

Press release, 12 June 2020

Schloss Burgdorf welcomes first guests as “Schloss für alle”(castle for all)

Schloss Burgdorf opens its doors to the public on 13 June 2020. The city in the Emmen Valley now features a youth hostel with 115 beds, a new restaurant, an exciting museum for all ages and numerous options for private and business events. 800-year-old Zähringen castle is also home to a civil wedding venue.

A piece of Swiss history can now be experienced by everyone at close quarters: Built in the early 13th century, Schloss Burgdorf will open its doors completely to the public for the first time ever with the opening of the “Schloss für alle”. The castle was home to dukes, sheriffs and canton administration for centuries, and now a youth hostel, museum, the Schloss Burgdorf restaurant and a civil wedding venue are to be found at the old fortress following major renovations. The castle also offers a wide variety of different event areas.

Accommodation in the museum

One of the main features of the “new” Schloss Burgdorf is its redesigned museum. This relates exciting stories about the castle, the region and people from Burgdorf who travelled overseas, leaving their mark all over the world. It invites guests of all ages to re-experience the turbulent history of the castle in the present. Numerous “cabinets of curiosities”, hands-on stations and changing exhibition themes ensure that the museum is always thrilling no matter how often you visit. “It was our goal to truly create a ‘Museum for everyone’ with all the different formats,” says museum director Daniel Furter.

Those who have dreamt of adventures from movies like “Night at the Museum” or “The Princess Diaries” are one step closer to their dream here. The museum is not confined to just a few single rooms –it is spread across the entire castle, even into the rooms of the youth hostel. The latest member in the network of Swiss Youth Hostels hosts a total of 31 rooms, including double and family rooms as well as dormitories with four or six beds. Rooms are optionally available with a separate shower/WC or a bathroom on the same floor level. Ten rooms are also accessible for the disabled. Just like the entire castle, the hostel also offers plenty of space to meet and interact with other guests, with its spacious lounges that are typical in youth hostels. The accommodation price also includes breakfast and admission to the museum free of charge for youth hostel guests. Staying at the Schloss Burgdorf youth hostel offers a unique experience for everyone, from those travelling alone, to couples and families, groups, schools and companies. “Schloss Burgdorf is not only ideal for leisure and holiday trips. It’s also geared specifically to the educational demands of schools. The combination of museum and accommodation is the perfect reflection of the ‘Travelling for education’ creed that the Swiss Youth Hostels have long devoted themselves to,” says Janine Bunte, CEO of Swiss Youth Hostels.

Accommodation in a dormitory is available from 40 CHF per person (including breakfast and admission to the museum), while one night in a private room starts at 60 CHF per person.

Everything under one roof for dining, conferences and weddings

The Schloss Burgdorf restaurant which like the hostel, is run by Swiss Youth Hostels, is a new “place to be” for Burgdorf residents and visitors to the castle. Up to 60 hungry and thirsty guests can be entertained at the restaurant throughout the year, with seating for an additional 60 in the garden restaurant overlooking Emmen Valley during summer. The attractive selection of regional à la carte dishes also features reasonably-priced set lunch and dinner menus. On Sundays, the restaurant serves a fine brunch, ensuring a special weekend experience together with a visit to the museum.

Schloss Burgdorf also offers an ideal infrastructure for private and business events with a wide range of different rooms and areas that are perfect for seminars and conferences, with options for an accompanying seated or standing lunch. Private occasions such as birthdays, family celebrations or wedding receptions can be celebrated there too. Couples can also get married in the castle; at the civil wedding venue located within the castle walls. The unique atmosphere in the various rooms and outdoor areas gives every event a unique flair. To keep organisation as simple as possible, Schloss Burgdorf offers a package deal: from event rooms, including catering, technical infrastructure and accommodation. All this is under one roof and within walking distance.

The “Schloss für alle” concept is not only a hit among guests in Switzerland – it also attracts visitors from abroad, putting the entire Emmen Valley on the map. “As a hostel, museum, restaurant and impressive location for events and wedding ceremonies, the castle is a highlight of our city and region. Yet another reason for guests to visit us from near and far, to discover living history, to celebrate or to explore our grandiose and pure Emmen Valley landscape and hospitality,” Stefan Berger, mayor of Burgdorf, is pleased to report.

From the idea in 2011 to the opening in 2020

The concept of combining a museum, a restaurant with rooms for events and conferences, the civil wedding venue and a youth hostel came from the generator of ideas Atelier G+S, a Burgdorf architectural firm. After winning the ideas competition in 2011, the firm was also responsible for renovations which began in mid-2018. “The ‘Schloss für alle’ project is an excellent fit for Swiss Youth Hostels and convinced us right from the start. A modern operation that was designed based on sustainability in a historically significant building, combined with the educational offerings of the museum and the restaurant as a place to meet – it’s a perfect reflection of the philosophy and spirit of our company,” states Kurt Schempp, project manager at Swiss Youth Hostels.

There are a number of people and institutions that helped make the “Schloss für alle” a reality, providing both conceptual and financial support and advancing the project. “The repurposing project wasn’t a simple endeavour by any means. But everyone pulled together: city and canton authorities, as well as the Emmental municipalities, the towns of Zähringen, business sponsors, individuals who have donated and the tolerant town residents. “Today’s opening wouldn’t have been possible without their support, commitment and unfailing determination,” says Markus Meyer, president of the board of trustees of the Burgdorf Castle foundation.

For further information:

Youth hostel (prices and availability) – www.youthhostel.ch/burgdorf

Schloss Burgdorf (offers and prices) – www.schloss-burgdorf.ch

Current information on the opening weekend

Visitors to the castle can look forward to an exciting hour and a half tour on the opening weekend of June 13/14 from 10 am to 5 pm. All guests - including children – require an access ticket. These free tickets may be [downloaded online](#) in advance. They are also available in Burgdorf at the tourist office located at Bahnhofstrasse 14 and in the bookshop at Kronenplatz. We ask for your understanding, that due to the current situation, admission on June 13/14 is only granted to holders of tickets, restaurant- or youth hostel reservations.

Further information regarding the opening and admission tickets can be found on schloss-burgdorf.ch.

The Swiss Youth Hostels Association operates a network of 52 hostels, consisting of 46 of its own and 6 franchise businesses, ranging from a romantic castle to an urban designer location and spa hostel. The focus of the non-profit organisation, which has approximately 73,000 members, is on quality-conscious, sustainable and affordable youth and family tourism. In 2019, its operations generated a total of 736,511 overnight stays.

www.youthhostel.ch

For further information:

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