# Zurich? Boresville? Not if you stay at the fabulous Baur au Lac



What do you think when someone mentions Zurich? Boresville, right? Or somewhere you fly into when you’re skiing that has a nice airport and easy-to-use trains out to wherever it is? Well, you’d be wrong. And there’s nowhere proves how wrong you – OK and we! – can be than Baur au Lac, the most classic of hotels that, like Zurich itself, is turning everything on its head. In a way that doesn’t mess up your hair.

Now, don’t get us wrong, Baur au Lac is grand in the grandest of all grand ways. It’s *grande dame* and *grand monsieur* rolled into one. Couldn’t be no grander if it tried. Set on Lake Zurich itself in its own little park, it looks like the sort of building someone in Downton Abbey might inherit from someone they had a *liaison*with back at the turn of another century. Stately. Handsome. Yes, grand. Since 1844. It’s the sort of place Audrey Hepburn might have stayed… and what do you know, she did!

But never mind all that grand, Baur au Lac has come out the other side of Baur au Lac Reloading, an entire new approach to the whole grand thing, and it is a resounding success. Yes, as your car turns into the little park with its heritage trees, it might seem like all grand and no reloading. And as you step in past the liveried doorman, past the dinky little antique newspaper kiosk and to the desk, you’re still getting a grand vibe. And the sound of someone playing a harp over the clinking of teacups in the salon under chandeliers doesn’t *not* say grand. But there’s a twinkle. You go up in the dinky little lift – or take the grand staircase – to your room, which speaks of older styles in that they’re classic and comfortable albeit with art that speaks of a more contemporary moment. Don’t you find it funny when hotel room doors open out, by the way? It feels so weird! People must get smacked in the face. But anyway, marble bathrooms, bathtubs with views, wide corridors outside, lots of fabric… so far, so grand. But it’s the vibe and the restaurants at Baur au Lac which bear the main weight of that Reload. First up is the two-Michelin-starred Pavillon, in its own little, well, pavilion, with a… what are we calling this? Rotunda? With a modern chandelier and windows all around looking towards the lake and out into the gardens, which, at Christmas, have lots of little wooden huts, which you can actually go in and use. The head chef in Pavillon is Laurent Eperon and there’s a wine list curated by one of the big cheeses of sommelier-dom so you can spend some serious money in a town where nothing is cheap. Or just have your breakfast in here. Seeing as we’re young and vibrant and ever so *not* grand, we chose the new brasserie Baur’s, which even on a Monday was rammed, so we certainly wouldn’t risk a walk-in. Baur’s has every sign of being ‘the place to be’ in Zurich. From the design by Martin Brudnizki Design Studio (quirky, old-school but with a wink and the most immaculate lighting you could wish to be flirted in across a dining table. Well, he did do the redesign at Annabel’s so you understand the taste) to a proper brasserie menu and an atmosphere where everyone is clearly impressed with themselves to be here but most definitely not on best behaviour, everything just works. The bar next door, for when you just can’t bear to leave, has the same relaxed but sparkly flavour while even the bathrooms down a staircase are worth the trip. There was a time – and we got this from someone at the hotel – when you wouldn’t come to Zurich unless you were a banker. That means the place has money and lots of what money can buy including plenty of big important art, from the Kunst Haus, perhaps our favourite modern art gallery of the moment, to private galleries like Hauser & Wirth, who have made big splashes in the UK but pretty much own the art scene here. With a pretty little town to explore, a great food scene and a not-at-all-bad gay scene, it’s a city in a state of metamorphosis and Baur au Lac is at the centre of it all. As it seems always to have been. Now ain’t that grand?[bauraulac.ch](www.bauraulac.ch)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bauraulac.ch/en/explore/history-and-heritage.html> - This page provides a detailed history of Baur au Lac, including its founding in 1844 by Johannes Baur and its evolution over the years.
2. <https://www.bauraulac.ch/en/eat-drink.html> - This section describes the hotel's dining options, including the two-Michelin-starred Pavillon restaurant and the brasserie Baur's, highlighting their unique offerings.
3. <https://www.bauraulac.ch/en/explore/hotel-park.html> - This page showcases the hotel's private park, emphasizing its tranquil setting and the presence of heritage trees.
4. <https://www.bauraulac.ch/en/explore/hotel-park.html> - This page mentions the hotel's private park, highlighting its tranquil setting and the presence of heritage trees.