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A Vintage Throwback in Bad Gastein



The lobby at the Cōmodo hotel features a Camaleonda sofa by the Italian designer Mario Bellini and a bright red Rondo mirror made of highly polished stainless steel by the Polish architect Oskar Zieta. Courtesy of Design Hotels

By Yulia Denisyuk
T Contributor

Midcentury modern meets mountain refuge at the Cōmodo: That was the idea that Barbara Elwardt and Piotr Wisniewski, the Berlin-based architects behind the interior design agency WeStudio, wanted to bring to life with Elwardt's first hotel property. The Cōmodo has taken over an old health clinic on the edge of Bad Gastein, a Wes Anderson-esque spa and ski town in the Austrian Alps about 65 miles south of Salzburg. A gold-mining settlement turned vacation spot favored by Austrian emperors for its healing waters, the town was largely forgotten in the 20th century. In recent years, though, it has re-emerged as an in-demand alpine destination thanks to an influx of creative entrepreneurs opening properties in the valley, including Hotel Miramonte, by the Viennese architect Ike Ikrath, and the Regina Hotel, by the German duo Olaf Krohne and Jason Houzer. The 70-room Cōmodo adds a touch of nostalgia to the mix, with a spacious lobby that has floor-to-ceiling windows and showcases a mix of vintage furniture scouted by Elwardt and Wisniewski (including Italian-designed finds like the Camaleonda sofa by Mario Bellini and the Elda chair by Joe Colombo). The Cōmodo's spa uses Gastein's thermal waters for treatments, while the restaurant serves sparkling wine from nearby vineyards at tables topped with Verde Lapponia granite, which echoes the shade of Bad Gastein's dense forests. The work of established and emerging artists is displayed throughout the property: Gosia Warrink and Katja Koeberlin of Berlin's Amberdesign created abstract renderings of the surrounding mountains for the wool rugs; another Berlin-based studio, Fundamental, designed a series of goddess-inspired glass vases and candleholders; and the Polish sculptor Iwo Borkowicz crafted a gold-leaf-covered statue that doubles as a working weather station. "The goal is to evoke the nostalgia of a 1960s alpine resort mixed with Viennese cafe culture," says Wisniewski. "Instead of trying to erase the hotel's past, we chose to continue telling its story." *Rooms from \$260;* thecomodo.com.