

SUITCASE

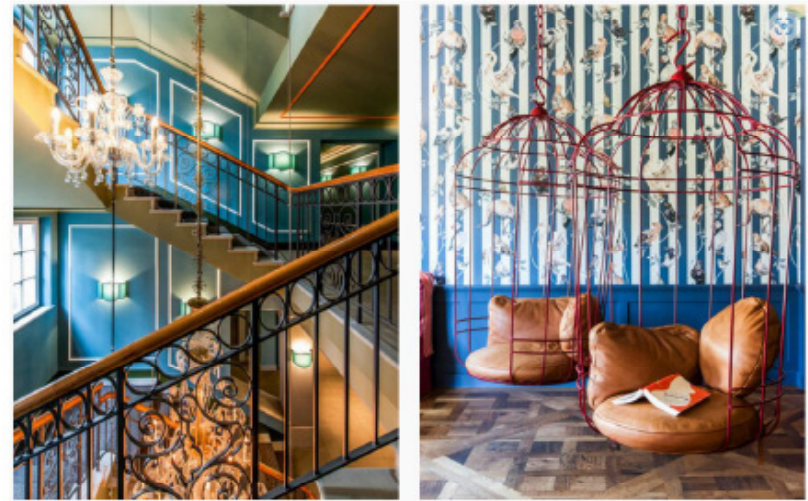
Le Grand Bellevue, Gstaad, Switzerland

Summer in the Swiss Alps? Do it in high style by booking a stay at Gstaad's most glamorous hotel, Le Grand Bellevue.



Snug in the German-speaking part of the canton of Bern, around a two-hour drive from Geneva, sits the glamorous ski village of Gstaad. With its 14th-century churches, traditional chocolate shops, fairy-tale chalets and chic designer outlets, it's no wonder that some of the world's most famous faces flock here - Elizabeth Taylor, Brigitte Bardot and Grace Kelly were among those who helped put it on the map.

While there's plenty to be said for an alpine adventure in the crisp winter months, a balmy summer's day in the mountains offers a level of serenity we didn't even think possible until experiencing it for ourselves. Which is where Le Grand Bellevue - Gstaad's oldest palace hotel - comes in. Situated just a moment's stroll from the town's pedestrianised Promenade, surrounded by staggering peaks and lush meadows, the handsome property - originally built as a Cure House and Spa back in 1912 - was acquired on its centenary by visionary young Swiss couple Daniel and Davia Koetser. Romantics will appreciate knowing that the pair actually met at the Gstaad Yacht Club, located in the hotel's grounds, and held their wedding brunch there, too.



In 2014, following a major renovation project, the design-driven duo relaunched the 57-room property, its original features complemented by art deco furnishings and playful touches throughout. From the thoughtful layout of the building to smaller elements such as the chandelier installation above the grand staircase, no attention to detail has been spared.

On arrival at Le Grand Bellevue - having been picked up by a chauffeur in a 1962 Bentley once owned by none other than Roger Moore - we're welcomed with a refreshing cocktail, before being ushered into the cosy library. In a hotel of this size, it's not too often that you find a team that genuinely strives to meet every request, but this feels more like the home of one giant family than a pit-stop destination. From the doormen to the waiters, every individual, it seems, has a magical story to share, spanning starry journeys on the Orient Express to whispered tales of parties in little-known Italian alpine towns. Also, you may notice the odd pineapple knocking about. The reason? The fruit is considered the national symbol of hospitality - we told you it's the finer details that count.