



TegernseeTalk

DUCHESS ANNA IN BAVARIA

A Powerhouse in Palace and Brewery

Duchess Anna in Bavaria is mistress of the former Tegernsee monastery and head of the Herzogliche Brauerei Tegernsee. This makes her, after Queen Caroline, wife of the Wittelsbach King Maximilian I Joseph of Bavaria, the second woman to brew in Tegernsee - and to lead the company with its 90 employees into the future without losing sight of the values of those who came before her. She is also active in the fields of health and culture, values the landscape and the character of the people in the Tegernsee valley, and loves contemporary art. We talk about what it means to continue the 209-year history of the Wittelsbach family in the Tegernsee valley, about identity, Tegernsee beer, and where she draws the strength to shoulder it all.

Profile:

Name: Duchess Anna in Bavaria - Baroness von Maltzan zu Wartenberg und Penzlin

Place of residence: Tegernsee

What is it about? The Herzoglich Bayerisches Brauhaus, and more than 200 years of Wittelsbach history at Tegernsee

When someone meets you, as in this interview, for example, how should they address you correctly?

I have noticed that some people feel most comfortable calling me Frau Bayern. Within the company, everyone addresses me however they like.



How would you complete the sentence: Home means to me ...?

Home is a very strong point of reference for anyone who feels rooted. First and foremost it is the people, but also the landscape and other aspects. That is what feeds one's thinking and actions. And that is how it is for me as well.

During Tegernsee Week, you guide visitors through the private rooms of Tegernsee Castle and thus through the now 209-year history of the Wittelsbach family at Tegernsee - as your mother did for many years before you. What would you like to convey to visitors?

When visitors enter this vestibule, this marble hall, for the first time, they always have this reverent "wow" moment. And I hope that during the tour this feeling subsides, and that people understand how much time and money it takes to preserve a building like this. I also hope I can convey that this house has always been a beloved home for everyone since it has been in family ownership. I certainly feel that very clearly when I am here. And I would be pleased if, by the end of the tour, the grandeur of the house were overlaid by the understanding that for us it is both home and economic center.

One sometimes hears the phrase "noblesse oblige" - what does that mean to you?

That was never at the forefront for us; my parents and my whole family do not think that way. It is more a matter of "family obliges." When you walk through the house, you see portraits of our predecessors everywhere - and they all always tried to improve it. No one lived off the substance. They dealt with the times and the possibilities as best they could. My father exemplified that too. So it is less an obligation than a matter of seeing what is possible and how to remain true to this line.

Is your life a balancing act between tradition and modernity? A split between past, present and future?

Take, for example, the modern light sculpture downstairs in the vestibule: for my parents it is a rupture, while for me it is a continuation. I do not see tradition as an obstacle. If you take it seriously, you look back and see what is needed in order to move forward. That also allows you to make assessments. Of course, traditions must always be examined critically. Perhaps it is partly a balancing act, but it is one that can be managed.

You first went to Paris to study political science. There would certainly have been other options - but in the end you chose Tegernsee. Why?

I truly loved Paris, but I am not the greatest city person. At the beginning of the 1980s we moved to the Chiemgau, where my parents still live today, but for me it was always Tegernsee and the Tegernsee valley. That is why I always felt this pull back to the "stable." I also knew for a long time that I would be allowed to carry on in Tegernsee. My father kept building and investing, and I saw that there was real momentum. That was, and still is, exciting.



You followed in your father's footsteps when you took over the business from him. Today you run a company with 90 employees in the form of the Herzogliches Brauhaus. What did he pass on to you?

What he passed on to my sisters and me was always to be courageous, rather quiet by tendency, liberal and tolerant. He set an example; he did not lecture. Before the handover, he gave me his assessment of where he saw challenges and opportunities and what was possible. And when he handed over, he truly handed over. That was one reason I never worried about whether it would work with him. He has always had an open ear, and there was never a battle between the generations. We still consult each other regularly. He is always informed, he points out aspects that need to be considered, and beyond that I have complete freedom and a very good team at my side.

You are the second woman to brew beer in Tegernsee. The first was Queen Caroline. Is she a role model?

Not only Caroline - the whole line is. I find it easier to understand the generations that are closer to me in time. Duke Karl Theodor was the first to study and became a famous ophthalmologist. His wife Marie José worked with him and, after his death, transferred the eye clinic into a foundation. She died in 1943. So it is not only Queen Caroline who is a role model because she continued the brewery after King Max's death; they all are, because they built something. Incidentally, I know quite a handful of women who have taken over a brewery in my generation or younger.



Duchess Anna in Bavaria 02. Image: © Der Tegernsee (Urs Golling).



What has changed in the brewery in recent years under your leadership?

As far as the core of the brewery is concerned, I have changed nothing. What is inviolable - and I hope will remain so in the future - is the way we brew beer, going back to the monastic tradition. Everything is based on taking no shortcuts and always keeping the quality of the product in view. One major step was moving bottling to Moosrain, and the latest major innovation was the alcohol-free beer. Thanks to new technical possibilities, we can now make an alcohol-free Helles that we at the company think is good and stand behind with conviction.

Before that there was already the “Leichte” - was that also a modern step toward a reduced-alcohol, healthier lifestyle?

My father chose the Leichte back then because, given the technical possibilities at the time, one still had to say: we cannot brew an alcohol-free beer that we truly stand behind. Tegernseer Leichte is a wonderful product, and I like it very much myself. It shows once again that what distinguishes my father is his quiet courage.

Do you have a favorite beer among the Tegernsee beers?

It depends on the season. I tend to prefer the Dunkel in the colder season, in winter. If I ever drink a shandy, then always with Pils - I also like the Pils very much. They are all very good and easy-drinking beers.

What are the challenges of leading a brewery rich in tradition and guiding it into a modern future?

One can only ever try to make the best of the conditions one is given. When the conditions for companies deteriorate to the extent that they are doing now, that is worrying. I hope there will soon be a change of thinking in politics. Of course, we look ahead and take the steps we are convinced will secure the brewery's future. This year we opened a new chapter and are leading our tradition-rich brewery in the Helles beer segment into a shared future with the Hopf wheat-beer brewery in Miesbach.





Duchess Anna in Bavaria 03. Image: © Der Tegernsee (Urs Golling).

You say that the most valuable thing the Tegernsee valley possesses is identity. What does that mean to you?

This valley has a mentality that I value: a strong sense of identity and many people who get things done, people who make decisions that help not only themselves but the whole valley. Take the farmers, for example. They have not maximized profit through sales; rather, they feel committed to other values. That is why we have farms that are being run in the 14th generation, and that is what I mean by identity. It is the be-all and end-all here in the valley. Another example is the Bräustüberl. It has existed for 350 years, and to this day everyone sits together at the tables and talks to one another. On the one hand there is continuity, and on the other there is development - and through it all, it is still the Tegernsee valley. Incidentally, here you can find the TegernseeTalks with Bräustüberl host Peter Hubert and alpine farmer Anton Maier.

The Gasthaus Herzog Maximilian in Gmund also has a great deal to do with identity...

The Maximilian is one of the oldest taverns in the valley. There was always a connection, if only because of the name, and in the course of its history it was briefly in family ownership twice. Seeing it stand empty was always painful. We had thought about it years earlier, but at the time we said: we cannot shoulder this. Then, a few years later, when the opportunity arose, we agreed within the company: we now have the backing to do it; we can manage this! And it worked. For everyone involved, it was the most exciting project we had ever had. From a purely investor's point of view, you would never do it, but it is always a mixture; it is simply not about maximization.



And now there are plans for the old traditional inn in Wilparting near Irschenberg ...

It is like the Maximilian: we had the opportunity to take over the old traditional inn under a 99-year hereditary building right. The inn is beautifully situated opposite the striking pilgrimage church, which you can see from the autobahn, with a view of the Alps.

Privately, besides your family, three things are close to your heart: art, music and the mountains ... You are involved, among other things, in the artistic advisory board of the Olaf Gulbransson Museum?

That gives me great joy and is a good example of tradition and modernity. In recent years Michael Beck has taken it in a new and highly exciting direction. Museums are among the very few institutions that are perceived throughout, and by everyone, as something positive and connecting. The success of the smallest branch museum of the Bavarian State Painting Collections radiates across the entire region. Take, for example, the exhibition "Picasso, Beckmann, Turner and others," which the Süddeutsche Zeitung unfairly described as a "hodgepodge." I know collectors, and when you went in there, you saw the soul of a collector! ... and that is what makes the quality of the special exhibitions. I was also pleased that the new collection guide includes contributions from people from the valley who are close to the museum, not only from art historians. That creates connection, and people move forward together.

You are also on the board of the Herzog Karl Theodor Foundation, the charitable organization that runs the Herzog Karl Theodor Eye Clinic in Munich...

In 2012 I took over the position from my father, who had held it for 40 years, and I am fully responsible on the board of the eye clinic. It is a wonderful task, but also a very difficult one. Healthcare is one of the most regulated fields we have in Germany. Every small detail becomes a challenge. Why, for example, are there so few ophthalmologists left who operate on children with strabismus? Because, by law, squint operations are not financially viable. The foundation has become a matter very close to my heart. Without Duke Karl Theodor and Marie José, I would not be here. So it is entirely natural to continue it. But in terms of time, that is only possible because we have such a fantastic team in the brewery and in the family business.

Can you really switch off and recharge your batteries? Where do you draw your strength from?

Once a week I go up the mountain. This landscape gives me an immense amount of strength. The smell of the lake in spring, in autumn - the way it smells when the first snow falls... And art, too, gives me tremendous strength. I know which picture I need to look at in which mood in order to draw strength. At home we have only contemporary art, and it appeals to different senses. Art is not simply craft; art is more. I walk through somewhere and see a work of art, and suddenly it speaks to me. Something opens up.



Will you reveal your favorite place in the Tegernsee valley?

We grew up in Wildbad Kreuth. For example, on the way into the Langenau there is a spot called Lahngarten. To me it is almost mystical. That is what I love about Kreuth: you put on proper shoes, set off, and within half an hour you are somewhere entirely different. Here in Tegernsee it is the lake that has that effect on me. These different moods, the light, the cries of the gulls in winter... And I also love those two pine trees standing out there. In short: there are several favorite places.

In your opinion, what should visitors to the Tegernsee valley absolutely do?

Whatever they do, please do it with respect - we are not a backdrop. I have a strong affinity for America, and every national park there says: Leave no trace. Guests are visiting here, just as we are visitors when we travel elsewhere: please be respectful, and that applies to everyone.

Personal motto:

I like to follow Hannah Arendt's sentence: "I expect the worst, I hope for the best, and I take things as they come."

More information: <https://www.brauhaus-tegernsee.de>

Original article: <https://www.tegernsee.com/herzogin-anna-in-bayern>