



# Personalised Charm

WELLNESS HOTEL AUERHAHN, BLACK FOREST, GERMANY



*Operating throughout six European countries, Private Selection Hotels ensures that its member hotels maintain the highest possible standards of quality and service. RLI talks to the company's President, Olaf Reinhardt, to find out more about its successful growth and commitment to guest satisfaction.*

GRAND HOTEL DIANA MAJESTIC, ITALY



BEVENGUDDO HOTEL, FRANCE



As international tourism has developed into a worldwide industry, with big growth rates on the one hand and huge uncertainty factors on the other, large hotel chains, in conjunction with worldwide-operating travel agents, are competing for visitors. In this environment, private hotel industry establishments, which operate on a smaller scale and are usually run by entrepreneurs, struggle to stand their ground; the advantages – personal service, individuality and charm, and the diversity of options – are eclipsed by loud propaganda.

It is these establishments that Swiss-based Private Selection Service AG offers its services to, offering a marketing platform for the holiday guest who travels individually and expects a high level of personal service and quality. At the moment Private Selection Hotels attends to 56 hotel members throughout Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Austria, France and Spain.

The company carefully

selects its member hotels and is therefore able to guarantee a high quality standard for discerning guests. Although each hotel is individual and unique, all Private Selection member hotels feature a key guest segment that consists of individually travelling guests (no mass tourism) and are all first class hotels (at least four-star) according to hotelierie suisse hotel qualification criteria. Each member hotel is run privately and is not part of an international chain, and all are located in a region of high tourist interest, offering regional specialities and excursions, and attractive indoor and outdoor activity infrastructure.

So how would the company sum up the past 12 months in terms of both achievement and in the growth, development and perception of its portfolio? "Our target is a qualitative growth," explains company President, Olaf Reinhardt. "All of our hotels have their own individual charm and every one is different. Our guests will find a familiar atmosphere and a high quality

standard in each of them."

Within the last 12 months, private Selection has gained eight new member hotels, including the Hotel Bad Schachen & Spa in Lindau on the shores of Lake Constance, Germany in April, and the Grand Hotel Diana Majestic on the Ligurian coast in Italy in May.

Focusing upon expansion within its existing markets, Private Selection Hotels seeks hoteliers that are situated in interesting tourism destinations and attract individual travellers, whilst sharing, and indeed living, the company's philosophy of being a host that consistently provides a high level of both personal service and quality.

Indeed, the company retains an extremely loyal customer base. "Our guests prefer the familiar atmosphere and high quality of services in our hotels," says Reinhardt. "All of our hotels have an attractive offer of leisure activities and almost exclusively utilise local products. In addition, all Private Selection Hotels take care of the environment and participate actively in the cultural, social and infrastructural development in the surrounding area of the hotel location."

Indeed, guest monitoring of the past 12 months has resulted in a 92 per cent satisfaction and recommendation rate among

guests across all hotels.

In addition, the company offers an attractive loyalty program to its guests and is a member of the Swiss 'Miles & More' programme, which means that with each reservation members receive free miles.

Reinhardt attributes the company's success to the high quality of its hotels and the competence of its long-time employees at head office, but how has the market stood up to the challenge of economic instability and the spectre of recession?

"Overall, tourism is still a fast-growing market," he says. "But in a saturated market such as Europe, and especially Switzerland, it will be very difficult to achieve future growth. To be successful we have to work harder for the quality of our services and hospitality in general. Above all, we have to guarantee good value for money."

The greatest challenge for a company like Private Selection Hotels will be the development in information technology. "These changes are of the utmost importance to how people will be approaching travel in the future," he adds. "We are confident that by 'humanising' our quality of service and personal assistance, we will generate for ourselves a big advantage in a highly competitive market."



AD-EXTERMINAL SPA, SANGUINETTO D'ORCIA, ITALY



WELLNESS & SPA HOTEL FAMILIAGE, SCHNIBELIUSTAD, SWITZERLAND



HOTEL WALDHAUS, SWITZERLAND