

Searles Castle Wedding Brochure

The History of Searles Castle

Searles Castle was built under the direction of Edward F. Searles, an interior decorator and antique collector. Having traced his ancestry to the Oxforshire Harcourt Family, he engaged the prominent architect, Henry Vaughn to design the castle in the style of Stanton Harcourt Manor in Oxon County, England. The building was completed in 1915 at a cost estimated to have been in excess of \$1,250,000. The castle, located at 23 Searles Road in Windham, New Hampshire, contains 20 rooms.

Searles is said to have employed the finest masons and woodworkers to construct the castle and imported marble as well as artifacts from Europe to furnish it. Examples of the fine work are found in the carved oak balcony and marble fireplaces.

Edward Francis Searles was born on July 4, 1841, in Methuen, Massachusetts. At the age of 13 he went to work in a cotton mill to support his widowed mother and his brother. His love of art and music, later to be his hallmark, were in evidence early in his life. At the age of 21 he was teaching piano and organ in Bath, Maine. In 1875, after an apprenticeship with a Boston firm, Searles became an interior decorator for the prestigious Herter Brothers of New York City. In 1881, he met Mary Hopkins, a Herter Brothers client, in San Francisco. Her husband, Mark Hopkins, part-owner of the Southern Pacific Railroad, had died in 1878. Mark Hopkins left his wife an inheritance of \$61,000,000.

Mary Hopkins commissioned Searles to design the interior of her Nob Hill home, and to work on Kellogg Terrace in her birthplace of Great Barrington, Massachusetts. They were married on November 8, 1887, in New York City. Searles was 47 at the time he married his 67-year-old bride. From Mary's death in 1891 until his own, Searles was involved in building projects in Methuen, Massachusetts, as well as Salem and Windham, New Hampshire. He died in 1920. Searles willed the castle to his secretary, Arthur T. Walker, who died in August of 1927, leaving it to his brothers and sisters. They sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Andrew of Methuen, Massachusetts, in 1930

The Sisters of Mercy acquired the castle in 1952. Since then, it has been used as a novitiate for young women entering the Sisters of Mercy, a retreat house, and administrative offices. Castle College held classes in the castle for over 25 years. Because the building needed extensive repairs, Castle College moved to a wing of the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse on the property and the castle was closed for five years. During those five years, repairs were made to the roof and building.

In 1991, in an effort to restore the interior of the castle, a "Decorators' Showcase" was held. Through the generosity of those interior designers and contributions received over the years from many benefactors, the interior of the building has been refurbished. Since that time, the castle has been available to the public for social, cultural, spiritual, and business events.

In November of 2001, the Sisters of Mercy contracted with Searles Castle Event Management to organize and manage events held at the castle. At this time, it was decided that operations would be expanded to include weddings and receptions in the castle courtyard in an effort to better utilize the facility, better serve the needs of the public, and to raise additional funds to further the charitable programs of the Sisters of Mercy.

In November 2019, NHC Events, LLC was incorporated and continued the legacy of Special Events at Searles Castle at Windham.



Searles Castle at Windham Rentals and Fees

Tented Courtyard Events

Our beautiful, private Castle Courtyard is available for Weddings and Special Events, from April through November. NHC Events at Searles Castle in Windham hosts only one function per day in the courtyard. Rentals are for a five-hour period. Additional time is available upon request. Tented events take place from mid-April until mid-November. Additional time is available at a rate of \$375 per half hour.
Capacity: 250 (including wedding party)

Pricing Includes

- A five-hour block of time for your reception
- Parking on castle grounds with shuttles to the courtyard
- Use of castle courtyard and surrounding grounds for your photography
- Use of the interior of the castle for formal photography
- Use of the first floor of the interior of the castle for cocktail hour
- Use of the beautiful wedding tent, complete with palladium windowed sides, elegantly draped fabric, interior lighting, chandeliers, and both heating and air conditioning systems (Tented weddings only)
- Your own personal consultant that will be with you every step of the way
- Use of tables and chivari chairs
- Use of stage and 27' by 21' dance floor (Tented Weddings only)
- Linen selection, including floor length tablecloths, overlays, and 18 napkin options
- Use of all necessary China, flatware, and glassware
- Use of skirted and decorated display and stationary tables
- Use of lounge furniture
- Complimentary tasting for two
- Display of oversized mason jars of ice water with sliced lemon to enjoy before your ceremony and during cocktail hour
- A delicious assortment of two stationary and four butler-passed hors d'oeuvres per guest
- Your choice of a traditional or gourmet salad along with dinner rolls and fresh herb butter
- Starch and fresh vegetables of your choice
- A complete coffee buffet
- Wedding cake along with your choice of embellishment for your wedding cake
- Centerpieces for your guests tables and head table

We do offer Special Enhancements and Upgrades. These special extras add just a touch that are sure to "WOW" your guests and make your event even more unique and elegant

Guest count minimums:

Fridays, Sundays and Holiday Mondays: 100 guests minimum

Saturdays and Holiday Sundays: 125 guests minimum

Those events not meeting the minimum guest requirement will be charged a fee of \$150.00 per person for the number of guests under the minimum, to offset the loss of revenue.

Courtyard Ceremonies

A perfect setting for your ceremony is the backdrop of our beautiful castle. If hosting your reception at Searles Castle at Windham, a ceremony fee of \$1,500.00 includes:

- One additional half-hour of time (Added to the five-hour rental)
- A one hour block of time for your wedding rehearsal and wedding party attire drop off (days and times subject to availability)
- A personal consultant and coordinator
- Ceremony chair rental and set up
- Complimentary champagne and water station set up in the bridal suite

Add the use of our beautiful bridal suite for up to two hours prior to your ceremony for an additional \$250.

If you would like to include use of the castle and surrounding grounds for photos taken before the ceremony and use of the bridal suite for a total of four hours prior to the ceremony, it is an additional \$500.

Snacks & Bites

Upon arrival, have a delicious spread of assorted finger sandwiches and bite sized treats to keep everyone fresh and energized!

Cheese and Fruit Sampler

Artisan Hard and Soft Cheeses, Fresh Fruit, Crackers, and Baguettes

Assorted Gourmet Cold Sandwiches

Roasted Turkey Breast with Cranberry Mustard on Whole Wheat
Shaved Beef Tenderloin with Horseradish Mayo on Ciabatta
Sliced Grilled Buffalo Chicken Breast with Bleu Cheese on Potato Rolls
Chicken Walnut Salad with Chopped Bib Lettuce on Croissant
Sliced Vegetarian Wraps

Chocolate Dipped Strawberries

Hand dipped milk or white chocolate strawberries for you and your bridal party upon arrival

Plated Entrée Menu Selections

Full Menu Selections available upon request

Pricing includes elegant tent, castle, courtyard, castle grounds, taxes and waitstaff gratuities

All menus include two stationary hors d'oeuvres, four butler passed hors d'oeuvres, choice of three entrées, dinner rolls with fresh herb butter, choice of plated salad course, choice of starch side, and choice of vegetable side

The Classic Wedding Reception Menu

Example of entrée selections:

Marinated Grilled Tenderloin Tips with Caramelized Onion Sauce

Boston Baked Haddock with Lemon Beurre Blanc Sauce

Chicken Piccata, Lightly Breaded, in a Sauce of Lemon, White Wine, and Capers

The Elegant Wedding Reception Menu

Example of entrée selections:

New York Sirloin Steak, Seasoned and Grilled, Topped with a Mushroom Sauce

Classic Chicken Cordon Bleu with a Mornay Sauce

Miso Glazed Sea Bass

The Grand Wedding Reception Menu

Example of entrée selections:

Roast Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus, Roasted Medium Rare and Sliced

Herb Crusted Chicken with a Champagne Citrus Reduction

Blackened Salmon with Mango Salsa

The Bar

Pricing includes all taxes and bartender gratuities
Open Bar "Tab" (Price based upon consumption with or without cap)
Open Bar 5 Hours
Open Bar Cocktail Hour
Open Bar Beer and Wine Only (5 Hours)
Non-alcoholic Open Bar (5 Hours)

Upgrades and Enhancements

The following appetizers are available to be served to your guests as an additional course.

Sample Upgrades:

Event Set up of Personalized Items and Storage

We are not responsible for the set-up of personalized items. All personalized items must be delivered on the day of the event (except for gowns and tuxes). If you would like to have NHC Events set up your personalized items, there is a \$750 set up fee. For storage prior to day-of, there is a \$500 storage fee.

Additional Stationary Hors d'oeuvres Displays

Raw Bar

Impress your guests with our beautiful, nautical themed display of fresh native oysters, littleneck clams, cocktail shrimp, and Canadian snow crab claws shucked over an iced filled boat and served with condiments

Plated Appetizers

Pasta Course

Warm Caramelized Sweet Onion Tart with Herbed Goat Cheese
Tri-Color Cheese Tortellini with Alfredo Sauce Parmesan

Something Sweet

Bananas Foster Flambé

Add that extra "WOW" factor with this crowd pleaser! Watch as our chef sautés fresh sliced banana in banana liqueur and brown sugar. It is then flambéed with Meyers Dark Rum and served over vanilla ice cream

After Glow

Gourmet French Fry Board

Your choice of three different French fries served on an elegant wood board displayed with assorted dipping sauces. Choose from Potato wedges, shoestrings, sweet potato, and waffle cut

Event Services Package

NHC Events at Searles Castle in Windham has contracted the area's most respected service providers to ensure that your event is perfect. Once you have made your selections, we will then take responsibility for every pertinent detail including payment, delivery, and confirmation.

Centerpieces

Select your beautiful floral centerpieces and head table piece. Additional flower available and priced per florists request. Payment for added on items will be made directly to the florist.

Ford Flowers

83 S Broadway in Salem, New Hampshire 03079

(603) 893 – 9955

www.fordflower.com

Susanne's Weddings

472 State Route 111 in Hampstead, New Hampshire 03841

(603) 329 – 5280

www.susannesweddings.com

Cake

Select a delicious award-winning creation from [Jacque's Fine European Pastries](http://www.jacquespastries.com). Additional upgrades available and priced per baker's request. Payment for added on items will be made directly to the baker.

Jacque's Fine European Pastries

128 Main Street in Suncook, New Hampshire 03275

(603) 485 – 4035

www.jacquespastries.com

DJ and MC

We will provide ceremony and reception music through one of our professional DJ's. Additional upgrades to DJ package available and priced per DJ's request. Payment for added on items will be made directly to the DJ.

Get Down Tonight Entertainment

59 Stiles Road North Suite 102 in Salem, New Hampshire 03079

(603) 890 – 1204 / (603) 411 – 3696

www.getdowntonight.com