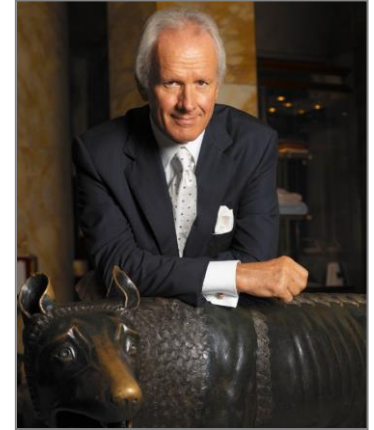


ROMA
HASSLER

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

Roberto E. Wirth
Proprietor & General Manager, Hassler Roma

Roberto E. Wirth (b. Rome, 1950), proprietor and General Manager of the Hassler Roma, is the first son of Oscar Wirth and his wife Carmen. Second-generation owner of the Hotel Hassler and representing the fifth generation of a famous hotelier family, he believes in carrying on the rich tradition of the Bucher-Wirth hotel dynasty. For almost two centuries, the Bucher-Wirth family has made a strong impact in the field of luxury hospitality and continues to do so.



The dynasty began with Franz-Josef Bucher, now considered one of the pioneers of the hotel industry in Europe. In the 1870s, Bucher bought and developed the Trittalp area of Switzerland, previously remote and inaccessible. Within a couple of years, he built several hotels and specialized in a new field, that of transportation and lift facilities, building funiculars, the Burgenstock railway and the Hammetschwand, still the highest chair lift in Europe. However, Franz-Josef Bucher's real passion was the hotel business, and he soon realized that city hotels were much more profitable than those situated in resort places. Therefore, in 1890 he sent his son-in-law, Heinrich Wirth, to Rome to become the manager of the Hotel Minerva, in the city center and a few years later he decided to buy the Hotel Quirinale in Rome. In 1921, Oscar Wirth, Heinrich's youngest son, followed in his family's footsteps and became partner with a German hotelier, Franz Nistelweck, son-in-law of the Swiss Hotelier, Albert Hassler. Together they managed the Eden and the Hassler hotels until 1964, when Oscar became the sole owner of the prestigious Hassler hotel. The hotel's excellent location atop the Spanish Steps and next to the Trinità dei Monti church provided it with almost unlimited potential. In 1939, Oscar demolished the building almost entirely in order to rebuild it. Thereafter the hotel was requisitioned by the U.S. Air Force to serve as their Rome headquarters during World War II. The new Hassler was finally opened to the public in 1947.

Today, Roberto Wirth considers the Hassler his passion, home and family heritage. His commitment, dedication and personal touch are what have led the hotel to achieve its position as one of Europe's top hotels and the preferred destination for the elite society's sojourns in Rome.

Being born deaf, Roberto Wirth has been very active in various associations that strive to improve conditions for the deaf. He is the founder and president of CABSS (Assistance Center for Deaf and Deafblind Children), a non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting deaf and deafblind children, and their families. The association focuses in particular on children from birth to six years and works with projects that promote an adequate cognitive, emotional, social, linguistic and communicative development, that allows children to fully express their personality. Moreover, CABSS, in collaboration with the Italian Fulbright Commission, provides study scholarships to deaf students to attend Gallaudet University, USA. He also sponsors several other philanthropic, cultural and artistic associations.

He established *Il Palazzetto*, a unique 16th-century Roman *palazzo* situated right by the Spanish Steps and just a few steps away from the Hassler. Il Palazzetto encompasses four intimate hotel rooms, and two spectacular panoramic terraces on the 4th and 5th floors as well as indoor spaces (open-air garden, library room and salone with a fireplace) on the second floor for private events.

Besides managing the restaurants of the Hassler and Il Palazzetto, he is also a consultant to several restaurants abroad, including the Italian restaurants "Travertino" of the Oberoi hotel New Delhi, and "Vetro" of the Oberoi Mumbai.

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Roberto Wirth is currently one of the Counsellors of the Association of Piazza di Spagna and Trinità dei Monti, after having been President from May 2012 until March 2015, his second turn in office after having being appointed President from 2003 – 2006. The Association safeguards and represents the interests of retailers and business owners who operate in the area (security, sanitation etc).

In the past Mr. Wirth has received numerous personal awards such as “Independent Hotelier of the World 2005” by *HOTELS* magazine, one of the most prestigious publications in the hospitality industry; the Prize for Economic Achievement by Rome’s City Government in an event presided by the city’s mayor (February 2006); the "Marco Aurelio" 2006 prize for Tourism from the Vice Mayor of Rome, Mariapia Garavaglia - this prestigious award recognizes those who have distinguished themselves in the Roman tourism sector, emphasizing the importance that tourism has for the economic and social life of Italy’s capital. In Nov. 2014 he was awarded the “Leading Legend Award” by The Leading Hotels of the World, for his commitment to the art of independent hospitality.

Roberto Wirth received a B.Sc. degree at Cornell University’s “School of Hotel Administration” (Ithaca, New York) as well as Honorary Doctorates in Humane Letters both from Lynn University (Boca Raton, Florida) in May 2006 and from Gallaudet University, in Washington, DC in May 2009. He is also one of the 8 deaf recipients of the DeafNation Inspiration Award (for Hotel Hospitality) which was granted in August 2012 in Las Vegas, during the first edition of what was to become an important international annual appointment.

In 2016 he was awarded with an Honorary Degree in Human Letters by the prestigious John Cabot University in Rome, Italy.

On June 14, 2018, in the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Fulbright Program in Italy, the US Ambassador to Italy, Lewis M. Eisenberg awarded Roberto Wirth with a special prize for the commitment that for over 25 years he has dedicated to the promotion of the rights of deaf children from 0 to 6 years.