STAFF TRANSITION IN THE PALACE KITCHEN
FRANZ W. FAEH TAKES OVER FROM SEASONED MASTERS PETER WYSS & HUGO WEIBEL

Gstaad, 4th March 2017 – For over 40 years they made an impact on the culinary signature of Gstaad Palace: Executive Chef Peter Wyss and Chef de Cuisine Hugo Weibel. Now the two seasoned masters are passing the cooking spoon on to Franz W. Faeh, who has also been closely associated with the Swiss hotel icon for decades. Raised in Gstaad, he completed his apprenticeship at the Palace before he set out in the wide world, particularly to Asia. Now he has returned to his homeland and has been managing the Palace kitchen successfully since this winter season.

“A great era is coming to an end: Peter Wyss (67) and Hugo Weibel (60) are a godsend for our establishment – where does one still find such loyal and passionate companions nowadays. We, all guests, truly owe so much to them, in culinary as well as human terms”, says Andrea Scherz, Gstaad Palace General Manager and owner in the third generation. Under the aegis of Ernst Andrea Scherz – 46 years ago – young Peter Wyss started out as Commis Saucier in the winter season 1971/72.

The seasoned master – he has been Executive Chef at the world-famous Palace since 1984 – has cooked for kings, stars and starlets, in the hotel and in the residences, in chalets at Oberbort and all over the world. He, who in the early 1970s actually wanted to open his own Italian restaurant in Delhi, has brought the great wide world of cuisine to Gstaad. Always inspired and with his nose to the wind, Peter Wyss – together with his loyal counterpart Hugo Weibel (who also started as Commis Saucier in 1976 and has been Chef de Cuisine since 1987) – developed a classic, refined signature for the three restaurants of the best establishment in the area. To this day it is characterised by straightforwardness, honesty and precision, and relinquishes the great stage to the true flavour of basic ingredients. Now the well-attuned duo is leaving the hotel – but will continue to be available to regular guests for exclusive catering events on request.

Franz W. Faeh – also no stranger in Gstaad – has taken over the sceptre as Executive Chef from this winter season. The 56-year-old Saanen native completed his apprenticeship at the Palace during the period from 1978 to 1981. But culinary career adventures soon lured him out into the wide world – particularly to Asia, where among other things he was active for the Regent Group for 16 years in Hong Kong, Jakarta as well as Bangkok, and there he regularly cooked for the Thai royal family. Now he is letting the lightness and subtlety of Asian cuisine, particularly that from Thailand where Faeh got most of his inspiration, flow into his creations which he continues to develop into a wholesome, modern interpretation of Palace classics with the assistance of a 55-person brigade de cuisine. His menus are composed of international elements, the recipes and ingredients are much lighter and the presentation fancier than in the past. “We want evolution, not revolution. We endeavour to emphasise true gustation, just as Peter Wyss did. In the process, creativity is never an end in itself, but always serves the holistic taste experience”, says Franz W. Faeh, who successfully led the Le Vieux Manoir in Murten before his return to Gstaad.
Handover in the Gstaad Palace Kitchen: Peter Wyss (left) hands over to the new Executive Chef Franz W. Faeh.
ABOUT Gstaad Palace:
The luxurious five-star superior Hotel Gstaad Palace, which opened its doors for the first time in December 1913, has been owned by the Scherz family for three generations and is therefore among the last family-run hotels in Europe. The 100 rooms and suites of the hotel with an extraordinary panorama of the Bernese Oberland skilfully combine contemporary glamour with alpine comfort. Gstaad’s landmark serves Swiss, Italian and international specialities in five restaurants, and also features gourmet cuisine awarded with 16 Gault-Millau points. The hotel’s own GreenGo nightclub is well-known for legendary parties and its illustrious clientele. The senses of guests are pampered at the 1,800 m² Palace spa. An Olympic-sized outdoor swimming pool and four tennis courts are available to guests in the summer. The Gstaad Palace sets standards for an entirely new form of luxury with the Walig Hut, an alp from the year 1783. The Scherz family welcomes its guests this winter season until 12 March 2017. The summer season lasts from 17 June to 10 September 2017.