

The leader of QUEEN is part of the history of our town.

« Instructions for the Freddie Mercury Tour »

The charismatic leader of « Queen », who spent the last days of his life on the Riviera shore, is a part of the history of this place. A private initiative keeps this memory alive and wants to offer another tourist attraction.

Fans come from all over the world to admire the statue. Some come from very far away – sometimes from Japan!

Impressed by the popularity of Freddie Mercury, **Rita Balesi-Grass and Norbert Muller**, together with Serge Rentsch, have decided to change Montreux into a pilgrimage center for this artist who suddenly left us a little more than 12 years ago. The name « Freddie Mercury's Montreux » was born and they started visits organized in three stages. First, a boat ride to see the Lake House (on the 'Made in Heaven' album), then Mountain Studio, guided by David Richards (for which a personal and numbered certificate will be issued to each visitor) and of course a visit of the statue just in front of Lake of Geneva, near the Market Place. All this will start again on September 6th beginning as « Freddie Mercury's Memorial » (see details at the end).

A poorly exploited cultural phenomena.

The proprietor of Bazar Suisse, Norbert Muller, on Grand Rue, just opposite the mystic statue, is everyday taken to task by fans and is questioned about Freddie Mercury or Queen. « I was amazed of the poor enthusiasm woven here around this phenomena », And Rita Balesi-Grass, director of MCS SA, says « People travel thousands of kilometers for an almost religious pilgrimage! We get phone calls and fans e-mails everyday. Many web sites all around the world speak about our « Freddie Mercury's Memorial Day ». Both declare that they don't do this for money but to enhance the fame and history of the town. « We have invested a lot of our time and energy yet we do not depend on these events for a living. »

A positive run in 2001

These two residents of « Montreux » are very well versed in tourism events (they are both involved in very famous Montreux Christmas Market) and they are not at their first coup d'essai. In 2001 a first try was put in place and has impressed around 600 visitors. The experience was suspended last year due to Casino's extensive transformation. One of the top events, of this Freddie Mercury Tour, is a visit to the Mountain Studio– guided by David Richards himself. This well known sound engineer has recorded an awesome number of works of artists from Phil Collins, David Bowie or Led Zeppelin – without forgetting Queen who loved this place so much and who owned the studio in 1979.

A question still remains open for an answer. The recording studio could not become operational in time. It is still under construction, the management of Casino Barrière says, they are very much interested in this event and are very polite in saying: « We are very optimistic. Even if, the recording studio could not be functional, guests would still be able to visit this mystical place » says **Gilles Meillet**.



Rita Balesi-Grass and Norbert Muller surround David Richards, Sound Engineer, in front of the entrance of his mystical « Mountain Studio ».

A commemorative day

In the remembrance of Freddie Mercury, henceforth a « Memorial Day » will be celebrated every year.

The first one will be held on September 6th (Freddie Mercury was born on September 5th 1946). It will coincide with the resumption of the Freddie Mercury's Montreux Tour (see above).

On this special occasion, there will be: Visits to the Lake House with the special « Montreux Jazz Festival » boat (ex Expo 02) – The guests will be served a special menu prepared by Peter Freestone himself, a personal assistant of Freddie Mercury for 12 years. Mr. Freestone will of course be present in Montreux and choose from among Freddie's most beloved dishes. Rita Balesi, Norbert Muller, Serge Rentsch and the Swiss Queen Fan Club have invited the famous Dutch cover band « Miracle » to highlight this day, as a particular revival in memory of this great British Combo. They will set the NED stage on fire in the evening.