Inside Baguio’s Most Haunted: The Laperal White House

I felt a strong presence inside the house.

Artful presence, nothing paranormal. Art has taken over the first floor of the Laperal White House, but most people are here to satisfy their curiosity about the feared and unexplainable.

They say that behind the mist that blankets the hills and streets of the City of Pines are countless mysteries and tales of horror. The map of Baguio, they say, is dotted with haunted houses and cursed hotels that have sheltered restless — and sometimes hostile — ghosts and spirits. One of them — the Laperal White House.

The house was originally beige, but was later repainted white.
The very supernatural presence of Mica. Don't worry, she's very friendly.

**The Haunting**

The Laperal White House is an eye-snatcher along Leonard Road, just beside the allegedly equally spirit-infested Teachers’ Camp. There have been many stories. Some unfortunate passersby have seen a little girl standing motionless on the third step of the staircase that fronts the house. Some have spotted a woman looking out its glass windows. Some have heard angry voices and loud noises from inside the house even when it was completely empty. Others have claimed they had this awful feeling of being unwelcome and being watched. The guards are also terrified to go in at night.
One day, the caretaker of the house, who stays in another house within the premises, ordered a guard to cut down a fortune plant on one side of the house. The guard fell ill and could not walk for days. A guard also shared his personal experience
inside. Once while he was doing the rounds inside, he received a call from his wife. The call went fine until she asked who he was with at the time. The wife apparently kept hearing a woman’s voice. Thing is, the guard was all alone.

Even the residents and staff of neighboring establishments have their share of White House spooky encounters. One incident involving a clairvoyant happened at PNKY’s Restaurant just across the notorious house. “At that time PNKY’s was just on ground level,” Ferdz Decena of Ironwulf.net narrates. “When the Clairvoyant looked at the mirror of the restaurant, she was stunned when she saw a woman standing behind her along with the reflection of the house.”

Vincent Tabor of Lakbay Baguio has also written about his personal experience when he was in High School. “We saw a white figure (could be fog) that is coming down from the attic down to the front entrance,” he recalls. “Suddenly my friend started running so I followed. When I asked him why, he said he saw a woman coming towards us.”

The History

The White House’s Amityville reputation might have been a product of its long, bloody history. Boasting an American Colonial architecture, this house was built in 1920, back when the country was under American rule. It was the home of the Laperal family, one of the oldest clans in Baguio, headed by Don Roberto. His wife Dona Victorina was said to be very fond of the fortune plants in the garden.

At the height of World War II, terror knocked on their door in the form of Japanese soldiers. The house was transformed into a garrison, where — again, if some stories are to be believed — they brutally tortured and murdered many. Among them, the Laperal family, except Don Roberto, who would survive the war only to accidentally slip and fall to his death from the stairs in front of the house.

But who are the little girl on the stairs and the woman by the window? The little girl was said to have been killed in another accident. Running after her nanny who was on the other side, the poor girl crossed the street and was run over. The nanny (not sure if the same nanny or another) was also killed in one of the bedrooms of the house. It is believed that the woman standing by the window, looking over the street was the nanny.
One of the bedrooms of the house
Today, the Laperal White House is now owned by business tycoon Lucio Tan. Now open to the public, it hosts the Ifugao Bamboo Carving Gallery, a joint project of the Philippine Bamboo Foundation and Tan Yan Kee Foundation. The exhibit aims to “bring to the attention of the public the increasing importance of bamboo in the preservation of arts and culture of the Cordilleras, prevention of landslides and soil erosion, and pollution control.”

The ground floor of the house has been converted into a gallery
Some of the pieces of bamboo art on display
The gallery is on the ground floor, but visitors are free to roam around the rest of the house if they are brave enough. The art is excellent, but my guess is that most people who enter the house are there to indulge their craving for mystery, satisfy their curiosity, or simply to scare themselves.

The living area of the house. Imagine someone is sitting there looking at you. Boo
The very narrow staircase. I almost did not fit. Thank heavens I skipped breakfast that day.
Wait, is this what I think this is?
My friend Mica and I took our time exploring and taking plenty of pictures. It was early morning and save for the few staff, we were the only souls inside — living souls, that is. We checked out all the rooms, climbed the freakily narrow staircase, and even reached the empty attic. Perhaps I was just trying to make myself believe that I was tough and all. Perhaps we were never *really* alone. Perhaps the place fosters a chillier, more frightening atmosphere at night. But I really did not feel anything strange or creepy. It was an ordinary open house sightseeing moment for me.

Not that I was asking for something out of the ordinary to happen.

**No. 14 Laperal White House**  
Leonard Road, Baguio City  
Entrance Fee: P50


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