

## Just married: Hyatt's Miraval Berkshires and Wyndhurst Manor

By Clarence Fanto, Eagle correspondent 14 hrs ago



One of the four new cottages added to the former Cranwell Spa and Golf Resort by Miraval Berkshires, which opened in July 2020. The \$132 million project, including site acquisition costs, also included 13 other new buildings and 13 renovated facilities. Miraval has absorbed its sibling on the site, Wyndhurst Manor and Club, including the original Wyndhurst mansion built in 1869, an early "Gilded Age" cottage.

### LENOX — What's in a name?

At the luxury-end Miraval Berkshires Resort & Spa on the grounds of the historic Cranwell Spa and Golf Resort property, a great deal, according to Hyatt Hotels Corp.

When the hospitality industry giant opened Miraval in July 2020, it marked the conclusion of a \$132 million transformation of the 380-acre site — the largest one-time financial commitment in the history of the Berkshire County hospitality industry.

[The project](#) encompassed 13 new and 13 renovated buildings. It included four new guest cottages, a dining room with chef's kitchen for culinary classes, retail spaces, a new Life in Balance Spa and the Body Mindfulness Center, with a total of 121 guest rooms.

But, when it opened, Hyatt had separated the heart of the original Cranwell resort overlooking October Mountain and its locally popular golf course, branding it as Wyndhurst Manor & Club with 10 guest rooms and suites, and 35 more in three carriage houses and Beechers Cottage. [Wyndhurst](#) was the name of the original estate on the site, built in 1869, an early Gilded Age "cottage."

Wyndhurst was promoted as offering less-expensive stays, aiming to offer "a step back into the Gilded Age, a true-to-place experience for multigenerational families, golfers and those simply wanting to escape."

Starting April 1, Wyndhurst will become part of the Miraval brand, slightly renamed Wyndhurst Mansion. According to Hyatt's announcement, the shift represents "a strategic decision based on the demand for both Miraval and Wyndhurst guests to experience the full breadth of amenities and wellness experiences available at Miraval, while also providing unique and historic accommodations and increased suite availability."

For a deeper dive into the reasons for the transition, and its local impact, The Eagle spoke with Miraval Berkshires General Manager Victor Cappadona on Friday.

"We are extremely committed to the local community, people and businesses from our roots and existence as Cranwell," he said. "That will continue to be a major part of who we are in the local community and the amenities we offer. We call it 'the heart of the house,' and without that passion and care, we wouldn't be able to take care of our guests."

Excerpts from the interview follow, lightly edited for length and context:

Q: What is the significance of this change for the resort, for prospective guests and the community?

A: We're looking to have the unison and the identity of both brands, with the 10 historic suites and guest rooms in the iconic Wyndhurst Mansion going into our mix for what people experience when they come here. It will also offer the additional dining experience at the 1894 Fireside Bistro and Bar and the Rose Terrace, with their breathtaking views of the Berkshires.

Wyndhurst Mansion guests will have the full Miraval experience; we had a huge demand from them for that, and the Miraval guests wanting to embrace the beautiful mansion. It's really a win-win, kind of low-hanging fruit for us to identify the need and satisfy both parts.

Q: What is the effect of the transition on the Wyndhurst Club, the local golf and membership group?

A: Absolutely, the Wyndhurst Club is an extremely important piece of our local social fabric, and we're very excited to see that growing.

We've done a lot to enhance that experience by adding electric carts, reshaping the golf course, adding a new fitness center and some other amenities, Sloane's Tavern is a part of that [to be reopened year-round], the outdoor pool there stays intact, and we have multiple levels of membership, ranging from strictly golf to an all-in fitness membership with golf that includes the indoor pool and water aerobics.

Q: In terms of community access, such as local or statewide meetings or conventions, and very popular holiday meals in the mansion, will the 1894 Bistro and Sloane's Tavern be open to the public, as well as resort guests?

A: We understand the impact of the mansion to our local environment; we're very involved in the fabric of the community, and we don't see that changing at all. We really feel this will enhance that experience by still opening the mansion to groups, private functions, social events, weddings and bar mitzvahs; all of that will continue as it has historically.

As an enhanced experience, we will be able to offer the opportunities as a Miraval event, to have all the amenities available; for example, if a group wanted to buy out the mansion and do team-building and team-bonding, they now have access to Miraval activities like the Challenge Course, which really enhance these types of retreats.

Q: With the possible fadeout of the COVID pandemic, what trends are you seeing among guests booking stays there?

A: Post-COVID, we're seeing a huge demand for suites, so, this allows us to double our inventory in suites.

We had 14 suites altogether; now, we'll have 28 out of our 121 rooms. The traveler is looking for larger accommodations, the desire to spread out a little more. We have a very focused reservation process to identify the different intentions of the guests, not only the amenities programs and specialist activities, but some might feel the mansion is more suited to their state of mind, or a carriage house, more of a spread-out, home feel.

The cottages also give us the ability for travelers who come together as couples to share the same building.

Q: How did Miraval weather the pandemic storm, and what do you see looking ahead to the upcoming warm-weather season?

A: This was a really tough time, but the good news is, travel and leisure are leading the recovery, and wellness and leisure is at the tip of that spear.

Out of an experience like this, sometimes people find a greater need to reflect on making wellness and balance a bigger part of their lives, giving people within driving distance from New York and Boston the opportunity to experience that. For that recovery, we should see the greatest demand in years to come, not only an immediate impact as people want to reset, but also life and balance are here to stay. I think the future is really bright for us to help people find that new balance.