

# Mansion Installation: Pantry

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Image appears on label.

*Footman Arthur Field polishing silver, Hillwood, 1960s*

Alfred Eisenstaedt / Time & Life Pictures / Getty Images

## Pantry

In stark contrast to the period interiors of Hillwood's dining spaces, the kitchen and this pantry—the staff workspaces—were ultramodern for their time, with glass-front metal cabinets in yellow or green and stainless steel work surfaces.

Marjorie Post treated her guests to fabulous dining experiences at Hillwood, including the opportunity to eat on rare historical tableware in her collection. Guests used the same pieces that had once belonged to eighteenth-century French aristocrats and members of the Romanov dynasty, the rulers of imperial Russia.

For large dinner parties, Post often hired extra hands to help, but only her staff was allowed to handle the delicate silver and porcelain pieces she used to set her magnificent tables. After a large dinner, two housemen washed the dishes, and two parlormaid dried them. The services were immediately put away. Post's butler Gus Modig recalled that "with the silver, you put it down, slowly, not dump it.... There was a mat in the bottom of the sink.... One by one, not a handful.... We had to be careful."

Footman Arthur Field held primary responsibility for the silver pieces, which he carefully polished on a regular basis, including the objects on display here.

*In case at right:*



**Vase with coins**

Austria, 1909

Silver gilt

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(12.206)



**Two bowls**

Western Europe, 1800s

Silver plate, glass

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(14.138)



**Set of saucers**

Cartier, jeweler (French, 1847–present)

New York, mid-1900s

Silver gilt

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(12.446.1–12)

Marjorie Post's butler Gus Modig mentioned that she commissioned this set of saucers to be used with 1700s Sèvres porcelain ice cups for serving coffee.



**Ice cups with a turquoise-blue and a pink ground**

Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory

(French, 1740–present)

Sèvres, France, 1768–1775

Soft-paste porcelain

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*

(24.63.11–12; 24.101.1)



**Flatware from the Hillwood Service**

Gorham Manufacturing Company

(American, 1831–1967)

New York, ca. 1960

Silver gilt

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*

(12.326)



**Tray**

Codognato (Italian, 1866–present)

Venice, ca. 1930

Silver gilt

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*

(12.305)



### **Tea and coffee set**

Boin-Taburet

(French, active 1860–after 1936)

Georges Boin, silversmith

(French, 1849–1911)

Paris, ca. 1889

Silver gilt

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*

(12.303.1–10)



### **Vase**

Black, Starr & Frost

(American, 1810–present)

New York, early 1900s

Silver

*Gift of Mrs. Augustus Riggs, 1977 (12.359.2)*



### **Post family silver**

Gorham Manufacturing Company

(American, 1831–1967)

New York, ca. 1905

Silver

*Gift of Mrs. Augustus Riggs, 1977*

(12.351; 12.360.1–2)



Image appears on label.

*Keeping track of the day's details in the pantry, 1960s*

Alfred Eisenstaedt / Time & Life Pictures / Getty Image

These plates belong to major services that Marjorie Post regularly set on her tables. They speak of Post's love for porcelain and objects with prestigious provenance. The blue set was ordered in 1771 by French aristocrat and diplomat Cardinal Prince Louis de Rohan (1734–1803), while Empress Catherine II of Russia (r. 1762–96) commissioned the Order services from 1777. Post used the Order services for the first time in 1939 for a formal dinner at the American Embassy in Brussels. Additional pieces from these sets are displayed in the French porcelain room, Russian porcelain room, and dining room.



### **Plates from the Order of St. Vladimir service**

Gardner Porcelain Manufactory

(Russian, 1766–1892)

Verbilki, after 1783

Hard-paste porcelain

*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*

(25.21; 25.22)



### **Plates from a dessert service**

Possibly Jacob Petit (French, 1796–1868)

Demont, decorator

(French, active 1832–40)

France, ca. 1835

Hard-paste porcelain, gilding  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(24.120)



**Plates from the Rohan service**

Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory  
(French, 1740–present)  
Sèvres, France, 1771  
Soft-paste porcelain  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(24.66)

Marjorie Post's morning routine included a breakfast she took in her bedroom, often served on this violet service, one of her favorites. Staff sent the tray to the second floor via the nearby dumbwaiter. She enjoyed toast, jam, eggs, bacon, and Postum. Postum is a coffee substitute created by C. W. Post, Postum Cereal Company's founder and Marjorie's father. Butler Gus Modig added that "there was always a banana on the tray, Post Grape-Nuts, teas, toast, and a finger towel," along with a flower arrangement.



**Breakfast set**

Shelley Potteries Ltd. (British, 1896–1966)  
Great Britain, 1900s  
Bone china  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(26.153)



**Vase and goldware**

Tiffany & Co.  
(American, 1853–present)  
New York, 1900s  
Gold  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(11.186.1; 11.213.1; 11.214; 11.215)



**Juice glass**  
USA, 1900s  
Glass  
*Bequest of Marjorie Merriweather Post, 1973*  
(23.492)



Image appears on label.  
*Alfred Eisenstaedt / Time & Life Pictures / Getty Images*

## Kitchen

Three cooks prepared three meals a day at Hillwood. One cook attended to Marjorie Post, while the other two took care of the staff's needs. When in residence at Hillwood, usually in the spring and autumn, Post held one dinner party a month, three 125-guest luncheons, and a weekend of garden tea parties.

Post was known to seat dignitaries next to friends like her hairdresser and serve popular foods, both common and gourmet, from orange sherbet to caviar. She also proudly served such products as Jell-O, Maxwell House, and Sanka, produced by the General Foods Corporation, successor to Postum Cereal Company, which Post's father founded. Marjorie Post told one guest, "Jell-O is a wonderful product, because of course it's used by all levels of income...and it's good for all times."

The menus here showcase examples of the variety of foods prepared for guests at Hillwood.

