

Launch of the new VAN HOOL tourist coach T919 Altano Handover of the first T919 Altano to Schmetterling

On Wednesday June 3rd the German Tour Operator Schmetterling came to Belgium to pick up the first ever T919 Altano (15 m), produced by VAN HOOL.



Elmar Singer, manager of the bus and coach operations of Schmetterling came with one of his Van Hool double-deckers to Koningshooikt to receive the keys of their brand new T919 Altano. He brought some relations with him as well as a Frankish music band. In a family-atmosphere the new coach was presented and a Belgian barbecue-lunch with Frankish beer was the start of a pleasant two days stay of the group in Belgium. A visit to the plant of Van Hool was very instructive and showed how Van Hool combines high tech production facilities with a flexibility that enables Van Hool to build to the customers wishes.

The new developed T919 Altano is nearly 15 m long and completes the T9 Altano range. The Altano is the Van Hool high-decker with underfloor cockpit. The Schmetterling vehicle has a real kitchen near the middle steps under the floor. The operator ordered a lot of extra safety devices like extra camera's at the left and right side



of the coach, a lane departure warning system, the smarttyre control system of the tyres, extra curves lighting eo.

Passengers is offered all of the newest multi media systems: digital TV, Ipod and MP3 connections, a special front camera and much more.
A superb luxury coach for a superb coach operator.

Schmetterling was founded by Willi Müller in 1974. He is still the General Manager and together with his family runs what is now a highly sophisticated travel and tourism company with 400 employees, offering a wide variety of holiday packages and worldwide destinations. The headquarters is in Geschwand in the German state of Bavaria. Schmetterling has four divisions: a travel agencies cooperation with 3.500 offices in Europe, a travel agency, a technology area as well as the bus and coach operation.

The TÜV certified vehicles, really live up to their 'First Class' rating. They have 78 luxury seats and are fully equipped with DVD Player with 7 screens, toilet, air-conditioning, navigation system, kitchen with microwave, fridges, sausages heater, coffee machine, ... Following the delivery last month of the new Van Hools, Schmetterling now has a 68-strong operating fleet: 25 touring coaches and 43 scheduled buses. Together they cover around 10 million kilometres a year (or some 250 times around the world!)

The company now has 10 double-deckers and 15 standard coaches and all units are equipped to provide at least 4-star service. They ordered their first Van Hool double-decker in 2000 followed by more double-deckers in 2003, 2004, 2008 (three) and now another three in 2009.

Schmetterling has, since November 2008, a contract with Costa Crociere, the European market leader, and uses the double-deckers to bring customers from Germany to Italy, to the cruise ships. Schmetterling brings people to Spain for Neckermann.

Schmetterling is a long-term contractor to the VAG municipal transport company that oversees a widespread fleet of modern coaches and numerous bus routes in Nuremberg, Fürth and Erlangen. Moreover, the company is also a contractor to OVF (Omnibus Verkehr Franken GmbH) and licensee of two routes of the VGN (Verkehrsverbund Großraum Nürnberg GmbH).

Accordingly, low emissions and low fuel consumption are pre-requisites for Schmetterling and the company has been operating DAF powered vehicles since 2004.