

Ready for Restart

After a large number of the hotels of BWH Hotel Group Central Europe had to close temporarily due to the Corona crisis and concurrent restrictions, the hotel group is now ready for the restart. With comprehensive hygiene and safety measures adapted to local requirements and coordinated with the state authorities, almost all of the approximately 300 hotels are now open again.

Eschborn, Germany, May 26, 2020. "Our hotels are finally able to welcome their guests again and we are ready for the restart – albeit under difficult conditions," explain Carmen Dücker and Marcus Smola, CEOs of BWH Hotel Group Central Europe GmbH, a group being responsible for around 300 individual hotels of Best Western Hotels & Resorts and the WorldHotels Collection in ten countries. "Following the respective announcements by the governments that private travel will be gradually permitted again in most of the Central-European countries, most hotels are planning to reopen in the upcoming weeks, while carrying out strict and far-reaching hygiene and protection concepts," says Smola. From mid-March to May, around two-thirds of the hotels of BWH Hotel Group Central Europe had to temporarily close their doors including the properties in Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, and the Czech Republic. "Even though we can see a silver lining by now, the crisis is far from over. It may take one or two years before the hotel industry can reach pre-Corona levels again," Smola explains.

"Hygiene is in our DNA"

The safety and health of guests and employees is a top priority at BWH Hotel Group Central Europe. In coordination with the requirements of the individual countries, the health authorities and the adapted occupational health and safety regulations, the hotels of the group rely on consistent hygiene and safety concepts and measures in all areas, such as strict adherence to the distance regulations and a routine of even more frequent cleaning and disinfection cycles. "The additional hygiene measures do not actually pose a real challenge for our hotels, as this issue is, so to speak, in the DNA of our industry, and we were already bound by strict hygiene regulations before Covid-19," says Carmen Dücker. "We also meet the increased information and safety needs of our guests by providing comprehensive information on our websites. All those measures are adapted to regional guidelines and unique situation of the individual hotel. This is a decisive advantage as the information on the pages of the large booking platforms are often only standardised", explains Dücker.

New Products and Flexible Offers in the Leisure and Corporate Segment

In order to respond to the altered market situation, BWH Hotel Group Central Europe has adjusted its sales and marketing strategy. For example, the Group has put together a new marketing package in view of the current situation that includes new digital modes of offering, new price models and new products. "Because major events are not taking place until further notice, we are, for example, launching a new offer for small private events and celebrations. The so-called hybrid meetings represent another trend that came up during the last weeks which we will also serve with a new concept," says Dücker. BWH Hotel Group Central Europe has also prepared itself for the increasing demand in the local and regional market from small and medium-sized companies: The hotel group offers the Best Western Business Advantage program especially for this target group. Coupled with the Best Western Rewards customer loyalty program, customers receive a corresponding price advantage, the highest possible availability and – a particular demand in these times – the most flexible cancellation policy.

The topic of domestic tourism will also become increasingly important in the entire Central-European region. "We are ideally positioned to meet domestic tourism demand in all our ten markets – with holiday hotels in all holiday regions as well as city hotels for short trips, we have a wide range of offers for guests who want to take a holiday in their own country due to the current situation," says Dücker. "Those who want the highest possible security, flexibility and individual information are best served directly with us and on our websites – of course at fair and transparent prices for everyone as well as exclusive offers for our regular guests and members of our customer loyalty program Best Western Rewards", Dücker explains.

Confident Price Calculation Required

Future pricing is one of the key factors for a successful restart. "It is necessary to calculate a transparent pricing policy adapted to the new normality and the new needs of the travellers with reasonable and fair prices that take into account the increased costs", says Dücker. "In addition, there is the uncertainty of many guests and customers on the subject of travel in general, which we are counteracting with a great deal of flexibility and creative concepts", says Dücker. Due to governmental guidelines and regulations in Corona times, the costs for hotels are increasing, for example due to the higher personnel deployment, more cleaning agents, protective measures and partly even rebuilding of the property. "If costs rise, hotel prices must not fall under any circumstances! All hotel businesses have suffered severe losses during the Corona crisis, while at the same time costs are rising due to new security measures. It is therefore important that the entire hotel industry during and after this drastic crisis does not undercut each other with cheap offers and start a downwards spiral of the hotel prices", says Dücker. She highly recommends that the industry stands together in terms of pricing, maintains a stable and fair price level in order to master a successful restart.

The following press picture is available for download:

Carmen Dücker and Marcus Smola, CEOs of BWH Hotel Group Central Europe GmbH: „We are ready for restart“

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About BWH Hotel GroupSM:

*The BWH Hotel GroupSM is an international hotel group headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, and the umbrella brand for the three global brand families including Best Western Hotels & Resorts, WorldHotels Collection and SureStay Hotel Group with a global network of approximately 4,700 independent hotels in over 100 countries and territories worldwide. * BWH Hotel Group offers a total of 18 hotel brands worldwide that suit the needs of hotel developers and guests in every market: Best Western®, Best Western Plus®, Best Western Premier®, Executive Residency by Best Western®, VÄ«b®, GL , Aiden®, Sadie®, BW Premier Collection® and BW Signature Collection® as well as WorldHotels® Luxury, WorldHotels Elite, WorldHotels Distinctive and WorldHotels Crafted. SureStay®, SureStay Plus®, SureStay Collection® and SureStay StudioSM complete the group's brand portfolio. ** BWH Hotel GroupSM offers hoteliers operational services, sales and marketing support, multiple award-winning online and mobile booking options as well as the customer loyalty programs Best Western Rewards® and WorldHotels RewardsSM with more than 40 million members.*

BWH Hotel GroupSM Central Europe GmbH, formerly Best Western Hotels Central Europe GmbH, based in Eschborn, supports a total of around 300 hotels in ten countries, including Germany, Croatia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Further information: www.bwhhotelgroup.de www.bestwestern.de and www.bestwestern.com

** Numbers are approximate, may fluctuate, and include hotels currently in the development pipeline.*

*** All Best Western, WorldHotels and SureStay branded hotels are independently owned and operated. In Europe, SureStay Hotels are managed with the brand Sure Hotels.*

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