



HOTEL KÄRNTNERHOF



Style and elegance in a former brothel

Vienna's smallest grand hotel with its magnificent location; just a three-minute walk to St. Stephen's Cathedral has reopened in 2013 following an extensive renovation.

The Wilhelminian facade gleams in fresh light grey; inside the designer Niccolò Grassi, who also worked for Ferragamo, has given the hotel a mélange of Viennese art nouveau, French flair and Italian elegance. Fine wallpapers adorn the walls of the rooms and hallways, armchairs and sofas of velvet invite guests to linger, and in the salon opposite the lobby there is a collection reminiscent of the natural scientist Alexander von Humboldt; pictures with animal motifs, butterflies under bell jars, bird and ostrich eggs - and a composition of dried algae, behind glass, framed. The theme is repeated throughout the hotel.

After World War II the building was known as a brothel named 'Madame Rosa' for a few years; its clients were allied soldiers. Today the privately owned hotel has 44 rooms and suites, most of them with original parquet floors. The largest suite was dedicated to Christiane Hörbiger, the Grande Dame of German film/ tv. She has ties to the hotel of a special kind as she resided there regularly. The Kärntnerhof is one of the few hotels in the 1st district to have its own roof terrace, which serves as a lounge in the summer months and has a view of the baroque towers of the Courtyards of the Holy Cross. Depending on size and season, a double room/suites are priced from 139 up to 499 euro including breakfast.



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"Over the centuries Vienna has been a meeting place for artists, intellectuals and merchants from all over Europe. We wanted to draw on this for the design of the hotel", explains Nicole Nagel, who is responsible for the design as a partner and the director of the Kärntnerhof. She grew up in the hotels of Europe; her father, Friedrich Nagel, started out as a hotelier in the fifties with two Berlin establishments; the Hotel Plaza (Knesebeckstraße) and the Old Vienna restaurant on Kurfürstendamm. Hotels in Italy, Spain and elsewhere in Germany followed. The family, which comes from Vienna, acquired the Kärntnerhof in the eighties. Nicole Nagel was able to obtain the Italian designer, Niccolò Grassi, and Eline de Potter from Belgium for the refurbishment. Eline de Potter curated the private collection of paintings and art objects and assisted in designing the colour scheme of the hotel. The result is a warm and harmonious atmosphere.

Niccolò Grassi designed most of the furniture and lights at the Kärntnerhof. The grey-green sculpted panelling in original Viennese art nouveau shades was crafted in Tuscany. Armchairs and sofas were made by a Belgian furniture maker; even the accessories were specially made for the hotel by Florentine craftsmen. The wallpapers originate from renowned firms such as Farrow & Ball (England), Osborne & Little (England) and Sandberg (Sweden). They form a classical and at the same time modern setting for the works of art, for example the portrait of Christiane Hörbiger, taken by the fashion photography icon, Elfi Semotan. The picture hangs in the Christiane Hörbiger Suite.

Breakfast is in the salon of the Kärntnerhof, selected regional products are served on the buffet. The hotel does not have its own restaurant, but the staff, who know the city very well, are never short of a recommendation of where to eat. This, too, is part of the make-up of Vienna's smallest grand hotel; charming, attentive and individual guest service.