

VareseNews

The Palace Hotel celebrates its first 100 years

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There will be a whole year of celebrations for the building that, more than just a hotel, is a monument to the town of Varese. **In 2013, the Palace Grand Hotel, in Varese, will be celebrating its historical birthday** with a series of cultural, food and wine, tourist and recreational events, all strictly in style with the hotel itself, with the **Art Nouveau of the 1900s**. “We didn’t want to celebrate this occasion in an individual, momentary way, but with a whole year of events suitable for everyone, from food and wine events to games, from guided tours to competitions. All in all, there’ll be about 30 events,” explained the deputy manager of the hotel, **Guido Torri**.

On the presentation day, only the first initiatives were revealed, particularly, the “Art Nouveau treasure hunt”, in which, in **December, final year high school students will be able to challenge each other, in a battle to recover materials, objects and memories that date back to the 1890-1915 period**. For the winning class, which will be chosen by an expert jury, there will be an end of school year “aperitif-dinner” offered by the Palace Grand Hotel. For the schools of all levels, a number of free guided tours of the Hotel have been organized, for which reservations should be made, for the visitors to discover its history and the Art Nouveau that is still alive and can be seen in the building. “We decided to organise these guided tours to take people around so that they can get to know these places better,” explained the manager of the tourist agency, **Paola della Chiesa**. “Of course, the tours are open to residents, but also to tourists; we’ll be preparing packages for potential Italian visitors, and for potential foreign visitors.”

These are only the first of many events to be organised by the Palace for visitors to discover, savour once more, recount and play with the theme of Art Nouveau, in all of its forms. On the 2013 calendar, there will be also “Spirits and Stories from the 1900s”, a series of free samplings, to discover the old flavours and stories of the 1900s. The first meeting will be on 18 January, with an event organised by the Palace, in collaboration with the distillery Rossi d’Angera and the Italian Association of Sommeliers. Next spring, there will be other meetings with the products of the historic

Angelo Poretti brewery. Then, there will be the St Valentine's Day Fancy Dress Party (14 February), with period photos, in an exceptional setting, and menu and music of the day, with a prize for the best couple in 1900 dress; there will be also free "Art Nouveau guided tours" in places that symbolise the region, starting in spring 2013, and "The Grand Centenary Ball" (on 10 May), with historic dances for a true blast from 1913.

"It's an important occasion, which we are particularly proud of," said the Chairman of the Palace Grand Hotel, Varese, **Claudio Maria Castiglioni**. "The Palace is the only one-hundred-year-old building in Varese Province that has maintained its original business, and that has strength and energy, after one hundred years, that it is mentioned as one of the biggest and most historic Italian hotels. It takes a great deal of work to keep a building of this kind going, and we want the centenary celebrations to be as great."

Claudio Maria Castiglioni, who was born in 1975, and who graduated in Economics, is the first-born of the Castiglioni Family from Varese, which boasts a long entrepreneurial tradition. It is this young, modern man who has the responsibility of running the historic Palace Hotel and of celebrating its centenary. "I was a little boy when I first entered the Palace, and that corridor made me feel very uncomfortable. Never would I have thought that I would end up managing it, that this would be my first job, and that I would be responsible for celebrating its centenary. But now. the Palace is my home."

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