

LES TROIS ROIS

Basel, October 2017

Press Release

Cristina Bally named Concierge of the Year by Sonntagszeitung

Head Concierge Cristina Bally of the Grand Hotel Les Trois Rois in Basel certainly swayed the jury of Switzerland's Sonntagszeitung, which has named her Concierge of the Year. The recognition given to Cristina Bally is one of the legendary hotel ratings awarded by the newspaper in its showcase of Switzerland's 150 Best Hotels, now in its sixteenth instalment. The jury included Christoph Ammann, head of the Sonntagszeitung's travel editorial team, hotel authors Hans Amrein and Karl Wild, and the editor-in-chief of Hotelrevue, Gery Nievergelt.

Cristina Bally, one of only a handful of women to hold this profession in Switzerland, has been with the Grand Hotel Les Trois Rois for twelve years. She is a member of the Clefs d'Ors, the Swiss Association of Concierges, of whom only two are women – and is of course delighted: 'This show of appreciation is a tremendous honour for me personally, but the recognition is by no means mine alone: it belongs to the hotel as a whole, the staff, and of course the guests!'

As Head Concierge of a long-established hotel that looks back on a history of more than 330 years, Cristina Bally firmly believes that, in an age of urgency and hustle and bustle, of Google and smartphones, people are still the ones who matter most: 'It's still personal service and our relationship with the individual guest that make all the difference, even in turbulent times. And while we certainly move with the times, we're by no means in thrall to every whimsical fashion. That's precisely my motivation: to do this demanding job with plenty of heart and passion every single day.'

*Interview with Cristina Bally – published in Marmite magazine
Recorded by Sabrina Glanzmann*

'We dot the i's, wherever they are.'

The Concierge of the Year commended in the 2017/18 Karl Wild hotel ratings talks about discretion, shows of confidence, and what the world of theatre and the hotel industry have in common.

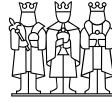
'I was recently invited to quite an important event in Basel – and no-one knew me. I thought that was great; after all, for a Concierge, that's a good sign. The work we do is all about discretion and restraint, so it's important we don't take ourselves too seriously: it's our guests who matter. It's certainly not a profession for anyone who struggles with the classic notion of service and the willingness to offer good service. Personally I think it's wonderful to be there for someone unconditionally, to build up trust, and to think ahead... The preferences, the likes and dislikes that my guests tell me about are my capital; and I store them away in my head, not on a computer. That's also part of the discretion and confidentiality I mentioned earlier. And it certainly pays dividends. For example:

Grand Hotel LES TROIS ROIS
Blumenrain 8 | CH-4001 Basel | Switzerland
T +41 61 260 50 50 | F +41 61 260 50 60 | info@lestroisrois.com
www.lestroisrois.com



swiss
historic
hotels





LES TROIS ROIS

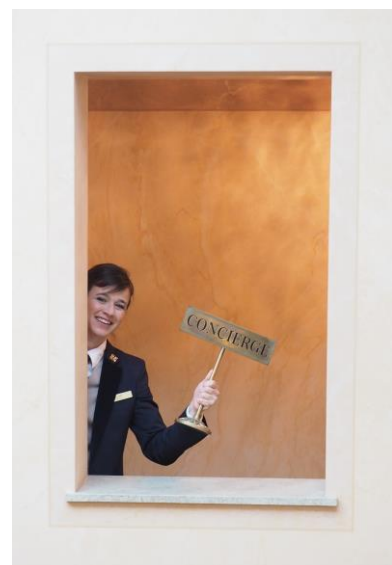
when a regular guest calls me up to reserve their favourite room from me directly and wants everything 'to be as usual' – that's the nicest show of confidence, and trust.

I never know what my working day will bring. Of course, there are plenty of routine tasks: sorting out the mail, getting the cars ready, checking on who's arriving and leaving. But every day also brings new surprises, with each new guest. But I have to say that the image of the Concierge constantly having to field the craziest, most outlandish requests is one that's often slightly overdone. Many of these requests have now become redundant, either because guests are much more independent or they bring along their own PA – and of course everyone has a smartphone. Anyone can google restaurant addresses and find out more about their destination. But guests still come up to us with their TripAdvisor recommendation on their devices, wanting to know what Restaurant A or Restaurant B is really like. By asking the right questions and with a little intuition, I can find out what sort of restaurant would be best suited – and it may well be one that was not top of the rankings. No device can dot those i's, no matter how smart it is.

It's true that the concierge profession is still very much a male-dominated domain – which is not the case in the States where a hotel manager in Denver introduced me to my dream job some twenty-five years ago. I'd grown up in a hotel environment, and so I was keen to do something completely different, which is why I started studying theatre in London... And yet I still ended up in the hotel trade. The nice thing is that there are lots of parallels with the world of theatre. For each of our guests, everyone here at the hotel is always working towards an 'opening night' when the timing and the cues just have to be right. So that hopefully they will say, 'Wow, that was great! Can't wait to come back'.

Media contact & press images

Caroline Jenny, Head of Marketing & Communications
Tel. +41 61 260 50 31 | Caroline.jenny@lestroisrois.com



Grand Hotel LES TROIS ROIS
Blumenrain 8 | CH-4001 Basel | Switzerland
T +41 61 260 50 50 | F +41 61 260 50 60 | info@lestroisrois.com
www.lestroisrois.com