

Grand Semmering

FLORIAN WEITZER AND HIS LATEST HOTEL PROJECT AT THE SEMMERING MOUNTAIN AIR RESORT AREA

As of November 2019, Graz hotelier Florian Weitzer is the new owner of the *Kurhaus Semmering*. As soon as - after completion of the multi-year review phase - all permits have been issued, the implementation of the careful revitalisation of the listed building can be started. The *Grand Semmering* will be the sixth hotel of the owner- managed Florian Weitzer Hotels & Restaurants and the first cosmopolitan hotel in a rural area. The *Kurhaus* was one of the most stylish hotels of its time and was known throughout Europe – which in turn exactly corresponds to the mission of the future Grand Semmering.



ILLUSTRIOUS GUESTS

Arthur Schnitzler, Anna Mahler, Franz Werfel, Egon Friedell, Max Reinhardt – these and many other artists, directors and publishers were some of the well-known guests to have stayed at the *Kurhaus* during the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and in the interwar period.

Art and culture shaped the hotel in its early years and soon will do so again. In its most recent past, the building has played host to festivals, concerts and plays and has even been used as a film set.

FLORIAN WEITZER'S MOTIVATION

“I have long been moved by the charm of the *Kurhaus*. I find inspiration in how city dwellers and artists spent their summer holidays here in earlier times. This history fascinates me. Now I'd like to try my hand at directing and inspiring people to dream. I intend to breathe new life into the *Kurhaus* in the coming years, and to do so with sensitivity. The *Kurhaus* and the Semmering region deserve to have the pride and honour of its golden age restored.”

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L U X U R Y F O R T H E S O U L

The luxurious dining room, former breakfast room and the staircase are all original and have landmarked status. They are just waiting to serve as venues for performance and art. This interior decorated with magnificent Art Nouveau elements will offer guests plenty of luxury for the soul. Just as the reading and music room and billiard and game room once did. While taking in the mountain air, sunbathing or exercising outdoors, guests can look forward to discovering how Florian Weitzer will incorporate these elements into his concept. And what features he'll have on offer to make time spent at the hotel even sweeter.

I D E A L L O C A T I O N , P I C T U R E S Q U E S E T T I N G A N D B E A U T I F U L V I E W S

The southeastern face of the Wolfsbergkogel is home to the *Grand Semmering*. Protected from wind, it enjoys a direct view of the Sonnwendstein and receives the most hours of sun in the historic mountain air resort. The Wolfsbergkogel is the birthplace of the community of Semmering, which was established in 1880. The area's popular trail takes hikers along the imposing viaducts and structures of the *Semmering Railway*, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, via the *Wolfsbergkogel* mountain station directly to the *Grand Semmering*. The famous *Twenty-Schilling View* lookout is on the hotel grounds.

The *Grand Semmering* is the latest Florian Weitzer Hotel on the Southern Railway after *Hotel Daniel* opposite Graz Central Station and *Hotel Daniel* near Vienna's Central Station. That makes the Semmering the interface linking the two cities.

S E M M E R I N G – T H E E M E R A L D O F V I E N N A

That's how it was once known. A place with incredible history, an impressive landscape and unique architecture. The mountain resort and FIS World Cup venue of Semmering, with its healthy climate, is approximately 1000 m above sea level and is characterised by its three major hotels – *Panbans*, *Südbahn* and *Kurbaus* – and the UNESCO World Heritage *Semmering Railway*. It is a metropolitan place in the countryside perfect for climate-friendly recreation and easily reached by train – a little over an hour from Vienna and Graz.

A place of longing, a place for winding down. With perfect air and diverse cultural, sporting and recreational offerings. Guests can choose from numerous options for long walks in the woods and along the rail trail, tennis and golf, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, skiing, snowboarding and more.

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FLORIAN WEITZER
HOTELS & RESTAURANTS

Owner	Florian Weitzer (since 2003)
General Manager	Michael Pfaller
3 Hotels in Graz	Das Weitzer, Grand Hôtel Wiesler, Hotel Daniel Graz
2 Hotels in Wien	Hotel Daniel Vienna, Grand Ferdinand
7 Restaurants	Der Steirer, Salon Marie, Daniel Bakery, Meissl & Schadn Vienna, Limón, Gulasch & Söhne, Meissl & Schadn Salzburg
Number of staff	approx. 450
Rooms	716 rooms / 1424 beds



GRAND SEMMERING G E S M B H

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K U R H A U S

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Appendix 1

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND



The *Kurhaus Semmering* was completed in 1909 according to plans by architects Franz von Krauss and Josef Tölk. It was designed as a reinforced concrete structure, falling somewhere between Historicism and Modernism, with room for 120 guests. Together with the *Südbahnhotel* and *Panhaus*, it was one of the three major hotels at Semmering. Following the Second World War, when it was used as a Wehrmacht hospital, the Soviet occupation forces were housed at the *Kurhaus*. It served as a rest home for federal employees until 1988 and then stood empty for many years. It was acquired by a Kazakh consortium in 2007. The *Kurhaus* was used as a venue for cultural events beginning in the 2000s, including the annual *Kultur.Sommer.Semmering* festival, which took place from 2011 to 2018. There is no obvious structural damage to the building, which has been maintained but is not in working condition.

The ceiling structures are largely reinforced concrete, while the ceilings of the upper floors are made of wood. The building's outer walls are masonry. The buildout and details are in the luxurious Art Nouveau style and are largely original and in very good condition. The hotel is landmarked, specifically its stairways, public areas on the ground floor and the southern façade and wood balconies.

Architects	Franz Freiherr von Krauß, Josef Tölk
Clients	Royal Councillor Dr Franz Hansy, Karoline Edle von Neumann - widow of architect and politician Franz Neumann
Building phases	I 1907-1909, II 1909-1912
Style	Blend of Heimatstil and Baroque Revival, decorative Art Nouveau and FunctionalismStahlbeton
Construction	Reinforced concrete

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Appendix 2

CHRONOLOGY OF SEMMERING AND THE KURHAUS

Around 1844	Carl Ritter von Ghega's plans for the <i>Semmering Railway</i> were completed; construction began in 1848.
From 1854	The rail line connected Vienna and Laibach via Semmering; the Southern Railway was extended to Trieste in 1857.
1879	Development of Semmering as a luxurious hotel and villa settlement began at the initiative of the Southern Railway company.
1880	The <i>Wolfsbergkogel</i> mountain station was built.
1881	The <i>Jubelhalle</i> restaurant on the <i>Wolfsbergkogel</i> opened. The first tenant was the well-known Graz hotelier Daniel (Yes, indeed the same Daniel who owned the Hotel Daniel Graz!).
1882	The <i>Semmering Hotel</i> (now the <i>Südbahnhotel</i>) was the first hotel to open.
1888	Hotel <i>Panhaus</i> opened.
1909	The <i>Kurhaus Semmering</i> opened.
1919	The local community of Semmering was established.
WWI and II	The <i>Kurhaus</i> was used as a convalescent home and military hospital.
After 1945	The <i>Kurhaus</i> housed Soviet occupation forces.
1967	Austria's twenty-schilling note featuring Carl Ritter von Ghega was issued. The revers depicted the <i>Kalte Rinne</i> railway viaduct (184 metres long and 46 metres high) (<i>see Twenty-Schilling View</i>).
Until 1988	The <i>Kurhaus</i> was used as a rest home for federal employees. It stood empty after 1988.
1998	The <i>Semmering Railway</i> was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
2007	The <i>Kurhaus</i> was purchased by Kazakh investors.
2019	Florian Weitzer purchased the <i>Kurhaus Semmering</i> at the <i>Wolfsbergkogel</i> , now the <i>Grand Semmering</i> .
2020 – today	Brainstorming, planning and submission of the project.