



# Hotel review: Opulence in the Alps

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## **LeCrans Hotel and Spa**

*Plans Mayens, 3963 Crans-Montana, Switzerland; +41 27 486 60 60; [www.lecrans.com](http://www.lecrans.com); 14 guestrooms and suites from \$525*

The exclusive resort of LeCrans is the first five-star property to open in Crans-Montana, a mountain village known for upscale chalets of stonework, slate roofs and larchwood balconies, plus stunning views over the imposing Alps. With 300 days of sunshine a year and a wealth of activities from golf to hiking to skiing to shopping, tiny Crans-Montana has long been a magnet for those who love the outdoors.

## **DESIGN**

There is a successful melding of the old (antiques, tapestries, rough sawn wood, rich colours) and the new (technology touches every aspect of your stay) at LeCrans. Belgian designer Christophe Decarpentrie blends light and the spectacular vistas with intimate, rich touches that make each suite feel like home. Technology may be one of the most fun aspects of the property, but it can also be the most frustrating. It took me a full two days to decipher the remote devices – LeCrans does not believe in old-fashioned switches.

## **AMENITIES**

The second-floor games room is a throwback to tried-and-true pleasures: shelves of books and board games, a fireplace and a large billiards table. If you'd like to venture off property, complimentary chauffeur service will whisk you into small – but swanky – Crans-Montana for shopping, dining or sightseeing.

The hotel is 100 metres from the ski slopes (ski in/ski out) and a spiderweb of hiking trails. Each unit has a designated locker in the basement ski and golf club room, which includes a rack heater to keep ski boots warm between runs.

The spa, LeSpa Cinq Mondes, has four treatment rooms, hammam with lavender-infused steam, exercise room, infinity Jacuzzi, an indoor pool and an outdoor pool with a view of the peaks and the sunset. The focus is on traditional wellness treatments from around the world.

## ROOMS

Every room but one has sweeping views of the Alps. My suite was spacious, with a floor-to-ceiling glass wall opening onto a private stone-floor terrace. The blending of old and new is seamless: Aged pine panelling, antique furnishings and a wood fireplace share space with plasma screen televisions, a DVD player preloaded with 200 films, an in-room Nespresso machine and a cutting-edge, all-in-one electronic control module for lights, television, DVD, radio, [temperature](#), curtains and blinds. The mix of comfort and convenience continues in the large marble bathroom space – heated tile floors, Japanese technology in the toilet area (remote control for temperature, spray and drying), deep Jacuzzi tub with a wall-mounted plasma television and waterproof remote, spacious glass and tile shower stall with oversized rain-shower head and four lateral wall sprays.

## SERVICE

Flawless Swiss style – friendly and efficient but not intrusive. The spa manager sent me a handwritten note with directions to a local outing; the front-desk staff arrives with a selection of English newspapers.

## FOOD

Chef Pierre Crépaud oversees the menu at the sole restaurant, the rotunda-shaped LeMontBlanc (yes, there is a view of the famous peak). A highlight is the “kitchen menu à la table d’hôtes” where up to eight diners reserve a chef’s table in the kitchen. The dishes lean toward a mixture of traditional French Valaisan-style cuisine. If you want to eat in your suite, the traditional Valaisan Plate – order from the 24-hour room service menu, it arrives in record time – contains triangles of dark rye, charcuterie and cheeses from the valley below and house-made pickles, all artfully presented on slate platters and garnished with flowers and herbs from the chef’s garden.

## THE VERDICT

James Bond would be at home here – not just with the impeccable surroundings and service, but the futuristic technology, too. If you want a longer stay, you’ll want Bond’s deep pockets.

*Special to The Globe and Mail*

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