Beat: Lifestyle

AN AUSTRIAN GEM: BIOHOTEL STANGLWIRT

HISTORY, TRADITION & MOUNTAIN ELEGANCE

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USPA NEWS -

The setting is magical. The property occupies a perfect crease of the piedmont where the Kaiser´s crown rises all around you, yet with flat land still able to cup picturesque highland pastures for grazing Lipizzaner horses, goats and sheep.

Spectacular far views surround this historic, five star diamond, Tyrolean resort, stacked with mountains, marvelous pine trees and small mountain lakes. Biohotel Stanglwirt, or " Stangl"? as referred to by "Stamm Gaeste"? (regular guests), at the foot of the dramatic Wilder Kaiser mountain, is one of Austria's oldest and most famous family owned and operated hotels.

Balthasar Hauser and his family,17th in a long line of ancestors focus on maintaining longstanding tradition while incorporating state of the art innovation. The entire Hauser family (two sisters and two brothers) is involved in the day to day operations of this unique hotel. Marketing and events director Maria Hauser-Lederer, who returned to the Stangl after having enjoyed a very successful, international career in hospitality management, conceptualized the gorgeous dirndls worn by female team members contributing to the traditional Tyrolean atmosphere. Now, mother of three year old little Leni, she continues her work in PR and oversees the onsite boutiques carrying her clothing line. Mrs. Magdalena Hauser, Maria´s mother, you will find entertaining, singing with guests in the dining room Austrian folk songs, hiking, walking cows down from pastures, ensuring that all team member´s questions are being addressed .

The Stangl upholds a wholly organic philosophy in its culinary offerings as one can feast on "žorganic quality" meats and cheeses from the hotel´s own farmstead and water drawn from the "Kaiserquelle"?, which has its source directly on the Stanglwirt´s grounds. My favorite, the famous Wiener Schnitzel, with roots to be found not in Vienna but in Venice, is one of their specialties. Italian chefs were frying meat in a breadcrumb wrapper as early as the sixteenth century, and before that the Jewish population of Constantinople did the same. According to legend, this form of fried meat was brought to Austria around 1857 by the Austrian Field Marshal Count Radetzky. Austrian chefs perfected the recipe during the late imperial age, making Wiener Schnitzel what it is today: an incomparable Austrian delicacy.

Stangl´s Kaiserschmarren, an Austrian style shredded pancake with fruit and Linzer torte are dishes known far beyond the borders of Austria. It took its name from the upper Austrian capital and is unique in the fact that the Linzer torte was the world´s first cake recipe to appear in written form. The cake first became famous in 1822 when a baker from Franconia, Johann Konrad Vogel, began working for Katharina Kress, the widow of a Linz confectioner. And that was the beginning of a success story. Today, the Linzer torte is just as well known abroad as the Sacher torte and no less popular as a delicious city souvenir.

From the ecofriendly architecture, parts of the roof are natural turf and meadow flowers, to the mountain chic, Tyrolean style furniture,
everything here is characterized by great attention to detail and comfort. The spacious, individually designed and superbly appointed bedrooms with stunning views of "Wilden Kaiser"?, are distinctive and welcoming, complemented by luxury bathrooms with fine toiletries to further enhance the indulgent experience. Fitting the environment, rooms and suites are exclusively made from natural materials: carpets made from pure wool, wood furnishings, right down to light switches and telephone handsets.

The Stangl has long evolved from a little farming inn to a world class, luxurious hotel while maintain its core values. Wellness enthusiasts, Peter Burwash tennis devotees, ski bunnies and golf fans will often find themselves working out

amidst the Klitschko brothers, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Franz Beckenbauer in state of the art techno-gym is fitted with cardio and strength building equipment. Not to be missed is the weekly, my favorite, four hour hike to the cheese hut lead by the Stangl´s sportive and witty owner and hostess, Mrs. Magdalena Hauser. After the cheese making presentation and a cow milking demonstration, Mrs. Hauser prepares a delicious mountain top picnic and shares anecdotes high lighting Austrian hospitality.

Mr.Hauser, an avid riding enthusiast himself, started his horse stable with "Pluto Verona"? one of the few private Lipizzaner studs in Austria. More perfectly trained, warm-blooded horses were added to the stud, as well as horses from guests, who take dressage and show jumping courses at Stanglwirt. These world famous horses originally from Spain are schooled in the Winter Riding School of the Hofburg Palace in a hippodrome once reserved for the imperial family. During their morning exercise they practice the choreographed steps which will be executed perfectly at the evening gala with their riders. These stallions were once stabled in the courtyard of every royal household in central Europe, valued as ceremonial horses for parades, jousts and military campaigns. However, only in Vienna has the tradition of Lipizzaner horsemanship endured to this day. The Lipizzaner horses, Europe's oldest domesticated breed of horse, take their name from an imperial stud which was located near to Trieste. And the Spanish Riding School is the only institution in the world which has practiced classical equitation in the tradition of the Haute Ecole since the Renaissance.

Stangl knows how to party and whoop it up. The world famous Weisswurst Party, takes place Friday of the Hahnenkamm Ski Race weekend in Kitzbühel, attracts over 2,500 guests, consuming 5,000 pairs of WeiÃŸwursts and just as many bottles of beer. Here it is not uncommon to bump into Prince Albert of Monaco, Vladimir Putin, Niki Lauda, Ivan Lendl, Steffi Graf, Dr. Kurt Walheim and many more. Dancing, singing and the famous Austrian "Gaudi"? (fun) continue into the morning hours.

This is a truly amazing place, very difficult to leave. Therefore, I will not say good-bye, rather: "Servus, Stangl, auf ein baldiges Wiedersehen!"?

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