



**PERCHED A MERE 20 FEET FROM THE EDGE OF THE GRAND CANYON**, El Tovar was the breathtaking reward for passengers who endured the long ride through the desert on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway at the beginning of the 20th century. Places like the canyon were new and exotic to most Americans, as was the opportunity to visit them by rail. Part of a plan to boost ridership and tourism, railroad moguls built resort destinations like El Tovar all over the West. **THE HOTEL OPENED ITS DOORS IN 1905**, and as the tourists flooded in, the canyon was imprinted on the national consciousness. El Tovar celebrates its 100th birthday this year. When first built, it was intended as a way to experience the Grand Canyon. Today, El Tovar is an experience in itself, part of the cultural history that has grown around one of the world's greatest natural wonders. **ARCHITECTURALLY ECLECTIC**, the building was designed by Charles Whittlesey, on retainer to the railway during its resort-building spree. Part Swiss chalet and part Norwegian villa, El Tovar has elements of Victorian resort architecture while incorporating the rough and rustic character that was becoming *de rigueur* for American wilderness resorts. While its balconies, terraces, and roof turret express the fussiness of the era, the hotel's peeled logs and unfinished timbers create a woody ambiance. **EL TOVAR IS STILL ACCOMMODATING GUESTS**, lured by the Grand Canyon's legend and vistas and perhaps, as suggested by an inscription on the front porch, "Dreams of mountains, as in their sleep they brood on things eternal." **FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.NPS.GOV/GRCA](http://WWW.NPS.GOV/GRCA).**