WITH AMBITIONS TO BECOME EUROPE'S LARGEST HUB, FRANKFURT AIRPORT WILL SPEND $113 MILLION ON A MAKEOVER

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Frankfurt Airport is investing 100 million euros ($113 million) in a series of upgrades that includes yoga rooms, playgrounds and a forest-like recreation area to make passengers more comfortable and hence more willing to spend money at the shops.

Airports around the world have increasingly transformed into family-friendly malls to lift earnings amid restrictions and competition in the aviation business. The makeover at Frankfurt is part of operator Fraport AG's ambitions to attain a five-star rating by Skytrax, alongside hubs in Munich, Hong Kong, Seoul, Singapore and Tokyo. That would complete a transformation from the days when Frankfurt Airport featured gambling halls, Beate Uhse erotic stores and dank, windowless bars.

While reviving the once-popular Dorian Gray disco probably isn't in the cards, "we'll do lots of other things to make the airport more attractive," Chief Financial Officer Matthias Zieschang said in an

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interview. “It’s good that the sex shops are gone and the sleazy bars.”

If it could, Frankfurt would reopen the disco, which closed in 2000, but fire regulation makes the project “brutally difficult,” said Zieschang. The airport’s image is particularly important for Frankfurt, as the city itself lacks the appeal of other major hubs.

Frankfurt Airport budgets 40 million euros each for upgrading terminal amenities and add an extra stop to a people mover, and renovating the arrivals area at its main terminal. It will also spend 20 million euros to build a visitor center and modernize toilets and a viewing platform.

The company is also investing as much as three billion euros on a third terminal, which is to be completed by 2022.

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