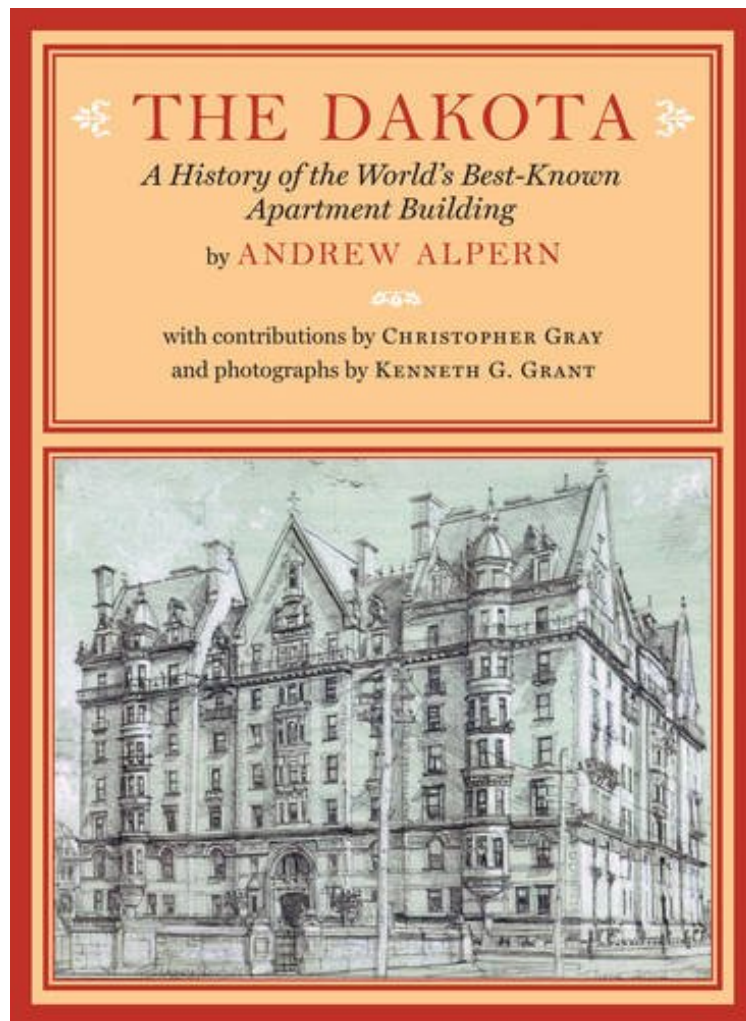


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# The Dakota: A History of the World's Best-Known Apartment Building

Andrew Alpern

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**Andrew Alpern : The Dakota: A History of the World's Best-Known Apartment Building** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dakota: A History of the World's Best-Known Apartment Building:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy James PolhamusFull of the most wonderful floor plans. Great gift for a history or architect buff on your list!9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful new book on The Dakota apartment building.By Peter P. LaszloThis is a fascinating, detailed and expertly crafted work. It goes into virtually all aspects of the development of The Dakota. Although it was obviously popularized by the death

of John Lennon, the book makes clear that The Dakota is a unique place, notwithstanding its famous residents. Frankly, I'm at a loss to understand the negative reviews. Obviously, Mr. Alpern used existing sources to sew together his story - but what author of a true story doesn't? I find it absurd to suggest that any author would be able to present new material on any subject such as this. It is the packaging of the material and the story that is presented within the confines of the book that make or break a product. In this, Alpern succeeded magnificently. I'm a frequent visitor to New York and I still love to stroll by the building and study its beautiful facade. Having read Alpern's book, now I'll be able to examine it in a different and more educated light. I can't recommend this enough to fans of architecture or people of more ordinary interests who want to discover the intrigue and difficulties of such an important structure. 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. WowBy Adam Beautiful and highly informative book on my favorite building in all of New York. When I first received the book, I was concerned that it may not have all that much information given its relatively thin size compared to other volumes I have on certain buildings. I was wrong. The book is expertly written (by an expert of course) and contains nearly all information one could wish for on the Dakota including, but not limited to; plans, historic images spanning the life of the building, and even a register of its first inhabitants. My only qualm with the book is the editing of the images. I feel that a tad too much HDR was used.. to the point that it distracts you from what it is you're looking at in the image. That said, it is a minor detail secondary to the real heft of the book, the information. I strongly recommend this well-bound book to anyone with interest in the great architecture of NYC, the country, and multi-family residential architecture as a whole. The Dakota is perhaps the single greatest apartment building ever constructed and set the gold-standard for future buildings of its type. This volume sits proudly among my favorites in my library.

The Dakota is arguably the best-known residential address in the world, home to dozens of New York City's most famous artists, performers, and successful executives. The rare sale of an apartment there, usually at jaw-dropping prices, is newsworthy, as is the financial and architectural health of the building itself, a landmark in every sense of the word. The first true luxury apartment house built in New York City, more than 130 years ago, the Dakota is still the gold standard against which all other apartment buildings are weighed. Historian Andrew Alpern tells the fascinating story of how the Dakota came to be, how Singer sewing magnate Edward Clark dared to build an apartment building luxurious enough to coax the city's wealthy from their mansions downtown for ultra-modern living on what was then the swamplands of the Upper West Side. Redrawn plans of the entire building, published here for the first time, show how Clark created apartments glamorous enough that they made living under a shared roof as acceptable in Manhattan as it already was in Europe's grand capitals, forever revolutionizing apartment life in New York City. This internationally renowned building is now accessible to us all at least in print, if not in its ultraprivate and well-guarded reality.

"Andrew Alpern, a lawyer turned architectural historian, has written a book for the outsider who longs to gain access to the marble halls of the inside...its pages are consecrated to details that allow the reader to reconstruct the Dakota from its foundation to its roof terrace in his or her imagination." - The New Republic "The list of features included in historian Andrew Alpern's book, 'The Dakota: A History of the World's Best-Known Apartment Building, would make the average New Yorker weep: tennis courts, marble staircases, oak- and mahogany-paneled dining rooms, 14-foot ceilings, ornate fireplaces, and, of course, those Central Park views. The book is loaded with original floor plans, historic images of the interiors, and profiles of the building's many notable residents through the years." - Bloomberg "The Dakota: A History of the World's Best-Known Apartment Building is a historical and architectural history, deliberately eschewing the gossip that could easily fill the pages of a book with such a name." - Untapped Cities "The Dakota is a serious, but equally compelling, book that chronicles all about the nuts and bolts of how the building at 1 West 72nd Street came about: its construction; how it changed the face of Manhattan's Upper West Side and its renovations over the years." - Brick Underground About the Author Andrew Alpern is an architectural historian, architect, and attorney who has known the Dakota since his childhood in the neighborhood. He is the preminent expert on historic apartment houses in New York, with nine prior books, five of which tell stories of New York's architectural assets and the people behind them. Alpern has also written scores of articles about historical architecture and particular buildings. He has written dozens of book reviews, more than 85 of his Letters to the Editor have been published, and he is regularly quoted in print. His donations of two major collections to the Columbia University Libraries resulted in a block-buster exhibition of his 50-year archive of the work of writer/artist Edward Gorey and the first-ever scholarly catalogue of his collection of over 300 years of architectural drawing instruments, which have been made obsolete by computer drafting. Since 2002 Alpern has served as general counsel and chief compliance officer for an SEC-registered investment adviser firm. He has been a resident of Manhattan since 1938.