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MOMENTS

Magazine of The Living Circle

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THE LIVING CIRCLE



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Dear Readers,

I am very much looking forward to steering *The Living Circle* towards a prosperous future. This is a collection of extraordinary, one-of-a-kind businesses. All our hotels are in exclusive locations and have their own, distinct character.

I want to contribute to this remarkable portfolio with my creativity, my focus on quality, and my values as a leader. Together we are redefining luxury: sustainable, regional, authentic, and rich in history. We want to offer unparalleled experiences that touch the senses in a special way, and create moments in time that allow for encounters, ideas and emotions.

The first *Mercato del Gusto* at the *Cantina alla Maggia* showcased a cornucopia of culinary delights. Forty producers, 13 Michelin stars and 11 chefs amazed the guests, who came in droves. As many as 4,000 visitors strolled through the gourmet market on the grounds of our winery and agricultural estate, sampled local specialties, tasted award-winning wines, and enjoyed seeing leading chefs like Caminada, Heilemann and others at work.

This summer, a very special hideaway opens its doors: *Château de Raymond Pierre* in the canton of Jura. This 16th-century building has been carefully renovated to offer guests a special kind of luxury: premium-quality, exclusive simplicity in an enchanted setting, surrounded by woodlands. The historic complex with its own chapel promises an unforgettable stay. Incidentally, cows from our farm near Val Terbi graze on the green meadows around this private retreat. It goes without saying that sustainability ranks high on our list of priorities for this latest addition to *The Living Circle*.

Read more about these and other topics from our “Circle” on the following pages. We hope our stories will surprise and inspire you!

Marco Zanolari, CEO *The Living Circle*

Slow living: simplicity and appreciation—that's enjoyment with a clear conscience.

Immerse yourself in nature

ascona-locarno.com/bike



Discover secret spots in the Lake Maggiore region by bike, such as lush valleys, emerald green rivers and traditional villages. Free charging stations throughout the area ensure that you don't run out of power.



What more relaxing way to arrive: Guests of the *Castello del Sole* are picked up by boat in Locarno. After a short ride, they are welcomed at the hotel's own dock.



Welcome to the *Château de Raymond-pierre*. Situated at an altitude of 1000 metres in the picturesque Swiss Jura, the private hideaway is surrounded by 650 hectares of forest and vast meadows. The château is the ideal location for a nature retreat.



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The perfect way to start a relaxing family weekend at the *Castello del Sole* is to arrive at the hotel's dock on our Frauscher boat. Set in the largest hotel grounds in Ticino, including a private beach, the *Castello del Sole* offers exquisite moments for young and old.

A WEEKEND FOR ALL THE SENSES



Photos: Tom Egli



CELEBRATING NATURE

The colour green is ubiquitous at the *Castello del Sole*. The view from almost every room over the hotel's expansive grounds is obstructed at most by one of the innumerable trees — some over a hundred years old.

If you want to offset the green with a few daubs of colour and enjoy creating your own flower bouquets, then the **FLOWER WORKSHOP** is perfect for you. Under the skilled instruction of our florist, you can assemble wonderful bouquets to take home. While the adults learn how to best combine dahlias and clematis blossoms, the kids can diligently collect grasses and leaves to make a tasty soup in the **GARDEN KITCHEN**. Kids Club coordinator Lucie knows the best recipe: tear up the leaves, add water, season with salt and pepper, stir and there you have it: a bowl of garden veggie soup ... smells heavenly!





SHARING TIME

The family-size swing at the hotel beach is a popular spot. It is a perfect way to **RELAX IN THE PARK**, as you cuddle up or let the motion lull you to sleep for a siesta. If a nap is not what you need right now, you can stroll along the beach, admire the boats in the marina or go for a refreshing **SWIM IN LAKE MAGGIORE**. The beach is right next-door to a bird sanctuary. With a little luck, you might catch a glimpse of one of the brightly coloured kingfishers that nest there.

And if the skies should cloud over, the **KIDS CLUB** organises games, fun and adventure. Lucie coordinates all activities and knows how to keep kids entertained. A qualified interior designer, she takes care of our youngest guests at the *Castello del Sole* with a great deal of patience and intuition. “We do crafts, paint and play all day long. Kids have such great imaginations — it’s always amazing what they come up with.”



ROUSING THE SENSES

KITCHEN TALK with Mattias Roock is a culinary amuse-bouche. The master chef invites guests to watch him cook and introduces them to his *Sapori del nostro Orto* concept: a multi-course meal comprised exclusively of products from the *Castello del Sole's* vegetable and herb garden as well as the winery and agricultural business. The subject matter is anything but dry, thanks to the delectable hors d'oeuvres and champagne served with it: Ticino foie gras with mulberries from the garden, blinis with trout from Lake Maggiore, or black polenta from right outside the hotel.

The head chef is happy to field any questions guests may have — whether they are about food waste, sustainability or recipes. For connoisseurs of exclusive wines, we warmly recommend a **WINE TASTING** event at the *Cantina alla Maggia*. What better place to taste the many facets of award-winning merlots than in the vineyard where the grapes are grown? And for a perfect end to such pleasure-filled days, you can **LOUNGE AT THE PRIVATE BEACH**. With your feet in the white sand, chillout music in the air, a drink in your hand, gazing across the water into the distance: This is how a holiday should feel.





HAVING FUN

Lake Maggiore sparkles in the morning sun. There are no boats out on the water yet, just a family of ducks drifting lazily along the shoreline. It's time for some early morning exercise on the meadow next to the dock. Yoga instructor Floriana teaches an invigorating **YOGA AT SUNRISE** class. After some gentle breathing and stretching exercises, she transitions to asanas, with their wonderful animal names like “down dog”, “fish”, “cobra”, and “grasshopper”.

Phili from the Phili La Scuderia riding stables next door introduces kids to the ponies. They can pet them, ride on them or lead them — whatever they want. While she prepares the **PONY CLUB** animals for a group ride, parents can grab a couple of bikes and cycle to Ascona. The **BIKE TOUR** to the piazza takes about 20 minutes. At this point, the only question left is whether to shop at the many boutiques or enjoy a superb gelato on a bench overlooking the lake? Our suggestion: do both! *rea*

Marco Zanolari has been at the helm of The Living Circle since August 2023. Originally from the canton of Grisons and widely travelled, he now oversees this unique collection of five-star hotels, a château, fine-dining restaurants and farms. We spoke to the new CEO about the course he has charted for the hotel group in this new era of redefined luxury.

NEW CAPTAIN ON BOARD: MARCO ZANOLARI

Photos: Tom Egli



Marcel Arzner has carefully moored the elegant boat to the dock at *Hotel Storchen*. He is picking us up for an afternoon excursion on Lake Zurich on a gorgeous autumn day. The Glarus Alps are clearly silhouetted against the horizon, the sun is slowly setting over Uetliberg hill. The experienced skipper is sharing the skills of his trade with the new “captain” of *The Living Circle*, CEO Marco Zanolari.

Marcel, who at 66 has long since retired, is a skipper at heart. On 365 days of the year, he ferries adventurous guests between the *Alex Lake Zürich*, the *Storchen* and Herrliberg, and from there to Restaurant *Buech* and *Schlattgut* farm.

“Our unique group of businesses is moving ahead at full sail and setting trends. Each of our hotels has a distinctive location and its own, distinct character. The only thing we’re missing is a hotel in the mountains.” Marco Zanolari

How does it feel as a mountain dweller from Grisons to be here on Lake Zurich?

To be honest, it’s great. The profession of a mariner has always fascinated me. Now that I live on Lake Zurich, I might even try to get my boating license. Last summer, I went on a sailing trip around Sicily with my family, friends and five children. An intense experience like that teaches you quite a bit, about sailing — and about yourself.

Was hotel management always your dream job? Yes. It was a real privilege to attend the world-famous EHL Hospitality Business School in Lausanne. I completed the entire degree programme in French, which wasn’t easy, to say the least.

At the same time, it ultimately opened doors to leading hotels all over the world. It certainly did. I started off in Guangzhou more than 20 years ago, at a time when there were not many westerners in China. It was difficult to manage day-to-day life without any knowledge of the Chinese language. There were also amusing moments, but it was definitely a formative experience. Later, I returned to Europe before moving on to Doha and the USA. I wouldn’t have missed the opportunity to spend time on these different continents for anything in the world.

Now you are the captain of The Living Circle. Have you charted its course? We want to explore new waters, to keep with the nautical terms. Our unique group of businesses is moving ahead at full sail and setting trends. Each of our hotels has a distinctive location, its own distinct character, and deep roots that often go back decades or even centuries. The hotels are connected in a circular economy with our own farms in Herrliberg, Ascona and and canton Jura. It's a one-of-a-kind collaboration that you won't find anywhere else, at least not in Switzerland. We intend to nurture this precious asset. The only thing we're missing is a hotel in the mountains.

Said like a true native of the Grison Alps! Do you have any specific plans in that direction? Not really, nothing is in the pipeline. But our eyes and ears are always open for opportunities. Right now, we are in the final stage of opening *Château Raymontpierre* in the canton of Jura. This jewel with 14 rooms is the latest addition to our string of pearls. It is an enchanting place, complete with its own forest and farm. This is our first venture into western Switzerland now that we are so well represented in Ticino and Zurich.

What compass are you guided by in your plans for this exciting collection? You have to remember that the hotel trade is a people business, as they say. It's about emotions, passions, talents. Good hotel managers can perform their role best if they are given the necessary latitude. Or to put it another way: It's about the software, not the hardware. Our aspiration is to achieve perfect craftsmanship in all areas of the business.

That is certainly an important factor at a time when skilled labour is scarce. How do you counteract that? I'm convinced that everyone is motivated by something. Young people in particular want to have a meaningful occupation. They want to grow — together with the older generation as their role models. The fact that we are a group of hotels and businesses, with different characters in all corners of the country, is a major benefit in this context. Talented employees have an opportunity to develop their skills within *The Living Circle* without having to travel abroad. Because surprisingly, that is something younger people don't want to do as much these days. At least not for work.

At the helm, Marcel points our boat towards Zürihorn, a spit of land on Lake Zurich, stopping at the dock near the Eureka sculpture by Tinguely. Marco Zanolari learns how to moor the boat correctly. Throwing his weight against the wind and waves, he pulls the vessel in centimetre by centimetre. He almost forgets to put the boat fenders in place. A quick reminder from Marcel is all it takes.

What are the most important characteristics of a good captain, in your opinion? *What is your management philosophy?* A captain has to be consistent, authentic, honest and always send clear messages. I have a reputation for giving fair and direct feedback. My aim is to practise mindfulness.

What does that mean? It begins with greeting each employee individually when I walk through our businesses, and ends with giving practical guidance. We managers need to be accessible, available, on the ground. Our employees need to understand where we want to go together with them.

And how do you react when mistakes inevitably happen? I would say calmly, but with a clear mind. That is something that many of my former employees who have moved on to successful careers can confirm. Of course, a harsh word can sting. But as long as it is well formulated and understandable, then it is usually not a problem. Generally speaking, I think we Swiss are a bit too cautious sometimes. I like the attitude of colleagues in the USA, where mistakes are an integral part of any business model. Over there, if you've never been in trouble, you're not considered a good entrepreneur.

"I'm convinced that everyone is motivated by something. Young people in particular want to have a meaningful occupation. They want to grow."
Marco Zanolari

In the meantime, Marco Zanolari has successfully passed the test and moored the boat at the dock. Skipper Marcel noses it back out onto Lake Zurich and lets his boss take over at the helm. The monitor provides all the information he needs about the depth, current, wind direction, etc. Seaman Zanolari shifts up a gear, sending the boat flying. But the skipper gets him to bring it back down a notch, because strict speed limits are enforced on the lake. We cross under Quaibrücke bridge and chug slowly up the Limmat. Private boats have no business to be here, unless they have a special permit like our Alex boat, which is one of the few watercraft allowed to travel this stretch, along with the ferries operated by Lake Zurich Navigation Company. Finally, we arrive at the dock belonging to Hotel Storchen, the only five-star hotel in Zurich set on the riverside with a view of the old town.

You worked for many years as director of Grand Resort Bad Ragaz, a leading five-star hotel in Switzerland. What role does luxury play in your life? The question is how we define luxury. At *The Living Circle* we embrace a new kind of modern luxury. Caviar, lobster and fillet steak are passé.

What about today? When it comes to meat, we take the "nose to tail" approach. Our animals lead happy, free lives out in the fresh air. We make use of all parts. Now the focus is on organically grown seasonal vegetables, or our own rice from

our fields in the Maggia Delta in Ascona. Guests today are interested in a healthy diet. They believe in the philosophy that you are what you eat.

You have Andreas Caminada on board, who is a driving force in the fine dining sector. Stefan Heilemann, Stefan Jäckel and Mattias Roock also stand for the highest level of haute cuisine. What do these prominent names bring to The Living Circle? Above all, an exquisite culinary experience for our guests. At the same time, Andreas Caminada is what Roger Federer is for tennis: a role model for up-and-coming talents. Our top chefs are themselves brands, and they make our brand more approachable and tangible. That is a big help when it comes to recruiting employees in the restaurant trade. On top of that, everyone wants to witness these champions at work. We are developing our own academy to better promote young talents.

You are also head of three agricultural businesses: the Cantina alla Maggia in Ascona, Schlattgut farm in Herrliberg, and the farm at Château Raymontpierre. Do you have any connections to farming? I do in fact. My parents are wine merchants and winegrowers. As a boy, I often helped out at harvest time. Those are unforgettable moments in life.

*And what do you like doing when you have time off? I like to play golf, especially with my son. It's a real challenge trying to beat him! He's good for me and my handicap. And he grounds me, too: Winning isn't always important ... (he grins).
Interview conducted by Reto Wilhelm*

AT THE HELM SINCE AUGUST 2023: MARCO ZANOLARI

Marco Reto Zanolari grew up in Chur in the canton of Grisons, a popular holiday destination in Switzerland. He has been CEO of *The Living Circle* since August 2023. Zanolari comes from a family of winegrowers. A talented athlete, he attended the Swiss Alpine Secondary School (SAMD) in Davos, before pursuing a degree in Hospitality Management at the EHL Hospitality Business School in Lausanne. After graduating, he travelled the international hotel world, with stations in China, Thailand, Germany, Mallorca, Athens, Istanbul, Doha, Beverly Hills, Miami and Maui. Finally, Marco Zanolari decided to return to home to Switzerland. He was General Manager of the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz from 2016 to 2021 before becoming Chairman of the Executive Board. During this time, he also studied for an Executive MBA degree at the University of St. Gallen, which he successfully completed in 2023.



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There are as many definitions of home as there are people on the whole planet. At Max Chocolatier we pack them carefully into our hearts and carry them with us as we travel through life. Home becomes a unique collection of what we sense, experience, reflect upon and remember. Welcome to our home, situated in Lucerne, Switzerland, The Max Chocolatier Event & Design Studio is a journey, this is where it begins ...

Max Chocolatier's Atelier is an enchanting haven for those who appreciate the art of chocolate. Here, master artisans meticulously handcraft each and every one of their delectable creations using only the best all natural ingredients from around the world, resulting in an unrivaled taste adventure. Working with incredible natural flavors and ingredients makes the need for additives obsolete. And instead of using artificial preservatives to ensure our delicacies are consumed at their best, we rely on human temptation. One thing we like to live longer is our chocolate boxes.

Offering more than just delicious confections, Max Chocolatier celebrates artisanal craftsmanship, premium natural ingredients and its Swiss heritage in each of its chocolate creations and chocolate experiences. Indulge in a tantalizing experience that is sure to excite your senses. Join us on a chocolate tasting journey in one of our Boutiques or in our Atelier into the enchanting realm of cocoa, conching, Grand Cru chocolate, and beautiful seasonal ingredients. Discover the secrets of our handcrafted, Swiss made, all-natural chocolate gems by savoring a selection of seasonal Max Chocolatier delicacies, each more exquisite than the last.

The Max Chocolatier Design & Event Studio in Lucerne was designed with delectable sensory experiences in mind. Chocolate may be our love language, but the joy of sharing delicious savory morsels extends it far beyond. For a piece of us, visit us in our Boutiques in Zurich or Lucerne.

maxchocolatier.com

For event requests contact us through events@maxchocolatier.com



"Max Chocolatier is named after our personal superhero Max, proud chocolate aficionado and son of founder Patrik König."

MERCATO DEL GUSTO

*Photos: Thomas Buchwalder,
studio daulte, Bo Bury*

4,000 guests, 40 producers,
18 Michelin stars, 138 Gault &
Millau points, 11 head chefs,
six months of preparation—
and one promise. Impressions
from the *Mercato del Gusto*.





People have come from all over to the first *Mercato del Gusto* at the *Cantina alla Maggia*. Towards noon, getting through the crowds becomes a real challenge. Among the sound of laughing, clinking of glasses, clanging of cooking pots and murmur of people chatting, Antonio Pischredda breathes a deep sigh of relief. “We have been working at a manic pace to make this outdoor market happen”, says the manager of the Enoteca Alimentare shop. “Even so, we really didn’t know what to expect until the last minute. And when it started raining in the morning ...” But his fears were unwarranted because the weather gods mercifully cleared the skies over Ascona. And anyway, where else can you watch chefs like Mattias Rook from the *Castello del Sole*, Stefan Heilemann from *Widder Hotel* or Stefan Jäckel from the *Storchen* (both in Zurich) preparing delectable foods and chat with them about culinary topics? Where else can you experience so much creativity, skill and passion for cooking? Eleven top chefs participated in the *Mercato del Gusto*. With a total of 18 Michelin stars among them, they are bright lights in the culinary sky.

Three of these stars are held by Andreas Caminada, who has a lifelong love affair with the Ticino region. “It doesn’t take long to drive over the Alps from Grisons, where I live, when you need a change of scene. Ever since my childhood, I have identified with the people and the culture here.” Caminada is also one of the creative minds behind the *Mercato*. At his *Schloss Schauenstein* restaurant in Fürstenu, Grisons, the Michelin-starred chef has already hosted five markets for speciality foods — all of them a resounding success. The *Mercato del Gusto* follows this blueprint. Local cheesemakers, chocolate-makers, coffee roasters and icecream producers showcase their products and skills at some 40 market stalls. You can’t help but be amazed. Take for instance the cheesemaker from Mendrisio, who works exclusively at night. Or the chocolate-maker who experiments with camel milk. The snails bred in Ticino are a delicacy for some, an acquired taste for others.





The producer was inspired by an age-old Ticino tradition. “For a lot of people in Ticino, snails were often the only meat they could afford.” Then there is the stall with corn for polenta: Who knew it comes in colours other than yellow? At the *Cantina alla Maggia*, white, red and black corncobs are grown.

Of course there is rice. Markus Giger first planted rice at the *Cantina alla Maggia* in 1997. Today, with 26 years of experience under his belt, he harvests as much as 80 tons. “Our rice is highly sought-after”, he says. “We are seeing high demand even outside *The Living Circle*.” One stall serves nettle risotto with char, quinoa and nut butter foam. A few steps on, we sample trout from Lake Maggiore, polenta waffles with honey foam, and much more.

Fabio Del Pietro, Director of the *Cantina alla Maggia*, tells an interested crowd that he is working with the sommeliers from *The Living Circle* hotels and a new team of oenologists to take quality to an even higher level (see next page). It will be interesting to see what they come up with, because at the leading wine trade fairs — Mondial du Merlot or Decanter UK — wines from the *Cantina alla Maggia* already garner gold and silver medals.

Later, the busy market feels more like a folk festival. A band begins to play, no one seems to be in a hurry, visitors stroll between the stalls, grab a bite to eat here, something to drink there, bump into old friends and make new ones. And in the background, Sabrina Schmid of the *Castello del Sole* is at ease, happy, and smiling more brightly than all the Michelin stars together: “About 4,000 people came to the event today — we never expected that in our wildest dreams. All of us, including our chefs and exhibitors, are more than delighted with the turnout!” No wonder she is optimistic about the future: “We’ve already promised to hold the Mercato again next year”. *Franz Bamert*

Next *Mercato del Gusto*: 2 June 2024
cantinaallamaggia.ch



Ettore Biraghi (left) has won multiple awards: He was named Rookie of the Year by Gault & Millau in 2017, and made it among the best winemakers in southern Switzerland two years later.

Ettore Biraghi, the new oenologist at the Cantina alla Maggia winery and agricultural estate, is an experienced wine expert. He has been working closely with Cantina alla Maggia Director Fabio Del Pietro since summer 2023 to perfect the estate's wines. We asked what makes these two experts tick.

IN VINO VERITAS

ETTORE BIRAGHI
HEAD OENOLOGIST, CANTINA ALLA MAGGIA

AGE _____ 45

EDUCATION _____ Bachelor of Science in agriculture, agricultural engineer

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT ME _____ Only good things, I hope

HOW I WOULD DESCRIBE FABIO _____ Fabio is decisive and resilient

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MY JOB _____ Creativity

WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT MY JOB _____ When I have to leave work at the end of the day

HOW I LIKE TO WORK _____ In a team

WHERE I GET MY INSPIRATION _____ I learn a lot from experienced people and constantly search for new ideas

WHAT I WOULD NEVER COMBINE WITH WINE _____ Cheerless company

WHEN I MOST ENJOY A GLASS OF WINE _____ With the right person

AND WHEN DO I PREFER BEER _____ With people who know nothing about wine

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR A GOOD WINE _____ A good vintage

FAVOURITE PRODUCT WE PRODUCE _____ Polenta crisps

MY PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE _____ Observe, don't obstruct, intervene only if absolutely necessary

SIGN OF A GOOD WINE _____ If the glass is empty, we did a good job

FAVOURITE WINE WE PRODUCE _____ Melodia

A WINE I WOULD LIKE TO PRODUCE _____ A 100% Petit Verdot

GOALS FOR 2024 _____ To take things to a new level step-by-step, without fear, but with dedication and perseverance

FABIO DEL PIETRO
DIRECTOR, CANTINA ALLA MAGGIA

AGE _____ 47

EDUCATION _____ Bachelor of Science, agricultural engineer, ETH Zurich

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT ME _____ You'll have to ask them

HOW I WOULD DESCRIBE ETTORE _____ Ettore is resilient and has a high emotional IQ

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MY JOB _____ Facing new challenges every day and finding solutions

WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT MY JOB _____ Not getting anywhere

HOW I LIKE TO WORK _____ I like to think things through on my own first

WHERE I GET MY INSPIRATION _____ I am curious about the world around me

WHAT I WOULD NEVER COMBINE WITH WINE _____ Desserts

WHEN I MOST ENJOY A GLASS OF WINE _____ In good company

AND WHEN DO I PREFER BEER _____ When it's warm outside

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR A GOOD WINE _____ Harmony

FAVOURITE PRODUCT WE PRODUCE _____ Rice

MY PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE _____ Think before you act

SIGN OF A GOOD WINE _____ Consistent and harmonious from the nose to the mouth

FAVOURITE WINE WE PRODUCE _____ Ascona 2023

A WINE I WOULD LIKE TO PRODUCE _____ Petit Verdot aged in amphorae

GOALS FOR 2024 _____ To enhance the finesse and elegance of our wines, with Ettore's help

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OUR
MAGIC
PEOPLE

ORNELLA MOLEDO
HOUSE KEEPING

Her greatest passion: animals, especially cats What she is proud of: her family and her son Enea
If she could start again from scratch, then ... she would want to be a vet Her personal tip in the region: visit one of the many beautiful valleys — they are all special in their own way Where she takes friends from abroad to impress them: to the “Maldives of Switzerland” — Lavertezzo in Verzasca Valley — or our wonderful *Castello del Sole* resort
Where she likes to spend her free time: out and about — hiking, walking, or cycling The first thing she does when the alarm goes off in the morning: have breakfast in the kitchen with her cat Lula — coffee for her, milk for Lula The best compliment she has had from a guest: “You are the soul of the hotel” What she dreams of: learning guitar



Photos: Nicolas Zonvi

A QUESTION OF HONOUR



Storchen Zürich has been the permanent home of the Boatmen's Guild since the last millennium. Every three years, the boatmen invite the Society of the Constable and Zurich's other 24 historical guilds to a duel on the river Limmat in front of the hotel: Schifferstechen, or water jousting, is similar to a medieval knight's tournament, but on boats.

His eyes are narrowed to slits in a face seemingly chiselled from stone, his body bent forward, straining, legs placed slightly apart and feet rooted to the boat. The crowds on the terrace of *Storchen Zürich* and along the shoreline chant: "Carlo, Carlo, Carlo!". Carlo Celli is the jouster from the Boatmen's Guild. It's not clear whether he can hear the chorus of voices. He says something to his two oarsmen, lifts the five-metre-long lance and locks eyes with his opponent on the other boat, one Pascal Kistler from the Riesbach Guild. People are calling his name, too, but all he can probably hear is the blood rushing in his ears.

Raphael Pedroncelli, manager of *Storchen Zürich*, says: "It is an honour for our hotel to host such an old organisation as the Boatmen's Guild. The forebears of the present-day guild members also felt at home here, and so the *Storchen Zürich* has become part of the history of the Boatmen's Guild."

Suddenly, the boats shoot towards each other. The two jousters grip their lances more firmly, check their footing, and they're off! The two young men thrust forward simultaneously, both falter. Kistler falls backwards into the water, Celli seems to recover at first. Is it a wave that finishes him off, or an awkward move by one of his oarsmen? At any rate, Celli also loses his balance and tumbles into the waters of the Limmat. They repeat the joust, and again, both take a plunge. Still in the water, the two men laugh and shake hands. On land, they toast each other with a mug of beer and a friendly embrace.

"Water jousting is not about winning, but about celebrating the tradition", guild master Claude Lambert says later at *Storchen Zürich*. "It's an age-old tradition, much like a medieval knights' tournament. The difference is you can't ride a horse on the water, and it is more about cultivating friendships and forging social ties." Silvia Steiner, a member of the Government Council of the canton of Zurich, who is attending the event as an honorary guest, very much shares his view: "The guilds and their celebrations — such as the Sechseläuten spring festival or today's Schifferstechen — show Zurich in a very friendly, hospitable light. And I am proud to be here today."





Guild master Claude Lambert: "Water jousting is not about winning, but about celebrating the tradition. It is about cultivating friendships and forging social ties." He is pictured on the left with proud hotel manager Raphael Pedroncelli.

Guilds were formed in the Middle Ages as associations of craftsmen, merchants, traders or sailors. They wanted to take responsibility for their own affairs and not be swayed by bishops, princes or other authorities. The guilds also provided a kind of insurance for surviving dependents. If a member died, the guild made sure that his wife or children did not become destitute.

The tradition of water jousting was cultivated throughout Europe. For many years, jousts fought wearing heavy suits of armour and carrying pointed lances. If one fell into the river or lake wearing and carrying heavy iron, there was a good chance he would not resurface. Today, the jousts in Zurich "fight" in traditional costumes but with cushioned lance tips.

While outside the hotel, the jousts are still clashing, cheering and gulping river water, inside the *Storchen* the banquet is being prepared. "The *Storchen Zürich* is our home", says guild master Lambert. "We can take it easy here and know we are in good hands. Our friendship with hotel manager Raphael Pedroncelli has grown over the years and that's something we really appreciate." Pedroncelli returns the compliment: "It is an honour for our hotel to host such an old organisation as the Boatmen's Guild. The forebears of the present-day guild members also felt at home here, and so the *Storchen Zürich* has become part of the history of the Boatmen's Guild."

The jousting is over, but the celebration continues with food and drink, with speeches, laughter and fellowship. And what about the winners of the joust? There are no prizes, no golden lance or anything an outsider might expect. Because as we said, this tradition is about being there, not winning. The three best jousts are congratulated by name during the evening celebrations, and guild master Lambert adds dryly, "That is honour enough." *Franz Bamert*





MOON WOOD

Photos: Tom Egli



Moon wood — the very name exerts a magical allure. But this exceptional material has a great deal more to offer than that. Steeped in nocturnal mystique, it also lends itself perfectly to practical applications in architecture and furniture construction.

Trees can reach an age that exceeds ours a hundredfold and its wood remains intact for an incredible length of time. Little wonder, then, that for thousands of years, people have been studying the effect of when the wood is harvested on its quality. To this day, moon wood is said to be less combustible, more resistant to rot and less likely to expand or shrink. It is also thought to be particularly dry and hard. Because trees absorb more moisture at full moon, this makes moon wood less prone to cracking and deformation. It retains its shape and stability over time, making it an ideal choice for bespoke furniture and architectural applications.



Moon wood is prized for its excellent properties in countless cultures around the world. Even the ancient Romans are said to have built their galleys exclusively from moon wood, thanks to its resistance to the marine borer, an aquatic wood pest akin to the land-dwelling bark beetle.

In China, it remains the material of choice for the production of objects of art and furniture, and is believed to foster positive energy and harmony in the home. In Japanese culture, it is used in the construction of temples and shrines to forge a connection between nature and cosmic forces. These diverse cultural roles are testament to the versatility and symbolic richness of moon wood.



For the large-scale renovation of *Château de Raymondpierre*, the latest member of *The Living Circle*, moon wood was sourced from the nearby forest. Spruce was used for all interior fittings — from the floors and the wall panelling to the furniture — lending the historical rooms a unique ambience.

But artisanal considerations are just one part of the equation: By using moon wood in architecture and furniture construction, we also pay homage to the beauty of nature and the evocative allure of the moon. Moon wood transports the magic of the night into interior spaces, reminding us that nature is a source of inspiration and beauty.

chateauderaymontpierre.ch

Nestled in a sublime setting,
Château de Raymond Pierre
is surrounded by gently rolling
hills, forests and meadows.

CHÂTEAU DE RAYMONTPIERRE

AN EXCLUSIVE
PRIVATE
**HIDE
AWAY**

Photos: Digitale Massarbeit, Tom Egli

The newest addition to *The Living Circle* is synonymous with exclusivity. Whether it is a creative retreat, a culinary event with distinguished chefs, an inspiring holiday or a once-in-a-lifetime celebration.



Whether for a family celebration, a wedding or a conference, the castle and its 14 rooms can be booked exclusively as a package offer.



Sydney and Timon's passion for first-class service and fine cuisine is reflected in every detail of the Château.



CHÂTEAU DE RAYMONTPIERRE

The view of undulating countryside around Vermes in the canton of Jura is enchanting. It is the ideal place to leave urban life behind. No wonder a castle was erected here! Built in the 16th century as a hunting lodge by Georges Hugué, this extraordinary château has now been converted into an exclusive agritourism destination by *The Living Circle*. Comprising a main building with a round bastion, a curtain wall with two corner towers and a chapel with late-Gothic windows, Château de Raymontpierre has been carefully restored. At its heart is a spiral staircase, a kitchen with a vaulted ceiling, an impressive fireplace in the grand knights' hall, and six bedrooms and suites. Another eight rooms in the new "La Grange" annex offer absolute tranquillity combined with rural charm. The rooms have a uniquely clutter-free, understated design and exude timeless elegance. A small, exclusive spa has also been cleverly integrated into this historic ensemble — in keeping with the principle of less is more. Simplicity is the new luxury.

"It is the ideal environment for unforgettable moments in a private setting", says Sydney Karolewski, who welcomes guests to *Château de Raymontpierre* together with Timon Wolf. "We try to pamper our guests in any way we can. The historic rooms and the neighbouring farm help make any event an unforgettable experience."

Those not necessarily interested in booking an entire castle can attend one of the many inspiring and creative retreats that take place throughout the year, or enjoy fine dining at a culinary event (see page 135). During the Swiss school holidays in July and August, the wonderfully positioned *Château de Raymontpierre* also opens its doors to individuals and families.

The estate's close bond with its natural surroundings is also reflected in the way the estate is managed. "Whenever possible, ingredients used in the kitchen are sourced from the castle garden, our farm or the surrounding forests", says Timon Wolf. The castle also has its own fresh-water spring nearby, and wood from the neighbouring forest is used to make the interior furnishings and for heating. True to the philosophy of *The Living Circle*: Luxury fed by nature.

The young hotel managers from Basel have gained a wealth of experience in the world of hospitality and haute cuisine. In June 2024, this lovely château in the Swiss canton of Jura will welcome its first guests, opening a new era in exclusive farm stays: Welcome to a world of luxury in close proximity with nature.

chateauderaymontpierre.ch



With great refinement, a small, exquisite wellness area has also been integrated into the historic building, in the spirit of "less is more".



zurich schipfe 4 munich theaterstrasse 27 berlin schlüterstrasse 50 dusseldorf heinrich-heine-allee 38 www.talbotrunhof.com



TALBOT RUNHOF

Lavish, elegant, stylish — *Restaurant Buech* is known for its extravagant floral displays.

Lisa Michalik sums up the secret of her stunning flower arrangements:
“Simply beautiful is beautifully simple”. We visited the skilled floral designer high
above Lake Zurich.

Photos: Tom Egli & Sava Hlavacek

IN FULL BLOSSOM





Around lunchtime, luxury limousines start gathering on the gravel drive outside *Restaurant Buech*. The first guests make their way into the dining room of this rustic establishment. As usual, all the tables are occupied on this autumn day. The restaurant outside Herrliberg has a reputation for spectacular views and fine cuisine — and for stylish flower arrangements.

Four hours earlier, Lisa Michalik takes delivery of her weekly order: A large rack overflowing with calla lilies, long-stem roses, lilies, carnations, spotted orchids, ferns, grasses, and foliage. The morning air fills with a potpourri of delicate floral scents. “When I order the flowers, I already have the finished bouquets in my mind. But when I start arranging them, I get inspired by the colours and forms, and end up ditching my original plan. This creative process is what I really love about my job.”

“I work intuitively and am inspired by different forms and colours. And I have a reliable instinct for beautiful things.” Lisa Michalik

While she carefully arranges the lilies and grasses in a large vase, her gaze wanders to the window. She loves the view from here over the vineyards and down to glittering Lake Zurich. Lisa Michalik clearly has a keen eye not only for the details, but also the bigger picture. She honed her skills working as a photo stylist and costume designer for international photo and film productions. She was asked to join the team at *Restaurant Buech* by former manager Marc Wyss — himself a master of dramatic presentations — and started flower arranging three years ago after he left the restaurant. Her lack of formal training as a florist has not been a handicap by any means: She is a natural. “I work intuitively and am inspired by different forms and colours. I have a reliable instinct for beautiful things. That’s all there is to it!”, she says succinctly. Guests regularly ask if they can take her floral arrangements home with them, confirming that her intuition is more than adequate. She also gets frequent requests to design for private events, although she



doesn't have the time. "It's a good feeling when people appreciate something you love doing."

Whether for weddings, birthday celebrations or corporate events, Lisa Michalik can sum up the secret of a successful floral arrangement in one word: opulence. It is important to give each flower the chance to shine, even in a mixed bouquet. She particularly likes the combination of elegant calla lilies, with their long, narrow blossoms, and spotted orchids. Grasses, foliage and ferns bring out the colours in the blossoms. In contrast, voluminous hydrangeas won't let other flowers near them. Like roses, they work best on their own.

"It's a good feeling when people appreciate something you love doing." Lisa Michalik

Lisa Michalik is one of those people fortunate enough to have found their vocation. And she loves where she works, too. With its newly renovated dining rooms, the wonderful terrace and snug wooden cabins, *Restaurant Buech* requires a range of decorative styles. For the smaller Kleine Stube dining room, for example, she chooses light colours and unobtrusive blossoms that do not detract from the artwork on the walls. Statement bouquets and pastels are better suited to the renovated Grosse Stube. The wooden cabins are a wonderful source of inspiration. "I usually deck out the Stall in exotic flowers such as strelitzias, also called bird of paradise flowers, and orchids. The Zuberhütte looks best in shades of blue. And I prefer to give the Paradiesli cabin, which is popular for weddings, a more romantic look."

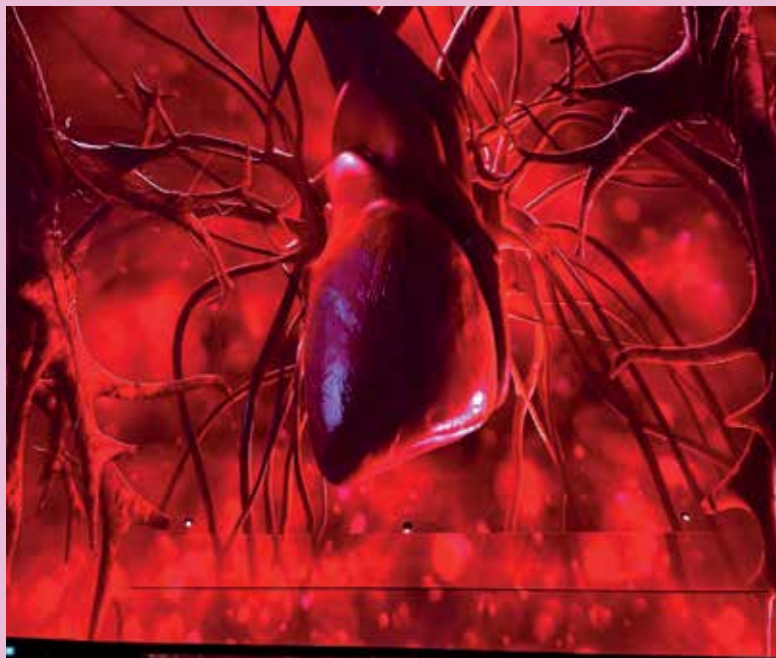
It goes without saying that the décor is coordinated. From the place settings to the tablecloths, candles and vases, Lisa Michalik has a flair for harmonious design, down to the smallest detail. She also makes sure that no two arrangements are the same, especially since many guests come here regularly, and want to see something new each time. *Anina Rether*



What up-and-coming young chef doesn't dream of the chance to work with international masters of the trade? The Uccelin Foundation, established by Sarah and Andreas Caminada, makes these dreams come true. It gives talented junior chefs and service staff the opportunity to gain experience and hone their skills at high-end restaurants and businesses around the globe. Intern Andrea Ehrbar, 24, from Davos completed the five-month programme in 2023 and shares her Uccelin diary with us.

Photos: Andrea Ehrbar and Tom Egli

TO DREAM AND THEN TO FLY





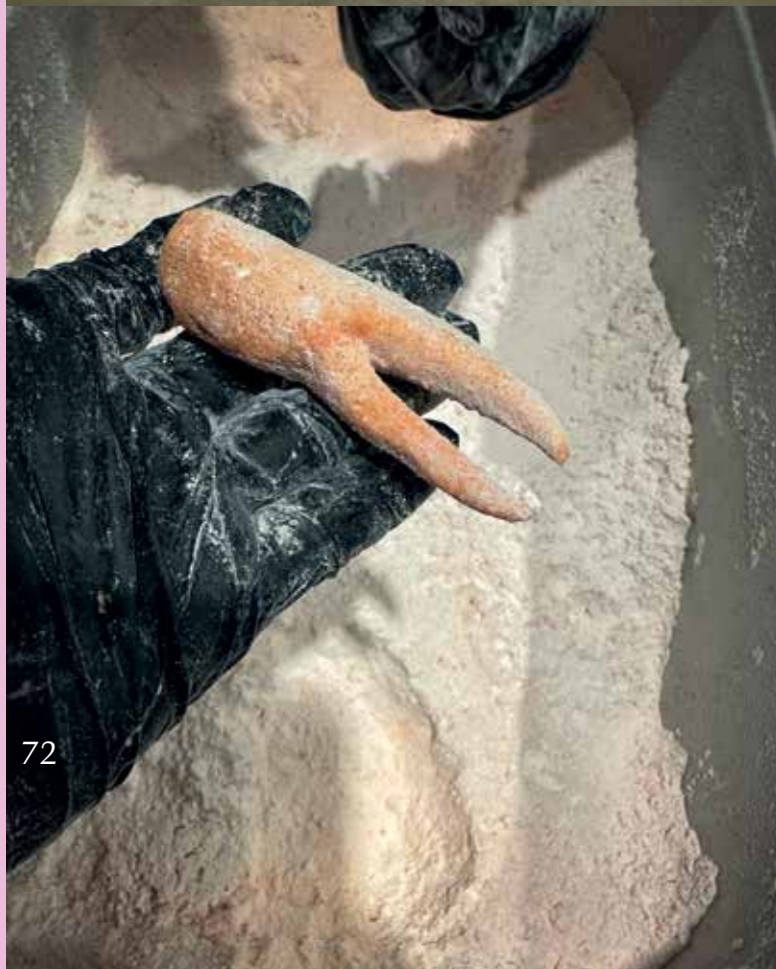
ALCHEMIST, COPENHAGEN

HEAD CHEF: RASMUS MUNK, 2 MICHELIN STARS ☼☼

The Alchemist is located in an old shipyard building, in the abandoned docklands of Copenhagen. It takes up no less than four floors. The scale is impressive, as is the food it produces.

In the first week, I work on producing individual elements. I've already managed a perfect omelette, and the blueberry "lungs" I created on a 3D printer (picture below) also turned out well. After two weeks, I am assigned to all kinds of tasks. There's a lot of tinkering and experimenting going on. Besides creating the perfect dish, each course is presented with a message on sustainability, orchestrated in various media formats. Everything is digitalized, timed exactly, and tailored individually to the guest's evening experience.

As a Uccelin intern, besides production, recipes and presentation, I also want to learn how a team is managed in a large establishment. The employees are treated with respect and involved in decision-making. Everyone helps each other. Head chef Rasmus Munk is always around and he takes time to teach me his philosophy and explain his rationale and thoughts. I write down a lot of inspiring ideas, tips and tricks that will be a big help in the future. Among the many other unique features here, it is also worth mentioning that various non-alcoholic beverages are served as a matter of course.





MAGDALENA, SCHWYZ

HEAD CHEF: DOMINIK HARTMANN, 2 MICHELIN STARS 🍴🍴

From the ocean and Nordic cuisine to the heart of Switzerland and regional, vegetarian cooking. What a change of scene!

Most of the products used at the Magdalena are sourced locally from the region around Rickenbach. As an Uccelin intern, I am allowed to work in all areas of the restaurant from the outset: I prepare vegetable brunoise, herbal oils, crisps, tartelettes, sauces, purees, ice cream and grilled vegetables. It's a good way to learn about the restaurant's specialities.

We are a small team (above right), so it is even more important that we work together smoothly, whether it's communicating with one another or using the equipment.

In the second week, we head to Cervo in Zermatt, where we are representing the Magdalena as guest chefs. It's a great event, and a bit of a "home game" for me:

I recognise lots of familiar faces among the guests, including the team from The Omnia, a former employer of mine. The Magdalena gives me a great insight into the world of vegetarian cuisine, from developing ideas to sourcing ingredients and turning them into finished dishes.

With a little initiative, I can make decisions, plate up and help out where needed in this small but impressive establishment.





AZURMENDI, BILBAO

HEAD CHEF: ENEKO ATXA, 3 MICHELIN STARS 🌿🌿🌿

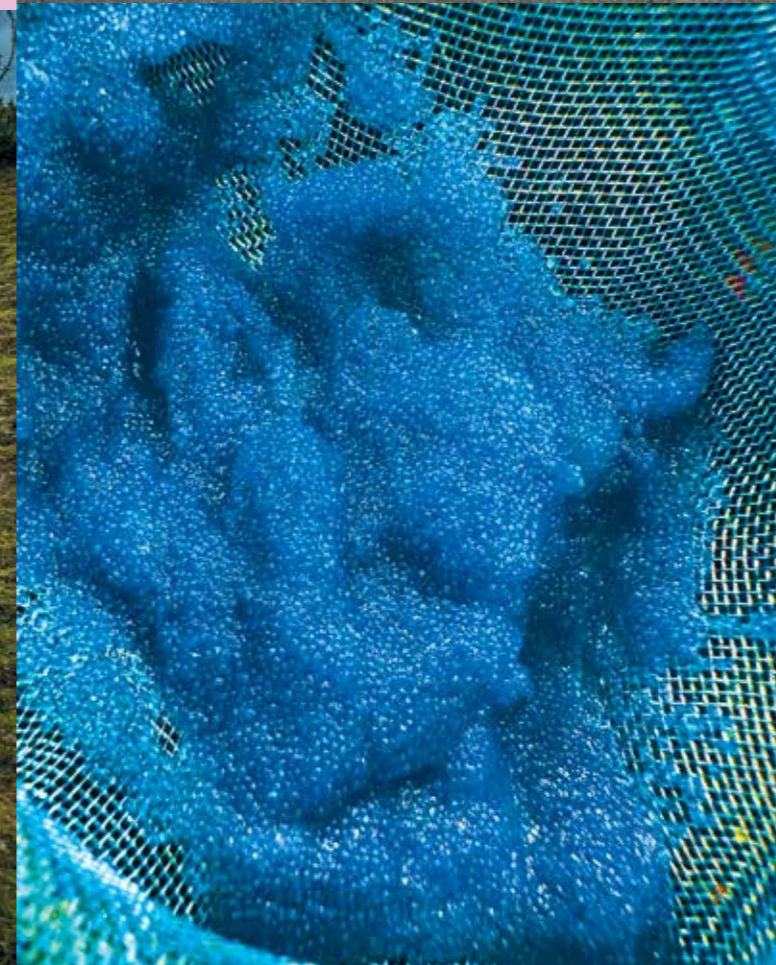
Before being introduced to the kitchen, I get to learn more about this unusual, sustainable restaurant: a bioclimatic building, circular systems for efficient water and energy use, composting, geothermal energy and solar panels, a greenhouse, a garden and a germplasm database listing over 400 local vegetable varieties. Head chef Eneko Atxa takes time to explain his philosophy to me candidly and transparently.

I start out at the Poissonnier station — a key item on the multi-course menu at the Azurmendi. I soon discover that most of the kitchen staff speak only Basque! But somehow, we understand each other, and I learn a lot in this respect, too. I prepare sea urchins, tuna and oysters and soon am given the chance to help serve the first course. The training for chefs here is not comparable with ours. Employees are often trained in highly specific tasks that no one in Switzerland can do with such perfection. But once they enter less familiar territory, there can be some problems. Still, the work is ideal for me, because I get to learn from real experts.

At the Azurmendi, I get an insight into sustainable cuisine at its best: something between a greenhouse and research lab, combined with creativity, authentic aromas and varying textures.



UCCELIN FOUNDATION





After five months and eight stations at gourmet restaurants and excellent producers around the globe, Andrea Ehrbar is back where her adventure began: in the kitchen at Schloss Schauenstein restaurant. To round off the programme, all scholarship recipients are required to present a product they developed during their Uccelin internship.

For Andrea Ehrbar, the decision was easy. She has been interested in the process of fermentation for some time. Wherever she went — in the kitchen at the Alchemist, in the bars in Bilbao's old town, at her various internships — she came across water kefir and kombucha. She soon knew what her Uccelin product would be: a Scoby Starter (top right), a starter kit anyone can use to make kombucha. "What is commonly called tea fungus, which consists of alpine herbs in my version, is a symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast (SCOBY). It can be made with tea, coffee, passionfruit juice, or other ingredients, depending on your preferences. After a few days, it produces a healthy, unique drink", the Uccelin chef says enthusiastically.

Her product presentation, including a production schedule, went well: Michelin-starred chef Andreas Caminada, Marcel Skibba, partner and head chef at Schloss Schauenstein, and Anthea Zinsli-Jufer, managing director of the Uccelin Foundation, are convinced that Andrea Ehrbar's Scoby Starter will generate a lot of interest. "It's always great to see our Uccelin interns' eyes light up", says Andreas Caminada. "We want them to surpass their own goals and discover something new and inspiring." With the scholarship completed, Andrea Ehrbar is about to take her next big step. After a few days at home, she is already packing her bags: Another internship awaits her at the three-star Frantzén restaurant in Stockholm. *Anina Rether*

UCCELIN FOUNDATION

Uccelin means "little bird" in Rhaeto-Romanic. It's a well-chosen name, after all the foundation aims to give wings to young culinary talents. Established by Andreas and Sarah Caminada, it offers gifted young chefs and service staff the opportunity to gain work experience at restaurants and with producers all over the world. The programme lasts five months.

Participants can put together their own internship from a choice of more than 70 restaurants and 30 producers worldwide. Since the foundation was established in 2016, 60 young people have completed the programme. One of the foundation's board members is executive chef Tanja Grandits: "Working with young talent inspires me time and again. It constantly reminds me how creative and wonderful the work of a chef truly is." The foundation is funded by private donations and charity events.

The Living Circle Group and the Caminada Group have partnered since 2022. Guests from *The Living Circle* can support the Uccelin Foundation by making a voluntary donation of two Swiss francs per menu at our gourmet restaurants in Zurich. uccelin.com

RELAXED LUXURY BY TALBOT RUNHOF

Photos: Ali Zigeli



Made with gently draped fabrics and flattering cuts, evening dresses by Talbot Runhof are a wardrobe essential for the modern woman.







Timeless elegance, maximum comfort: Oversized, white shirt-dress with broderie anglaise and half-length bell sleeves by Talbot Runhof.

Whether it's a glamorous evening gown or sensational cocktail dress, Johnny Talbot and Adrian Runhof design fashion that can best be described as relaxed luxury. Their designs skilfully combine style, elegance and wearability. One of the duo's five flagship boutiques in Germany and Switzerland is set in a prestigious location in Zurich at Schipfe 4. With a penchant for exceptional fabrics, perfect tailoring and extravagant details, the Munich-based brand has gained a loyal fan base worldwide.

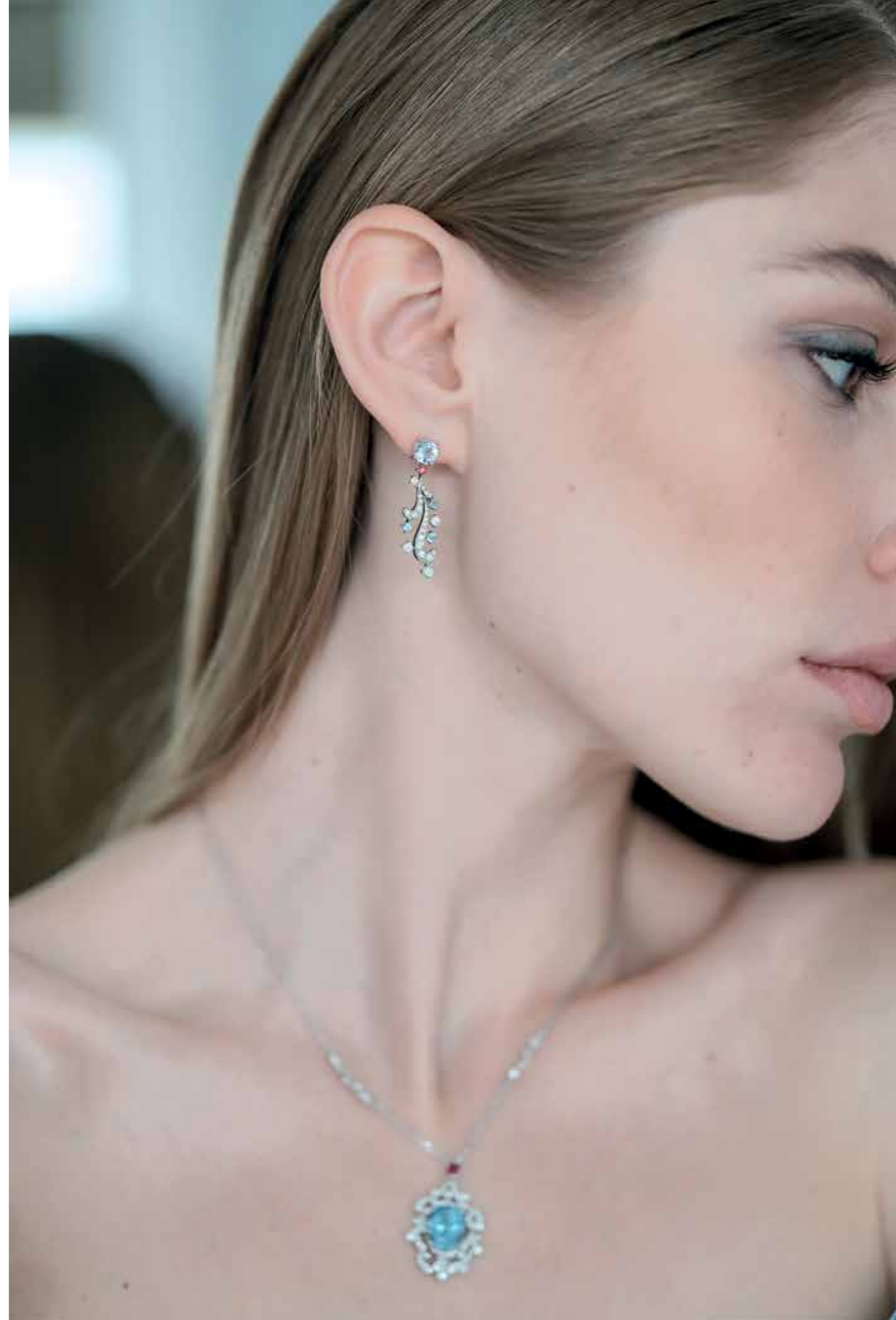
For this photo shoot, the two designers chose the relaxed atmosphere of our *Alex Lake Zürich* resort. The models were decked out with jewellery by Gübelin, and the lake did its best to out-sparkle the gems.

“Our signature style is soft, flowing cuts, and we choose the materials accordingly”, Adrian Runhof explains.

Seams are another hallmark of the Munich label. “Either they are where nobody expects them to be, or they aren't there at all”, the designer says with a grin. But most important for Talbot Runhof is the choice of fabric, from classical weaving techniques to the latest high-tech fibres. Johnny Talbot and Adrian Runhof's fondness for exceptional textiles is also reflected in the elegant style of the *Alex Lake Zürich*, which is furnished with natural materials in harmonious colour combinations.

The two designers have their own explanation for their distinctive style: “It's the woman, not the dress.” Johnny Talbot, responsible for designing the cuts, puts it concisely: “Our clothes stand for stylish, elegant wearability that will spark joy for many seasons to come.”

alexlakezurich.com
talbotrunhof.com



SHE HELPS YOUNG TALENTS BECOME WORLD CLASS

Konstanze Eickhorst lives and breathes music. She plays chamber music with the Linos Ensemble, is a soloist, a professor of piano at the University of Music in Lübeck and sits on the jury of several competitions. Now she is also a juror for the 2024 Concours Géza Anda. We spoke with her about the connections between competition, training, and personal goals.

Photo: Marco Borggreve

You won first prize at the Concours Géza Anda when you were 27 years old. Now you are back in Zurich, but this time in the jury. How does it feel? I am very excited to be in Zurich! Of course, it brings back memories. But I have never completely lost contact with the Concours over the years, and I am still in touch with several prize-winners. Some of them previously won the European Piano Competition in Bremen, where I am chairperson and a member of the executive artistic board. I am delighted that Bremen acted as a springboard for their success at the Géza Anda. The piano world is big, but our paths still frequently cross. It's great to have come full circle and to be "on the other side" of the competition this time in Zurich.

How does the jury work? Do the members sometimes argue for points, or is it a secret ballot? In my experience, it's best when the members of the jury award their points without discussing the participants' performance beforehand. If the result is close, heated debates do occur. The jurors all have different cultural backgrounds, represent various schools of piano playing, have their own opinions on style, interpretation and so on. The difference between generations can also play a role. That's why it is wise to appoint as diverse a jury as possible. Of course, it can happen that members of the jury are not happy with a decision. But it's a democratic process, and we cannot function as a jury if we are not prepared to compromise.

"It is wise to appoint as diverse a jury as possible." Konstanze Eickhorst

The competition puts young pianists through their paces. They must master a repertoire lasting more than five hours. Besides perfection, what does a candidate have to demonstrate to get your vote? A strong personality, depth of feeling, an authentic interpretation, an intensive analysis of the score, fantasy and spontaneity. They need to pique my interest, make me want to hear more.

The Géza Anda Foundation supports the prize-winners for three years and arranges performances for them. That is something other contests don't offer. Yes, it is a quality feature that sets this competition apart. Before winning in Zurich, I had already played numerous concerts, including chamber music performances with the Linos Ensemble. But it was thanks to the collaboration between the foundation and the agency that I was able to make my debut at the Salzburg Festival and the KKL concert hall in Lucerne. These led to further engagements at large festivals and gave me the chance to perform with fantastic orchestras and conductors. It was challenging, but also a tremendous opportunity that opened the door to yet more concerts.



The pressure of competition is high, as are the hopes of young musicians. How do you help them prepare? As a professor, I regularly support students who are preparing for competitions. But the journey itself is the reward, as I always tell them. Practising, studying the pieces intensively and mastering an extensive repertoire is the real achievement. That's why I encourage them to view and experience recitals as concerts, not as competing "against" someone, but as performances for the music and for the audience. Of course, success at competition also depends on luck and how you play on that day. But if you remain true to yourself, the jury's decision shouldn't be your main focus. If you don't make it to the next round or win a prize, then you might do another time.

Can you remember when you first heard the music of pianist Geza Anda? I don't have a clear memory of the "first time", but he was definitely a presence in my childhood, especially as a performer of Mozart. Anda was multitalented: He was a soloist, conductor, chamber musician, composer. He could do everything. I still find that fascinating today.

He was also called the “troubadour of the piano”. How would you describe his style?
That’s not so easy. I also try to see song as the basis for all music and sound. Especially for pianists, the human voice and breath are great ideals we aspire to. Géza Anda mastered that completely. He also immersed himself deeply in the score. Perhaps that is why his musical interpretation seems somewhat sober today. But to my mind, his style is absolutely authentic, on the highest level.

As a teacher, you are passionate about passing down your experience to the next generation. Why does that appeal to you? Music means everything to me. Without it, nothing matters. Passing on to young people what I believe about music is very important to me. Students want to live with and from their music. I would like to set an example and show them various ways to make their dreams a reality. I also see it as my duty to pass on the cultural legacy and keep it alive, which of course includes supporting new music, but also sharing the works of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven with future generations.

And what advice do you give young artists as they embark on an international career?
They need real enthusiasm and passion. Otherwise, they won’t have enough stamina to launch their career, bear up and persevere, and be content with a life spent on the stage and living out of a suitcase. But all of that is impossible if you don’t have the talent. Many dream of an international career, wear themselves out practising, and eventually become frustrated and even lose their passion for music. It is important to have idols and ideals, but it is equally essential to develop your own profile as an artist and remain true to yourself. Only very few music students will be able to earn a living from performing. But there is more than one way to build a rewarding career. Becoming a piano teacher, showing children and young people how to play the piano and appreciate music from an early age and educating our future audience is a colossal and incredibly important task. But of course, there are other exciting paths. Former students of mine are successful conductors, musicologists, professors of composition or opera directors.

Which moment during the ten days of the Concours are you looking forward to most? There are several: The first note. The first meeting with the jury and swapping notes with colleagues. The atmosphere at the competition. It will be an intensive few days, challenging on various levels, but also most certainly uplifting.

Interview: Anina Rether



A young Konstanze Eickhorst wins the first Géza Anda prize in 1988.

Born in 1961, Konstanze Eickhorst won the Concours Reine Elisabeth in 1987 and the Toronto Bach Competition (in memory of Glenn Gould) in 1985. She performs as a soloist and chamber musician and teaches as a professor at the University of Music in Lübeck. konstanze-eickhorst.de

GÉZA ANDA FOUNDATION

Géza Anda, father of the present-day owner of *The Living Circle*, was born in Budapest in 1921. He settled in Switzerland in 1943 and achieved world fame with his expressive talent for German classical and romantic music. Two years after his unexpected death in 1976, his widow, Hortense Anda-Bührle, established the Géza Anda Foundation. The first Concours Géza Anda was held in 1979. The international piano contest lasts ten days and takes place every three years in Zurich. The three finalists receive prize money as well as the opportunity to perform as soloists at countless orchestral concerts and recitals over a period of three years. geza-anda.ch

ATTEND THE GÉZA ANDA PIANO COMPETITION

Entrance to the first two rounds at the Musikschule Konservatorium Zurich (MKZ) is free: geza-anda.ch
Tickets to the semifinal on 5 and 6 June 2024 in Winterthur: musikkollegium.ch
Tickets to the final at the Tonhalle Zurich: tonhalle-orchester.ch



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dermis-hautklinik.ch



They handle the affairs of Privatbank IHAG in Zurich: Christoph Mauchle as President of the Board of Directors, and Martin Keller as Chief Executive Officer.

Owned by the Anda and Franz-Bührle families, Privatbank IHAG is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2024. The two men at its helm describe the compass guiding them, with brief statements on concepts that inspire them.

GREAT BUSINESS MINDS

Photos: Tom Egli

CHRISTOPH MAUCHLE
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRIVATBANK IHAG

ZURICH AND ITS LAKE _____ The city on the river Limmat is rightly considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world, with an exceptional quality of life.

VALUES _____ As a private bank and service provider, our focus is always on our clients and their needs. In fact, it is our original *raison d'être*: Only with high-quality service, great commitment and the expertise of our employees can we guarantee our business success.

SWISS FRANC _____ Our strong currency. Thanks to pursuing a prudent and long-term economic policy, Switzerland will continue to be a safe haven in the future.

LUXURY _____ For me, luxury is not a question of material values, but above all having the freedom and the time to do things that interest me.

GOURMET CUISINE _____ I treat myself now and then, especially at the restaurants of *The Living Circle*. I am constantly astounded by the innovative compositions and impressed by the way they are presented.

FINE ART _____ I used to have a poster of Claude Monet's "Water lily pond" in my apartment in New York that I bought at the Metropolitan Museum more than 35 years ago. Today, I can enjoy the original paintings that hang on the walls in our bank.

CLASSICAL MUSIC _____ I am a bigger fan of modern music, but occasionally I like to listen to classical composers. The genius of their compositions and the harmony of their work impresses me time and again.

THRIFT _____ For me thriftiness goes hand in hand with sustainability. In other words: less is more.

INNOVATION _____ Innovation stems from the ongoing drive to improve and question what exists, to collaborate with clients, to explore, not in isolation, but in relation to the world outside and its needs.

RETIREMENT PLAN _____ More important the longer you live. The earlier you start, the easier it will be to maintain your desired standard of living in old age.

CYBERSECURITY _____ An issue that has become exponentially more important in recent years. As a bank, we take this challenge very seriously and are constantly addressing it to fully protect our company and above all our clients.

DIGITALIZATION _____ Probably the greatest innovation of the last 20 years. It has fundamentally changed our way of life. We have only really become aware of this through the rapid development of artificial intelligence. As a bank, we have to keep pace with it so we can respond promptly and grasp any opportunities that come our way.

MARTIN KELLER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PRIVATBANK IHAG

HOME _____ Is where I unpack my suitcase. I have travelled a lot and lived abroad for seven years. Switzerland, with its reliable values and unique standard of living, is and always will be my home.

VALUES _____ Are more important now than ever. Reliability, trust, thinking and acting with the bigger picture in mind are crucial values for successful people and companies.

SWISS FRANC _____ As a "safe harbour", the Swiss franc will almost inevitably continue to retain its value and grow stronger. We must nurture the principles and systems underlying our strong currency. It is not a coincidence that we are (almost) the only country with a debt brake enshrined in the constitution.

SWISSNESS _____ Still a hallmark of quality with a positive connotation, but one that is in danger of losing its appeal.

LUXURY _____ Is overrated and plays an artificial role, especially in social media. For me, luxury is the freedom to act and have time for the things in life that give me satisfaction.

GOURMET CUISINE _____ Vegan is smarter, meat tastes better. A bit of both is good.

SUSTAINABILITY _____ We must embrace this in all aspects of business and life, not just as a label without any substance behind it.

PREMIUM HOTELS _____ The highest stage of evolution in the restaurant industry.

TRADITION _____ Serves as the basis for a proven set of values that should guide us to an innovative future.

THRIFT _____ Is a fine virtue, but generosity towards others is better.

INNOVATION & AGILITY _____ These are values that set Privatbank IHAG apart. They are essential for generating sustainable value.

CYBERSECURITY _____ A necessary but unfortunate consequence of technological evolution, which will become infinitely more important due to the rapid development of artificial intelligence.

PRIVATBANK IHAG: IN BUSINESS FOR 75 YEARS

The bank was established by Emil Georg Bührle in 1949 as Industrie- und Handelsbank AG. Over time, it shifted its focus to wealth management and credit transactions for clients. This transformation was reflected in the change of name to IHAG Handelsbank Zürich in 1994, and IHAG Privatbank in 2000. Today, the bank is an agile financial boutique, based on the three pillars of asset management, financing and stock exchange trading. It employs around 70 members of staff. pbihag.ch

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OUR
MAGIC
PEOPLE

MONIKA PFAMMATTER
BANQUET SUPERVISOR

How long she has worked at the *Widder Hotel*: for almost 25 years Her first job at the *Widder Hotel*: banquet assistant
 What she likes best about the *Widder Hotel*: the friendly atmosphere and the unique architecture
 The best feedback from guests: that she is telepathic because she fulfils guests' wishes before they ask. And that everything runs smoothly when she's around What others say about her: she's like a machine, or "she's about to flip her lid"
 How she deals with stress at work: with humour What motivates her: the team, the friendly atmosphere, the great guests
 Her hobbies: hiking, reading, dancing, meditating, spending time with her partner and her family What makes her particularly proud: bringing up her two sons alone despite having a strenuous job What she hopes for: that more people are passionate about their work When she realised she loved her job: one winter season at a 3-star hotel in Flims; the atmosphere in a restaurant is simply the best!

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Christian Kramer and Nadia Auer are a dream team, but total opposites: He is laid-back, she is in constant motion. What connects them is a professional passion for all things sweet and tangy. The two award-winning maestros of gourmet desserts work in the Rôtisserie restaurant at *Storchen Zürich*. We met them at the places in the city on the river Limmat where they draw their inspiration.

SWEET DREAMS



It is a bright, late autumn day in Wollishofen on Lake Zurich. A stiff wind is blowing, as a last ray of sunshine breaks through the clouds, doing its best to out-shine Nadia Auer, who is approaching at a fast pace. Easy to spot in her black-and-white uniform, she has just finished her lunchtime shift at the *Storchen Zürich*. She wants to show us Saffa Island, a lovely spot just a stone’s throw from Zurich’s Landiwiese park.

“Here I am. And here is where I feel most at home. In summer, this little island is like my living room. It’s just a ten minutes’ walk from where I live”, says Nadia Auer. This year, she spent almost all her free time in summer here with friends, whenever she wasn’t working at the patisserie in the *Storchen Zürich*. “I’m really a mountain girl. I love the autumn and winter in South Tyrol where I come from. But what we don’t have there is a lake. Which is one of the reasons why I came to Zurich.” The other is Christian Kramer, her colleague at the *Storchen Zürich* who is systematically mentoring her passion for gourmet desserts.

“Christian is my mentor and he encouraged me to apply for the Marmite Youngster talent contest. Thanks to his help, I have gradually developed my own style.” Nadia Auer.

Nadia graduated from the school of hotel management in Bruneck in South Tyrol. She developed her sweet tooth later on: In Bruneck, she enrolled to train as a pastry chef and has mastered all the classics, “Even though conventional Black Forest gâteau was never really my thing. I always tried to vary my cakes and present them in an unusual way.” Nadia gets her inspiration mainly from social media, where she follows a number of culinary artists from around the world. But her most important coach is Christian Kramer. She has been his assistant for almost one-and-a-half years now. “The two of us are a dream team. Christian is my mentor and he encouraged me to apply for the Marmite Youngster talent contest. Thanks to his help, I have gradually developed my own style.”

Nadia’s award-winning dessert is a praline with smoky whiskey soaked in birch sap and tonic sauce. Inspired by her lakeside barbecue sessions, she briefly smokes the the ganache. She serves the dessert with sea buckthorn berries pickled in white



wine vinegar. Her idea for the butterfly wafer also came from Saffa Island, specifically from the brimstone butterflies that thrive there.

A change of scene. Christian Kramer — also decked out in black and white — meets us in front of his favourite spot: Zurich Opera House. We ask him what his favourite opera is. “I haven’t quite figured out opera as a genre yet. But it still might happen ... I love the opera house as a historic building. It feels almost like a cathedral to me. And above all, it reminds me of the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, close to Villa Kennedy where I worked for three years.” He loves the plaza in front of the opera house and Brasserie Schiller, an ideal spot to sit and watch the world go by.

“You can omit sugar entirely from many desserts, but that doesn’t work so well with ice-cream.” Christian Kramer

Christian has been in Switzerland for a long time. He started out at the Walliserhof in Saas-Fee, before moving down from the mountains. “Cities are more my thing. My wife and I were thrilled when we visited Zurich for the first time. We had a memorable, carefree afternoon in the urban gardening café Frau Gerolds Garten”, says Christian, who grew up in Bielefeld, Germany. Today he lives between the city and the countryside in Niederglatt on the outskirts of Zurich, where he can get out into nature more easily with his little daughter.

Christian Kramer initially studied business administration, but never really enjoyed working with numbers and tables, so he decided to pursue his love of good food. He wavered between becoming a chef or a pastry chef, finally choosing an apprenticeship in the small but superb Gutzeitcafé in Bielefeld. He hasn’t qualified as a master chef yet, but can envisage doing so in the future. In the meantime, he has earned a number of prizes, such as second place in the Pastry Chef of the Year competition. “I really enjoy working in the patisserie, even if it is much more stressful than sitting behind a desk!”

He is passionate about textures and works with various consistencies and layers in his creations and recipes. “Some are firmer, others have a liquid core. Desserts thrive on contrasts and a careful dramaturgy of flavours.” He is constantly on the lookout for unusual combinations and likes to add a bit of spice. “I often use chilli in my

repertoire. It emphasises the flavours perfectly, as does the pleasant tartness of a yuzu lemon. I am also a fan of fermenting and preserving.” He often marinates fruits in vinegar or pickles them. “That takes some of the sweetness out of the desserts.” Now and again, he experiments with exotic ingredients like green Thai curry paste or fish sauce, always in small doses, and primarily to enhance the flavour.

Talking of influences, “The *Cantina alla Maggia* — *The Living Circle*’s winery and agricultural estate — is a wonderful treasure trove for our gourmet desserts. I like to pickle Merlot grapes, for example, or turn them into red wine ice-cream. We use polenta to make crisps for decoration, and we dry hops and turn them into powder.” In Christian’s opinion, what makes a dessert good is not just its sweetness, but also a fresh taste and exquisite ingredients. They are the principal performers on the masterful plates of our two artists. Soon, the curtain will rise for the evening guests. Christian and Nadia say goodbye to prepare for their next performance. *Reto Wilhelm*

NADIA AUER’S SIGNATURE DISH
4TH PLACE AT
MARMITE YOUNGSTERS 2023
Jack Daniels quark mousse praline
with a sea buckthorn core,
served with hazelnut ice-cream,
tapioca and sea buckthorn chips —
on a beech sap and tonic sauce —
decorated with yellow wafers
(left in the photo).

CHRISTIAN KRAMER’S SIGNATURE DISH
2ND PLACE AT
PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR 2023
Merello cherry and kaffir lime
icecream (in front) with cherry
blossom and Vesper Martini sauce,
gin, kumquat froth and yoghurt
crisp, ginger cream, pepper ash,
pistachio and praline paste — topped
with pistachio crumble and gilded
(on the right).



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In addition to the CULINARIUM ALPINUM restaurant, the historic building also houses a hotel with 14 stylishly renovated rooms, several conference rooms of various sizes for up to 90 people as well as a course kitchen for communal, convivial cooking.

An «edible landscape» with 250 varieties of fruit and countless herbs has been planted in the former monastery garden. The garden is open to the public and invites you to stay and taste.

CULINARIUM ALPINUM
Mürgstrasse 18 | CH-6370 Stans/NW
T +41 41 619 17 17 | culinarium-alpinum.ch



OUR
MAGIC
PEOPLE

MUSTAF AJRIZI
VALET

How long he has worked at the *Storchen Zürich*: 29 years, or more precisely since 21 April 1995. He came to Switzerland during the Balkan War in 1994 and started as a luggage porter, before becoming a valet. What he likes best about the *Storchen*? the atmosphere in the team and the location at the heart of Zurich, and meeting regular guests. How he deals with stress at work: one for all and all for one. Everyone helps in the team, you are rarely alone. Where he likes to spend time most in the city: walking along the lakeshore. How he switches off after work: eating dinner with his wife and two sons. His trip of a lifetime: to California. Why he is always in a good mood: he's happy by nature. His highlight for 2024: his son's wedding. His superhero: his father who he admires for his honesty, love and kindness.

TILLA THEUS' SIGNATURE



Tilla Theus & Partner in Zurich are specialised in overseeing and executing new building projects in complex urban contexts, in renovating existing structures and restoring historic buildings, as well as in interior architecture and design.

Major projects include renovating and building two of *The Living Circle's* iconic hotels, the *Widder Hotel* and *Castello del Sole*, and the Caminada Group's *Mammertsberg*. The architecture firm has set these havens of hospitality on course for a successful future with a mixture of respect for tradition and courage to embrace innovative solutions.



When it opened in Zurich's city centre in 1995, the legendary *Widder Hotel* set a new trend in five-star hospitality with a blend of originality and authenticity. From 2015 to 2019, it was given a fresh design, a new colour scheme and an added eatery, the *Boucherie August*. In addition, the *Widder Bar* and *Widder Restaurant* were finally united as a single entity, thanks to new fire safety laws that permitted direct access between the two establishments.



The *Castello del Sole* in Ascona was expanded in 1995 with an imposing entrance and grand front courtyard. The multi-functional rooms facing the expansive park and the popular *Pavillon Lugano* rang in a new era for this unique member of *The Living Circle*.



Tilla Theus breathed new life into the *Mammertsberg* in Freidorf in 2012. A connecting structure for the kitchen with a bamboo façade and a new annexe with stone cladding completed the fully renovated main building. The historic guesthouse, with its magnificent view of Lake Constance, soon became a popular meeting place again.



OUR
MAGIC
PEOPLE

CHIARA STUTZ
FRONT OFFICE SUPERVISOR

How long she has worked at the *Alex Lake Zürich*: since October 2022 The best feedback from guests: “your personality is the argument in favour of this hotel” What others say about her: she should be a feel-good manager Her personal highlight in 2023: sitting with the whole family at one table What motivates her at work: that she can live from what she loves doing Her personal tip in the region: swimming in Lake Zurich in the evening and enjoying the sunset from the dock Her favourite room in the *Alex Lake Zürich*: the penthouse with its wonderful view over Lake Zurich from the balcony Her greatest weakness: always wanting to help others Her role models: the list is too long to write down Her greatest wish: the chance to step into someone else’s shoes for a while What she is grateful for: life

LIFE & STYLE

See our events page
for highlights
to brighten up 2024.
Enjoy browsing!



[thelivingcircle.ch/de/
angebote-events](https://thelivingcircle.ch/de/angebote-events)



A SPAIN A CLASS OF ITS OWN

Welcome to a sumptuous world of warm water, fine fragrances and soothing steam. Treat yourself to some time-out with a blend of rest and exercise, activity and relaxation. The SPA & Beauty salon at the *Castello del Sole* offers an incomparable wellness experience. Let go, decompress and regain strength. We're here for you, with a first-rate discrete and professional service.

SPA manager Jutta Hosser and her team know all about pampering the body and soul. Whether you choose personal training to strengthen the back, yoga and meditation for inner balance, or a facial massage to activate even the smallest muscles of the face, you can be sure that you are in experienced hands at the SPA of the *Castello del Sole*. The 15 members of staff have one main objective: to help you achieve a deep sense of well-being with a lasting effect.

The Onsernone SPA suite offers exclusive privacy and comes with a sauna, steam bath, whirlpool and ice fountain. The SPA's signature service is its *VinoAqua* treatment: a cell-renewing peeling extract made of grape seeds, skins and leaves, sourced entirely from the hotel's own *Cantina alla Maggia* winery.

castellodelsole.com



TRAINING WITH PROFESSIONAL BOXER DAN MORLEY

After his great success last year, Dan Morley will be returning to the *Castello del Sole* from 13 July to 1 August 2024. Enjoy a full-body workout that combines boxing techniques with weight-bearing, fitness and cardio exercises. It is available as an individual training session or in a small group.

Let's go live to Dan Morley in the ring ...!



Photos: *The Living Circle* © archive; Dan Morley © Bo Bury, Dan Morley © zVg



GOOD HEALTH IS THE FUTURE

At the *Castello del Sole's* SPA and wellness area, our guests' well-being takes centre stage. Health plays a major role in this. **RICHARD GIROLAMI** (top), specialist for sport physiology and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), takes you on a journey of physical, emotional and energetic transformation. **NICOLE PRASSANTON** combines the best classical massage techniques in her exclusive signature treatments.

castellodelsole.com



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VILLAS & THEIR GARDENS

ISOLE DI BRISSAGO — VILLA EMDEN & BOTANICAL GARDEN (1)

The botanical garden offers a fascinating insight into the world of subtropical plants. Enormous eucalyptus trees, a sea of rhododendrons, Japanese bananas and exotic plants, such as the prickly pear cactus, draw hobby gardeners from all over the world to the Brissago islands. Kids can go on a treasure hunt and help Baroness Antoinette find her favourite flowers.

villaemden.com

LUGANO — PARK AT VILLA CIANI (2)

The shade of ancient trees, tidy flower beds, English lawns and quiet hideaways on the lake entice locals and tourists alike to Parco Ciani. Visitors can picnic, read, nap and chat on the lawns. The park stretches from the city centre to the mouth of the Casserate River. A wonderfully designed playground can be found under the oak, lime, plane and maple trees that are all typical of Ticino's forests.

luganoregion.com

GAMBAROGNO — BOTANICAL GARDEN (3)

Some 1,000 varieties of camellia grow on the hill between Piazzogna and Vairano. They are joined by magnolias, azaleas, rhododendrons, dogwoods and citruses — a veritable sea of flowers above the lake. Left to go beautifully wild, two ravines form a natural boundary for this botanical garden.

It is an ideal spot to sit by the water, lean back and relax.

parcobotanicogambarogno.ch

MORCOTE — SCHERRER PARK (4)

Follow the romantic trails past majestic palm trees, fragrant flower beds and enchanted ponds. At the heart of this vast park is a historic villa whose architecture evokes a Mediterranean feel. The terraces offer breathtaking views of Lake Lugano and the surrounding mountains. Numerous Siamese, Arabic and Indian follies dotted throughout the park add a touch of the unexpected.

visitmorcote.ch

CASTAGNOLA — PARK AT VILLA HELENEUM (5)

Stairways, pillars, tuff rock grottos, bannisters and wrought iron gates: Parco del Heleneum, with its characteristic subtropical and tropical plants and flowers, is truly a unique ensemble. Since 2023, the impressive Art Deco villa has been home to the Bally Foundation, which is dedicated to showing a wide range of contemporary art and hosts two temporary exhibitions every year.

ballyfoundation.ch

MONTE VERITÀ — PARK WITH GREEN TEA (6)

High above Lake Maggiore on the "Mountain of Truth", artists and bohemians pursued a natural lifestyle in the years leading up to the First World War. An exhibition and the Albergo Monte Verità Bauhaus hotel keep the community's memory alive today.

The extensive park was laid out in early 1900, and includes a tea plantation, Zen garden, tea house and tea path designed along Japanese principles.

monteverita.org



Photos: Websites of the different locations, Switzerland Tourism, ticino.ch

TWO NAMES



ONE HEART

A new agricultural brand is born: *Cantina alla Maggia*. The name acknowledges the commitment that has gone into creating a leading winery (cantina in Italian) in Ascona. The former brand name, *Terreni alla Maggia*, will live on in the agricultural products that are loved and appreciated by our loyal customers in Ticino and all of Switzerland.

Since the agricultural estate was established in 1930, it has adapted continuously to changing customer needs and agricultural developments. Following in this tradition, its focus has shifted in recent years to winegrowing. In addition to our agricultural specialities, which are representative of the unique Maggia river delta region, wine production has become increasingly important over time. This spring, for example, we planted 5,500 new vines and acquired a new bottling plant. In addition, our first wines bearing the signature of Ettore Biraghi, our new oenologist and an expert in his field, are now on the market.

The *Cantina alla Maggia* brand reflects this evolution. It underlines our dedication to producing wines that rank among the world's best and repeatedly win prizes. As we continue to cherish and cultivate our roots, we will retain the winery's former name, *Terreni alla Maggia*, as an umbrella brand for products from the agricultural branch of our business, in other words our popular rice, polenta and pasta. In future, we will therefore be known by two names that unite our two passions under one roof: wine and agricultural specialities.
cantinaallamaggia.ch



AGRICULTURE FOR ALMOST 100 YEARS

The fruitful land in the Maggia delta has been farmed since 1930. And since 1942, when Emil Bührlé acquired the *Terreni alla Maggia*, it has been a central task for the family to utilise and protect this land sensibly and sustainably.

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Photos: *The Living Circle* © archive, Tom Egli, jazzascona.ch

AWARD-WINNING WINES 2023



THE NEW ORLEANS EXPERIENCE

What does the Ascona Jazz Festival have in common with the city of New Orleans? A passion for music in an unforgettable venue. Jazz lovers have been meeting in Ascona for over thirty years. It is a gathering of national and international artists, such as Dee Dee Bridgewater (photo), who set the tone at this festival with 180 concerts performed over ten days.
20 – 29 June 2024
jazzascona.ch



Gault & Millau has once again named the *Cantina alla Maggia* one of the 150 top vineyards in Switzerland. Not surprisingly, its products, which are available in all *The Living Circle* businesses, regularly win awards. Raise your glass with us and toast the latest honours!

FALSTAFF WEINGUIDE SCHWEIZ
Ascona Riserva 2019 (94 points)
Il Querceto 2019 (92 points)

GRAND PRIX DU VIN SUISSE
Gold Medal 2023 for Il Querceto 2019

shop.cantinaallamaggia.ch



Morello cherry, blackberry and candied plum, juicy acidity, velvety tannin with a mocha and chocolate finish. A gorgeous classic wine!



OUR
MAGIC
PEOPLE

PAMELA FERRARI
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND STOCKKEEPING MANAGER

What she particularly appreciates about her work: it is varied, she never gets bored Where she finds peace: in her childhood holiday home The first thing she does when the alarm goes off in the morning: wakes her small son and takes him to kindergarten Something that makes her happy every day: lifting the receiver, being in direct contact with guests and fulfilling their wishes Best lesson in life: working in restaurants and many years of volleyball training that taught her how strong you are as a team What clients at the *Cantina alla Maggia* appreciate most about her: that she is always there for them What talent makes her life easier: always seeing the positive side of things and acting accordingly Her highlight for 2024: marrying her longtime partner



**STAR CHEF'S LUNCH
AT CASTELLO DEL SOLE**

15 September 2024—Save the date for a lunch you simply mustn't miss: It's Mattias Rook's (centre) turn to host his "asconesi" colleagues Rolf Fliegau from the Giardino (left) and Marco Campanella from the Eden Roc, for what has become the traditional Star Chefs' Lunch. For more information, scan the QR code.

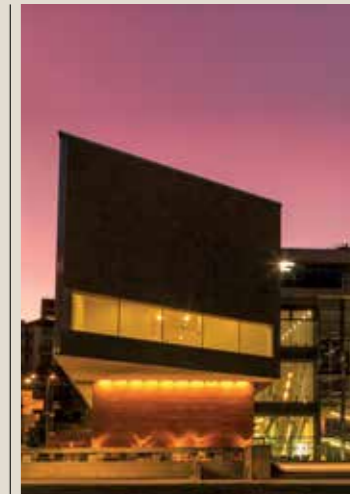


**MERCATO
DEL
GUSTO**

After the great success of the first event, the second annual *Mercato del Gusto* culinary festival will be held on Sunday, 4 June 2024, on the grounds of the *Cantina alla Maggia*.

Fifty stands will present a selection of Ticino specialities to make foodies' hearts beat faster. Chefs with a staggering number of Michelin Stars and Gault & Millau points will be there. It promises to be a celebration of fine food!
cantinaallamaggia.ch

Photos: *The Living Circle* © archive, iStock



MUSEUM MASI

Even in Ticino, it occasionally rains. But a visit to the MASI museum (Museo d'Arte della Svizzera Italiana) is not just for grey days; it is a must for all art enthusiasts. The "Sentiment and Observation Art in Ticino" exhibition traces the history of late Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, to Symbolism, Expressionism, New Objectivity and Magic Realism, right up to the emergence of Surrealism. The collection, augmented by a number of high-calibre loans, conveys a picture of how art in Ticino progressed and developed against a unique cultural backdrop from the years after the founding of the Swiss Confederation to the end of the Second World War. Until 31 December 2024
masilugano.ch

CONGRATULATIONS

Tino Staub, 40, was named Regional Executive Chef as of 1 January 2024.

In this newly created role, the long-time executive chef at the *Widder Hotel*, is responsible for culinary excellence and strategy in the *City & Lake Resort (Storchen Zürich, Widder Hotel, Alex Lake Zürich)*. He plans to optimise workflows and organise service more efficiently to take better care of our guests. He is also responsible for quality assurance and safety in our kitchens.

Tino Staub has worked in our restaurants for 15 years and has many years of experience as an executive chef. We are delighted to entrust him with this task.

Congratulations Tino!
thelivingcircle.ch

THE LIVING CIRCLE FOOD FESTIVAL



Restaurant Buech in Herrliberg offers secluded corners, a shady beech tree forest and a view of Lake Zurich that is utterly breathtaking. No wonder it was chosen as a venue for *The Living Circle Food Festival*. This year you can once more experience our top chefs, up close and personal, in a casual atmosphere.

Andreas Caminada (1)
Schloss Schauenstein ☼☼☼

Stefan Heilemann (2)
Widder Restaurant ☼☼

Stefan Jäckel (3)
La Rôtisserie ☼

Mattias Rook (4)
Locanda Barbarossa ☼

John Schiffmann (5) & Joeri Zaman (6)
Restaurant Buech

Luigi De Gregorio (7)
Alex Lake Zürich

You can also look forward to exquisite musical entertainment! Enjoy a wonderful summer day with excellent food, fine wines and a convivial atmosphere.
Sunday, 7 July 2024

Register online restaurantbuech.ch or events@thelivingcircle.ch
restaurantbuech.ch



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www.andreascaminada.com



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STAY IN YOUR OWN PRIVATE HIDEAWAY

4 Hands Dinner by Chef of the Year 2023 Silvio Germann.
In the morning, the Château team will treat you to a modern take on a hearty breakfast.
17 — 18 June 2024

Wine tasting menu by award-winning chef Tanja Grandits (photo). On your second evening, the Château kitchen will serve up a four-course dinner. End your stay the next morning with a hearty breakfast.
12 — 14 July 2024

A unique culinary experience with natural chef Rebecca Clopath. She offers guests a sensory dining experience and takes them on a journey through the cuisine of the canton of Grisons.
29 August — 2 September 2024

For Michelin-starred chef Pascal Steffen, fish and meat play second fiddle. Vegetables take the leading role in his tasting menu.
28 — 30 September 2024
chateauderaymontpierre.ch



CHÂTEAU DE RAYMONTPIERRE

Welcome to *Château de Raymontpierre*, the newest jewel in the crown of *The Living Circle*. This private hideaway is nestled among 650 hectares of woodland at an altitude of 1,000 metres in the idyllic canton of Jura in Switzerland. Nature and elegance meld to create a picture-perfect destination (from page 54).

Château de Raymontpierre is not a standard hotel. Exclusivity is our trademark. Whether for a creative retreat, an inspiring seminar, or an unforgettable celebration, our château opens its gates to you only. Immerse yourself in a new world of luxury, close to nature. Every moment spent at *Château de Raymontpierre* becomes an unforgettable experience.

Botanical Retreat

Over 80 percent of the native wild plants here are not only edible, they also possess extraordinary properties. Discover more about wild herbs, plants and berries on a field trip through the woodlands with herb expert Stefanie Gross Blau.
22 — 25 August 2024

Yoga Retreat

Breathe deeply, enjoy the view and the tranquillity. Take time for yourself and leave the daily grind behind. At our yoga retreat with Danae Borsani, you can gain new energy and enjoy delectable culinary creations.
11 — 15 September 2024

Forest and Game Retreat

Wild and natural, from nose to tail. At our game retreat you can learn more about hunters' skills and explore their traditions.
10 — 13 October 2024
chateauderaymontpierre.ch



Photos: *The Living Circle* © archive, tanjagrandits.ch, Tom Egli, video still © Jura Tourism



Aperitivo!

Your Favourites at The Living Circle

These and other Italian treasures:
bindella.ch/weinshop



Bindella
la vita è bella

NEGRONI, NEGRONI, NEGRONI.

The *Widder Bar* is legendary. Located on Rennweg in Zurich, it boasts an impressive selection of over 1,200 spirits.

Fun fact: This is roughly the same number as the wells that supply fresh drinking water to locals and guests. But only few of them order water at the *Widder Bar*. Much more popular in 2023 were the following, in descending order: negroni, whisky sour, espresso martini, bellini, dry martini. Cheers!
widder.ch



Right this way for our drinks menu ...



Photos: *The Living Circle* © archive; Tom Egli

A STELLAR CAREER: STEFANO PETTA SHOWS HOW IT'S DONE

What makes The Living Circle so special are the people behind it. Our businesses offer them opportunities to grow...

2003 — 2008: Apprenticeship as a chef and restaurant manager at Hotel Eden in Sisikon, Uri

2010: Trained as a sommelier in Nuolen, Schwyz

2011: Revised the entire wine menu for the grand reopening of the Schweizerhof hotel in Bern as head sommelier responsible for purchasing

2014: Sommelier at Clouds, Zurich, under master chef David Martínez

2015: Began working with Michelin-starred chef Stefan Heilemann as restaurant manager and sommelier at the Ecco restaurant in the Atlantis by Giardino

2020: Named restaurant manager and sommelier of the *Widder Hotel* under Stefan Heilemann

2024: Director of Wines, *The Living Circle*

Congratulations Stefano!
thelivingcircle.ch

SHORT CUTS



CONGRATULATIONS

When it comes to wine, he is the expert par excellence! So it comes as no surprise that Stefano Petta (36) was named Sommelier of the Year 2024 by Gault & Millau. The native Italian is sommelier and manager of the *Widder Restaurant* in Zurich. This award puts him among the champions of the Swiss restaurant and wine industry.

Congratulations Stefano Petta! What do you think about this award? I never imagined I would be named Sommelier of the Year one day. It's a real honour for me. But I couldn't have done it without my team!

What do you recommend to start off a gourmet evening at the *Widder Restaurant*? Stefan Heilemann's starters always go well with a nice glass of champagne. If guests don't want sparkling wine, I recommend a glass of our Kerner from *Cantina alla Maggia*. This fruity, fresh white wine is perfect to start with.

And which wine is best for winding down an evening of fine dining? A dessert wine is the best choice. It pairs perfectly with the desserts created by our pastry chef André Sidel. If a guest prefers sparkling wine to finish off the meal, I often recommend a glass of champagne.

Which wine region is underestimated? The Loire Valley is a very exciting region right now, for both white and red wines.

Do you advocate one style of glass, or do different wines need different glasses? We have four different glasses at the *Widder Restaurant*: a universal white wine glass, one for Bordeaux, one for Burgundy and a separate glass — but not a classical flute — for champagne. At home, I have various kinds of glass, but I still generally use the same one!

Which Swiss wine do you select to surprise guests? Thanks to my close contacts with winemakers, I have a lot of rarities on the menu, such as Marie-Thérèse Chappaz's Completer from Valais. Most people are only familiar with a Completer from Grisons. I also like to recommend a more mature vintage of our Ascona Riserva in a magnum bottle from 2017. Guests are always amazed by all the wines we produce at the *Cantina alla Maggia*, our own winery and agricultural estate.



MADE IN ZÜRICH INITIATIVE



As local as possible, as global as necessary.
As many as 161 highly diverse urban producers have joined the platform of the Made in Zurich initiative: from furniture and jewellery designers (1) to soap makers (2), food queens (3), high-tech firms and industrial businesses. Made in Zurich shows that producing locally can be good for business (again).
madeinzuerich.ch

FOR EXAMPLE: TURICUM GIN

The Turicum distillery has been producing gin, vodka and rum for over ten years. Today, Turicum gin is sold by select distributors and shops in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Gibraltar and Hongkong. If you want to create your own gin, the distillery generally holds a Gin Lab Workshop (4) every Friday and Saturday. Try your hand at alchemy and mix the perfect drink with instructions from an expert.
turicum-distillery.com

FOR EXAMPLE: CHOCOLATE DREAMS

The magic formula at Zurich-based chocolate maker Garçoa (5) is “bean to bar”, guaranteeing complete control and transparency along the entire chocolate-making process, from cocoa bean to chocolate bar. That includes harvesting and fermenting the cocoa beans, transporting them to Switzerland and roasting and grinding them the Zurich manufactory’s stone mill. Although Garçoa’s production site is small, interested chocolate lovers can nevertheless visit the manufactory on a “chocolate safari” and learn how bars of Garçoa chocolate are made.
garcoa.ch

MADE IN ZÜRICH CITY TOUR

Visit the artists and craftspeople who sell handmade, local products and original Zurich design in the young urban quarter around Zurich’s main railway station. From cult skincare products to designer coffee machines (6), producers in Zurich make products that stand out with an impressive level of innovation, design, functionality and quality. Discover a selection of original Zurich products on this exciting tour of one of the city’s newest quarters — and the passionate, inventive and creative people behind them.
zuerich.com

No. 1: BEATRICE ROSSI fine jewellery Zurich, beatricerossi.ch, No. 2: Soedler, soedler.ch, No. 3: UMAMI micogreens, eat-umami.ch, No. 4: Turicum distillery, turicum-distillery.com, No. 5: Garçoa chocolate, garcoa.ch, No. 6: ZURIGA coffee machines, zuriga.com

Photos: lavaterhaus.ch, iStock, Joachim Müller-Crépon © zVg, Ali Zigeli

LAVATER CONCERT SERIES — THE “ZUNFTKONZERTE ZÜRICH” CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Vive la révolution! — The 2024 Lavater concert series focuses on periods of major upheaval in past centuries. It ingeniously connects political occurrences with contemporary music history. The four days of the event provide an interesting insight into historical events and attempt a look into the future. This year’s edition of the chamber music festival will be held at Lavater House. Used today as a parish hall, the building is named after Johann Caspar Lavater, who was pastor of St. Peter’s. From this very house, Lavater corresponded with eminent people across Europe. A fitting location for a major musical festival in the centre of Zurich. The concert series will be held from 9 to 12 May 2024.

zunftkonzerte.ch/lavatertagerevolution

The two concluding concerts on Sunday, 12 May 2024, will be held in the *Widder Saal* theatre:

PROGRAMM SURPRISE

An entertaining programme for young and old with the festival musicians. Immerse yourself in the musical world of Strauss, Mozart oder Poulenc.
widderhotel.com

GRANDE FINALE

Arnold Schönberg, *Op. 4 «Verklärte Nacht»*
Francis Poulenc, *Les Chemins de l’amour*
Deux poèmes de Louis Aragon
Johann Strauss Jr., *Lagunen-Walzer Op. 411*,
Kaiser-Walzer op.437

Performed by the Belenus Quartett and Sarah Kollé (soprano), Andrea Kollé (flute), Moritz Roelcke (clarinet), Lea Boesch (viola), Joachim Müller-Crépon (cello, photo), Alexander Boeschoten (piano)
widderhotel.com



DAY PARTY AT THE ALEX LAKE ZÜRICH

Enjoy an afternoon in the wonderful ambiance of this lakeside venue. Sample culinary delights and forget your worries for a few hours. Summer drinks, contemporary tunes and action-packed entertainment on the lake make this an exceptional day out.
23 June / 1 September 2024
alexlakezurich.com



COCKTAILS & MORE IN THE HEART OF ZÜRICH

The *Barchetta Bar* at the *Storchen Zürich* is a popular meeting place for locals and tourists alike. With high-top tables under the archways and on the piazza in summer, the bar promises a Venetian atmosphere on the banks of the Limmat. The most popular alcoholic beverage it serves is a very Swiss beer from the tap, followed closely by the most Italian of aperitifs: the Aperol Spritz. Salute!
storchen.ch



**FÜRSTENAU
OUTDOOR MARKET**

The historic town of Fürstenuau will host its seventh outdoor market for select regional specialities in September 2024. Over 50 market stands will be clustered around the award-winning *Schloss Schauenstein* and *Casa Caminada* restaurants. Among them are producers who have supplied their delicious regional products for many years to the *Schloss Schauenstein*, *Igniv* and *Casa Caminada* restaurants. Be tempted by home-made specialities, select wines and spirits, craft-roasted coffee, fine baked goods, strong mountain cheese, Grisons air-dried beef, Salsiz sausage, and plenty more.

Date: 8 September 2024
Time: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
andreascaminada.com

ISSUE N° 7 2024/2025 — PUBLISHED BY *The Living Circle Group AG, thelivingcircle.ch* CONCEPT Reto Wilhelm (Panta Rhei PRAG) & Sonja Studer (Sonja Studer Grafik AG) PUBLISHING ADVISOR Lidia Anda PUBLISHER Roman Migliorato & David Minoretti EDITOR Anina Rether ASSISTANTS Olivia Capecchi, Alexandra Cuérel, Nina Fink, Guendalina Rampazzi, Sabrina Schmid, Kai Simon ART DIRECTION & LAYOUT Sonja Studer AUTHORS Anina Rether, Reto Wilhelm, Franz Bamert PHOTOS Bo Bury, Tom Egli, Nina Fink, Ali Zigeli, Nicolas Zonvi, archive of *The Living Circle* TRANSLATIONS Claire Gordon-Kühl COPY EDITOR Erika Suter PRINTED IN SWITZERLAND Erni Druck und Media AG, Offset FSC® CIRCULATION 15,000 copies in German and English NOMINAL CHARGE CHF 22, EUR 18

Photos: falstaff.com; Tom Egli



WIDDER HOTEL
Small is beautiful — the 5-star superior Widder Hotel at the heart of Zurich boasts tremendous diversity: Tradition combined with modern flair in 9 former townhouses.



STORCHEN ZÜRICH
The 5-star Hotel Storchen in Zurich set in a unique location directly on the River Limmat is steeped in history. A guest house stood here more than 660 years ago.



CASTELLO DEL SOLE
The 5-star superior hotel Castello del Sole in Ascona is embedded in 140 hectares of land. Space and time harmonise perfectly with nature.



ALEX LAKE ZÜRICH
Just a few minutes from the city on the shores of Lake Zurich, the 5-star hotel Alex Lake Zürich in Thalwil boasts a fantastic location.



BUECH
This restaurant above Herrliberg with the flair of a countryside tavern and breathtaking views of Lake Zurich has welcomed guests for more than 100 years.



SCHLATTGUT
Milk and eggs from happy animals. Delicious ice creams and sorbets are made here at Schlattgut farm. This oasis is a well-kept secret for events with exceptional views.



CANTINA ALLA MAGGIA
Cantina alla Maggia in Ascona is committed to cultivating fine specialities on 96.5 hectares of land: Rice, corn, wine and much more can be bought in the farm shop.



CHÂTEAU DE RAYMONTPIERRE
This exceptional private hideaway in the canton of Jura is set in 650 hectares of woodlands and meadows: A newly renovated castle with its own farm.

MEMBERS OF THE LIVING CIRCLE



SCHLOSS SCHAUENSTEIN
A historical castle in the Grisons, nine unique bedrooms and highly acclaimed cuisine from leading Swiss chef Andreas Caminada: Schloss Schauenstein is an all-round experience!



MAMMERTSBERG
This boutique hotel on Lake Constance combines tradition with architecture and culinary arts. Silvio Germann and his team got off to a great start in October 2022 with 18 Gault & Millau points.



IGNIV
Creative cuisine made for sharing: Four restaurants in the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz, Badrutt's Palace in St. Moritz, Marktgasse Hotel in Zurich and the St. Regis in Bangkok celebrate sharing on a plate.



OZ
In the Oz, meaning "today" in the local Romansch dialect, the garden sets the tone. Seating 12 guests, the restaurant in Fürstenuau serves vegetarian dishes harvested fresh from the garden.



CASA CAMINADA
An homage to home: Andreas Caminada's hotel with a restaurant, bakery and shop blends modern architecture with Grisons dining culture and traditional craftsmanship. The 10 guestrooms promise a relaxing stay.



**FÜRSTENAU
OUTDOOR MARKET**

The historic town of Fürstenuau will host its seventh outdoor market for select regional specialities in September 2024. Over 50 market stands will be clustered around the award-winning *Schloss Schauenstein* and *Casa Caminada* restaurants. Among them are producers who have supplied their delicious regional products for many years to the *Schloss Schauenstein*, *Igniv* and *Casa Caminada* restaurants. Be tempted by home-made specialities, select wines and spirits, craft-roasted coffee, fine baked goods, strong mountain cheese, Grisons air-dried beef, Salsiz sausage, and plenty more.

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Photos: falstaff.com; Tom Egli



WIDDER
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BY THE LIVING CIRCLE

WIDDER HOTEL
Host:
Daniel Weist

35 rooms, 14 suites,
4 luxury residences,
3 restaurants, 2 bars

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widerhotel.com



STORCHEN
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Host:
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1 restaurant, 2 bars
and a rooftop bar

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+41 (0)44 227 27 27
storchen.ch



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BY THE LIVING CIRCLE

BUECH
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in a beautiful setting

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schlattgut.ch



**CANTINA ALLA
MAGGIA**
ASCONA

**CANTINA ALLA
MAGGIA**
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Guendalina Rampazzi

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Alimentare: open daily

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+41 (0)91 792 33 11
cantinaallamaggia.ch



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VAL TERBI
BY THE LIVING CIRCLE

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and Marcel Skibba

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Host:
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Lake Constance

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mammertsberg.ch



IGNIV

Creative haute
cuisine that celebrates
sharing on a plate. In
Bad Ragaz, St. Moritz,
Zurich and Bangkok

igniv.com



OZ
Host:
Timo Fritsche

Multi-course vege-
tarian menus straight
from the garden
for just 12 guests

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oz-restaurant.com



CASA CAMINADA
Host:
Mathias Kotzbeck

A guesthouse offering
Grisons cuisine and the
art of bread-making.

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