

The Golden Bar in Haus der Kunst

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From 10 am - 2 pm each day, the Golden Bar in Haus der Kunst accommodates the various needs of its guests with specially prepared morning coffee and croissants, lunch, afternoon coffee and cake, and a restaurant for exceptional dining experiences.

The 1930s

The Golden Bar, located in Haus der Kunst and originally designed as the "Artists' Festival Hall" by the building's architect, Paul Ludwig Troost, turned 75 in 2012. When the "House of German Art" ("Haus der Deutschen Kunst") was opened in 1937 as the first monumental representational building of National Socialist cultural policy, it also hosted gastronomic facilities in addition to the annual "Great German Art Exhibitions". A museum leaflet from 1938 included a list the "restaurants of the House of German Art". According to the original text, these were:

- the posh and cozy cafe with an outdoor terrace and views of the English Garden;
- the delightful bar with dance floor, beloved for its intimate artistic design;
- the beer stüberl (small pub) in the basement, a highly popular refreshment room with modest prices.

These "restaurants" were open all year round, even during exhibition-free periods. Their gastronomic selections were similar to those found in upscale hotels or on luxury liners. Until 1930, in fact, Troost had been best known for the interior designs he created for the North German luxury liner builder Lloyd and for various high-end furniture series. The bar still adjoins the terrace room, and the rooms of the former "beer stüberl" now house the nightclub P1.

The wall decoration

The murals in the Golden Bar were painted by Karlheinz Dallinger on gold leaf, and depict maps of Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Italy and Dalmatia, South Tyrol, Champagne, Bordeaux, Portugal, Spain, England, Ireland, Hungary, and Germany. The figurative representations include:

- tobacco merchants and the transportation of sugar cane in canoes;
- disgorging of champagne (expelling the yeast from the necks of the bottles) and its storage on riddling racks;
- a whisk(e)y distillery and whisk(e)y merchant;
- the wine harvest with Bacchus, grape pressing, and barrel aging.

As a whole, these murals present an illustrated history of the origins of rum, cigars, tobacco, champagne, whisk(e)y, and wine. This decoration exudes worldliness, thus elegantly disguising the racist core of the National Socialists' cultural program.

Postwar period and critical deconstruction

Hidden under camouflage netting, Haus der Kunst survived World War II almost unscathed. After the war, the prevailing desire was to conceal or downplay the building's monumentality. Rooms were made smaller by adding hung ceilings; views between rooms were obstructed by partition walls, and the red marble on the columns was hidden under coats of white paint. In the 1950s, plywood panels were mounted over the bar's murals, which depicted contemplative scenes of Nymphenburg Park.

In 2003, the Belgian curator Chris Dercon became the artistic director of Haus der Kunst. To allow open discussion on the building's past, he had the postwar architectural interventions removed as part of a "critical deconstruction". The murals were exposed and restored. The industrial designer Konstantin Grcic broke with the 1930s aesthetics with a contemporary interior design, which featured an installation consisting of white beer tables and benches and his Mayday lamps. Since 2011, Okwui Enwezor has continued to pursue this discerning discourse on Haus der Kunst and its history in the field of tension between contingency and reflexivity.

Classic drinks with a modern twist

In 2010, Leonie von Carnap and Klaus St. Rainer took over the Golden Bar. With his shaker manufactory and bar concepts for international media events in Los Angeles, Cannes, and Venice, Klaus St. Rainer had long since made a name for himself as a bartender.

Today, the facility contains furniture from the 1950s and 1960s. The room's highlight is a 1920s chandelier, which once hung in the Hotel Savoy in Zurich. The counter and a large, luminous painting in the lounge - both graffiti-like and consisting of white letters on a black background - were designed by painter Florian Süßmayr (born 1963 in Munich).

Even the current drink menu continues the aesthetic break between the past and present by giving classic drinks a modern twist. A popular drink in the 1930s, Blood & Sand originally contained equal amounts of Scotch whisk(e)y, red vermouth, cherry brandy, and orange juice. The bar has replaced the original orange juice

and now serves the drink with a golden crown of orange foam instead - a molecular change that creates a novel drinking experience.

Awards

In 2012, the Golden Bar was voted one of the 50 Top International Bars by Drinks International of London. In 2013, it was named Bar of the Year at the Mixology Bar Awards. In 2014, Klaus St. Rainer published his book "Cocktails - Die Kunst Perfekte Drinks zu Mixen", which one year later received the Edouard Cointreau's Gourmand Cookbook Award for the best German cocktail book, and was chosen to be one of the three best Cocktail books worldwide. In 2015, Klaus St. Rainer has excelled as the Barkeeper of the year (Leaders of the year, Falstaff magazine), and the Golden Bar as the Bar of the year (Falstaff magazine). The Golden Bar, Munich is the winner in the category Barteam of the year of the Mixology Bar Awards 2017.

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