



Photo: Elias Hassos

Genius Loci at Lake Chiemsee

Regional Alpine tradition and international design: in the new Chiemgauhof Lakeside Retreat by Matteo Thun & Partners, both elements combine to create a skilful blend that makes the hotel unique.

by Sandra Hofmeister | 7/8/2025

Matteo Thun & Partners have designed many luxury hotels – in Hamburg and Petrčane in Croatia, Al Amaaria in the Emirates and Yangyang in South Korea. The interiors that stand out in particular are those connected to the Alpine world – the home of the South Tyrolean architect. The Vigilius Mountain Resort opened in 2003 at an altitude of 1,500 metres in the Dolomites near Merano and continues to set standards in hospitality design today – with a design concept that ensures relaxation and authenticity at all levels. The Chiemgauhof Lakeside Retreat in the Bavarian Oberland, around 100 km from Munich and 50 km from Salzburg, is the latest and a particularly beautiful addition to the architects' portfolio. Its design concept combines Alpine traditions and international design in a balanced mix.



Photo: Elias Hassos

Lake view on the Bavarian sea

From the street, the Chiemgauhof is hardly recognisable as such. The three buildings in the nature reserve near Übersee are staggered parallel to each other in an east-west direction towards the Chiemsee beach and connected to each other. Larch wood envelops the unobtrusive façades, just like the agricultural buildings in the surrounding area – a special feature of the regional vernacular architecture. 'We have translated the special charm of the old wooden barns into the here and now, and over time, nature will do the rest and give the entire hotel a beautiful patina,' says Matteo Thun, explaining the architectural concept. The five-star-plus hotel has a total of 28 rooms and suites with loggias and special features such as private saunas and gardens. Every guest unit has a lake view, making the sunset over the Bavarian Sea an unforgettable experience.



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Regional materials

The central hotel entrance leads into a spacious lobby that extends up to the roof. From here, guests can enjoy a view of the lake through the front area as soon as they arrive, while two wooden staircases on either side lead up to the gallery and the rooms on the upper floor. The carefully selected range of materials used in the interior is limited to a selection of natural materials with regional woods. The stone floor made of Alpine Nagelfluh slabs alternates with oak parquet in the communal areas such as the lounge and the parlour on the lake side. There, the building opens up with floor-to-ceiling windows onto a pergola and the hotel's own Chiemsee beach with its own wooden jetty and landing stage.

Inside and outside blend together on the ground floor on the lake side, where the pergolas in front of the house and the old trees are incorporated into open, light-flooded areas. Timeless upholstered furniture is grouped in the lounge around a cosy central tiled stove, which was laid with tiles from the Kampfleuthner pottery on the island of Frauenchiemsee. Historic furniture from the region, such as the large painted wooden chests, complements the contemporary design of the furnishings, some of which were designed especially for the Chiemgauhof by Matteo Thun & Partners. This blend of regional ingredients and contemporary design also characterises the rooms and suites.



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Rooms and boathouse

Carefully placed wooden wall panelling, floors and cabinets, also made of oak, transform the rooms into cosy retreats that open onto a loggia facing the lake. Carefully selected wooden furniture curves into the space and is complemented by soft textiles such as hand-woven recycled carpets and sheep's wool blankets from LPG Studios in nearby Aschau. The bathrooms are lined with elegant dark Nagelfluh stone from the Alps, while the freestanding Ofurò bathtubs made of larch wood, designed by Matteo Thun and his partner Antonio Rodrigues for Rapsel, bring the Japanese bathing tradition to Bavaria. The boathouse on the lake shore is also in the Japanese tradition, with a dark outer shell made of flamed wood and interiors featuring a large fireplace in dark metal and stone. The pavilion with a bar and tearoom can be used for a variety of festive occasions.



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'I always wanted to design a hotel with Matteo Thun,' says Ursula Schelle-Müller, who purchased the property with its dilapidated predecessor building on the shores of Lake Chiemsee together with her husband Dieter Müller. The founding couple of Motel One also owns Das Achental in nearby Grassau, and the hoteliers were heavily involved in the construction and design process of the Chiemgauhof Lakeside Retreat. On the foundations of the dilapidated previous building, an ecologically and technically sophisticated hotel has been constructed that combines the regional heritage of the area with the advantages of modern hospitality and the highest level of comfort. Art is also an integral part of this overall concept – it is omnipresent at the Chiemgauhof. The paintings by Munich Secessionist Julius Exter, whose studio in Übersee can still be visited today, further anchor the luxury hideaway in regional Bavarian culture, contributing to the hotel's unmistakable charm.

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