

French Restaurant in Iowa has a Wallace Fountain



Django Restaurant
1420 Locust Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309 USA

Jeffrey Hunter became interested in Wallace fountains more than 25 years ago when he first started going to France to visit a friend who was, at the time, the Director of the American Library in Paris.

Many who visit Paris admire Wallace fountains, but not everyone can take this piece of Paris home with them, especially when the souvenir weighs more than 1,300 pounds. In 2008, Hunter commissioned a Wallace fountain from GHM, the foundry that continues to manufacture the cast iron fountains from the original molds. He had the fountain shipped to Des Moines, Iowa where it stayed in storage for ten years. The fountain was installed in 2018 on the patio of Django, a French restaurant Hunter owns in partnership.

While the fountain is not operable, it does bring charm to the heartland of America. Iowa was once a part of the French Louisiana Territory and the first Europeans to set foot on what is now Iowa were Marquette and Joliet, two Frenchmen who led an expedition exploring the Mississippi River Valley in the 1670s. The flag design of the State of Iowa includes a vertical tricolor of blue, white and red, acknowledging this historic connection.

Hunter has fond memories of his Paris visits and claims, "It's really just Paris nostalgia that explains the fountain's provenance." Thanks to Hunter's nostalgia, diners at Django can enjoy a little Parisian atmosphere when seated near this authentic Wallace fountain.

