



PRESS RELEASE | July 2019

## 2019 WORLD LUXURY SPA AWARDS: NICHE DESTINATIONS SCOOPS TOP ACCOLADES

**Niche Destinations – a world of stories for discerning travellers – has bagged three of the highly coveted World Luxury Spa Awards 2019 in the top Global and Continent categories:**

- **Global Winner** *Best Unique Experience Spa 2019* – **Spa Minera at Hotel Plunhof**, Italy
- **Continent Winner (Europe)** *Luxury Romantic Destination Spa 2019* – **jSPA at Relais & Châteaux SPA-HOTEL Jagdhof**, Austria
- **Continent Winner (Europe)** *Luxury Ayurveda Spa 2019* – **European Ayurveda Spa at Ayurveda Resort Sonnhof**, Austria

St Petersburg, Russia – On 6 July, The State Hermitage Museum Official Hotel hosted the 2019 World Luxury Spa and Restaurant Awards' 4th gala ceremony; a glittering event attended by more than 200 international guests representing 90 countries, 450 spas and 270 restaurants from across the globe.

Niche Destinations Managing Director, Claudia Reichenberger said: 'I feel privileged to count three of our peerless collection of spa and wellness retreats amongst the Continent and Global Winners. All are highly deserving of these prestigious awards, and I'm delighted the sheer dedication and hard graft of all involved has been amply rewarded. It is an outstanding achievement in the international luxury spa and wellness industry.'

The Annual World Luxury Spa Awards are given on a regional, country, continental and global basis; the Global and Continent categories being the most sought-after. Each winner is selected by public vote in recognition of world-class service excellence. Deciding factors include guest satisfaction, determined by online feedback and reviews, location and brand, and this year saw a strong focus on 'unique design with a touch of class'. The World Luxury Awards' Group Marketing Director Michael Hunter-Smith said: 'True luxury is not easily attained. It takes highly efficient and dedicated staff, who are willing to go the extra mile and stop at nothing to make sure that every guest feels cared for and no challenge goes unresolved.' The Global Spa of the Year accolade went to the Bio-Spa Victoria Gran Lujo in Tenerife.

### **Hotel Plunhof – Alpenglow Meets Dolce Vita!**

A cocktail of Italian exuberance, South Tyrolean tradition, seamless hospitality and creative wellness concept – just some of the ingredients that make up the character of family-run 4-star-superior Hotel Plunhof. In the idyllic seclusion of the Ridnaun valley, Paula Volgger and her eight children are the mainstay of the establishment, generating a heart-warming family atmosphere. The Plunhof's Spa Minera and the Acqua Minera poolscape pay tribute to Ridnaun's mining heritage. This singular wellness concept offers signature treatments under the *Power from Rock & Soil* theme, using organically-certified Dr. Spiller's Biocosmetics and !QMS. In the restaurant, Mediterranean and Alpine flavours play in fruitful harmony, supported by a cellar rich in fine Italian and South Tyrolean wines.

Mountain air, spellbinding scenery, boundless activity, fine dining and a captivating spa: all the things that make the EU Ecolabel-certified Plunhof's guests come back for more. Erwin Volgger was in St Petersburg to accept the award in person: 'This is such special recognition of our mother's and late father's life's work – the whole family is delighted!'

### **SPA-HOTEL Jagdhof – Tradition and Lifestyle in a Breathtaking Setting**

The 5-star Relais & Châteaux SPA-HOTEL Jagdhof in Austria is part of the hotel elite, and the Pfurtscheller family have spared no effort in creating this luxury haven in the pretty village of Neustift, and only 20 minutes from Innsbruck airport. Combining traditional Tyrolean warmth with elegance and award-winning cuisine, the hotel is full of life and laughter – a world of relaxation and indulgence where guests are welcomed as friends. The beautiful Stubai Valley offers a glorious summer playground, prime glacier skiing from October to June, and hunting on the hotel's private estate. The Jagdhof's ground-breaking, 3,000sqm spa is a world apart, and the 20,000-bottle wine cellar is a treasure trove that has even made it into the World's Best Wine List. Small wonder the awards keep coming, and guests keep returning. Proprietor Christina Pfurtscheller was elated: 'The fact that our guests continue to think so well of us makes us incredibly proud; but then, they are our passion!'

### **European Ayurveda Resort Sonnhof – Asia or the Alps? *Namasté* or *Servus*?**

The European Ayurveda Resort Sonnhof is a sanctuary for the soul set in the beautiful mountain landscape near Kufstein in the Austrian Tyrol. The Resort in Hinterthiersee is framed by the Wilder Kaiser mountains and dazzling views. The Maurachers, owner-managers of this family enterprise, have registered the European Ayurveda® trademark for their pioneering adaptation of the ancient Indian life science, developing it specifically to suit Western lifestyles, climatic conditions and nutritional requirements. The Resort boasts a team of outstanding physicians, naturopaths, therapists and chefs from India and Europe, and guests benefit from a wide range of Ayurvedic diagnostics, treatment programmes, Yoga classes and meditation sessions. The spa houses an indoor pool, saunas, steam rooms and meditation areas, as well as providing access to the restful garden. Healthy and delicious European Ayurveda® Signature Cuisine uses organic produce from the family's own Lindhof farm. The holistic approach adopted by the Sonnhof's team of experts combines with sympathetic décor, exceptional facilities and surroundings of perfect tranquillity, to ensure a complete physical and spiritual detox. Guests leave cleansed and with a new zest for life. Visibly moved after the ceremony, Johann Mauracher, the Resort's owner said: 'This is a wonderful honour. It confirms that my children and I were right to keep pursuing and expanding the path embarked on by my late wife.'

**Download photos: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/marketing-deluxe/albums/72157709507785552>**

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