

WIESLER

Hotel seit 1909

# The Interior of Hotel Wiesler

How a building rich in history receives a stylish, contemporary coat of paint.

The redesigned rooms, the lobby and the 'Speisesaal' restaurant of the Hotel Wiesler in Graz convey a lively, urban feeling. Whether Art Nouveau, contemporary design, second hand furniture from the jumble sale or well – travelled handmade works of art – as the creative mastermind, owner Florian Weitzer always keeps the historical substance of the hotel in mind. Whilst mixing and matching different styles, his main aim is to create instantly recognisable details and to give things with soul and history a place: As a source of inspiration and comfort to guests from all over the world.

## **Historical substance – charged with contemporary energy**

A spirit of progress has always surrounded Hotel Wiesler in Graz: when it was opened in 1909 as the Grand Hotel Wiesler, it was the rooms with ensuite and a telephone as well as a hotel lift, which set new standards. Taken over by the Weitzer hotelier family in 1999, the traditional 5 star hotel continued to be the number 1 address in town. Finally, in 2010, it was Florian Weitzer who single handedly changed this ranking and completely repositioned the hotel: as a place of inspiration and enjoyment for travellers and business men and women from all over the world. Instead of being stiff and pompous, the accustomed quality of the Wiesler is presented today in a lively, urban way – far from standard and stagnation, open to new and creative influences. So it's no wonder that the interior fittings of the newly designed rooms (71 out of 101) at the Wiesler from 3 construction phases between 2011 and 2016 are aesthetically exactly the opposite of heavy and sedate.

Florian Weitzer loves to interpret old buildings of high artistic quality and a particular flair in a contemporary way and to mix old with new. Hotel Wiesler in Graz is the best proof of the fact that gently carried out changes does not mean the loss of historical substance. The days gone by are not forgotten: For example, for events there is the salon „spring“ that impresses with its wall-sized Art Nouveau mosaic by Leopold Forstner – a scholar of Koloman Moser and friend of Gustav Klimt. And next door, in the all-day restaurant called 'Speisesaal', it is street art by the young artist Josef Wurm that entrances guests: modern art, positioned atmospherically by the classic chandeliers in the 4.3 meter high hall.

### **Instantly recognisable details – given a soul by history and style**

It matches the contemporary spirit of the time perfectly that styles are presented colourfully, mixed and as trendy, integrated interior design. Florian Weitzer, however, opposes the usual trend scout rules, as he sees design as a continuous process, in which decisions can also be made based on gut instinct. Categorisations like vintage, retro or shabby chic are equally as undesired as the requirement to create something brand new. It's much more about creating instantly recognisable details. It's often wonderful objects which have been forgotten and now hunted down at jumble sales, which turn up through inheritance or in the historically rich Weitzer Hotels' collection – they find their place again at the Wiesler. Things with style, history and soul. Florian Weitzer finds inspiration for some design ideas in nature and whilst travelling. Whilst one awaits a shave in folding cinema seats at Austria's only female barber's reminiscent of decades of nights out at the cinema, the 'Speisesaal' chairs tell a different story. From old school chairs to specially sought out pieces from the flea market or repository. They have all been lovingly restored in collaboration with a socio-economic business and make the 'Speisesaal' a real eye-catcher. The desk in room 201 offers, on the other hand, a fine anecdote: At the beginning of the last decade, the table was part of the Wiesler inventory and after a short journey around the world, returned to the Wiesler again in 2012, when Florian Weitzer recognised it at the 'Dorotheum' auctioneers.

### **The Wiesler rooms – furnished with passion**

It all started with "room 209." "Sleep well", "bathe well" and "good TV" are the must haves that Florian Weitzer covered when a showroom was furnished according to his ideas, with original and unique items. The basis – a hint of revolution: free from wall paper and plastering, bare walls and wooden floors as well as a free standing bath tub with a chandelier and an unrestricted view of the happenings of the city. Accompanying this is a mix and match of original seating from the 1970's, an extensively restored 'treasure chest' filled with wine and snacks, found at a jumble sale, as well as countless unconventional details, such as a guitar to strum on, a record player for a nostalgic vinyl sound or a typewriter for composing a message from Graz. And in between, there is quite enough space for contemporary design: such as the original lamp shade made from tie silk, designed by the well-known Dutch artist Piet Hein Eek. He has been successfully designing and developing one of a kind pieces out of old materials for years. The beautiful and comfortable furniture made from recycled materials in the entrance hall also matches this concept – sofas, custom made for the Wiesler from varnished wood waste. Another, well-travelled trinket is the hand painted, clay tiled 'tavalera' wash basin from Mexico.

Every piece is individual in its own way – exactly as the interior fixtures and fittings of the different rooms always exhibit unique pieces: no matter if ‘copied’, second hand or newly discovered.

In the early summer of 2012, the famous Wiesler ‘Suite’ at last received a contemporary coat of paint. Composed of the ‘Royal Oak’ room and an extended Grand Independent room, everything here seems spacious and sophisticated, furnished with stylish materials – from a leather covered bed to the velvet curtain in the bathroom. There may well be a little English club feeling, provided by the Chesterfield copy standing in front of the fireplace, though the comfortable, personal touch of the room isn’t lost. This is ensured by affectionate details like the fine Styrian wine on the second hand case, the mini bar in the globe, and good books by big thinkers.

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