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L'année dernière à Marienbad

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The considerable amount of renovations carried out on our hotels only too often evokes this heading, symptomatic as it is of a state of mind concerned only with what has gone before. The question whether this must of necessity be so requires a sociological study of tourism and hoteliers.

Tourism and the Three-star Hotel

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by Reinhold Hohl

Here "three-star" means, of course, that category in hotel guides above which we cannot go. Prior to the first third of the 19th century the problem of hotel architecture did not arise, seeing that those who travelled did so only to places of pilgrimage or to health resorts. Then there emerged the increasingly widespread phenomenon of holidays and with it the construction of "palaces" in the heart of the country (Rigi, Zermatt, etc.). The illustrations to this article show the forms assumed by hotel architecture in the first half of the 19th century, that is to say, before "the fall from grace", which occurred as soon as tourism became a mass phenomenon and what had previously been incidental items of décor (pavilions, chalets, etc.) degenerated into the monumental.

The Architectural Renovation of our Hotels

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by Theo Schmid

Among all the forms of architecture hotels are the buildings with the highest degree of functional complexity and the greatest sensitivity to changes in behavioral patterns and requirements. So true is this that the working life of a hotel rarely, if ever, exceeds 50 years. Sociological development, increasingly rapid progress in technology, the ever more vital necessity to rationalize work methods—all these factors explain why hotels are bound to age more rapidly than other buildings and why the hotel industry is forced to go on changing its forms of accommodation. This is why in this sector there is little concern with questions of style and final solutions and why the answer is sought in attempting to benefit from provisional but continual renovation.

Restore, but don't renovate

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In the course of an interview granted Werk, Alberto Camenzind, himself both architect (FAS/SIA) and hotelier, disagreed with the author of the previous article. Recognizing the importance of hotels being modernized with regard to their installations and standard of comfort, he is of the opinion, nevertheless, that their appearance, far from being adapted to be in line with current tastes, should be retained or even restored, if it should have been lost, so long as their original character was stylistically satisfactory, which is generally the case. Any large hotel could be said to be the psychological dynamo of the tourist centre in which it stands. Intelligent planning in a tourist resort must be carried out on the spot and in the first instance must make use of what already exists. Given the two constant factors of climate and the natural surroundings, it is up to the population to show its initiative and attract tourists, where necessary by setting up satellites near the main centre or even by creating an important new one.

The Bürgenstock Hotels

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We publish some photographs of the Bürgenstock hotels. These form a 50-building strong complex all belonging to one person; it is this factor that would give a chance for over-all renovation on a large scale.

Davos—Centre and Decentralization

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by Marianne Gisel

Davos, whose existence for so long depended on its sanatoria, is at present being forced to become a tourist resort owing to the marked, and in itself fortunate, decline in tuberculosis. It is primarily a winter-sports centre but nevertheless also caters for holidaymakers. It is only within the last five years that a number of holiday houses have been built—at the end of 1961 the number of beds amounted to 3,000. In addition, the commune has organized a competition for a skating-rink, a conference building (work on which has been provisionally suspended), an indoor swimming-bath and a new park lay-out. For all this, the number of new buildings in the centre of the town and the increase in vehicular traffic make it desirable that there should be a measure of decentralization, which should take the form of neighbouring resort villages. The holiday houses at the end of the lake are the first example—a good one, it should be said—of this plan.

The Example Set by Leysin

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Once a world-famous sanatorium centre, Leysin has been able to move over exclusively to tourism in the course of a few years by virtue of the fact that Leysintours Ltd. has, one after another, renovated the town's hotels, which at the present time are used by Touropa, the Club Méditerranée and the Touring Club de France. In addition, holiday houses have been built, among them a holiday village for the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions.

Town-planning for Tourism at Mürren

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by Rudolf Werder, architect, Berne

In addition to a systematic review of the local town-planning judged necessary, this issue contains the comments of the town's Tourist Officer concerning the fact that at the present time no touristic town-planning on a nation-wide basis is taking place in Switzerland and touching on the necessity of drawing up as soon as possible an over-all plan for the future, which plan should comprise huge, staggered stages.

Renovation of the Hotels and Baths in Bad Ragaz

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1955/62. Otto Glaus, architect FAS/SIA

In addition to the complete transformation of the park, very careful renovations were carried out on the interior of the "Hôtel des Sources", a fine piece of work (1870–73) by B. Simon. Subsequent to this, the first stage of the renovation of the hotel "Hof" was started as well the construction of a personnel building next to the old hotel "Mühlebad", which will henceforth centralize the laundry and workshops. At present under review are a new pump room and the renovation of Pfäfers.

Architecture and Tourism in the Ticino

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by Peppo Curonici

It was between the two world wars that mass tourism and the multiplication of holiday houses, whose architecture has too often been imitated by the Ticinese themselves, began. The general level—there is nothing which resembles Cannes or St. Moritz—tends to be "petit-bourgeois". Very common, too, is the inclination to mix, both in architecture and in souvenirs, Nordic elements and those taken from the Ticino itself, the old and the new.

Swiss Travel Folders

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by Hans Neuburg

Despite the fact that tourism has been in a state of advanced development for half a century, the work carried out in the field of folders, brochures and other printed matter has not led to very many, if any, striking achievements. Although photography made itself felt very quickly in this sector, modern commercial artists failed to exploit this field until fairly late in the day. Nevertheless, we should be aware of the realistic and yet symbolic style embodied in certain productions, and of the good work accomplished by the Publicity Division of Swissair.

New Swiss Travel Posters

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by Willy Rotzler

The Swiss travel poster, whose predominance in the poster art of the country was once commented on in Werk (WERK 4/1960), no longer occupies the position it did. In the first instance, there are, numerically speaking, very few travel posters in comparison with the total figures for poster work, and, moreover, despite their generally satisfactory worth, banality tends to be the order of the day. With the exception of the series issued by Swissair, the Swiss Federal Railways and the Swiss Tourist Office, our travel posters are slightly below the standard set by the Swiss poster on the whole. It is to be hoped that a greater concern with invention, daring and originality will succeed in gradually awakening Swiss artwork in the field of travel from its present torpor.