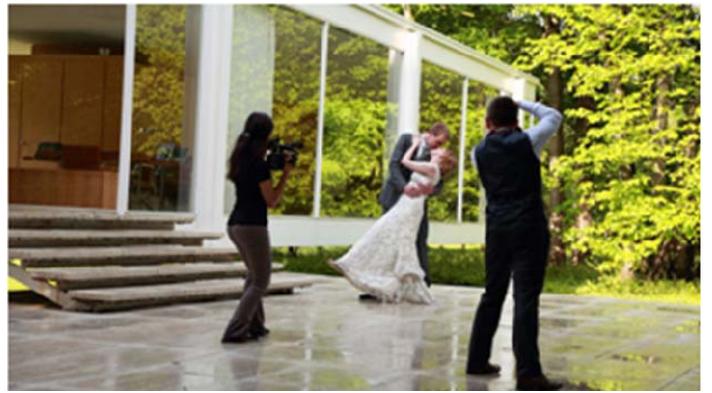


FARNSWORTH HOUSE WELL MAINTAINED, RESTORED AND WORTH THE TRIP

— Sandy Conrad
sconrad@fvshopper.com

The Farnsworth House is located at 14520 River Road in Plano (630/552-0052) and is maintained by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a private 501 (c)(3) non profit organization.

Built by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, it is considered significant because it embodies an aesthetic culmination of his experiment with this building type and it is perhaps the fullest expression of modernist ideals that begun in Europe. Historian Maritz Vandenburg wrote: "Every physical element has been distilled to its essence. The interior is unprecedentedly transparent to the surrounding site and also ...uncluttered. All the paraphernalia of traditional living – rooms, walls, doors, interior trim, loose furniture, pictures on walls, even personal possessions— have been virtually abolished in a puritanical vision of simplified transcendental existence." Mies van der Rohe was able to realize special and structural ideals impossible in larger projects. Its isolated site allows a degree of transparency. In 1947, a model of the Farnsworth House was exhibited at MOMA (Museum of Modern Art). It is noted for its continuous glass walls, the independent floating terrace and is considered by architects and scholars alike to be a pivotal piece of his long artistic career.



The house was first conceived as a country retreat for Dr Edith Farnsworth. It faces the Fox River and is raised 5 feet 3



inches above the ground supported by thin, white I-beams. The pastoral setting allows the house to appear to float above the ground. It has been said that the house maintains a temple-like aloofness and reflects Mies van der Rohe's minimalist expression of structure and space. Born in 1886, he has long been considered one of the most important architects of the 20th century, an innovative leader of the modern movement, creating visionary projects of glass and steel. He died in 1969.

Completed in 1951, the house has been meticulously maintained and restored both in 1972 and again in 1996 after a flood damaged the interior.



Tours are conducted from April through November, Tuesdays through Fridays at 10 AM, Noon and 2 PM, and on Saturdays and Sundays, on the hour from 10 AM to 3 PM. Tickets for guided tours are required and can be purchased online or by phone at 866/811-4111. Reservations are strongly encouraged; tours cannot be guaranteed without one. Parking is available at the Visitor's Center. Interested persons can experience the house in person on a guided tour, or on a personalized or a motor coach tour from Chicago. An experienced docent gives a fascinating discussion about the history of the Farnsworth House. Group tours for 15 or more persons and private tours are also available. The tour can be customized to focus on a

particular area of interest; options are limitless including being able to sketch, photograph or explore. Only photographs for personal use are permitted and cannot be taken for commercial use without express written permission by the Trust. Guided Interior Photography Tours take place on all weekdays and 3 PM on weekends and must be arranged in advance.

Infants in carriers are free. All other children, who must be accompanied and under the control of parents, require a ticket. Actually, adults are encouraged to not bring children on the tour as it involves standing quietly while listening to the docent for approximately 45 minutes and strollers are not allowed.

For non-English speaking visitors, audio translations in Spanish, French, Slovak, Chinese and Portuguese languages are currently available.

The unique setting presented by The Farnsworth House makes it perfect for special events. The breathtaking architecture and landscaping enhance Wedding Ceremonies, Bridal Showers, Receptions, Corporate Meetings, Seminars and Creativity Workshops Catering is permitted by an exclusive list of vendors and alcoholic beverages are allowed. Tables, Chairs, Linens, Tableware, etc. must be provided by the person or group renting the facility. However, the staff will provide a Special Events Coordinator to ensure all details are met.