded the Crystal Ballroom to watch the news report on two dozen TV sets, installed specifically for the occasion.

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For more information please contact:

Michelle Bigda/ Fallon Benner
PRAXIS
905.949.8255 ex.234/ 239
michelleb@praxispr.ca/ fallon@praxispr.ca