

FORMER BUNKER: HOTEL WITH NO STARS IN SWITZERLAND



Switzerland is the first country in the world to have a Zero Star Hotel. Artist-twins Frank and Patrik Riklin came with the idea to change an air-raid shelter into a low-budget hostel.

The Zero Star Hotel is located in the Sevelen commune in the St. Gallen canton. Switzerland has plenty of such unused defense building that cost money. According to the town mayor, Roman Zogg, the bunker was used only for military training. The hotel can be now used for various cultural events. A night in this hotel cost between 6 and 16 euros.

This hotel has no windows; guests may see the outside only via a live cam. There are military bunks and no heating. Guests are provided with hot water bottles to keep them warm. They are also given slippers to protect them from the ice cold floors as well as with earplugs. The ventilation system is rather noisy, therefore some people may like to use these. The shelter is equipped with some furniture from a closed down hotel and decorated with few pieces of arts by the artists. There is also a communal bathroom.

As a whole the shelter was not changed much. The artists wanted to preserve its unique atmosphere and also to offer a sort of opposite to the luxurious 7 star hotel in Dubai. That is the reason they did not for example painted walls. Besides, if necessary the bunker must be convertible back to military use within 24 hours. For these reasons the hotel keeps its Spartan style.

Who knows perhaps a new kind of hospitality services is on the rise. It is not unusual for old buildings from the cold war era to serve for different purposes and it is not uncommon to see a soundproof shelter used as a night club here. If an old castle can be converted into a comfortable hotel why not a bunker?

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