



**AIA**  
Florida



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## **People's Choice Architectural Competition Highlights Historically Significant Hotels**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Florida's tourism industry has suffered a devastating blow due to the necessary measures taken to slow the spread of COVID-19, and the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Florida) is focusing its 2020 People's Choice Competition on 28 historically and architecturally significant hotels to help give the industry a boost.

On Friday, June 5, AIA Florida launched its 7<sup>th</sup> annual online competition at [FloridaPeoplesChoice.com](http://FloridaPeoplesChoice.com) where the public can vote on their favorite hotel. Over 4,000 votes for Florida architecture have been recorded in under 72 hours with Miami's Fontainebleau currently holding the top spot. Voting runs through July 10 and the winner will be announced on July 11.

"The world as we knew it has changed, and AIA Florida wanted to focus this annual, fun competition on something that could help revitalize our state's largest industry by highlighting some of the architectural gems that comprise the tourism industry and celebrate our state's history," stated Stephen Panzarino, AIA, President of AIA Florida.

From Palm Beach's The Breakers Resort, opened in 1896 by Henry Flagler to accommodate travelers on his Florida East Coast railway, to Tampa's Le Meridien, a former federal courthouse transformed into a hotel, and to St. Petersburg's The Vinoy Renaissance, which was used by the military to train recruits during World War II, the 2020 People's Choice competition not only highlights these architecturally significant buildings, but also it celebrates Florida's history.

The 2020 People's Choice nominees are:

- The Betsy, South Beach
- The Biltmore Hotel, Miami
- The Birchwood, St. Petersburg
- Boca Raton Resort & Club, Boca Raton
- Brazilian Court, Palm Beach
- The Breakers Resort, Palm Beach
- Casa Marina Hotel, Jacksonville Beach

- Casa Monica Hotel, St. Augustine
- Colony Hotel, Palm Beach
- Colony Hotel & Cabana Club, Delray Beach
- Delano, Miami
- Disney's Contemporary Resort
- Don Cesar, St. Petersburg Beach
- The Faena Hotel, Miami Beach
- Florida House Inn, Fernandina Beach
- Fontainebleau, Miami
- Four Seasons Hotel at the Surf Club, Surfside
- Hotel Jacaranda
- Le Meridien, Tampa
- Lodge at Wakulla Springs, Wakulla Springs
- National, Miami
- Palihouse, Miami Beach
- Pensacola Grand Hotel, Pensacola
- The Postcard Inn, St Pete Beach
- Putnam Lodge, Cross City
- Southernmost House, Key West
- Sundy House, Delray Beach
- Vinoy Renaissance, Tampa Bay

Last year, the contest garnered 1.6 million votes and ultimately resulted in **The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ - Diagon Alley™ at Universal Studios Florida®** taking first prize. This annual competition is hosted by AIA Florida and the Florida Foundation for Architecture. The popular contest was a spin-off of the 100 years anniversary of the association in 2012. Since then, the contest has become an annual event and to date, the competition has attracted more than nine million votes cast from 150 countries. The competition was designed to engage the public in discussions about architecture and to award recognition based on public opinion.

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*The Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects, headquartered in Tallahassee, represents the interests of more than 3,900 members in Florida and the Caribbean. Members adhere to a code of ethics and professional conduct that assures the client, the public and colleagues of an AIA-member architect's dedication to the highest standards in professional practice.*

*The Florida Foundation for Architecture is a non-profit organization that exists to advocate the value of architecture to audiences beyond the profession. This is accomplished through Foundation events, publications and grants for programs that feature architecture and are open and available to the general public and related professions, as well as architects.*