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TRAVEL BRIEFING
Global
Key openings

A launch in Kuala Lumpur, an art-filled guesthouse in Geneva, and an Austrian hotelier on the up — here is our selection of intriguing new places to lay your head.



Maximilian Hotel
PRAGUE

When it opened in 1995, the Maximilian Hotel was one of the first small and smart hotels in Prague and it's recently been given a thoughtful facelift by London's Conran and Partners. Its 71 rooms are a short stroll from Charles Bridge and Wenceslas Square. The guest rooms are rather grand, with arched ceilings, while the woven headboards nod to traditional basket-making. The hotel's artwork celebrates the Czech avant garde movement and the reconfigured space now has an additional bar and café plus a brasserie, library and courtyard garden. There's also a basement spa for those looking for a little respite. — SZ
maximilianhotel.com



Austin Proper Hotel
TEXAS

Los Angeles designer Kelly Wearstler has brought her deft touch to Texas for the Proper brand's first hotel outside California. Every dreamy room is finished with tiles by ceramicist Rick Van Dyke, art by Magda Sayeg and Texas-mined travertine. The food options include The Peacock, the hotel's Mediterranean flagship; La Piscina, a Mexican-inspired poolside affair; The Mockingbird Café, a bakery; and Goldie's Sunken Bar, a cocktail joint. Bottoms up. — SR
properhotel.com



Q&A
FLORIAN WEITZER
Hotelier
Weitzer Hotels, Graz and Vienna

Florian Weitzer is a member of the fourth generation of a family of hoteliers from Austria's second-largest city, Graz. Since taking over the group in 2003, he has expanded into Vienna with the Hotel Daniel and Grand Ferdinand Hotel, while also overhauling and updating the family's three Graz mainstays. He talks about Austrian hospitality, buoying a brand and a new opening outside the capital. — AKO

What does Austrian hospitality mean to you and what makes it unique?

There's a line in the Austrian national anthem that goes: "A nation blessed with beauty". So we strive for high standards when it comes to hospitality.

How is it changing?

You have to be unique to survive. For my part, each of my locations has its own distinct identity. This appeals to our guests and, of course, this is what helps to create a brand.

Tell us about your latest openings.

We recently opened a new restaurant, Salon Marie, at the Grand Hôtel Wiesler in Graz. Dating from 1909, the hotel itself is quite special. We will also open our first standalone restaurant this summer in Salzburg.

How did you make them feel new and keep your fingerprint on them?

I love reinterpreting highly atmospheric old buildings in a contemporary way, so while we celebrate tradition, we do it in a forward-looking manner.

Are there many opportunities in the Austrian market and what are they?

You could say that there are still many places in Austria that are waiting to be kissed and awoken. I believe that my new project is one of them. I purchased a historic spa hotel in a beautiful area just outside Vienna; it will be opening in a few years as the Grand Semmering. It had its heyday before the First World War when important Austrian writers and artists came to visit. I was inspired by the charm of the building.

weitzer.com