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THE EUROPEAN HERITAGE AWARDS / EUROPA NOSTRA AWARDS 2025
THE MEDIEVAL TOWER ROOF OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MAURITIUS IN SPITZ AN DER DONAU

Dear Ladies, dear Sirs!

The church tower roof in Spitz is a prime example of a successful restoration of a tiled roof. It is the best thing I have experienced in my 40 years of research and consultancy work. At last, an all-encompassing, outstandingly well-founded and uncompromising roof conservation.

Spitz is unique in terms of its monument conservation requirements. The roof, which is often referred to as the 5th façade of the building, is receiving the same conservation attention as the other façades for the first time. This holistic programme includes

- A perfect and comprehensive as-built analysis of the roof as a whole and the roof cladding in particular
- Archive research on written and image sources
- Inspection of the roof structure and the carpenters' replacement measures reduced to what is necessary
- Examination of the existing roof tiles, their condition, their material composition, careful evaluation of replicas and restrained replacement while preserving the original substance
- sensitive and skilful execution of the roofing work, especially in the challenging parts, in particular the valleys, but also on ridges, hips and eaves
- Customised and technically clean execution of the masonry and plumbing work
- Preservation of the special roof decoration (metal corner attachments on the ridge)
- Conservation of the murals
- The goal of modernisation has been achieved with added value in terms of substance preservation and radiance
- All in all, an impressive team performance with excellent coordination and a high work ethic on all sides

The fundamental research in all areas, from material to art history, which is rarely associated with roof renovations should be emphasised. It culminates in the recovery of a highly symbolic image carrier in the sense of the *intentio auctoris* and thus makes the Spitz church tower roof an exceptional document of European significance. There is probably no other tiled roof in the whole of Europe that has been so excellently researched, preserved and conserved in its original substance as the church roof of Spitz, thanks to the intervention of monument conservationists. An exemplary achievement in the sense of the UNESCO Convention.

Spitz is an award-worthy beacon of monument preservation. It may serve as an example of the largely neglected protection of historic roof cladding. The Europa Nostra Award offers a unique opportunity to draw attention for once to the preservation of the substance of the highly endangered tiled roofs and to explicitly recognise the preservation of the roof covering.

Jürg Goll
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