

Oberstdorf Thermal Spa

## **An alpine sense of space in ceramic**

**The new Oberstdorf Thermal Baths in the Allgäu region have created a wellness and health centre that combines alpine architecture, sustainable construction and high-quality materials. Designed by Auer Weber Architects, the new building blends sensitively into the mountain landscape with its clearly structured forms, pitched roofs and a vertically structured timber façade. Inside, ceramic tiles and bathroom ceramics from Agrob Buchtal ensure functional quality, design clarity and long-term reliability in the demanding environment of a swimming pool facility.**

**Oberstdorf, March 2026** – The new thermal spa replaces the former baths on the site and develops a spatial concept that combines wellness, sport and relaxation in different areas. Around 9,400 m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area provide the setting for the thermal spa, sauna and wellness facilities, as well as catering. Generous glazed areas open up the bathing hall to the landscape and offer impressive views of the Allgäu Alps.

### **Architecture in dialogue with the Alpine landscape**

Architecturally, the new building is conceived as an ensemble of several staggered structures, whose sloping roofs and minimalist design language draw on regional building traditions and translate them into contemporary architecture. The building volumes vary in height and length, thereby responding to the surrounding development and the topography of the site. The generously glazed swimming hall forms the spatial centre of the complex. Here, wood, concrete and glass combine to create a calm, clearly structured interior design that deliberately directs the gaze towards the landscape and water. Different recreational zones – from sports-oriented pools and relaxation areas to the sauna complex – are spatially interconnected yet organised in a differentiated manner.

In the design of the baths, colors and materials form a cohesive whole that is closely aligned with the atmosphere of the surrounding natural environment. The landscape characteristics of the Allgäu region are translated into a spatial concept that runs through the entire building. The idea of the four elements serves as a leitmotif, reflected in the distinct material and color schemes of the various functional areas.

### **Ceramic surfaces as part of the spatial concept**

The grey of the surrounding mountain landscape sets the tone. With the Nova ceramic surface in anthracite and in 15 × 15 and 60 × 60 cm formats, this motif is carried through from the exterior into the interior. Floor surfaces, wall cladding and seating blocks thus form a consistent, tranquil base that evokes the mineral presence of the mountains and creates the architectural framework for the various bathing areas. For pool surrounds and circulation areas, the series offers both the necessary robustness and slip resistance required for intensive bathing use.

The pools reflect the color palette of the Allgäu mountain lakes. Tiles from the Chroma series in 12.5 × 12.5 cm create a finely graded transition from light to dark turquoise, subtly interpreting the interplay of depth, light and movement in the water. The fit-out is complemented by ceramic pool mouldings and overflow channels from the Wiesbaden system, which meet functional requirements such as hygiene, drainage and safety during ongoing swimming pool operations.

The children's pool also reflects the color palette of the water: Loop round mosaics in sea green and aqua blue create a fresh, lively yet harmonious color scheme. In the relaxation areas, this palette is complemented by lighter, mineral-inspired shades. Benches clad in the Loop round mosaic in ivory echo the chalky tones of the rock and glacial formations of the Allgäu landscape, forming a natural contrast to the dark flooring.

Another design focus lies in the cooling area of the sauna wing on the upper floor. Here, the design draws inspiration from the impressive atmosphere of the Breitach Gorge. The color palette of the cladding tiles from the Craft series – including flamed olive, benite blue, dark grey and hematite black – echoes the rugged rock formations, the subdued light and the cool freshness of the gorge. The slightly mystical effect of these shades simultaneously enhances the perceived cooling atmosphere of the space.

### **Aesthetic and ecological sustainability**

In addition to its architectural quality, the project also pursues a sustainable energy concept. A roof-integrated photovoltaic system, along with energy-efficient building services and heat recovery systems, reduce the facility's energy requirements and support resource-efficient operation. The ceramic materials also contribute to sustainability here. In addition to their durability, their Hytect surface facilitates cleaning and ensures a permanently hygienic environment.

The new Therme Oberstdorf thus not only creates a tourist attraction for the region, but also serves as an example of how architecture, landscape and materials can be brought together to form a harmonious overall concept. The ceramic solutions from Agrob Buchtal make an important contribution to this: they combine design quality with the high functional requirements of modern swimming pool architecture.

*approx. 5,200 characters*

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