



Hershey's Cuban Connection

Though Milton. S. Hershey's plantations and mills in Cuba were sold 60 years ago, the chocolate king's enchantment with the country and its people inspired **The Hotel Hershey** to preserve that history by adding Cuban-themed treatments to the celebrated **Spa At The Hotel Hershey** in 2004.

In 1916, with his empire already poised to become the international sensation it is today, Mr. Hershey knew that his ongoing success was dependent on sugar, a product that was in short supply during World War I. His need for this ingredient and his love of travel took him to Cuba, where he began acquiring sugar mills and plantations.

Central Hershey, the flagship mill and plantation, was also an active and comfortable town for its workers. Mr. Hershey provided the Cuban community with an infrastructure similar to the one he had successfully installed in Hershey, Pennsylvania – including health care, free public schools, a baseball diamond and a golf club. Other developments included the Hershey Cuban Railroad and the Hershey Agriculture School, which was built for boys orphaned by a railroad accident in 1923.

Mr. Hershey's philanthropic efforts resulted in his receiving a prestigious Cuban honor, the Grand Cross of the National Order of Carlos Manuel de Cespedes.

The profits generated by his Cuban properties helped support Mr. Hershey's "Great Building Campaign" in Hershey, Pennsylvania, during the Depression years in the United States. In 1946, a year after Mr. Hershey's death, his Cuban holdings were sold to the Cuban Atlantic Sugar Company.