



IMPERIAL HOTEL
OSTRAVA

History of Imperial Hotel Ostrava



At the start of the 20th century Moravian Ostrava was the most important center for coal mining and heavy industry in the entire Habsburg Empire. Naturally, the dynamic change into a large city led to the development of a wide range of hotel and accommodation services, thereby allowing the city to show, in addition to the vast iron works, mines, steel plants and coke ovens, its more amiable and hospitable side in the form of coffee shops, taverns and hotels. In the end, what could the weary visitor appreciate in the otherwise dismal, blackened city other than comfortable accommodations and the high quality of services that went with them?

So thought seasoned Ostrava innkeeper Josef Petzak, when he applied to the city of Moravian Ostrava for a hotel license in November 1902. His business aims received the unanimous support of the general committee led by Mayor Gustav Fiedler at its session on January 2nd, 1903. And thus resolution no. 22370 allowed Josef Petzak, a 47-year-old native of Olomouc, to turn his vision of constructing a first-class hotel into reality. Holding his own against the competition offered by other modern facilities at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, such as the Café Habsburg or the Café Union on the main square of the hotel Slavia (on today's Hollarova Street) required him to come up with first and foremost a well-thought-out business plan. Today, more than 110 years later, we can say it has withstood the test of time.



To carry out his plan, he bought a piece of property in a strategic location, on the corner of the busy Zámecká Street, connecting the main square with a major thoroughfare - Nádražní Avenue. Building the new hotel was entrusted to the renowned Moravian-Ostrava company Mihatsch & Ulrich, which had scored great success with orders not only in the city but on a wide scale as well. After inspecting



Imperial Hotel Ostrava

Tyršova 6, 702 00 Ostrava 2, Czech Republic
T: +420 599 099 099 E: reception.ih@cpihotels.com
www.imperialhotelostrava.com



the site for the hotel, which was done on March 28th, 1903, nothing stood in the way of constructing it. The three-story building went up really fast, with the owner requesting approbation on Christmas Eve "so that I can open the hotel on January 1, 1904." It took place to the satisfaction of all sides concerned on New Year's Eve 1903 and nothing now prevented the first guests from making use of the advertised services in the newly opened hotel on the first day of 1904.

The majesty and splendor of the building, replete with a corner tower, made it deserving of the name Imperial. The local press couldn't say enough words of praise for it, either. Only superlatives ran throughout their pieces - "at the turn of the century the city has been enriched by a magnificent construction of monumental proportions,, or that the city has obtained a new "spectacular ornament,,. It

was also declared that "the new hotel, given to grandeur and luxury, equipped with every comfort,, fulfilled all the demands of modern accommodations. Owners Josef and Anna Petzak offered their guests at the beginning of the 20th century elegant accommodations, today we would say above standard, which included electrical lights and central heating in the rooms. Within a short period of time the hotel had acquired a very good reputation. The more affluent clients in multiethnic Ostrava were predominantly German, who formed the overwhelming majority of the visitors. After all, it was nearly impossible to resist the attractive offer of accommodations in a first-class hotel, "in the best place in the city, only 50 feet from the local train,, which had "an exclusive kitchen, excellent wine,, and of course beer (the drink was considered suitable for children at that time).



Soon enough the Petzaks decided to expand their enterprise. We can only guess as to what motivated the significant increase in hotel capacity - whether it had to do with the evergrowing demand for accommodations or the fact that a singular opportunity to buy up the neighboring property had presented itself at a convenient time. A one-story building standing next to the new hotel had been declared unsuitable for living in 1905 by the městský fyzikus (city doctor). Naturally this had an effect on the original owners when they were deciding "what to do with it,,". In January 1907 a sales contract was drawn up and the Petzaks could begin investing in a new wing for the hotel. The demolished building was replaced with a so-called dependence, which allowed a major expansion in the number of hotel rooms. The new three-story

construction, approved in September 1910, was connected to the original hotel building on the ground floor. Residents of the city could spend a pleasant moment in the parterre, either in the coffee shop or in several of the many lounges, like the one reserved exclusively for women or another one that provided beer on tap. One room was used only for serving breakfast to hotel guests. The Petzaks operated the hotel right up through the creation of Czechoslovak Republic. On January 1, 1919, they decided to sell it and drew up a sales contract with the new owners Helena and Alfred Arbters. They operated the hotel up until June 1927, when they began to lease this important building and the high quality services it offered to various individuals.

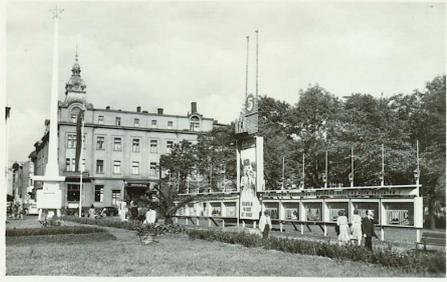


The German owners, the Arbters, asked for an A category classification for their hotel in the fall of 1939. Among the reasons they gave were the hotel's 96-room capacity, personal elevator, telephone outlets in every room and other conveniences, like a nearby pharmacy. Hotel operations were greatly scaled back as a result of the allied air attacks on the city in August 1944, when the newest part of the hotel was hit during the bombing raids and only 37 rooms out of 100 could be reconstructed for accommodations.

Liberation saw the hotel confiscated as German property and put under government administration. On February 21, 1949, the Ministry for Internal Trade issued an edict whereby the Hotel Imperial was nationalized and integrated within the state-owned enterprise Československé hotely. The hotel wing that was significantly damaged during the war was finally torn down in the spring of 1949 and a new addition was built along the whole length of the building's area. The project had been drawn up during the course of 1948 by the architect Čestmír Šlapeta, but since his design in the end didn't represent "an adequately acceptable expression of our labors to build socialism,, a new competition was announced to give the facade an artistic look. The winning design was the work of architect Zdeněk Alexa, who perhaps best fulfilled the requirements of the detractors for "a new architectural manifest,, at a time when socialist realism was beginning to make its presence felt in architecture. The hotel moreover became a conspicuous landmark, inasmuch as many of the surrounding buildings were demolished as a result of war damage.

Imperial Hotel Ostrava

Tyršova 6, 702 00 Ostrava 2, Czech Republic
T: +420 599 099 099 E: reception.iho@cpihotels.com
www.imperialhotelostrava.com



Many organizational changes were carried out in the 1950s and 1960s to incorporate the Hotel Imperial into the existing hotel network and this led to it being renamed the hotel Ostrava. The Opava-based state-owned enterprise Severomoravské hotely a restaurace took over the management in 1952 and a year later it became an enterprise within the state-controlled business as the Hotel Ostrava. In 1955 another reorganization saw it absorbed into the state-owned enterprise Restaurace a jídelny Ostrava-střed. On July 1, 1960, it was again transformed into an enterprise of the state-controlled business Hotel Ostrava by an edict of the ministry. On this date the management of the Tourist Association named Vilém Šelig as the hotel manager, who remained in this position up until his

retirement in 1987. The location of the Hotel Ostrava among buildings of a similar character was emphasized in 1963 when it was renamed the Interhotel Ostrava during the course of reorganization. The name hotel Ostrava did not quite catch on, so on March 1, 1966, the hotel was given back its original name Imperial.

The extensive modifications carried out at the end of the 20th century led to the building lots that created the corner of Tyršovy and 28. Října Streets being absorbed into the hotel complex, so that the hotel now consisted of one complete building running from 28. října Street up to Zámecká Street. During the 1940s there was an apartment house where the hotel's pub stands today. There were several shops and stores on the ground floor thanks



to its convenient location on the main thoroughfare. One of the owners of the building operated here, for example, the First Moravian-Ostrava Umbrella and Sunshade production facility. The pharmacy U svaté Barbory was established here in 1950. In 1967 the building was no longer suitable to live in and was eventually torn down in 1982. The available space, which for many years had stood in the shadow of an advertisement for the Piešťany spa resort, was built up as part of the reconstruction carried out on the hotel during the mid-1990s.



On January 1, 1989, the InterHotel Imperial Ostrava again became a breakaway company of the state-run business Čedok. The change in the political environment resulted in changes in the ownership. On April 1, 1990, the state enterprise InterHotel Imperial Ostrava was formed and then transformed on May 1, 1992, into a joint-stock company. On

July 1, 2001 the hotel became a property of ORCO Hotel Development and member of the hotel chain Mamaison Hotels & Residences since 2007. Nowadays the hotel belongs to one of the biggest hotel groups on the Czech market – CPI Hotels, a.s. and is still proud bearer of the name Imperial.



Imperial Hotel Ostrava

Tyršova 6, 702 00 Ostrava 2, Czech Republic
T: +420 599 099 099 E: reception.iho@cpihotels.com
www.imperialhotelostrava.com