



PRESS RELEASE

Ricola opens Kräuterzentrum (Herb center) in Laufen

Laufen, June 27, 2014 – **Herbs are the most important raw material in all Ricola products. The new Ricola Kräuterzentrum is a central location for processing these herbs from the Swiss mountains. The forward-looking construction project was completed by renowned Basel architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron and the company Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH. The opening ceremony gave guests at the largest loam building in Europe the opportunity to refuel with real "Chrüterchraft".**

Following 16 months of construction, the new Ricola Kräuterzentrum, which is directly adjacent to the production facility in Laufen, entered into operation at the beginning of May 2014. The center will clean, dry, cut, store and mix 1,400,000 kilograms of fresh herbs every year at a central location to create the unique Ricola herb blend that is the vital ingredient of all Ricola products.

The building, which has a solid rammed earth facade, is over 100 meters long, around 11 meters high and was designed by Herzog & de Meuron. This is the seventh project to be completed by the Basel-based architecture firm for Ricola. The company Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH was brought in for the loam facade. Martin Rauch, the company's founder and managing director, is Europe's leading expert in loam construction techniques. Europe's biggest loam building now stands in Laufen. Kundert Planer AG was responsible for the planning of the new Kräuterzentrum, and the construction work was managed by the general contractor Piora AG.

Centralizing various stages of production

At the opening ceremony Felix Richterich, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Ricola AG, explained the motivation behind the construction of the Kräuterzentrum: "This new center will enable us to centralize in a single building the individual stages of production in herb processing that were previously carried out at various locations." It was clear, then, for the traditional Swiss company that herb processing – a core competence at Ricola – has to take place on local Swiss land in Laufen. Ricola invested 16 million Swiss francs in the realization of the Kräuterzentrum. The Swiss manufacturer of herb drops sees this as a good investment in the future, not least with a view to meeting increasing production demands.

A simple and sustainable structure with special magic

Pierre de Meuron, Senior Partner, Herzog & de Meuron, commented on the earth building: „As an architect you not only have to take specifications into account but also the place where the building is to be located. The materials used to build the shell of the Kräuterzentrum were sourced from a radius of eight to ten kilometers. The building is made out of the heritage on which it stands. "The Kräuterzentrum was built using loam and earth from the local Laufen valley, "thereby reinforcing traditional values while at the same time taking a forward-looking approach with a sustainable construction method," said Martin Rauch, managing director of the company Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH. The sustainable construction of the Kräuterzentrum is underlined by the energy-friendly heating system and the rammed earth elements used for the facade, which help to stabilize the temperature and humidity levels inside the building. Lukas Richterich, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Ricola Familienholding AG, commented in his address that the forward-looking values held by the family firm had been reflected in the new center.

Staff and their families celebrate the opening of the new building

It is extremely important for Felix Richterich that the Kräuterzentrum combines functionality with a prestigious appearance: "It should be a place where we can present our herbs, with all their mystery and their magic," he emphasized. This was most certainly the case with the 13 Ricola herbs at the opening ceremony. Following the official part, guests were taken on a guided tour that appealed to all of their senses. The architects, the loam builders and the herb cultivation team were all on hand to offer an account of their work. In the afternoon the site was open to all employees and their relatives, who continued to celebrate the opening of the Kräuterzentrum.

Images

Our current image database is stored on our website:

<http://www.ricola.com/en-ch/Meta/Media/Photo-gallery>

If you require other images, please e-mail us at:

media@ricola.com



About Ricola

Ricola AG is one of the world's most modern and innovative manufacturers of herb drops. Ricola herb specialties are exported to more than 50 countries and are famous for their fine Swiss quality. Founded in 1930, with company headquarters in Laufen and subsidiaries in Asia, the USA, Italy and the UK, Ricola products now include around 40 different herb specialties. In Switzerland, this family-owned company is a pioneer in herb cultivation and places great value on using carefully selected locations and controlled, environmentally friendly cultivation methods without the use of pesticides and herbicides. Ricola has concluded fixed long-term purchase agreements with more than 100 farmers in Swiss mountain regions. Ricola is a responsible employer of more than 400 staff and is committed to sustainable corporate management: economically, socially and ecologically. The traditional values of a family-run enterprise coupled with Swiss quality and a passion for innovation are crucial factors in the success of the Ricola global brand.

About Herzog & de Meuron

Herzog & de Meuron, founded in Basel in 1978 by Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, has been one of the world's leading architectural offices for decades.

Today the company is run by five senior partners: the two founding members along with Christine Binswanger, Ascan Mergenthaler, and Stefan Marbach. Worldwide, 400 people are in the employ of Herzog & de Meuron. The company's landmark projects include Tate Modern in London, the Olympic Stadium in Beijing, and the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, which is still under construction. Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron have been honored with the two most prestigious awards in architecture: the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2001 and the Praemium Imperiale in 2007. The Kräuterzentrum is the seventh project created by Herzog & de Meuron for Ricola since 1983.

About Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH

LOAM – CLAY – EARTH. These three words have been significant for the work of Martin Rauch and his team for over 30 years. LOAM stands for handcraft and technology, CLAY for artistic design, EARTH for the sustainability of earth construction.

The focus of our work is concentrated on the rammed earth building technique – proven over thousands of years with new perspectives and developments, making its arrival in contemporary architecture.

Thanks to our long-standing experience and constant drive for innovation we are capable of planning and realizing projects of all sizes. Our projects set the highest quality standards based on our vision of a sustainable future.

Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH set up a Swiss subsidiary, Lehm Ton Erde Schweiz GmbH, and production for the "Ricola production hall" project is based at our site in Zwingen.

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