

Grand Hotel Kronenhof – History

1848

Andreas Gredig (1806-1877) moves from Grüsch in Prättigau, Grisons to Pontresina and buys the Guesthouse Rössli for his son Lorenz Gredig (1829-1905). His son sets up a Veltliner wine shop in the guesthouse cellar and buys horses for the transportation of wine from Veltlin over the Berninapass. In addition, he renovated the “Rössli” and re-opened it in 1851 as a guesthouse under the name “Gasthaus zur Krone-Post”.

1860-1870

Lorenz Gredig expands his guest house business into the adjacent old schoolhouse, commissioning Grisons’ master builder Nikolaus Hartmann renovate, and extended, into two annexes across the street. The “Krone” now offers accommodation for 50 guests.

1872-1879

Thanks to the explosive development of tourism in the Upper Engadine, the “Krone” flourishes and soon needs more space for its guest to eat, drink and entertain: Hartmann senior adds a new restaurant, with a kitchen beneath, down to the valley. As part of these improvements, he also builds the “Bellavista” wing – with luxurious function rooms (Salle de Conversation, Salle des Dames, Salle de Billiard) and guest rooms with private drawing rooms. Lorenz Gredig also enhances the status of his premises by given it a new name: it is now called “Hotel Kronenhof and Bellavista”.

1896-1898

The Kronenhof experiences its largest and most significant expansion to date: based on the plans of architects Jacob and Georg Ragaz, it is renovated, rebuilt and extended into a prestigious, horseshoe-shaped three-winged structure with an honorary courtyard (Cour d’honneur) – as it stands today! The main entrance is positioned beneath the dome in the middle of the courtyard with the huge hotel lobby in the centre, bathed in light and lined by elegant drawing rooms on both sides. This is completed with the dining room and the splendid “Grand Restaurant”, enlarged by two side aisles. Outside a tennis court in the large, terraced park awaits guests. From now on, the luxurious premise, with over 350 guest beds, is known as the “Grand Hotel Kronenhof and Bellavista”.

1905

Lorenz Gredig dies, his son Lorenz Gredig-Fanconi (1861-1940) takes over management of the Kronenhof. The Belle Epoque brings noble and wealthy guests from around the world: travelling comfortably (also in winter) on the Rhätische railway from Chur, from 1903 to Samedan, from 1908 to Pontresina. Lorenz Gredig-Fanconi builds an ice-skating rink and forges plans for the building of a new wing with a separate banqueting hall and ballroom. In 1914, though plans were halted as the First-World War breaks out.

Crisis Years

War and years of crisis burden the “Kronenhof” – only the wine business and farming reveal themselves to be secure sources of income. Despite this, behind the scenes, things are modernised: The kitchen is enlarged, new heating is installed, the guest rooms are given private bathrooms.

1928

The Winter Olympics take place in Upper Engadine, focussing in St. Moritz, (with ski-jumping in Pontresina). The region is once again visited by jet-setters of the time. In 1933, the architect Nikolaus Hartmann junior, son of the “Krone” master builder, designs a modern, wooden “Ice Pavillion” with a sun terrace for the “Kronenhof” ice rink and in 1937/38, in the oldest part of the hotel, adds new vault for the old inn and new wooden panels for the “Kronenstübli”.

1940

The Second World War turns Switzerland into an “Alpine Fortress” with the few - Swiss - guests staying in the oldest part of the Kronenhof. Lorenz Gredig-Fanconi dies, aged 81. His children continue to manage the business: Lorenz Gredig-Stünzi (Grisons cantonal councillor, vice president of the Swiss Hoteliers Association), Andreas Gredig (manages the hotel from 1945), Christian Gredig (manager of the wine business), Giachem Gredig (responsible for farming), Thomas Gredig and the only daughter, Margerita Gredig.

1948

The Winter Olympics take place in the Upper Engadine for the second time: Once again, the region becomes a meeting point for swarms of international guests, with St. Moritz the Mecca of glamour, Pontresina the oasis of discretion and tranquillity.





GRAND HOTEL KRONENHOF PONTRESINA

★★★★★

1954/1974

Lorenz Gredig the fourth, son of Christian Gredig, manages the Kronenhof – and receives industrialists and artists, guests of honour and filmstars.

1963/64

The Kronenhof is given a swimming pool and, connected to it in the large park, an open air pool.

1975

For the first time, a woman assumes management of the «Kronenhof» and its 140 staff: Rita-Angela Gredig, the daughter of Andreas Gredig. In 1984 the premises are leased, but then, because one of the 16 Gredig heirs demands cash, sold.

1989

After 140 years of family tradition, the Gredig family sell the «Kronenhof» to the Swiss private investors Hans C. Bodmer and Andreas G. Schmid, who maintain the premises with great commitment. Since autumn 2002, the «Kronenhof» is managed by the Zurich five-star hotelier Henry Hunold.

2004

In Spring, the Grand Hotel Kronenhof and its entire property is bought by AG Grand-Hotels Engadinerkulm, owners of the famous Kulm-Hotel in St. Moritz. In the coming years, the Grand Hotel Kronenhof, protected inside and out as an historical monument, is painstakingly fully renovated. The first part to undergo renovation works is west-wing Ganzoni, where 29 rooms including 3 suites were completely renovated.

2005

Summer 2005 the renovation continued with 7 courtrooms (These rooms were not used for guests for 20 years). The corridors on the four upper floors were completely renovated. The wood of the old corridors, a rare “Canadian Pitch Pine”, is used for a new parquet floor in the Kronenstübli.

2006/2007

Heinz E. and Jenny Hunkeler are taking charge of the leadership of the Kronenhof in October 2006. In September 2006 have started the gigantic construction works, including a 100 spaces new underground garage, 28 additional guest rooms and a more than 2000qm large spa-complex. From April 2007 until November 2007 the hotel was completely closed. In addition took place the reconstruction of the staff-accommodation and the kitchen. Since the creation of the three-wing-layout of the hotel in the last century, no project to expand was as big and significant as this.

2013

Marc Eichenberger is taking over the management of the Grand Hotel Kronenhof. In 2015 he initialises the extension and modernisation of the ski room. 13 double rooms and junior suites are being refurbished in 2016 with French star architect Pierre-Yves Rochon.



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