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## Swiss Deluxe Hotels achieve occupancy levels last seen in 2019

**Overnight stays rose by 18.3 percent in 2022 to exceed 1.2 million.**

**The Swiss market shrank somewhat to take a share of around 35 percent, which corresponds to some 445 thousand overnights.**

**The shortage of skilled workers and staff is seen as the greatest challenge.**

*Zurich, 4 May 2023 – 2022 saw Swiss Deluxe Hotels – the association representing Switzerland’s 39 most exclusive 5-star hotels – once again witness increases in overnight stays, occupancy and revenue. Business involving domestic guests settled at a high level, while that from countries such as the USA, the UK and the Gulf states made substantial gains. The number of overnight stays reached levels last seen in 2019.*

The Swiss Deluxe Hotels association recorded a total of 1,271,149 overnights in 2022, equivalent to growth of 18.3 percent compared to the previous year. This means that the occupancy rate of the 39 Swiss Deluxe Hotels has returned to 2019 levels, i.e. before the Covid pandemic’s dramatic impact. The overall hospitality market in Switzerland is not quite at that point yet and remains 3.5 percent below the 2019 mark. Moreover, occupancy in the segment containing all 104 of Switzerland’s 5-star hotels is still 5.6 percent below the 2019 figure. This suggests that the 39 Swiss Deluxe Hotels were both nimble and successful in terms of welcoming back international guests, responding to changes in travel behaviour by accepting shorter-notice bookings and shorter stays and by adapting even more to their guests.

**The overall revenue for the 39 Swiss Deluxe Hotels with all their affiliated companies grew by 13.0 percent to around CHF 1.56 billion. This means that revenue for the association came in at just below pre-pandemic levels.** Even though overnights reached the previous level, guests consumed and spent slightly less. This can be attributed to the unstable economic environment, among other factors.

### **Swiss domestic market settles at a high level**

Swiss Deluxe Hotels recorded more overnight stays by Swiss-based guests in 2021 than any other year. At 552,187, domestic overnights accounted for a record 53.2 percent of the market share that year. This figure settled back down to around 35 percent last year, but remains at a much higher level in terms of effective overnight stays – around 445,000 compared to 360,000 or so in 2019. While domestic guests are increasingly holidaying abroad again, the decline in their numbers was more than offset by buoyant international core markets.

That said, these markets’ trends turned out to be very varied. While neighbouring European markets such as Germany (+7.4 percent) and France (+4.0 percent) grew only moderately, other markets – USA (+63 percent), UK (+61.1 percent), Asia (+59.8 percent), Brazil (+43.5 percent) and the Gulf region (+37.8 percent) – posted high double-digit growth rates. The Chinese market, unlike the rest of Asia, will probably not pick up noticeably until the current year.



SWISS DELUXE HOTELS

	2022	2021		
COO	Overnight stays	Overnight stays	Change %	Market share %
Switzerland	445 624	552 187	-23.9	35.1%
United States	170 877	63 201	63.0	13.4%
GCC <sup>1</sup>	110 922	68 953	37.8	8.7%
Germany	94 573	91 309	3.5	7.4%
United Kingdom	80 295	31 210	61.1	6.3%
France	50 952	46 759	8.2	4.0%
Asia <sup>2</sup>	37 737	15 173	59.8	3.0%
Italy	24 159	17 779	26.4	1.9%
Russia	21 500	21 598	-0.5	1.7%
India	18 988	8 197	56.8	1.5%
Brazil	18 268	10 326	43.5	1.4%
Netherlands	14 617	9 739	33.4	1.1%
Belgium	12 703	10 027	21.1	1.0%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1 271 149</b>	<b>1 038 335</b>	<b>18.3</b>	

1 Gulf Cooperation Council countries: United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman

2 Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, rest of South, East and West Asia

### Optimistic outlook

In general, Swiss Deluxe Hotels are anticipating a good year in 2023. Even though geopolitical tensions continue to dominate the headlines and interest rate policies and inflation are putting pressure on consumer and travel behaviour, business in the top segment of tourism, restaurants and hospitality will remain stable.

### Sustainability and shortages of skilled workers

However, with success come new challenges. At the same time as guests are expecting more sustainability, processes have become more digitised and the need for individual attention has become even greater. One of the main challenges in the resurgent business is the availability of enough qualified staff. Are artificial intelligence applications such as ChatGPT set to take over the jobs of receptionists? "Probably not, but what we can learn from algorithms is to anticipate the needs and wants of our guests based on past experiences," says Michael Smithuis, President of Swiss Deluxe Hotels and General Manager of the Fairmont Le Montreux Palace, Montreux. "It is not enough to have the guest's favourite newspaper ready, or to know their preferred table in the dining room. It is about providing services that delight the guest," he adds. This calls for a high degree of attentiveness and professionalism on the part of the staff. And this is where luxury hospitality faces perhaps its greatest challenge: how can the sector attract and retain sufficient and, above all, highly qualified staff? What distinguishes a Swiss Deluxe Hotel from other hotel segments and categories is that the guests are looked after and served by people who have been working in the same establishment for years, decades even, and who give the hotel a face, or rather several familiar faces. "We have to once again achieve this quality of service and care for our long-standing regular guests as well as a new clientele; it means carefully nurturing our most important resource, namely our employees," observes Michael Smithuis.

### Summer issue of the H magazine



This year's summer issue of *H*, the house magazine published twice a year by Swiss Deluxe Hotels, takes us to the Graubünden mountains. Entitled "Into the green", it is part of a double issue: the winter edition, "Into the white", will feature a tour through the Valais mountains to Gstaad.

Appearing on 1 July 2023, the summer issue will, as usual, be available in all Swiss Deluxe Hotels, Globus department stores as well as in all Audi showrooms and Zurich airport lounges.

### **Nathalie Seiler-Hayez appointed Managing Director**

The Board of Swiss Deluxe Hotels has chosen Nathalie Seiler-Hayez to be the association's new managing director. She succeeds Jan E. Brucker who, after ten years as president and three years as the association's managing director, will pass on the baton at the next general meeting in Interlaken on 26 June 2023 to devote himself to his own projects going forward. "It is, for us, an immense pleasure and honour to have found in Nathalie Seiler-Hayez a managing director with a proven track record, who brings experience from the international luxury hotel industry and at the same time knows the needs and demands of the members of Swiss Deluxe Hotels," says Michael Smithuis, President of Swiss Deluxe Hotels and General Manager of the Fairmont Le Montreux Palace in Montreux. "Maintaining the amicable and collegial atmosphere among the members – what we call the *Amicale* – is a key element of our association, and hence one of the priorities of Nathalie Seiler-Hayez as our incoming managing director."

### **Swiss Deluxe Hotels**

The Swiss Deluxe Hotels association (SDH) was founded in 1934 and comprises 39 of the most renowned 5-star hotels in Switzerland such as The Dolder Grand and the Baur au Lac in Zurich, the Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel & Spa in Interlaken, the Gstaad Palace, the Beau-Rivage Palace in Lausanne, Badrutt's Palace Hotel and the Kulm Hotel in St. Moritz, the Castello del Sole in Ascona and the Grand Hotel Les Trois Rois in Basel. They all embody the prestige of the Swiss luxury hospitality sector, to which they have contributed so successfully for almost two centuries. With a total of 4,100 rooms and suites and some 8,200 beds, SDH's membership accounts for more than 40 percent of Switzerland's 5-star capacity. SDH is thus the most important association in this segment and has for decades assumed a leading role in Switzerland's luxury hospitality. The name Swiss Deluxe Hotels stands for exclusive quality and the highest standards. The personal service is unique: over 8,000 employees ensure the well-being of a clientele accustomed to service luxury. In 2022, the association recorded 1,271,149 overnight stays, while sales in 2022 totalled around CHF 1.56 billion.

*The figures are based in part on extrapolations of the entire association of 39 Swiss Deluxe Hotels in 2022.*

### **Further information:**

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