

Press release, 29 February 2024

100 years of Swiss Youth Hostels – anniversary exhibition opens at Burgdorf Castle Museum

A special exhibition entitled «100 years of Swiss Youth Hostels – savouring, slumbering, adventuring together» will open at Burgdorf Castle Museum on 1 March 2024. In addition to the history of Swiss youth tourism and the Swiss Youth Hostels, the exhibition puts a spotlight on the guests of the youth hostels.

On 28 April the Swiss Youth Hostels are celebrating their 100th anniversary. The laying of the foundation stone for the youth hostels in 1924 also marked the start of youth tourism in Switzerland. Burgdorf Castle Museum is highlighting this historic anniversary from 1 March to 29 December 2024 with its special exhibition «100 years of Swiss Youth Hostels – savouring, slumbering, adventuring together».

1 March to 29 December 2024: An annual exhibition full of history and stories

The special exhibition at Burgdorf Castle Museum puts a spotlight on youth hostel guests. Historical photos and videos take visitors on a journey, showing how the youth cooked, washed up and slept on straw 80 years ago. The video covers everything from the founding of the Wandervogel movement in the 1920s and 1930s to the backpackers of the 1960s and the «generation of low-cost flyers» of the 1990s to today's hostels, which offer half-board and dormitories as well as double and family rooms with shower/WC or even wellness facilities.

With their 100th anniversary, the Swiss Youth Hostels are not only writing history, but also countless personal stories. Visitors to the exhibition can enjoy some of these «youth hostel tales» from the comfort of their bunk bed – from love for life to a second home at the youth hostel.

Close connection between Emmental and youth hostels

The standardised bed linen has always been a unifying element between the hostels. The exhibition showcases everything from wool blankets to the latest bed linen created by textile designers. There is also a close connection between the youth hostels and Burgdorf and the region. A fictitious series of postcards provides insights into tourism in the Emmental valley and presents the various ideas for a youth hostel in the region. «Something brought to full circle when the youth hostel moved to Burgdorf Castle in 2020, confirming the close connection between the Swiss Youth Hostels, tourism in Emmental and Burgdorf Castle,» says Daniel Furter, Director of Burgdorf Castle Museum. As part of a brainteaser game to round off the day, visitors to the exhibition can test their knowledge of the locations and buildings of the youth hostels and, with a little luck, will soon be able to spend the night in one of them themselves.

True to values practised over 100 years

The Swiss Youth Hostels are part of Swiss cultural history. Their eventful history mirrors their interaction with youth and social tourism, which has been actively practised by the non-profit organisation from the day it was founded to the present. «The Swiss Youth Hostels have remained true to their values for a century: We want to make it possible for all people to explore the world and learn about new cultures. At the same time, we aim to make sustainable travel accessible to everyone,» explains Janine Bunte, CEO of the Swiss Youth Hostels.

The community character of the youth hostels plays a key role in this, reflected in the title of the exhibition «Savouring, slumbering, adventuring together». And so the exhibition posters also focus on sharing meals, overnight stays and adventures. For the duration of the exhibition, three versions of these posters matching the title will be displayed at all youth hostels. «A QR code takes our guests on a short journey through time on each of the topics and gives them access to an entertaining video on the 100-year history of the Swiss Youth Hostels,» says Janine Bunte.

More information on the history of the Swiss Youth Hostels will be provided to media representatives by the Swiss Youth Hostels at the end of March 2024.

About the Swiss Youth Hostels

The Swiss Youth Hostels Association's network comprises 42 own hostels and 7 franchise properties, ranging from romantic castles to urban design locations and wellness hostels. The non-profit organisation with nearly 60,000 members generates around 800,000 overnight stays annually. The focus is on quality-conscious, sustainable and affordable tourism for young people and families.
www.youthhostel.ch

About Burgdorf Castle Museum

The Burgdorf Castle Museum is a cultural institution of regional importance in the canton of Bern. The museum presents objects from three collections: the regional history collection of the association of the Knights' Hall, the Burgdorf ethnological collection and the Swiss gold room. The exhibitions cover a variety of formats: from cabinets of curiosities, themed display cases and historical rooms to multimedia shows and hands-on stations. In its work, the Burgdorf Castle Museum focuses on education and outreach, in particular with many highly booked offers for school classes of different age groups. The museum attracts around 25,000 visitors every year and holds more than 400 tours and workshops.
www.schloss-burgdorf.ch

For more information:

Swiss Youth Hostels

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