

# New casino in Saxon (Wallis)

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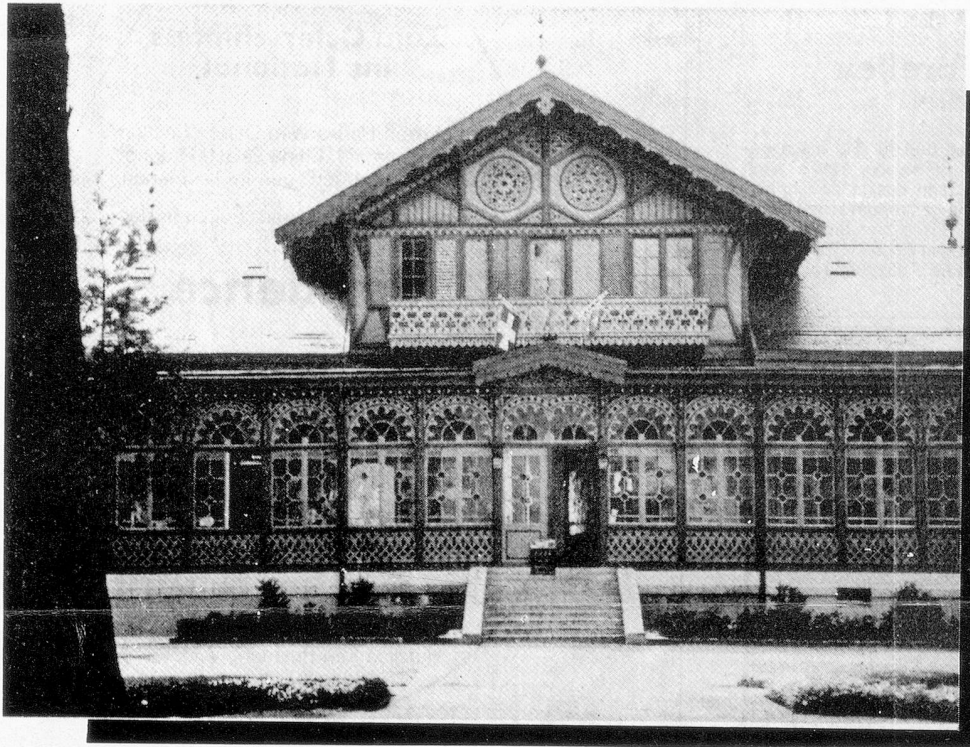
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## NEW CASINO IN SAXON (WALLIS)



"Faites vos jeux, rien ne va plus". This announcement was made for the last time in the evening of December 31, 1877 when the Casino in Saxon closed its doors. The golden years of Saxon began in 1855 with the construction of the Grand Hotel des Bains and the Casino with its concert and gambling halls. The entrepreneur was a certain Joseph FAMA from Dalmatia who came to the Wallis and recognised the great potential of the then small and modest thermal resort of Saxon. He undertook his development with great skill and foresight and soon personalities from all over the world flocked to Saxon to enjoy the thermal baths in the afternoon and the gambling casino in the evening. Victor Hugo and Garibaldi were often there amongst the world elite and Dostoïevski lost all his wealth in Saxon.

When the anti-gambling law came into force in 1874, the concession could no longer be renewed and so the casino closed down at the end of 1877.

Today, over 100 years after its closure, the casino is back in business. The gambling rooms are open again and the dance hall is in full swing. But the most interesting part of the old building is its basement which now houses a unique museum entirely dedicated to goddess Fortuna. The museum contains every conceivable gadget connected with "luck" and "chance", from rabbit feet, amulets, owls, lilies of the valley, piggies, penguins and hunchbacks to fortune telling and gambling automats. Little pieces of polished wood are strategically displayed throughout the museum for those who feel an irresistible urge to "touch wood" for good luck. All the machines are in working order, so in a sense, the museum is also a gambling place in its own right. Some of the machines are over 100 years old. The collection has been assembled from all over the world.

Thanks to the Casino and its museum, Saxon is waking up from a sleep that has lasted more than 100 years.

## LAND SWITCH

During 1993, the Swiss voters and the Government will have to decide whether the Bernese enclave of the "Laufental" should be attached to the half-canton of Basel-Land. If approved, the switch should take place on January 1, 1994.

## WHICH SURNAME ?

Habitually, at a wedding, the husband's surname becomes the couple's family name. However, provided the bride expresses her desire at the wedding, she can put her maiden name in front of the family name. But according to a decision of the Swiss Federal Court, this request cannot be made by the husband (it must be made by the wife) nor can the husband request to adopt his wife's maiden name as his family name.

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