

Remembering an Icon: Swiss Education Group unveils its first private hotel, The Freddie Mercury

Montreux, Switzerland, 29 August 2018 – Swiss Education Group, the largest private hospitality educator in Switzerland, marked a milestone in the Group’s history with the official opening of **The Freddie Mercury**; the Group’s first private hotel. Located in the heart of Montreux, at Platform 1 of the Montreux Train Station, **The Freddie Mercury** will be used to welcome the Group’s invited guests and partners and function as a training centre for professionals.

The Freddie Mercury was inaugurated on Tuesday, 28 August with an intimate cocktail event attended by 50 VIP guests, partners and local press. VIP guests included the Mayor of the Commune of Montreux, Laurent Wehrli and Jim Beach, Manager of the iconic rock band Queen who together with Florent Rondez, Chief Executive Officer of Swiss Education Group marked the hotel’s official opening in a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Other notable guests included Christoph Sturny, Director of Montreux-Vevey Tourism and representatives of the Mercury Phoenix Trust, a charity organisation initiated in memory of Freddie Mercury to fight the global battle against HIV/AIDS.

“There is a special history between the city of Montreux and Queen and I am extremely proud that we are able to commemorate Freddie Mercury’s life and his influence in this region with the opening of this hotel, named after him. This also further cements our long-standing relationship with The Mercury Phoenix Trust, who has been our official charity partner since 2013,” said Florent Rondez.

Montreux is an important part of Freddie Mercury’s life and to honour his time here, there is a bronze statue in his likeness on permanent display, at the waterfront of Lake Geneva. The Casino Barrière de Montreux also plays host to Queen: The Studio Experience exhibition; an interactive display of historical Queen artefacts dedicated to ‘the immortal spirit of Freddie Mercury’. In September, the Casino annually celebrates Freddie Mercury’s birthday.

Each year with the support of Swiss Education Group, Montreux hosts Freddie For A Day, a weekend long celebration of Freddie Mercury’s life to raise funds for the Mercury Phoenix Trust. Over 200 students from Hotel Institute Montreux and SHMS collaborate on the design, logistics and promotion of the event putting their learnings from the classroom into practice – all for a good cause. The 5th edition held in May, 2018 raised over 25,000CHF.

The five-storey **The Freddie Mercury** building, which is owned by La Caisse de Retraite Professionnelle de l’Industrie Vaudoise de la Construction, features 89 bedrooms, a 120-seater restaurant, four public spaces and seven training rooms. Helmed by architect Fabien Steiner, **The Freddie Mercury** is positioned as a 4-star private hotel offering a modern, and youthful vibe, with a touch of ‘Rock ‘n Roll’. The hotel blends vibrant colours with contemporary interiors and sleek furnishings put together by Florent Rondez himself and furniture manufacturer Nogueira sàrl.

The design and interior of the hotel reflects Freddie Mercury’ life, paying homage to some of his favourite places, cities and things. The training rooms are named after different cities that have certain significance to Freddie Mercury. For example, of Indian origin he was born and raised in Zanzibar

where he spent most of his childhood and at the age of seven, started taking piano lessons. All five floors of the hotel also have a colour theme corresponding to something he treasured. The colour red

runs across the fifth floor, representing his love for Japan after visiting the country during a tour in 1975. To reflect his fondness for cats, the third floor has a feline theme and one of the conference rooms in the hotel is named Delilah; after the name of one of his cats to whom he wrote a song about.

“We are delighted to continue the partnership between Swiss Education Group and The Mercury Phoenix Trust – fighting Aids worldwide. Swiss Education Group and Florent’s commitment to helping the Trust has enabled us to expand our work fighting this terrible disease worldwide,” commented Queen Manager and MPT trustee Jim Beach.

The Freddie Mercury features a collection of 120 pictures from Freddie Mercury’s private album, specially curated by Jim Beach who serves as a consultant on the project. Four portrait paintings of Freddie Mercury are also on display, two of which are by local artist Sébastien Pridmore, who used coffee as paint in one of his creations. The two other paintings are by French artist Franck Bouroullec and Christian Perette, former Executive Director of Nestlé Pro Gastronomie.

In November 2018, Fox Films will be bringing Freddie Mercury and Queen’s legacy to life with the much anticipated movie release of Bohemian Rhapsody.

About Swiss Education Group

With five schools based across seven campuses throughout Switzerland, Swiss Education Group is Switzerland’s largest private hospitality educator. In total, the Group has over 6,500 students from over 110 countries and the campuses are beautifully located in the French and German speaking regions of Switzerland. Partnerships with the University of Derby (UK), Northwood University (USA) and Washington State University (USA) ensure that students’ qualifications are internationally transferable. Courses are conducted in English and all schools offer Diploma, Bachelor and Master programmes, with a variety of subjects and specialisations.

As a worldwide ambassador of best practices in Switzerland, Swiss Education Group enjoys the benefit of being highly esteemed by tourism and hospitality industry professionals. Locally, the group is an esteemed economic player, bringing many international students and visitors to the regions where the schools operate. <https://www.swisseducation.com/en>