



**CASTELL**  
THE FINE ART OF RELAXING

## HOTEL CASTELL, ZUOZ

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Christine Abel & Matthias Wettstein  
Hotel Castell  
CH-7524 Zuoz  
Switzerland  
info@hotelcastell.ch  
Tel +41 (0)81 851 52 53  
www.hotelcastell.ch



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## 1. Vision: the fine art of relaxing

Hotel Castell was built in 1913. It stands on a terrace above Zuoz, with stunning views across the Engadin. A lively hotel, modern in every respect, awaits visitors here. This is an idyllic spot in which to relax and re-energize, surrounded by nature and art.

Nicolaus Hartmann's original building has been restored in stages over the past few years. Great care has been taken to balance old and new. As a result, the Hotel now boasts new rooms of excellent design, some by the internationally renowned UNStudio, of Amsterdam, and some by local star Hans-Jörg Ruch, from St. Moritz.

The legendary Red Bar by Pipilotti Rist and Gabrielle Hächler interacts with and enlivens the rooms left unaltered since the foundation era. These include the Restaurant, with its sumptuous stucco ceiling, and the venerable Lounge Bar. From the Red Bar, there is access on to the sun terrace, constructed of bare larchwood by the Japanese artist Tadashi Kawamata. The terrace provides the link to the Reflecting Pool set in rock – another Kawamata installation.

Installations and other works by numerous artists of world rank embellish the Hotel and its surroundings. Works by promising young talents are also present. This artistic emphasis is unique in the Swiss hotel industry and contributes to the Castell's distinctive aura.

The highlight of the Castell has been installed in the basement, in the former spa rooms of 1913: a spectacular hammam now occupies the 250 square metres of space. The imaginative design by UNStudios Amsterdam appeals to the senses. The light architecture forms a fascinating contrast with the massive stone walls of the old Hotel Castell. Welcome to the Engadin, for the ultimate wellness experience with a difference!

Its cheerful and family-friendly atmosphere makes the Castell a meeting point for people of quite different lifestyles.

Be surprised!

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## 2. Brief history

Hermann Gilli, a Zuoz hotelier and wine merchant, built Hotel Castell in Zuoz to plans by the prominent St. Moritz architect Nicolaus Hartmann, from 1912 to 1913. It was designed as a 'kurhaus' spa facility and incorporated spa therapy rooms with the latest equipment.

The Hotel had only just opened when the First World War broke out and the Castell, high on its perch above Zuoz, experienced its first major crisis. Demand only recovered in 1923, when the Hotel started to flourish for the first time. Famous personages such as the German Crown Prince and his family, the British peer Lord Templewood as well as the writers Stefan Zweig and Arthur Schnitzler were numbered among its illustrious guests. This was Hotel Castell's heyday. With other prominent hotels of the time, such as the Kulm in St. Moritz and the Waldhaus in Sils, the Castell was considered one of the leading hotels in the Engadin. An orchestra played daily on the skating rink. Glittering parties with well-known figure skaters and trainers became highlights of social life. These were the Golden Twenties.

Giacomo Andrea Gilli succeeded his father Hermann, installed the first electrically heated open-air swimming pool in the Canton of Graubünden and had many rambling trails laid out around the Castell. Everything seemed on track for success when the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and ensuing Great Depression set all his plans at naught. On the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the Gilli family had to close the Hotel and were forced to sell it.

In 1955, Hotel Castell passed into the ownership of the Federation of Migros Co-Operatives. In 1961, the whole attic storey, with its characteristic 'onion' tower, was destroyed by fire. Not long after, the Hotel was transferred to Hotelplan as a club hotel. This formula enabled the Castell to experience a second heyday, culminating in 1971 with an average 100% room occupancy rate. The Hotel's position and infrastructure made it a popular destination for family holidays. These successful years lasted until the 1973 oil crisis.

In 1983, the international travel agency Horizonte, a Migros subsidiary, bought the Castell and renovated it in the manner typical of the 1970s and early 1980s, at a cost of CHF 3.5 million. Unfortunately, the renovation led to an insensitive alteration of the Hotel's original appearance and made all the rooms smaller. The furniture and fittings originating from this stage remained features common to all the rooms until the latest renovation. Fortunately, the communal rooms (the Dining Room, hall, lobby and Ladies' Salon) conserve their original style to this day.

In 1989, the Castell was sold to Lukas Kunz, of Bilten.

In 1996, the limited company Castell Zuoz AG, principal shareholder Ruedi Bechtler, of Herliberg, bought the Hotel.

The new owners set to work to envision and plan for a successful future for Hotel Castell. Planning soon began for Chesa Chastlatsch, a new building directly adjacent to the Hotel, with 17 modern freehold flats. Negotiations with the municipal council of Zuoz to reclassify the area as building land took four years. The building work eventually received approval, because Hotel Castell now urgently needed restoration. There was one proviso: that the proceeds of selling the apartments should be spent, in a ratio of 1:1, on the Hotel conversion. Later the whole project, both to construct Chesa Chastlatsch and to renovate the Hotel, was approved at all levels.

Luxurious, mansard-type freehold apartments, serviced by the Hotel, arose alongside the Castell. The star Dutch architects Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos ([www.unstudio.com](http://www.unstudio.com)) are proponents of an experimental, innovative architecture. Though adapted to its rural



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surroundings, the agreed building was special, and promised to become a special embellishment of the Upper Engadin. An 18-hole golf course opened in June 2003, while the new chair lift in Zuoz, built in 2005, further enhanced the attractiveness of the La Plaiv area.

In late October 2002, Bettina and Richard Plattner took over the management of Hotel Castell. With immense enthusiasm, they steered the Hotel through the phase of major structural alterations and ushered in a new and successful era.

The Hotel's special charm has been preserved. At the same time, lively, modern facets have been added. The renovation covered all the rooms, the Dining Room, lobby with art and gift shop, and much of the infrastructure, including the kitchen. New additions were the sun terrace, health and fitness facilities complete with hammam, the cinema and a second garage. The total investment in the Hotel renovation amounted to CHF 15 million (see section 4, 'Architecture').

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### 3. The Castell today

Hotel Castell has much to offer. Here is a summary:

- Five-star panorama in a sun trap, enjoying absolute peace and quiet
- Rooms with amazing design by UNStudio, of Amsterdam, or Hans-Jörg Ruch, of St. Moritz
- Splendid historic Dining Room with elaborate stucco ceiling and modern art (renovation 2018)
- Authentic, imaginative terroir cuisine, influenced by the alpine region
- Blue Hour in the Red Bar by Pipilotti Rist and Gabrielle Hächler
- Historic Lounge Bar with simple menu
- Sun terrace by Tadashi Kawamata with restaurant and deck-chairs for relaxation
- The Hammam: a dream world of steam, glass, light, pleasurable heat and meditative gold bath
- Massages and treatments
- Rock Spring Sauna as well as open-air sunbathing and meditation space
- Inspiration from contemporary art works from the Ruedi Bechtler Collection and the Walter A. Bechtler Foundation
- Art Tours every Thursday at 5 pm
- Art and gift shop with art publications and beauty products
- Books and videos to borrow
- Cinema in the Castell – 9 p.m. 1-2 times/week
- Games room with billiards, flipper and table football
- Hotel skating rink in the park; ice skate hire
- Football pitch and bowling alley
- Hotel's own mountain and e-bikes
- Summer: mountain railway pass included from second night of stay
- Winter: ski pass included; a ski ticket for the Upper Engadin ski region is also available at just CHF 45.00 per person per day (offer valid from second night of stay; ski ticket can only be reserved for the whole stay)
- Ideal base for hikes, tours and snowshoe walks including hire of snow shoes
- Ski in / ski out: linked directly to the Zuoz pistes
- Shuttle runs to Zuoz village several times daily (stops at railway station and sports centre), from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. during the day.

#### **Nearby:**

- Switzerland's only National Park
- Zuoz – best-preserved village of the Upper Engadin
- Zuoz-Madulain 18-hole golf course – just a chip away
- Inline skating course
- Family swimming pools in Pontresina and Zernez (both 20 minutes away)



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## 4. Architecture

Four successful architects have shaped the architecture of Hotel Castell. Nicolaus Hartmann laid the foundation stone in 1912 and topped his finished work with an eye-catching tower in 1913. The subsequent conversion was the work of UNStudio, of Amsterdam (Chesa Chastlatsch, the Hammam and half of the rooms). Ruch & Partners Architects Ltd., of St. Moritz, designed the remaining half of the rooms. The architect Gabrielle Hächler and the artist Pipilotti Rist added a splash of colour in 1998 with their Red Bar. Working with Andreas Fuhrmann, Gabrielle Hächler was also responsible for the sensitive and refreshing renewal of the Lounge Bar, the Ladies' Salon and, in 2013, the Belvoir Dining Room.

### **Nicolaus Hartmann, Junior**

The buildings by the St. Moritz architect Nicolaus Hartmann Jr. (1880–1956) made a remarkable contribution to the history of 20th-century Swiss architecture. His 'Bündner Heimatstil' guided the building traditions of Graubünden and the Engadin in a new direction, aided by nearly a century of economic prosperity. Hartmann made a point of drawing on the region's traditional forms of construction, relying on local materials and sound craftsmanship. All his life he was a firm supporter of the Swiss Heritage movement. His largest non-hotel client was the Rhaetian Railway, though he also carried out some restoration projects on castles and châteaux. Apart from the Castell, his flagship works in the Engadin were: Hotel La Margna in St. Moritz; the Alp Grüm station building; the monument to Giovanni Segantini (sensitively restored in 1998–99 by Hans-Jörg Ruch); the Engadiner Museum; the church in St. Moritz-Bad; Restaurant Alpenrose in Sils; and the Swiss international boarding school, Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz.

Further information: <http://www.hartmann-bau.ch/unternehmung/items/geschichte.html>

### **UNStudio, Amsterdam**

They built Rotterdam's iconic new Erasmus Bridge and caused a stir in architectural circles with their 'Möbius House' in Het Gooi. Their joint proposal with United Architects for Ground Zero gained massive publicity: it was for a set of entwined towers reminiscent of the Hydra. They built the new Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart and the mountainside Chesa Chastlatsch above Zuoz. Headed by Ben van Berkel and his business partner Caroline Bos, UNStudio is established at international level and on its way to superstardom. In van Berkel's opinion, classical building style is a spent force. "Nowadays it's all about aesthetics, the principles and core values of architecture – spatial organisation, atmosphere and movement. Further information: [www.unstudio.com](http://www.unstudio.com)

### **Ruch & Partners Architects Ltd., St. Moritz**

Many outstanding conversions and new buildings in the Engadin bear the inimitable stamp of Hans-Jörg Ruch. With fine judgment, he brings opposites into creative tension. Ruch builds holiday homes, banks, hotels and exciting shopping centres. Other projects have included a library, an electricity substation, even a Swiss Alpine Club hut. This cosmopolitan architect has travelled widely. Pretension and stylistic hotchpotch are his pet aversions. When selecting materials, Hans-Jörg Ruch limits himself to rough concrete and iron, glass, a piece of timber, maybe a stone. In his philosophy, less is better, while more is already too much.

Further information: [www.ruch-arch.ch](http://www.ruch-arch.ch)

### **Gabrielle Hächler and Andreas Fuhrmann, architectural partnership, Zurich**

Hächler and Fuhrmann have gained recognition for a series of detached houses and two minor public buildings. A major theme of their work is the exploration of architectural space as a fundamental building block of architecture. Since 2011, they have also held a chair of design and town planning at Berlin University of the Arts.

Further information: [www.afgh.ch](http://www.afgh.ch)

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## 5. The Hammam

The Hammam represented a new and fascinating contribution by the Castell to the Swiss wellness scene. The Castell became the first hotel, not only in the Engadin but Switzerland-wide, to introduce the oriental tradition of steam. An attractive range of massages and health treatments has sprung up around this feature.

The plan devised by UNStudio Amsterdam combines the mystic power of the Castell's location in Zuoz with elements of the oriental cult of bathing.

The Hammam is installed in the former spa rooms in the basement of the Castell – with direct access to the Hotel's surrounding parkland. The fortress-like thickness of its stone walls is one of its distinctive features. The exterior theme of visible strength continues into the interior design, where it acts as a unifying element among the variety of shapes and forms present. In this project, the clear geometric lines of the available spaces and their natural stone provide a framework for the special hammam atmosphere created by light and steam.

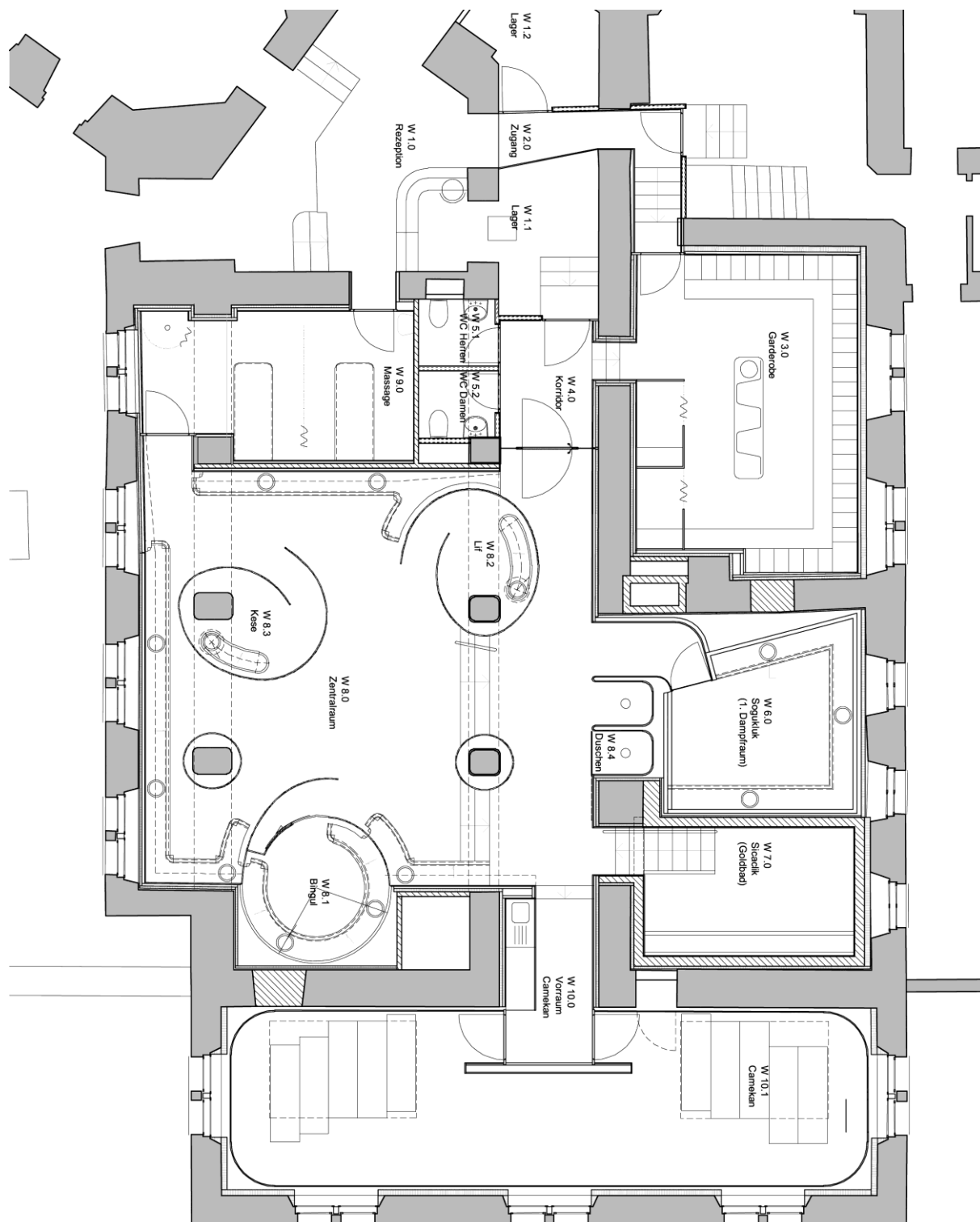
The Castell's Hammam offers an independent and contemporary interpretation of the great central space of the traditional hammam, with adjoining alcoves. The architecture uses light to lend a spiritual atmosphere to the space. Light flows inexhaustibly, passing through semi-opaque, veil-like partitions, into this central space. Here, cylindrical shapes define their own sections of space and dematerialise the load-bearing structure (pillars). They also soften the sharp edges of the space beneath the horizon and create an interplay of light and shadow in the depths of the room. This sunken plaza is a place where intermingling and fluid patches of movement and rest combine collectivity and intimacy. Bathed in the diffuse light of the gold bath, in the flow of warm water ('sicaklik'), thoughts can roam free. The cool preparatory 'soğukluk' and the final 'camekan' rest area are designed as transition zones. As such, they mediate between the outside world of holiday activities and an inner world of concentrated cleansing of body and soul.

### **The Reflecting Pool in the rocks and outdoor sauna**

Tadashi Kawamata's Reflecting Pool is set in rock and surrounded by a timber platform. Its small Finnish open-air sauna complements the rather enclosed and inward-looking Hammam.



## Layout of the Hammam







## 6. Art and culture in the Castell

### Contents

- Art tours
- Art Weekends
- Cinema, music, theatre and film
- Library of art and architecture
- Portraits of the artists

The Castell encourages engagement with contemporary art. Guests encounter works of art exhibited in the Hotel (paintings, installations and actions) and projects with artists sponsored by the Walter A. Bechtler Foundation. Responses range from annoyance to delight or curiosity. The Hotel's principal shareholder, Ruedi Bechtler, has loaned these works to the Hotel, while the installations and actions are set up in close co-operation with the artists themselves. The works of many well-known and top-ranking artists are represented in the Castell, including Roman Signer, Pipilotti Rist, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Carsten Höller, Martin Kippenberger and many more. All can be viewed free of charge.

Fine art has become a living, integral feature of Hotel Castell. The works on display there have led guests to request professional explanations of the subject of art at all levels. The exhibited works get visitors talking about art, and create a unique ambience at the Hotel.

Works of the following artists, from the Ruedi Bechtler Collection, are on display at Hotel Castell: Roman Signer, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Tadashi Kawamata, Pipilotti Rist and Gabrielle Hächler (the Red Bar), Ross Sinclair, Thomas Hirschhorn, Carsten Höller, Martin Kippenberger, James Turrell, David Shrigley, Chantal Michel, Mickry Drei, Lawrence Weiner, Irene Hug, Teres Wydler, Martin Senn, Wade Guyton, Nic Hess, Mai-Thu Perret, Takaaki Izumi, Simon Starling, Hugo Suter, Christine Streuli, Gerda Steiner and Jörg Lenzlinger, Markus Schaub, Ruedi Bechtler, Gabriel Orozco, Angela Bulloch, Jason Rhoades, Erwin Wurm, Tobias Madison and Nicolas Party.

### **Art tours**

At 5 p.m. every Thursday, the Hotel Director lead a public art tour through the Hotel rooms.

### **Art Weekends**

Art Weekends are held regularly at the Castell. They give guests the opportunity for closer contact with art and artists.

Art Weekends have been held with the following artists and architects in recent years: John Baldessari, Olaf Breuning, Ben van Berkel, Johanna Dahm, Liam Gillik, Gabrielle Hächler, Carsten Höller, Tadashi Kawamata, Tobias Madison, Chantal Michel, Nic Hess, Pipilotti Rist, Markus Schaub, Mickry Drei, David Shrigley, Roman Signer, Simon Starling, Gerda Steiner and Jörg Lenzlinger, Christine Streuli, James Turrell, Lawrence Weiner, Teres Wydler and Erwin Wurm, Judith Albert, Simon Starling, Andrea Büttner, Cédric Eisenring, Shana Moulton, Raphael Heffi, Julian Charrière, Isabel Lewis.



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### **Cinema, music, theatre and film**

The Castell owns its own small cinema, which seats 30. Trigon Film's Walter Ruggle compiles the programme ([www.trigon-film.org](http://www.trigon-film.org)). A film is screened at 9 p.m. 1-2 times/week.

Music events sometimes take place at Hotel Castell. Illustrious guest performers have included Corinne Curschellas, Fritz Hauser, Vera Kaa, Max Lässer, Roland van Straaten and the cabaret duo 'Die geholten Stühle.'

In 2012, Martin Suter filmed his psychological drama 'Der Teufel von Mailand' in and around Hotel Castell.

Evening screenings of art films take place near the Hotel reception.

### **Library of art and architecture**

The library has a stock of excellent books on art, nature, the region and health and fitness, which can be borrowed. It also loans rare art videos.

### **Brief portraits of the artists**

#### **Roman Signer**

Roman Signer studies natural forces and incorporates them in his works (e.g. gravity, the properties of water, etc). Just as other artists use paint and brushes, so Signer has used explosives for years. He probes the potential of everyday objects (canoes, briefcases, bicycles, cars, model helicopters, etc) and puts them to unusual uses. As a result, they gain new significance. Shortly after the 1996 takeover of the Hotel, Roman Signer led the first Art Weekend. On the meadow in front of the Hotel, he staged 'three minor events.' His repertoire included an explosion which blasted a dozen old swivel armchairs from the Hotel sky-high.

A second time, in 2000, he astonished Hotel visitors with explosions and whirling helicopters. New photographs of these events now hang in the rooms. Signer metamorphosed the Bronze Horse, an 'heirloom,' with minimum intervention. As part of the Public Plaiv contemporary art project, his Piaggio Fountain was installed in various locations as a village fountain for brief periods. In 2006, he enthused participants at the Collectors' Days with two exciting events.

#### **Peter Fischli and David Weiss**

The pair of artists Fischli and Weiss have explored everyday life in numerous ways and frequently conveyed amazing messages: with photographs, objects, videos and large-scale installations. A group of 'Equilibres,' a rubber object as well as flower and mountain photographs epitomise their amazing oeuvre. Both artists are friends of the Engadin and stayed regularly at the Castell. Sadly David Weiss died not long ago.

#### **Tadashi Kawamata**

Kawamata wants to enhance visitors' wellbeing. Instead of walking on stone, they pad across softer timber or sit on insulating wooden benches. He creates havens of relaxation and meditation. A further interest of his are provisional, open-ended situations, improvisations, apparently unfinished installations which have an annoying look and overturn a mindset of cherished norms.

In 1997, Tadashi Kawamata built an installation in a small rocky arena behind the hotel. This had been the site of the Engadin's first electrically-heated swimming pool, later demolished.

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The 50-metre length of wooden walkway along the rock face rests on the old timber structure. Kawamata has re-used most of the original bases. The installation features what Kawamata himself calls the 'Reflecting Pool' – a wooden sun terrace and usable sauna cabin heated by a wood-fired stove. These blend with the landscape to offer a place of meditation and sensory impressions.

A by-product of the conversion is a filigree, slightly springy wooden terrace opposite the Red Bar. This forms a new link to the Reflecting Pool in the rocks. The collection also includes photographs of urban projects. Kawamata finds materials for use in constructing small dwellings, which he photographs and then abandons to their fate.

### **Ross Sinclair**

The neon words 'Spiritual Gold' in the bar are the work of Ross Sinclair. They form part of his cycle of works 'Real Life And How To Live it.' These express the artist's disillusion and regret at what the human race has done to the world.

### **Pipilotti Rist and Gabrielle Hächler**

The Red Bar, dedicated in 1998, is their joint work. The main part of the bar is shaped as an 'S', in refreshing contrast with traditional bars centred on a fireplace. The two artists have successfully created a situation in which the two spaces feed each other: a sensual venue for meeting people.

### **Carsten Höller**

Carsten Höller uses fine art to probe neglected topics such as drugs, luck or happiness. He has also devised an exciting new method of gaining access to human perception, a subject on which he has lectured at two Art Weekends. At these, he showed films and conducted experiments with visitors.

Here is how Höller's red pea whistle at the entrance works. You roll it into a ball and place it in the cylindrical container. The whistle then turns into a sledge, with the tip facing downhill, and is impelled down the slope on the snow. While this is happening, the slipstream blows into the mouth of the whistle and spins the pea, sounding the whistle.

Another Höller work plucks viewers from a swamp. In another, doves lift people into the air on ropes. At a third, you don a special rucksack to see your own feet heading towards you.

### **Martin Kippenberger**

Three letters by Martin Kippenberger, who died all too prematurely, hang in the stairwell. They are from 'The End of the Alphabet.' There is also a miniature, motor-powered theatrical 'Blessing' and the 'China Garden,' a cupboard full of foam 'stones' which can be laid out to form a Chinese garden. Kippenberger positioned a Metronet underground station entrance at the railway station in Madulain. This was his imaginary way of linking the Engadin to other important places in the world.

### **Olivia Etter**

She redesigned the children's play hall as a 'Colour Inferno.'

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### **David Shrigley**

Shrigley is known above all for his amusing drawings which open out a new world, and for the settings of his photographs. He devised the illuminated sign 'It's freezing in here' especially for the Castell. It could even have been hung over the fireplace in the hall ... He thought of and shot the many small photographs on the stairs. Shrigley takes viewers by surprise with newly invented pictures and thereby expands our horizons (e.g. in the river with his notice 'River for Sale'). In the field in front of the Hotel, he once set up a snowman standing on its head. The scene is recorded on a postcard.

### **Chantal Michel**

Chantal Michel firmly believes that art is not something external: it impinges on the whole persona, body included. The medium in which she expresses herself are videos, performances and photographs. Hers are the photographs of a performance in a Paris hotel. A similar performance took place at an Art Weekend and a souvenir postcard also exists of this.

### **Lawrence Weiner**

This artist, who lives in Amsterdam, works with sentences. Drawing inspiration from the Castell's site, he has devised the mysterious texts applied to the south façade.

### **Mickry Drei**

The three young female artists caused a furore at the Kunsthaus Zürich with their 'Sexshop.' They have designed two splendid showcases especially for Hotel Castell. Sushi and lobsters build a bridge between cookery and art.

### **Nic Hess**

Nic Hess creates gigantic murals from his innovative drawings, which reproduce logos and other symbols from the world of marketing and fairytale figures such as Pinocchio. Often he uses sticky tape of different colours instead of a pencil and traces flowing lines to form pictures. At the Castell, one of these creations 'sucks' guests into higher realms. In the Hotel, he has woven elements from an accumulation of photographs into an erotic picture.

### **Erwin Wurm**

New additions are three photographs by Erwin Wurm, a sculptor who works with 'living material.' He created these works with guests during the last Art Weekend.

### **Nicolas Party**

Party works with classical genres of painting while playing with their contexts. For example, he paints Blakam's Stones like fruit – a simple means of returning the still life genre into the third dimension.

In his mural paintings, Party uses mainly graphics, which he calls decorative patterns. He is responsible for the artistic design of the Belvoir Dining Room, which he transformed with a mural work, 'Blakam's Stones' and an outsize photograph at the end of 2012. Fuhrmann and Hächler were responsible for revising the room's interior design.

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### **Tobias Madison**

Tobias Madison was born in 1985 and lives in Zurich and Basel. His rich language of form comes across in all media and its form and content make many allusions: to literature, comics, techno music sampling and the alluring language of label and brand advertising. Madison makes no distinction between 'refined' and 'popular' culture. He treats models from the history of art in exactly the same way as the concept of nature or footage found from the Internet. Everything is grist to his mill.

His early works especially followed this approach. Madison produced digital art as a reflection of the accelerated pace of contemporary life. The declaration of these works as unique, despite their theoretical reproducibility, can be seen as an attempt to restore 'aura.'

Another important strand of Madison's oeuvre is collaboration. The 'Bora Bora Structures' series were joint works with Kaspar Müller. As the title suggests, these evoke a notion of longing and thus poke fun at the taboo of romanticising art.

... and more

Markus Schaub constructed his 'Walls' next to the ice rink. Ruedi Bechtler displays a Flip-Flop drawing and the result of his cultivation of algae at the entrance. A group of photographs by Gabriel Orozco hangs on the third floor, while Angela Bulloch welcomes people at the entrance with an interactive light sculpture. In the Hotel bar, she has set up a light installation which alludes to the film 'Blow-up.' Works of Jason Rhoades installed on the premises include two light multiples entitled 'Female Principle.' On the fifth floor, capital 'U's have been applied to the walls using a template by Wade Guyton, while Beatrix Grohmann has created the murals in the cinema.



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## 7. 'Art Public Plaiv' and the Walter A. Bechtler Foundation

In recent years, a wide range of contemporary open-air art installations have sprung up in the rural area of La Plaiv (S-chanf, Madulain, La Punt-Chamues-ch and Zuoz).

They are part of Art Public Plaiv, a contemporary art project carried forward in collaboration between the Institute for Contemporary Arts at Zurich University of the Arts, the Plaiv Business Organisation (formed by the region's four municipalities) and the Walter A. Bechtler Foundation for Art in Public Spaces. The project has close links with the Hotel through Ruedi Bechtler and seeks to promote educational tourism in the 'Engiadina' region.

Research teams and invited artists reconnoitred the landscape to identify ways of involving contemporary art. The key question concerned the present and future cultural identity of the four communities S-chanf, Zuoz, Madulain and La Punt-Chamues-ch. The project made proposals for art works which would open up a range of new functions in the context of rural society. In this process, it was considered especially important that each art work should allude to the locality: this is art for a rural area and its villages.

The research project ran from July 2001 to March 2002 and culminated in a publication. It received significant sponsorship from the Swiss Federal Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI). The Walter A. Bechtler Foundation completed the following art installations as part of the Public Plaiv Project:

in the Hotel grounds: Tadashi Kawamata's 'Reflecting Pool' in the rocks with sauna and wooden terrace gentle to the feet; Lawrence Weiner's words on the south façade of the Castell; James Turrell's 'Skyspace Piz Uter;' and Roman Signer's water window. The Red Bar by Pipilotti Rist and Gabrielle Hächler had already been completed in 1997;

in La Plaiv region: Martin Kippenberger's mobile underground station entrance; Peter Fischli and David Weiss's 'Chamer Raum;' Ken Lum's 'Il Museum Buolf Mus-chin;' Bethan Huws' film work 'Architecture' and Peter Regli's 'Reality Hacking No. 199.'

Further information: [www.publicplaiv.ch](http://www.publicplaiv.ch) and [www.bechtlerstiftung.ch](http://www.bechtlerstiftung.ch)



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## 8. Cuisine at the Castell

### Restaurant Castell

Chef de Cuisine at the Restaurant Castell is the innovative Rüdiger König, who bids diners take their places at table under the impressive stucco ceiling of the historic Dining Room. König understands his cooking as a varied cuisine du terroir with regional and alpine dishes, focused on the vegetarian and vegan kitchen.

His dishes are an imaginative, à la carte creation each evening. The emphasis of the menus is on produce, and they seek to bring out the character of the main item.

The comprehensive wine list features more than 300 selected wines. Familiar names are present alongside newcomers, including many attractive priced discoveries. The long-serving Restaurant Manager, Gianna Sorosina, will be happy to advise on suitable choices.

Food from the region is a feature of the ample breakfast buffet, accompanied by freshly brewed coffee, frothy cappuccino or fine tea from the Ronnefeldt assortment.

### Banqueting and events

The Castell is the perfect venue for weddings, celebrations and parties. Banquet menus, stand-up buffets, picnics or aperitifs can be tailored to individual requirements.

### Red Bar

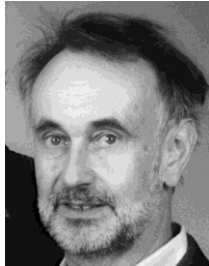
The sensual Red Bar is the work of architect Gabrielle Hächler and multimedia artist Pipilotti Rist. It serves drinks, lunch, dinner and snacks daily from 12 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. 'Blue Hour' with tapas and lounge sound runs from 5 to 7 p.m., after which dinner is served in the Restaurant Castell.

### Kawamata Terrace (Japanese timber installation)

A new dimension: in front of the Hotel bar, Tadashi Kawamata has erected a wooden terrace, which yields slightly to the feet. This creates a link to his 'Reflecting Pool' of 1997 in the rocks. Lunches and snacks are served in this special place, in its exceptional surroundings and ambience.

## 9. Fact sheet about Hotel Castell, Zuoz

### Brief biographies



Ruedi Bechtler, principal shareholder

Born in Zurich in 1942, Ruedi Bechtler is married with three children. He is a graduate engineer from the Federal Institute of Technology and holds an MBA from INSEAD, France. He has worked for several corporations in the USA and Switzerland and is the founder of Spinnerei Wettingen. He is also an artist and collector, the President of the Walter A. Bechtler Foundation and Co-Curator of the Zellweger Luwa AG photograph collection.



Christine Abel and Matthias Wettstein, directors

Christine Abel and Matthias Wettstein are a well-coordinated management couple and can look back on many years of international experience in the hotel industry. For the last three years they managed the popular Sorell Hotel Tamina in Bad Ragaz. Before that, they were the hosts for seven years at the Maiensässhotel Guarda Val in Lenzerheide. Christine Abel has also worked in Great Britain, Germany and Austria. For Matthias Wettstein, the new position at the Hotel Castell is a return to his home country, after his successes in the past in the luxury hotel industry in Germany, Russia and Vietnam. They have been managing the Hotel Castell since April 2022.

Address	Hotel Castell, CH-7524 Zuoz, Switzerland Tel. +41 (0)81 851 52 53 info@hotelcastell.ch · www.hotelcastell.ch
Principal shareholder	Ruedi Bechtler, of Herrliberg
Director	Christine Abel & Matthias Wettstein
Year of construction	1912–13; fully upgraded and renovated in 2004
Season	Mid-December to end of March mid-June to mid-October





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Rooms	68, classed as follows: 11 Castell, 9 Medium Nord, 22 Medium Inn, 18 Superior, 5 Junior Suites and 3 Family Rooms
Architects	UNStudio, Amsterdam ( <a href="http://www.unstudio.com">www.unstudio.com</a> ) (Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos) Hans-Jörg Ruch, St. Moritz Pipilotti Rist and Gabrielle Hächler: Red Bar (1998) Tadashi Kawamata: Reflecting Pool (1997) and terrace (2004) Gabrielle Hächler and Andreas Fuhrmann, Zurich
Chesa Chastlatsch	17 freehold apartments next to the Hotel, with access to the Hotel infrastructure and services. Architect: Ben van Berkel (UNStudio Amsterdam)
Finance	Proceeds from sales of the freehold apartments in Chesa Chastlatsch have financed most of the Hotel extension and renovation work
Room rates	Up from CHF 290.-, including buffet breakfast and admission to Hammam
Total staff	50 - 55
Restaurants	Chef de Cuisine Rüdiger König  - Restaurant Castell (breakfast, lunch and dinner) - Kawamata Viewpoint Terrace (lunches and snacks) - Red Bar (drinks, tapas, daily Blue Hour with lounge sound)
Hammam	A world of water and steam in 250 sq. m of space with all the essentials of the Oriental cult of bathing. Massages and treatments.
Cinema	The Hotel's own studio cinema seats 30. It screens film series selected specially for the Castell by Walter Ruggle, of Trigon Film. The cinema's murals are by the German artist Beatrix Grohmann, from Berlin.
Art	The many art works on display in the Hotel are on loan from the principal shareholder, Ruedi Bechtler. A number of installations have been devised jointly with the artists especially for this location. The Walter A. Bechtler Foundation for Art in Public Spaces has financed six major installations on the Hotel site.
Art Public Plaiv	Six works from the Art Public Plaiv project are permanent features at Hotel Castell. They are by Pipilotti Rist, Tadashi Kawamata, Lawrence Weiner, James Turrell and Roman Signer. <a href="http://www.publicplaiv.ch">www. publicplaiv.ch</a>
Art events	Regular art events (Art Weekends)

**HOTEL · RESTAURANT · HAMAM CH-7524 ZUOZ**

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Seminar facilities	Belvoir Room (accommodates 30 on seminar seating and 50 on concert seating) Ladies' Salon (accommodates 10–12 on seminar seating) Seminar Room (accommodates 12–16 on seminar seating and 20 on concert seating) Cinema in the Castell (cinema seating for 30)
Outline Programme	Summer: walking, climbing, wildlife observation, golf, tennis, football, inline skating, Nordic walking and many other summer sports  Winter: skiing, cross-country skiing, snowboarding, ski touring and many other winter sports  Reflecting Pool and rock spring sauna; yoga and meditation at the Reflecting Pool; the region also offers a broad range of high-quality cultural facilities and events
Golf	The Zuoz-Madulain 18-hole golf course, opened in June 2003, lies a stone's throw from the Hotel. Reduced green fees for Hotel guests
Parking	Garage with 40 spaces, 30 outdoor parking spaces
Location	The Castell occupies a panoramic viewpoint above Zuoz, 10 minutes' walk from the village centre and 1 km from the Zuoz golf course. Shuttle transfers to the village for guests; once daily to the St. Moritz ski pistes and back
Ski in / ski out	Direct access to the Zuoz ski pistes
Distances	1 km from Zuoz railway station, 12 km from Samedan Airport (10 mins.), 19 km from St. Moritz (15 mins.), 160 km from Zurich (2–3 hrs.), 200 km from Milan (2–3 hrs.), 300 km from Munich (3–4 hrs.)
Memberships	Swiss International Hotels, Swiss Golf Hotels, Engadin Golf Hotels, Engadin Ski Marathon Hotel, Private Selection Hotels
Press material	Visit our website <a href="http://www.hotelcastell.ch">www.hotelcastell.ch</a> > services > downloads & media where reports, photographs and logos in printable resolution are available for download and constantly updated.

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