

THE STORY OF THE ESPLANADE HOTEL RESORT & SPA****S

A HOUSE WITH A GREAT TRADITION

On the initiative of Dr. Luciano Bacilieri, a physician based in Locarno, and under the collaboration of foreign benefactors, the Esplanade health resort hotel was founded with the considerable stock capital of 1.1 million francs (at the time). A great deal of land was part of the hotel property, which extended to the banks of the Lake Maggiore and wine grapes were planted on a large parcel of this.

Shortly after the opening in February 1913, however, World War I broke out. With that, the guests, stayed away, which meant that the income ebbed. Since the capital was mostly depleted by the construction, it wasn't long before the resources became insufficient to continue operations. In 1915, insolvency set in. As a result, a local investors' group managed by Alfredo Fanciola took over the building, which led the Esplanade to success with a new conception as a five-star hotel.

How excellent the name which it made for itself was, after only a short time, is indicated by the fact that during the peace conference of Locarno in the autumn of 1925, it served the German delegation as a base.

After the difficult years of the worldwide economic crisis and World War II, in which the building endured a tough test, it registered an enjoyable upswing in the 1950s and 1960s, and was soon once again one of the leading hotels in the area of Locarno. The number of regular guests (along with renowned politicians and artists) who visited the Esplanade increased steadily.

In 1993, an insurance company took over the Esplanade and remodelled it once more into a spa hotel.

Despite the initial great success of the concept, the success did not endure. After a short time, the hotel remained closed for an entire year until it was taken over by a new owner and subjected to a comprehensive remodelling. On 28 May 1997, the Esplanade Hotel Resort & Spa, in its new splendour, could be opened once again as a hotel.

Today, the Esplanade Hotel is a four-star establishment for pleasure, adventure, sport and recreation, active vacations with pure well-being and relaxation, but also a suitable seminar and conference hotel.

The building entices one with its alluring charm. The charm of Mediterranean turn-of-the century architecture is correlated to contemporary architecture, and, under consideration of the constructive-biological aspects, to a functional and aesthetic room experience.

The building towers majestically above Minusio, a distinguished district of Locarno. The 67 rooms, including four junior suites, allow a panoramic view over the Lake Maggiore or into the palm grove with its exotic appearance. All rooms are furnished with parquet and natural stone floors and have a network connection SAT TV and radio, modem connection, mini-bar, telephone, safe and hair dryer.

In the restaurant “La Belle Epoque”, in addition to exquisite “à la carte” fish and meat dishes, vegetarian cuisine is also served. The panorama patio and the bar fulfil the highest standards for first-class gastronomy and attentive service. In the professionally equipped creative kitchen, the preparation of savoury dishes is a special highlight.

For seminars and conferences, a variable range of space is available. The seven conference rooms, as well as a banquet hall, can be divided and are equipped with the latest conference technology. As far as capacity is concerned, they allow occupancy of up to 140 guests. Each room is flooded with daylight and offers a pleasant view of the fantastically beautiful surroundings.

The palm park is a paradise made of lush nature and horticulture. More than 40000 m² of exotic greenery for relaxing and playing sports, with a heated garden swimming pool, tennis courts and boccia lane.

Two gymnastics and fitness rooms for complete body workouts are part of the wellness centre on more than 1600 m². The whirlpool, steam bath, Finnish sauna, bio-saunas and a Kneipp facility with a winter garden help maintain your well-being. Graduate “wellness coaches” arrange activity and relaxation programmes seven days a week.

The beauty centre is a pleasant and modern oasis. The combination of cosmetics, fitness, massages and baths cultivates the “spa frame of mind”.

At the peace conference of Locarno, which took place in October 1925, Belgium, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Poland and Czechoslovakia attempted to found a security system which was to spare Western and Central Europe the horrors of a new war. It contained primarily guarantees for the Western border of Germany defined in the Treaty of Versailles and its de-militarisation, as well as the arbitral regulation of possible disputes between Germany and its neighbours. The Locarno treaties were primarily the reward of the German foreign ministers Gustav Stresemann and his British colleague Joseph Austen Chamberlain, as well as the French prime minister Aristide Briand: they created the prerequisite for the acceptance of Germany into the League of Nations.