



SUVRETТА HOUSE
ST. MORITZ

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PRESS INFORMATION**

THE STORY OF SUVRETТА HOUSE

A grand five star hotel steeped in history, quintessentially Swiss and rooted in Engadine tradition

Far away from the bustle of central St. Moritz, Suvretta House emerges from the trees of the Upper Engadine Mountains as if from the pages of a fairy tale, with impressive turrets and a Belle Époque exterior standing out against the rugged valley landscape.

The history of Suvretta House begins in 1912, with hotel pioneer Anton Sebastian Bon. Although Anton Bon was approaching 60 when the hotel was opened, he was by no means ready for retirement. Dynamic and full of ideas, his achievements were rarely matched anywhere else in the world. Trained in the hotel business, a veteran of many renowned European establishments, his goal was independence and his own luxury hotel. Initially he and his wife Marie took out a lease on the hotels Bodenhäus and Post in Splügen. They then purchased the Rigi First hotel, and subsequently the Villa Pfyffer in Vitznau, which was to become the Park Hotel. But the landmark of his career as a hotel owner was to be the creation of Suvretta House.

Anton knew there were travellers who preferred to spend their holidays away from the public eye, far from the high-profile parties and the celebrity photographers of St. Moritz and that they would prefer an exclusive address two kilometres away in the Suvretta estate. This area provided peace and quiet and impeccable discretion, with the 'bellavista' - a tremendous view over the mountain panorama and lakes of the Upper Engadine.

Architect Karl Koller drew up the plans for a hotel and the foundation was laid on April 22nd, 1911. Work began at an unprecedented pace, with 400 workmen working from dawn to dusk. By December of the same year the hotel was ready for the interior outfitting work to commence. The following months of 1912 were dedicated to interior decoration and soon the hotel was ready to welcome the first guests. Anton Bon's dream, Suvretta House, had come true. Embracing the style of the belle époque, the château-like building was truly impressive. The luxurious interior boasted 110 bathrooms. Comfort was the absolute priority. With no expense spared the hotel exceeded even the expectations of the owners, and was only matched by its stunning location.

THE SOUL OF SUVRETTA – THE PEOPLE

After the death of Anton Bon in 1915, it was his wife Marie who made her mark on the future of the establishment. She was called 'the soul of the Suvretta', due to her strong personality. Yet those first years without her husband were difficult. The Great War was in progress and foreign guests were few and far between. During World War II the hotel had to be completely shut down for several years. But in spite of all the problems encountered, the legacy of Anton Bon was in good hands. His son Hans in particular was responsible for carrying on his legacy. His brother Anton worked in the hotel for a year after their father's death then left for England to continue his hotel career at the Dorchester in London.

The era of Hans Bon began in the golden 20's, the period of extravagant parties and balls and lasted until 1950. In January 1919 Vaslav Nijinski, the famous dancer, gave his last ever major performance in the ballroom of Suvretta House. During this time Madam Peron, Crown Prince Akihito of Japan and King Faruk of Egypt were staying at the hotel. The Shah of Persia, too, was a regular and enthusiastic guest. Guests knew Hans as a charming host, who liked to play traditional tunes on the Swiss accordion in the hotel bar.

After the economically austere war years a new beginning followed in summer 1946. Though the hotel had extremely limited financial resources the management were determined to restore it back to its former glory. Mountains of debt had to be cleared alongside a total renovation. After Hans Bon's death Rudolf Candrian-Bon took over for a period of four years. After this his brother Albert Candrian managed Suvretta House for the next 14 years. In 1968 the baton was passed on to directors Rudolf F. and Dorli Müller. In the glorious 50's the hotel had the unique 'Carousel Bar', where American guests in particular liked to meet for aperitifs and nightcaps. In 1989, Suvretta House management was passed onto Helen and Vic Jacob, who ran the hotel in accordance with the philosophy of the Bon family. Then in 2014 Esther and Peter Egli took over management and are in place as the seventh joint managers.

Since 2014 Suvretta House has been under the management of husband and wife team Esther and Peter Egli, who are 'on call' around the clock. Such dedication also has a positive effect on the staff, and contributes significantly to the long-term loyalty of the employees and the loyalty of returning guests. Suvretta House is seen by many as a 'home away from home'. Repeat guests at Suvretta House can leave their own skis, hiking kit and equipment which are carefully stored at the hotel for subsequent visits. This service is hugely appreciated by the numerous guests who return to Suvretta House year-upon-year. Regulars have their 'own' tables in the magnificent Grand Restaurant dating back to the era of Anton Bon and their favourite armchair for reading and relaxing in the lobby. They are drawn by the tradition of places like the hotel's stylish Anton's Bar where until 1989 its legendary expert mixologist Mario Scandella had presided over the bar for 40 years, serving a long list of celebrities such as the Shah of Persia, King Umberto of Italy and Gregory Peck. Many of the 300 members of the Suvretta team proudly wear a certain number of stars on their uniforms, symbols that express their loyalty to the hotel. One star stands for 10 completed seasons. Suvretta House has maintained its status and reputation over many decades by striving for continuity, by being determined to uphold the time-honoured and traditional values, by consistently seeking to improve the 'pillars' of Suvretta House.

THE ONLY SKI IN SKI OUT HOTEL IN ST MORITZ

Suvretta House was a pioneer when it comes to skiing. In 1935 the first-ever ski lift Suvretta-Randolins was opened. Hollywood star Douglas Fairbanks cut the tape on December 22nd, and proceeded to become the first celebrity to be taken up the mountain from Chasellas to Randolins. The project was established by the Skilift Suvretta company, guided by Hans Bon and architect Karl Koller. In 1937 a second lift was built as a continuation of the first one, twice the length from Randolins to Plateau Nair, up to altitude of 2760 metres. In spite of the war, slalom races were held, including the 1940 Vlasow Cup, which was initiated by Mrs Alex Vlasow.

Albert Candrian was as committed to winter sports as his predecessor. He continued the development of skiing facilities directly on the hotel's doorstep. To provide scope for downhill pistes, Suvretta House purchased additional land in 1963. Providing direct access from the hotel for guests to the Corviglia skiing region. The sunny south-westerly slopes are accessed by nine T-bar and chair lifts providing up to 600 metres elevation. Suvretta House is the only ski in ski out hotel in St Moritz. Switzerland's first ski school was opened in St. Moritz in 1925. The Suvretta Snow Sports School is located in the hotel, and employs more than 140 ski instructors during the winter season making it easy for guests to learn or improve their skiing or snowboarding skills.

A NEW ERA FOR THE GRAND DAME OF THE MOUNTAINS

In December 2016 the legendary doors of Suvretta House reopened. Not only to welcome the new winter season, but to mark phase one in a new era for the century-old winter palace. The hotel launched 23 new rooms as part of a staggered phase of refurbishment which will see the hotel re-launched and put back on the map as one of Europe's finest winter retreats. With the ongoing refurbishment led by UK interior designer Sue Freeman, the hotel embarks on an exciting period of change, with all rooms in the hotel set to be fully renovated by December 2017.

Aiming to refresh spaces which haven't been changed for over twenty years, yet retain the period charm and authentic features of a hotel first opened in December 1912, the redesign incorporates warming parquet flooring, hand crafted rugs, embroidered cushions, bespoke furniture, homely wallpapers, elegant colours and luxurious fabrics and reconceptualises room layouts to maximise on spectacular views of lake, woodland and mountains.

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