



# PARADIES

DAS HIDEAWAY IM ENGADIN

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## **HOTEL PARADIES – LOCATION, HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN**

### **The location**

The ascent requires a little patience, but the reward quickly comes into view. Five-star hideaway Hotel Paradies is located at 1650 m altitude on one of the Swiss Alps' most beautiful sunny plateaus. And it offers a spectacular view of the Silvretta peaks beyond. This delightful spot is situated in Ftan, in the Engadin Valley in the canton of Graubünden. The region is characterised by soaring peaks and tempestuous gorges. The source of the river Inn lies here. The river tumbles over steep rocks and flows through countless valleys to Austria and Germany. Engadin's flora proffers a cornucopia of boundless delights to botanists. But its fauna (ranging from red deer to ibex to golden eagles) is absolutely stunning too. Numerous villages in the area, for example Ftan, Guarda, Ardez, Baraigla, Tarasp, Scuol, Pradella, S-Charl and many others, have retained their original splendour up to the present day. The majority of the locals speak Rhaeto-Romanic, Switzerland's fourth official language. Up here there are plenty of insider tips to unearth. The region has products to appeal to all the senses and boasts traditional crafts like pottery, painting and music famous outside the country too.

### **The history**

Hotel Paradies greets its guests with the distinctive charm of an erstwhile artist's home. In 1910, artist Hans Walter Beyer extended the house and studio for himself and his wife. His spouse entertained their first guests in what used to be the lounge, but which is the library today. After several changes of owner and its transformation into a hotel in 1966 and 1967, Hamburg hotelier family Rahe purchased the property in 1995. After investing several million francs, the owners injected new life into the hotel during several refurbishment phases. In May 2009, the hotel re-opened after the last refit. Similarly to their Louis C. Jacob Hotel on the Elbe in Hamburg, the owners have retained the building's original charm even after refurbishment.

### **Architecture and interiors**

The hotel is comprised of cube-shaped forms. Some of these are in a terrace layout, made of concrete and wood and call Bauhaus style to mind. A warm and inviting atmosphere prevails inside. Guests encounter a large room, flooded with light, with upholstered fabric sofas and cushions in red, brown and beige tones. The long antique wooden table serves as the reception, surrounded by other restored



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pieces of furniture and mirrors. The Bechstein grand piano in front of the bar, the crackling fire in the hearth and the unique view of the sweeping Lischana mountain range seem to say welcome home.

Original paintings and graphics from contemporary artists and sumptuous oriental carpets transform the “Paradies” into an oasis for body and soul. The patio offers a direct view of the valley, inviting sun-seekers to linger a while. Guests might like a stroll in the hotel’s newly designed garden, or in warmer weather to breathe in the fragrance of wild thyme and fresh mountain air while relaxing on sun loungers.

Long winter evenings can be spent in the hotel’s own library. There are plenty of books to discover on the floor-to-ceiling shelves. Bibliophiles can sink into one of the soft leather chairs and escape undisturbed to the world of novels, detective stories or children’s tales, like Schellen Ursli, the boy from Engadin. Works from the distant past, but also the present, such as anthologies of poems, biographies and stories from local authors are to be found in the Beyer’s former lounge. Some of these include oeuvres by Engadin’s Cla Biert (1920-1981) in Rhaeto-Romanic, or wonderful poems by Luisa Famos (1930-1974), also born in Lower Engadin and Engadin’s answer to the likes of Lasker-Schüler, Bachmann or Droste. Marcella Meier also provided impressive insight into life in the mountains in her book “Das grüne Seidentuch” (The green silk scarf) which includes a lot of background information and exciting stories from Engadin. Of course the shelves also house beautiful coffee-table books and chronicles of Ftan too. There are also political treatises in the library, some for example from the Perestroika era. But anyone otherwise inclined can enjoy a game of chess, or backgammon or tinker away on the piano. Smokers can withdraw to the smoking salon (fumoir) with its British charm. With chequered wallpaper and heavy, old leather furniture it’s the ideal spot for a cigar or a glass of whisky in front of the open fire. Decorative velvet and tweed cushions lend the library and the salon a lived-in, warm feel that encourages people to stay.

## **CLUB PRIVÉ “IL PARADIS”**

### **The Club**

The Hotel Paradies in Ftan turns its vision into reality: the exclusive Club Privé “Il Paradis”. As an officially registered association, it is the first of its kind in Switzerland. The proven hotel club model among friends has long been established in the USA and UK but, until now, such a concept has been missing from the German-speaking region.

The number of members of the Club Prive “Il Paradis” is deliberately limited to 400 members – this guarantees a personal atmosphere. The club for liberal-minded individuals will combine natural prestige with discrete luxury, allowing you to stay at the hotel surrounded by like-minded guests, completely informal and undisturbed, discrete and durable, elegant and authentic.

The opening times are organised around the most beautiful seasons in the valley: in winter from December until March and in summer from June up until the Engadin “Indian Summer” in October. The motto is: During holidays in “Paradies”, club members no longer have to worry about the costs of consumption and activities. Because these are already included in the annual fee. They can simply enjoy and relax à discretion – and even utensils such as luggage, skis or other equipment can be deposited and will be ready when they return to their second home. A free chauffeur-service takes guests to golf or cultural events – and even picks them up from home. Ski instructors, cross-country instructors and green fees are also included in the club fee. And of course, animal travel companions are also very welcome: Full board is also valid for dogs.

### **Memberships**

Those who do not want to effectively own real estate in Switzerland, but still would like to secure their refuge in the Engadin in the long term, can do so through a limited membership in the **Members Club**. The club has a maximum membership of 400 (an individual membership per person). It covers Grandes Suites, Classic Suites, Junior Suites, Double Rooms and Single Rooms. Club membership is for three years at a cost of 5,000 CHF per person per year. This amount will count towards all-inclusive stays at the resort. Family and friends are also welcome! For each visit, the members can decide individually on the room they would like to occupy.

In addition to the Members Club there is also the opportunity to join the **Owners Club** to secure a suite in the house. The owner family of Horst Rahe sells 13 shares for this purpose, for which a separate stock corporation is founded. This should give interested parties the chance to secure a piece



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of the historical house. The owners acquire a suite and thus secure an entry in the land register – not only for the suite but also for the entire property. Owners are automatic Member of the Club Privé “Il Paradis” with all rights and privileges. They can use the suite for 14 days per calendar year, free of charge.

Guests and owners of holiday flats in the region have the possibility to acquire a **Daily Membership**. With an annual fee of CHF 2,000, they become part of the club, attend all events and excursions and may use the entire infrastructure such as the wellness area, library and the wonderful terrace. A part (CHF 1,000) of the fee is chargeable for consumption. The Members Club for day guests is reserved for a maximum of 50 memberships (one membership comprises two people).

The exclusive **Membership for companies** is laid out for a maximum of 20 memberships. The company becomes a member of the club by a one-off entrance-fee of CHF 20,000. This will be reimbursed upon termination. The annual membership fee of CHF 75,000 is always valid for two people for 7 all-inclusive-days in the Junior Suite – plus all the club discounts. The contribution also gives the company 7 rights of use. Special experiences such as “cooking with the team” or “job changes” are included in this membership.

### **The creator of the concept**

Horst Rahe has been an independent entrepreneur in the fields of shipping, industry, tourism and real estate since 1975. Together with his partner, he took over the “Deutsche Seereederei” (shipping company in Germany) in 1993 and developed the successful AIDA tourism concept for the cruise market. Later followed A-ROSA and latest a-ja for the holiday hotel sector. Horst Rahe lives in Hamburg and is the owner and Chairman of the Board of Paradies Touristik AG, a property and operating company that also owns the house of the same name in the Engadin. Horst Rahe has received several awards for his pioneering work in the hotel industry, including the prestigious “Brillat Savarin Plaque”, which was awarded to industry giants such as Mövenpick founder Ueli Prager.

## **CRAFTSMANSHIP AND ART**

The symbol of Hotel Paradies already welcomes visitors on the approach to the hotel. An ibex, cast in aluminium by sculptor Helmut Tschiederer, emphasises the proximity to local flora and fauna. It's placed among several tall, thick larch-wood columns.

Verena Jordan-Culatti has had her workshop for over 24 years in Guarda, a small village in Ftan. Some of her artefacts, like the colourful china bowls in the breakfast room, are attractive additions to Hotel Paradies. Her studio displays the whole range of her skills. And anyone wanting to learn pottery and how to work with ceramics can get Verena Jordan-Culatti and her enthusiastic team to teach them.

## **HOSTESS MEIKE BAMBACH**

From a very young age, her life was characterised by wanderlust and joie de vivre. After graduating from Cornell University in New York, she worked throughout the world in various hotels in Beverly Hills, Hong Kong, Australia and England. At the age of 28, she ran the castle "Elmau". In 2008, hotel director Meike Bambach moved from Hamburg's Louis C. Jacob to Paradies Hotel in Ftan. She describes managing this little jewel in the Swiss Mountains as her most appealing challenge to date. She and her team aim to preserve the hotel and its history and to establish it as a hideaway for pleasure-seekers, climbers and gourmets alike. As the mother of two children, she loves the great outdoors and has sought and found contact to the area and its people. Consequently, the hotel echoes much personal charm and attention to detail everywhere you look. In 2019, Meike Bambach was named "Hotelière of the Year 2019" by the renowned BILANZ Hotel Ranking. A well-deserved title for her constant personal commitment to give even more individuality to this special retreat in the Engadin. And a recognition for her pioneering spirit in implementing the innovative concept of the Club Privé "Il Paradis".



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## **THE SUITES**

Three grand suites (50-60m<sup>2</sup>), six suites and six junior suites (40-45m<sup>2</sup>), four double and four single rooms offer guests their own private retreat. All rooms are fitted with Swiss pine, revealing the typical fragrance of the alpine air, which is relaxing and invigorating at the same time. The wood is said to have an anti-allergic effect as its essential oils foster particularly relaxing slumber.

All rooms have a bathroom and/or shower made of local marble or granite. Separate dressing rooms, or walk-in wardrobes and modern equipment (safes, flat-screen TVs, telephones etc.) ensure top-level comfort. Custom-made breakfast tables as well as bedspreads fashioned from superb fabrics, lend all the rooms a personal touch. Some of the suites have bathrooms with direct views of the mountains, or their own fireplaces. Sights to behold are the sunrise and sunset over the majestic peaks from the south-facing balconies or patios that belong to all the rooms and suites. They all offer comfortable teak loungers and chairs. For a particularly delightful and romantic touch, they also have different night lanterns. Extensive conversion works are planned: the suites will be enlarged, partly merged and the bathrooms extensively renewed. In the end, only 13 luxurious suites will be available instead of today's 23.

### **A home away from home**

Specially selected beauty products ensure bodies are in peak condition and smell superb. The hotel's tip is to enjoy a calming "Dorma Bain" or a refreshing "Allegra" tea. The teas contain lemon balm, St. John's wort, spring primrose and many other fresh herbs that are grown organically and composed in Cornelia Josche's "Kräuter-Fabrik" in Guarda.

But man's best friend is also promised a wonderful stay at Paradies at any time. Owner-accompanied dogs are warmly welcomed and looked after by reception staff. In the large suites, even big dogs have more than enough space. Upon arrival, they can expect luxurious baskets with hand-sewn, chequered cotton covers, including bowls that all match the rooms' interiors. And of course, man's faithful companion will also be served a freshly prepared meal here too. Home-made cakes for dogs from the Paradies kitchen complete the offering.



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## **CULINARY HIGHLIGHTS WITH THOMAS HAYUNGS**

Thomas Hayungs knows the Engadin: He spent several years as a chef in St. Moritz and the surrounding area. Now he treats the guests of "Paradies" referring to all the rules of culinary art. He will continue the popular "Chadafö unica" concept at Paradies, which is a modern take on cuisine from the lower Engadin valley based on regional produce.

### **Charn Alpina**

In Rhaeto-Romanic, Charn Alpina means alpine meat. The idea for this artisan-meat offering came when Hotel Paradies worked with Ludwig Hatecke, a successful master butcher and genius with meat from Scuol. The result is a modern twist on authentic cuisine that is based on regional delicacies throughout. Ludwig Hatecke provides the final touches in true Engadin style. In the future, Charn Alpina will serve first-class meat specialities that stem from his butcher's shop. Thomas Hayungs will apply all his skills to produce dishes of sophistication. The meat will be pan-fried, smoked, turned into sausages, finely sliced, superbly fileted and much more. Each piece of meat has its own story and is part of the bigger picture that Ludwig Hatecke, as a butcher and connoisseur of this local foodstuff, is constantly fascinated with.

### **La Cucagna**

In addition to Charn Alpina, La Cucagna is also a tempting option. With a wide-sweeping view of the surrounding mountains, it welcomes guests to breakfast each morning. A whole host of tasty propositions and sweet temptations are presented on the long Italian cherry table in the middle of the room. There's exclusive buffalo milk from Ftan farmers, jams and organic yoghurt from the region, freshly baked thin fruit flans and of course delicious nut torte from Cantieni, fine Salsiz (a smoked sausage) from Hatecke, muesli, cheese from a small village cheesemaker's, and various types of bread. This delicious breakfast is accompanied by "Masdüra de la chasa", a coffee blend roasted especially for Hotel Paradies in Café Badilatti in Zuoz. There is no other coffee roasting house at such high altitude in the whole of Europe. Guests are invited to take breakfast as long as they want and even savour it on the patio in summer.

In the evening guests at La Cucagna can discover even more dishes from the local Paradies cuisine – with or without meat and also with vegetarian specialities if requested. The tasty Engadin ingredients are quite simply superb. Thomas Hayungs applies a theme of elements to showcase them, such as fire



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(subtly spiced), water (with trout from the river Inn), earth (in the sense of down-to-earth) and air (light and wholesome). The food is consistently based on regional, market-fresh cuisine. Guests choose from a menu that's updated daily and select the size of portions and order they appear in. No longer do courses come in a particular order. Thomas Hayungs and his team are open to entertaining compositions to suit any mood.

### **Chasa da Fö**

The Chasa da Fö cabin sits majestically on Alp Laret in Ftan some 2,200 metres above sea level. In Rhaeto-Romanic the name roughly means a house with a fireplace. This is where the kitchen team at Hotel Paradis in Ftan teach amateur chefs original recipes from the region. There's probably no other cookery school in Europe situated at such a high altitude.

The Chasa da Fö used to be meeting place and a former pigsty that has accommodated people and animals for decades. Craftspeople converted the erstwhile pigsty some years ago with a painstaking eye for detail. In addition to cosy benches and old wooden tables, a huge wood-burning stove from 1910 found a place there too. Umpteen generations of Ftan families have left their mark forever on the tabletops. Local workers liked to scratch their names on there while constructing the avalanche barriers high up on the mountains. The old wood-burning stove is located at the centre of the cabin. Everything revolves around it and it gave the cabin its name. Cookery courses and regional speciality evenings with music, art and culture take place in the Chasa da Fö.

### **Confectionery renaissance**

For dessert, Charn Alpina and La Cucagna serve classic Engadin confectionery that has caused a stir at almost 900 places across the world, from Turku to Sicily, from Gibraltar to the Russian court. Thomas Hayungs offers a classy reinterpretation of these traditional recipes. The menu features marzipan flowers, crispy confectionery, crumbly biscuits and brittle, as well as homemade candied fruit and fresh lemonades and orangeades. A Bischoff is also served, a forgotten cold and hot drink made of wine and bitter oranges.



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## **SPA IN THE "GARDEN OF EDEN"**

The Garden of Eden spa in Hotel Paradies covers two floors. The ground floor houses the Jacuzzi, the sauna and the steam bath. In the shower- or changing-room, the soothing fragrance of Swiss pine is everywhere and carefully chosen colours ensure relaxation in its purist form. Anyone seeking fresh, cool alpine air just needs to climb the stairs and onto the roof. Two Dutch tubs invite guests to take a pleasantly warm bath. The dedicated butler turns on the water, heating up the tubs with wood for up to four people. Anyone preferring a little more exercise might venture onto the foot-reflex-zone path Taosensa, or play a mini round of golf with friends in the garden on the new putting green. Large loungers are waiting on the hotel's meadow, surrounded by unspoilt scenery and bushes of sweet berries.

### **In shape with yoga and massages**

At Paradies, many roads lead to Rome in terms of relaxation, with yoga sessions on the alpine meadow, massage methods from India, or compresses made with local herbs. Ayurveda specialist Barbara Pohl whisks guests away into a world of utter relaxation by using traditional Indian arts of healing. Drawing on ten years' experience, she offers traditional Marma whole-body massages, to Shirodhara, to Padanganjali massages where feet carry out deep massages. Very popular in addition to the aroma- and hot-stone massage is Dorn Breuss therapy where the spine is treated particularly gently. The Asian body therapy Shiatsu eases tenseness and energy blocks by specific rotation of the joints and stretching. And covered in local herbs and surrounded by the fragrance of the flower meadows, the alpine herb compress cloaks the body into a state of warm repose.

## **CUSTOMISED EVENTS**

Hotel Paradies offers select arrangements with a particular theme. These could include an excursion into the world of herbs with the chef de cuisine, baking bread in a stone oven, or a mountain breakfast accompanied by the hotel's director. Or maybe guests want the hotel all to themselves to celebrate a wedding, an important birthday, or an anniversary with families and friends? Hotel Paradies makes all this possible by providing exclusive use of its premises.



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## **Weddings**

Couples wanting a white wedding encounter a snow-laden Hotel Paradies in winter. Romantic horse-drawn sleigh rides, flares in the snow, or crackling open fires turn the event into a unique experience for the happy couple and their guests. But in spring, summer or autumn too, vibrant countryside and mild breezes await and entice visitors to sip on aperitifs on the sunny patio. Up here, couples embark on marital bliss, quite literally with their heads above the clouds. A special, themed programme of accompanying events and excursions ensure unforgettable memories. Options could include a wedding in the church in Ftan, which is protected as a historic building, or in the romantic chapel at Tarasp Castle. On request, the bride and groom can book the entire hotel, including service and catering for the wedding party of up to 150 people.

## **Conferences, company events, workshops**

Hotel Paradies offers the perfect backdrop for events for up to 50 people, ranging from conferences to team-building weekends. Events at Paradies allow attendees to scale new heights, spurred on by the view of the Alps. A tailor-made programme of accompanying events, allowing the team to unwind after a day's work, is just as much part of the experience as the catering and modern infrastructure. Options could include visits to castles, baking bread in a historic mill, kick-scooter jaunts and curling. Making cheese on the Alp Pra San Flurin, a visit to a monastery, or gathering mushrooms with the kitchen team take the pressure out of the working day and open up new horizons. Hotel Paradies is easy to reach with public and private transport, with parking spaces free of charge. The hotel's handpicked giveaways are long-lasting memories of a successful event.

## **Gourmet seminars and kitchen parties**

A glimpse behind the scenes at Hotel Paradies is granted by a visit to one of its core operations, the kitchen. In Hotel Paradies' realm, guests discover how first-class recipes are prepared. The chef de cuisine and his team encourage guests to watch them at work and they will even let out the odd secret or two.



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## **LEISURE ACTIVITIES FOR BODY AND SOUL**

There are many different ways to relax, take exercise and recharge those batteries in Engadin. Estranged from the rigours of day-to-day life, it's easy to let your mind wander and simply take in the beauty and fascination of the surrounding landscape. There's virtually no limit to the sporting activities available like walking, cycling or horseback riding. And everything is included.

### **A remote Swiss pine forest**

Up here, the Swiss pine forest is called "God da Tamangur" and symbolises nature as it was in the beginning, the will to survive and fortitude. To hikers it's often a magical, enchanting place. At 2200 metres above sea level, where the trees cling onto barren rocks, this Swiss pine forest is higher than any other in Europe. Some of the trees here are more than 700 years old.

### **Hiking for all capabilities**

Engadin has more than 1000 kilometres of hiking paths. The hikers' favourite is Via Engiadina. Located on the sunny side of the valley (where Hotel Paradies near Ftan is too), it meanders through many small villages and beautiful alpine countryside. With an abundance of sweeping outlooks onto the surrounding peaks and small valleys, this tour covers 60 kilometres and 4305 metres in altitude. It can also be completed in stages from Hotel Paradies. The tour from Guarda to Chammonna Tuoi takes about two-and-a-half hours and winds through the valley towards Piz Buin. Upon arrival in the log cabin, there's home-made cake as a reward.

### **The thrill of mountain biking**

The in-sport of mountain biking and Engadin are a perfect match. What could top cycling through typical mountain villages, quenching your thirst with alpine water at the village well and then tasting a piece of piquant alpine cheese? Our tip: the tour from Vulpera to the moorland lake Lai Nair at 1547 metres offers challenging single trails and the chance to take in wonderful views of Tarasp Castle. Mountain bikers will find a 500-kilometre-long network of routes in Engadin.



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### **Soar to new heights with Flyer bikes**

The diversity of the Lower Engadin countryside matches the sporting challenges it presents cyclists. But a little help is required to fully enjoy the virtually unspoilt countryside. To get out and about with ease, guests at Hotel Paradies can rent modern Flyer bikes. These are the world's most lightweight electric bikes that are ideal for mountainous conditions. With half the effort, but twice the fun, mountains are scaled and even headwinds brushed off with a smile. Instead of struggling with tricky inclines, cyclists can take in breath-taking views of picturesque alpine meadows. But of course, the batteries can be switched off too if required.

### **Winter sports in abundance**

With its own chair-, ski-lifts and skiing school, Ftan is affiliated to the Motta Naluns skiing resort. Hotel Paradies also partners with the skiing and snowboard school in Ftan. On request, the boss and his best skiing instructors will look after guests personally. A spirited, four-kilometre-long sleigh-ride starts from alpine inn Prui (where the kaiserschmarrn is a joy!) and winds its way down to Ftan. The most attractive cross-country skiing routes are located all round Hotel Paradies. There's also a small beginners' slope for families and the youngest of up-and-coming skiers. In the valley, Scuol offers midnight skating or curling. Exciting snowshoe hikes (including a guaranteed sighting of ibex) start directly at Hotel Paradies. The skiing area around Ftan is up to 2783 metres in altitude, with snow guaranteed. It can also offer 80 kilometres of ski runs to suit all abilities. In 2009, a new cable car was built from Scuol up to the mountains and Ftan has had a new chair lift since 2010. The area around the hotel also has a multitude of well-connected winter hiking paths.

### **A romantic coach-ride to a fondue**

With crisp snow, larch woods cloaked in white and dashing horses, the San Jon stables near Scuol in Engadin is the place to meet to enjoy equine activities. Different levels of horsepower will take you from here to the mountains. Options include trekking, but also sleigh-rides through the snow-capped countryside. Our tip: why not opt for a horse-drawn sleigh-ride to a fondue, or raclette at an open fire with the family or friends to Bain Crotsch or S-Charl?



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## **LOCAL EXCURSIONS AND CULTURE**

### **Time travel at Castle Tarasp**

Stamina is required to explore Tarasp Castle (built between 1000 and 1100) on its peak that can be seen for miles around. The path leading up to it snakes around the building to the gate. Visitors embark on a journey into the past during guided tours of the castle whose stunning chapel is still used for weddings today. The view from the castle's corridors is spectacular. Our tip: for night owls and romantics, there are midnight tours during full moon, accompanied by the chilling rattling of chains and organ music.

### **A pool with character**

Engadin has a long tradition of swimming baths, like the one in Scuol. In the heated outdoor pool and with an impressive view of the peaks, visitors can relax and unwind, or experience all the benefits of the established tradition of bathing in the Roman-Irish bath.

### **The source of all life**

Worth a visit is the mineral water museum in Tarasp, which houses 5000 bottles of mineral water from all over the world. In the tradition of erstwhile drinking and bathing cures, the water comes from springs like Lucius, Lischina and Bonifacius.

### **Typical Sgraffito culture**

Engadin houses often have embellishments on their facades. These are engraved into the limestone (graffiare means to scribe). The technique is age-old. By adding mineral pigments, such as oxide yellow, cobalt blue or umber, the mortar can be lent a different colour. To gain an insight into this typical craft, Hotel Paradies can organise a guided tour with local experts.

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