



## ► CRISTALLINA HOTEL

The Cristallina Hotel in Ticino was awarded the 2005 Swiss Solar Prize in the "sustainable energy" category. The prize was given in recognition of the hotel's choice of building materials and its management philosophy, committed to sustainable development. Marco Kälin, the hotel's owner, was convinced that he wanted to create a commercial activity which would, as far as possible, respect the natural surroundings and the territory where this activity took place. Marco Kälin believes that a harmonious commercial activity must pay particular attention to environmental and ecological issues in its management methods.

The Cristallina Hotel is one of the first in the canton to employ renewable energy. The hotel's energy is provided by a wood-burning hot water heater and thermostat, as well as photo-voltaic, solar sources. Almost 56% of the hotel's hot water is produced by the thermal solar panel, which covers 10.4 sqm. The hot water heater burns wood from the Vallemaggia (the Magic Valley), a rich forest area which produces up to 90,000 KWH of CO2-free heat annually and it complements the thermal solar panel's capacity. It also supplies the heating for the hotel and its restaurants. The 4 KW photo-voltaic solar panel covers up to 15% of the hotel's electricity requirements.

Marco Kälin began his career as an apprentice at the Banca Popolare Svizzera in Locarno. In 1985, after a couple of years with the bank, he and a friend decided to manage a mountain hut for a couple of seasons. In the following years he had numerous experiences in the catering industry, followed by English language studies in the US. In 1991 he obtained a certificate confirming his qualifications for work in the hotel industry. Between 1991-1997, he managed a mountain property in Vallemaggia. In 2000, after taking artistic and holistic knowledge courses, Marco Kälin bought the old Cristallina Hotel, which he ran until 2002 as a bar. In the meantime, he worked with architects Michele and Francesco Bardelli,



and with Domenico Saladino, an ecology consultant in the hotel industry. They developed plans to restructure the hotel and looked for the necessary investments. The new Cristallina Eco-Hotel opened at the end of 2003.

Since the hotel is still in its business development stage it is difficult to estimate its success rate. In 2004 the hotel reported good room occupancy and its restaurant also proved popular. In Vallemaggia, it was the hotel with the highest number of reservations. In 2005 there has been a 25% increase in room reservation. In 2-3 years time Marco Kälin would like to see a 40-45% occupancy rate over an 11-month period. The hotel's guests are mainly Swiss German and German.

Mr. Kälin hopes to offer his guests new services on a regular basis. These may include the possibility to hire bicycles, electric cars or choose vegetarian dishes. In the meantime, he would like to make his guests more aware of ecological issues. In the future, he would like to adopt the ecological symbol of "Steinböcke" and position the hotel firmly within the market of ecologically sustainable hospitality.

### NAME

Cristallina Hotel

### CEO

Marco Kälin

### ACTIVITY

Hotel Management

### CATEGORY

Hotel

### TEAM

8

### CREATED

Opened end of 2003

### AWARD

2005

Swiss Solar Prize

### ADDRESS

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### CANTON

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### WEBSITE

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### CONTACT

Marco Kälin