



Noriega House

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In 1872, just before he turned 16 years old, Faustino Mier (Noriega) immigrated to the United States from a small town named Santander, off the northern coast of Spain, near the Pyrenees Mountains. Faustino arrived in America sailing through New York City, around Cape Horn and eventually on to San Francisco. His final destination was Tulare County where he would come to work for his uncle, Vincente Noriega, a sheep herder, and take his uncle's surname.

Faustino Noriega became a successful businessman and in 1893 partnered with another Basque immigrant named Fernando Etcheverry and together they opened the Iberia Hotel, which would later be known as the Noriega Hotel. That same year, Faustino married Louisa Inda on February 14th and they started a family. In 1900, Faustino and Louisa built the Noriega House on Baker Street at a cost of \$1,286.10, where they would raise their five children: Marcellena, Julia, Christine, Frank and Albert.

The Noriega family maintained nearly an acre of land around the beautiful house, and primarily used the property to support Basque immigrants coming into Kern County to start a new life in America. The Noriega's built other residences on the property to the east and south of the main house, which were occupied by extended family or were used as rental property. The estate at one time also included a summer cookhouse and a large garage.

The historic Noriega House is a 4,400 square foot Queen Anne Cottage. Considered lavish for its time, the house was finished with gaslights and was heated by one fireplace and four radiant stoves. Constructed of wood and sandstone bricks with 14 feet of ship-lap siding above the masonry walls, the house has five chimneys, four gables and two grand porch entrances. The house also boasts a root cellar that is still in use today. The classic arched doors and windows are a testament to the design and craftsmanship of a historical architectural period that once dominated classical home construction.

Direct descendants of Faustino and Louisa Noriega lived in the house and maintained the residence as recent as early 1996.

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The History Behind The Noriega House



1901



1920





The Restoration of Noriega House

In 1997, Jerry Randall, the President of the Old Town Kern Association, and his family purchased the Noriega House with the intent of restoring the house to its former glory. The Noriega House had fallen into disrepair, yet its old Spanish white paint and unkempt grounds still held great charm, it was clear to the Randalls that the house had a spirit all its own and was only in need of a second chance.

In the course of planning the restoration of the Noriega House, the Randalls discovered it wasn't economically feasible to restore the house to a private residence. The only way to save the notable structure was to give it a commercial mission. Once known as the famous "Old Town Kern Noriega House," the Randalls could see the house still had great potential and usefulness as a historic landmark and events center within the community.

The restoration of the Noriega House took almost two years. The extensive work to the property and estate included widespread re-landscaping and clean-up of the grounds, demolition of condemned structures and a total seismic retrofitting of the house. The house itself needed serious improvements to bring it back to code in the way of new plumbing, electrical, roofing and structural reinforcements. In addition to these vast improvements, the Randalls also removed all the ceilings and plaster back to the lathe, refinished the flooring, installed air conditioning, a commercial kitchen and added a new parking lot.

In 2007, the Tackitt family purchased the Noriega House from the Randalls. The Tackitts continued to make necessary upgrades, especially in the interior aesthetics of the house in the way of carpeting, furniture, accents and drapery as well as adding the signature black and white dance floor to the venue's exterior.

All in all the Noriega House was completely and beautifully resurrected from foundation to rooftop and serves today as a warm and inviting venue for all sorts of celebrations of both the past and the present! Under the creative and stylish direction of Megan Tackitt and her amazing staff, the historic Noriega House will continue to hold a prominent place in the rich tradition of the Bakersfield community.

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