



GAULTMILLAU SWITZERLAND AND CARL F. BUCHERER HAVE MADE THEIR CHOICE:

# GaultMillau « Hotel of the Year” is Pontresina’s Grand Hotel Kronenhof

A highly coveted award for the Engadine’s most venerable five-star hotel: GaultMillau Switzerland and partner Carl F. Bucherer have honoured the Grisons’ Grand Hotel Kronenhof in Pontresina with the title of Hotel of the Year 2008. The masterpiece of the CHF 50 million renovation project is no doubt the new health spa with its view of glacier and mountains – closely followed by the cuisine of Chef Bernd Schützelhofer, who proves daily that he deserves every one of the 16 points awarded him.

Pontresina’s Grand Hotel Kronenhof has been a prestigious and elegant place to stay from the day it first opened its doors, in 1848. Vast salons with ceiling frescoes created by Otto Haberer in 1901, an elegant Grand Restaurant that recalls great castle halls and the imposing mountain and glacier panorama of the Roseg valley and Corviglia range kept guests in awe from day one. Then came a time when maintaining this grand establishment became as challenging as financing the unavoidable renovation. But in 2004 Greece’s Niarchos family, owners of the Kulm Hotel in St. Moritz, serendipitously added Grand Hotel Kronenhof to its holdings and lost no time in investing 50 million Swiss francs in the hotel’s future and hiring a management team to give the venerable establishment new energy and impetus. Today’s young hotel managers are St. Moritz native Heinz E. Hunkeler, 34, and his wife Jenny, 33, a native of Geneva and, of course, Austria’s Bernd Schützelhofer, 38, as chef de cuisine.

## Wellness and a splendid view of mountains and glacier

The last expansion stage was also the most spectacular: The Grand Hotel Kronenhof temporarily closed its doors at Easter 2007, to reopen some months later, in December of the same year, to the astonishment of the first guests who couldn’t believe their eyes as they surveyed 2000 square metres of superb wellness spa located in the hotel’s own park. It features a generously proportioned pool with underwater music and counter-current swimming, a children’s pool, steam bath, relax-floating grotto, saltwater grotto, saunas, thirteen treatment rooms, state-of-the-art fitness equipment, a roaring fire in an elegant fireplace and a sizeable area for rest and relaxation. After a full day of skiing, golfing or hiking, guests love to relax while admiring the sun’s last rays setting behind Roseg glacier and the Corviglia range from inside the glass-fronted spa. Sitting atop the spa and wellness centre are 28 new, state-of-the-art rooms and suites,



CARL F. BUCHERER  
FINE SWISS WATCHMAKING

charmingly decorated by interior architect Joe Brinkmann in typical Engadine style. The Ganzoni West Wing (above the valley's only bowling alley) had been generously renovated previously. Today Kronenhof is one of the most beautifully preserved 19th century grand hotels. And double rooms at the Hotel of the Year start as low as CHF 420.

## 16-point cuisine commensurate with such an acclaimed establishment

Only establishments with a cuisine considered well above the norm can hope to qualify for the prestigious title of GaultMillau Hotel of the Year. Not a problem for Grand Hotel Kronenhof and head chef Bernd Schützelhofer. After a happy childhood on the shores of Lake Constance, he has for many years cooked shoulder to shoulder with famed chef Marcus G. Lindner at distinguished establishments ranging from the Ermitage of Küsnacht, near Zurich, to Gstaad's Grand Hotel Park. Today, Chef Lindner presides over the kitchens of Zurich's Restaurant Mesa. Chef Schützelhofer first gained the attention of gourmets everywhere when he rated a listing in GaultMillau's red gourmet guide as chef de cuisine at Lucerne's Hotel Astoria. In the Kronenhof kitchens Chef Schützelhofer and his 24-member crew regularly cater to as many as 200 hotel guests at the impressive Grand Restaurant, and up to 40 gourmets at the historic-rustic Restaurant Kronenstübli. Children fare equally well: by special request they may take their meals in a separate salon. "Not a problem for me", smiles Chef Schützelhofer, "I've dreamed of being a chef de cuisine of a prestigious Grand Hotel ever since my time as an apprentice." In summer, light but always exquisite lunches are served in the lovingly rebuilt, all-wooden sun pavilion, adjacent to the sun lawn, and in winter next to the ice rink. The 2009 edition of the GaultMillau guide pays tribute to Bernd Schützelhofer's culinary artistry with a 16-point rating.

## The Grand Hotel Kronenhof – the fine art of doing everything right

Says editor-in-chief of the GaultMillau guide Urs Heller: "The new Kronenhof is impressive. The 50 million have been invested wisely. Heinz and Jenny Hunkeler bring new drive to a venerable establishment, while the kitchens – in spite of the enormous demands made on them – create meals of an astoundingly high level." The perfect companion piece to the GaultMillau award are its title sponsor's timepieces: Presented by Carl F. Bucherer CEO Thomas Morf, an elegant Bucherer watch now adorns the wrist of your host as the oversize Bucherer clock in the hotel lobby benignly reminds guests of the day the Grand Hotel Kronenhof re-joined the ranks of Switzerland's exclusive five-star hotels.

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## GaultMillau's Hotels of the Year

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| 2008 | Pontresina, Grand Hôtel Kronenhof               |
| 2007 | Ascona, Hôtel Castello del Sole                 |
| 2006 | Lausanne, Beau-Rivage Palace                    |
| 2005 | Lenk, Lenkerhof alpine resort                   |
| 2004 | Flims, Waldhaus Flims Mountain Resort & Spa     |
| 2003 | Gstaad, Grand Hôtel Bellevue                    |
| 2002 | Lugano, Villa Principe Leopoldo                 |
| 2001 | Weggis, Park Hotel                              |
| 2000 | Interlaken, Victoria Jungfrau Grand Hôtel & Spa |
| 1999 | Morat, Le Vieux Manoir                          |
| 1998 | Bad Ragaz, Grand Hôtel Quellenhof               |