



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Archives Center Menu Collection

NMAH.AC.1391

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2016

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Archives Center Menu Collection
Date:	1937-2017
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1391
Extent:	3.5 Cubic feet (4 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Collection consists of restaurant menus ranging from 1937 to 2016 from the United States, Canada, as well as cruise ships.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Immediate source of acquisition unknown.

Provenance

The collection was sent anonymously and unsolicited to the National Museum of American History in 2016. In 2017, Brian H. Ford donated an addition to this collection. Also in 2017, the Morris Communications Company donated an additional two cubic feet of menus gathered as part of research on the Washington, D.C. restaurant scene.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Holly Nelson.

Preferred Citation

Archives Center Menu Collection, 1937-1999, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Accruals

Donors to this collection include unknown donor, Brian H. Ford and The Morris Communications Company.

Biographical / Historical

Largely from the 1950s, these menus are evidence of American imagery, food prices, and food culture.

Scope and Contents

A collection of restaurant menus from 1937 to 1999, but with the majority from the 1950s. While a large number are from California, especially the Los Angeles area, the menus come from twenty U.S. states, plus the Virgin Islands, Canada, and a few are from cruise ships. The menus tend to be picturesque or have colorful illustrations. Cowboy and western themes are emphasized and some of the menus are in novel or odd shapes. Some menus from famous restaurants are included such as Palmer House in Chicago, Old Original Bookbinders in Philadelphia, and Tavern on the Green in New York.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged alphabetically by restaurant name into file comprising 1 series.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Cruise ships
- Postcards
- Restaurants

Types of Materials:

- Fans (costume accessories)
- Menus

Container Listing

Series 1: Menus, 1937-1999

Box 1, Folder 1; A-C, 1937-1999
Box 2, Folder 2

Box 2, Folder 3; D-M, 1937-1999
Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3; N-Unspecified, 1937-1999
Box 2, Folder 4

Box 2, Folder 1 House of Lords (Scrolls), 1937-1999

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