

# ZERMATT INSIDE

December 2023, Volume 21, No. 6



Municipality of Zermatt, Citizens' Community of Zermatt, Zermatt Tourism, Zermatt Bergbahnen AG, Gornergrat Railway/Matterhorn Gotthard Railway

Municipality of Zermatt

Annual review

Mayor Romy Biner-Hauser reviews the events and occurrences of the past year and expresses her gratitude.

Pages 4/5

Zermatt Citizens' Community

Hotel renovation

The Kulmhotel Gornergrat, dating from 1907 and last underwent extensive renovation in 2005, has undergone a general overhaul.

Page 20

Zermatt Tourism

New look

The tourist office and the Postagentur Täsch shines in a new Alpine-chic look with a relaxed and airy atmosphere.

Page 23

Gornergrat Railway

Winter offers

This winter, the Gornergrat Railway offers great deals: including the NostalChic Class carriage to the Gornergrat every Wednesday. Pages 26/27

Zermatt cable cars

New valley station

The new Matterhorn valley station Express will be available from December 2023. The first AURO- The world's aerial tramway has been in operation since November 2023. Page 29

Zermatt cable cars

Matterhorn Ski Paradise – Ready for magical moments?

Winter already brought snow down to the lower elevations in the first half of November. In addition to the work for the Matterhorn Cervino Speed Opening, the snowmaking and piste teams worked with full commitment and passion to prepare the slopes at Matterhorn Ski Paradise.

Find out more on pages 2 and 3.

Merry Christmas

We wish all readers and advertising partners a happy holiday season and a successful start to the new year.

Editorial staff and service partners





Piste magic

Tuesday, December 26, 2023, the unique and Christmassy "Slope Magic by Night" will take place. Truly magical moments with a Valais aperitif under the starry sky of the Rothorn and the subsequent

Trip to Zermatt on the freshly groomed slopes. This special offer does not include dinner, but instead offers the freedom to choose your own evening program after 9 p.m.

We say thank you

This year we say «thank you» again and are there with our mulled wine and Punch stand at the valley station Sunnegga-Rothorn (Saturday, December 9, 2023, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM) and at the Matterhorn Express valley station (Saturday, December 16, 2023, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM). We look forward to seeing you there!

Next winter, too, you can look forward to a truly enjoyable experience, perfectly groomed slopes, and numerous sun terraces along the slopes. Just recently – in September 2023 – the Matterhorn Ski Paradise was named the best ski resort in the Alps for 2023. This was announced as part of the "Best Ski Resort" report , which is conducted every two years and is the largest independent guest satisfaction study in the Alps. In the coming winter season, the Zermatt Bergbahnen will do everything in their power to offer guests an unforgettable experience in the Matterhorn Ski Paradise. To this end, Worked intensively for weeks and months.

More comfort on and off the slopes

During the summer months, various slopes were The Zermatt Bergbahnen construction team has optimized the terrain. At the Wolli beginner's park in Sunnegga, terrain adjustments have been made, promising even more fun, safety, and comfort for first attempts on the snow – including a breathtaking view of the Matterhorn. There's also more comfort on the descent from the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise towards Trockener Steg. The Gandegg piste (number 73) was designed to allow a pleasant return to Trockener Steg without any uphill climbs . The international ski area offers up to 360 kilometers of slopes. Those looking for a taste of Italian style can cross the border at over 3,000 meters above sea level.

The Testa Grigia runway (number 80) was renovated and optimized. In addition to the slopes, the new Matterhorn Express valley station will offer more space and comfort starting in mid-December 2023. The sales outlets will be reintegrated into the main building just in time for winter, and ski lockers and restroom facilities will be available.

Matterhorn Test Center Trockener Steg

The latest ski models from Stöckli Swiss Sports AG are available for testing at the Matterhorn Test Center throughout the entire winter season . Whether it's a world-class giant slalom ski, a relaxed all-rounder, or a wide off-piste ski for days with fresh snow, the on-site experts advise and equip guests with the perfect model. The modern location offers a pleasant ski-in & ski-out experience, perfect views of the Matterhorn, and fascinating information about the history of the Swiss ski manufacturer. All information is available on the Zermatt Bergbahnen website.

Exclusive early morning experience

The First Track offer once again offers the opportunity to experience a truly successful start to the day this winter. Even before the cable cars officially open, you'll head up towards Trockener Steg with the piste and rescue services . The descent via Furggloch to Furi offers plenty of space,

empty slopes and a unique, magical moment. Finally, it's high up – a brunch with local

Delicacies and provide the necessary refreshment after the fantastic first descent in the morning. The First Track offer can be booked on Mondays and Thursdays.

In the thick of it instead of just being there

If you'd like to spend the evening away from busy restaurants and bars, our snow groomer drivers are the perfect choice. For approximately four hours , you can sit in the passenger seat and witness how the approximately 11-ton vehicles are maneuvered skillfully and with great expertise. The view from the cockpit couldn't be better: the slopes are illuminated by headlights, and the silhouettes of the mountains rise from the darkness all around. The snow groomer drivers will answer all your questions about the machines and slope preparation. This service can be booked online on our website every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Mystical moments in the moonlight For guests who prefer to be active in the evening hours, the moonlight descent offers the perfect opportunity. After dusk, the funicular takes you towards Sunnegga and then via Blauherd up to the Rothorn. There, in addition to an aperitif, a breathtaking view of Zermatt and the mountain backdrop around the Matterhorn awaits. From here, you can observe the lights of the snow groomers, which, like busy insects in the distance, are preparing the slopes for the next day. Led by a patroller from the piste rescue service, the descent towards Zermatt begins. The moon illuminates the slopes, illuminating the surrounding white mountain peaks in a glittering robe.

After arriving in the village, another highlight awaits: fondue at the Ferdinand by CERVO Mountain Resort restaurant, accompanied by appropriate music. More information and all available dates are available on our website.

All experiences



Matterhorn Ski Paradise –

Ready for magical moments?



Municipality of Zermatt

# All's well that ends well – or is it?

As I write these lines, it is clear to me that the year is drawing to a close and it is time to take stock of the year.

According to our service partners, 2023 will once again be a record year. The winter was snow-poor but rich in visitors, especially from the US. The summer was sunny, and the street scene was dominated by many Asians. Sometimes you had the impression that the flood of guests would never end.

Meanwhile, guests also shape our village landscape during the off-season, and we have to get used to it. I don't want to judge whether this is good or bad, but the fact is that tourism secures our income. We know that whoever says yes to Zermatt also says yes to tourism. We live with it and from it. However, and this is particularly important to me, Zermatt is a village and our living space, and this must be preserved. The intact village life is a USP (unique selling point) of Zermatt. This must be preserved, and we are prioritizing it in our sustainability strategy.

Like every year, 2023 was marked by many events, highs and lows, as well as changes. The latter isn't easy for everyone to accept, but change is part of life, and life is always moving forward. Only moving forward takes us further – standing still means standing still.

In April, there was a change within the municipal council, and our average age changed from 54 to 49. The municipal council meets every two weeks for its regular meetings and deals with an average of 35 items per meeting. The workload of a municipal council member amounts to approximately 30%.

A special highlight this year was the student exchange and destination trip to Japan. With 29 young people and 20 adults, we were able to spend twelve days in the Land of the Rising Sun. Lasting memories are guaranteed for all participants on such trips. The mayor of Fujikawaguchiko also received a lasting memory when I gave him a warm hug during the twinning ceremony. A somewhat unusual gesture for Japanese people.

In July, we welcomed a group from Cerebral Valais to Zermatt. A lasting encounter with special people. The Zermatt fire department had created an adventure course , and at the Air Zermatt base, we were able to follow the hustle and bustle while enjoying a raclette.



In mid-October, our sister community of Sexten invited us to the inauguration of the "House of the Mountains." Sexten, the village of the Three Peaks, is known for its warm hospitality and beautiful nature.

Daniel Luggen and I, representing Zermatt, will be present at the inauguration and will be taking home a great gift. It would have actually been the beautiful building itself , but we agreed on a Zermatt wall inside the house. In July 2024, Sexten will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first ascent of the Zwölfer, and we will be planning a destination trip there. Further information will follow over the course of the winter.

Culture should not be missed either and so in June a Another section of the cultural trail has opened. What? Have n't completed the trail yet? It's highly recommended, and there 's even a book available so you can read up on the history.

The opening of the Alpine Crossing was also a special event and crucial for the future . This marked the beginning of operation of the highest Alpine crossing.

The month of November was all about the Matterhorn Cervino Speed Opening. The weekend of the men's downhill races brought us plenty of snow, leading to This led to a cancellation. Although the women's weekend was sunny, this race could not be held due to wind.

The end of the year is always a time to say thank you. THANK YOU to all the employees of the Zermatt Municipality, as well as to everyone who works every day for the well-being of our residents and guests, ensuring that everything runs smoothly and that everything goes smoothly.

On behalf of the municipal council and administration of the municipality of Zermatt, we wish you a successful end to the year and a brilliant start to 2024.

Heartfelt  
Romy Biner-Hauser, Mayor



The year 2023: Many events, Ups and downs, but also characterized by changes.



Part 2

Municipality of Zermatt

Building in Zermatt – the increased common use or use of public land

The last issue of "Zermatt Inside" featured the first part of the article series "Building in Zermatt." This primarily covered principles and regulations. The second part now addresses the topic of "Use of Public Land," which represents an increased level of public use.

Before we move on to the topic of “increased common use,” we will summarize the essential principles from the first part:

- The operating times of heavy construction equipment and motor vehicles with thermal drive are restricted by regulations – excavation times are spring and autumn.
- Every vehicle operating in Zermatt requires a driving permit/special driving permit.

Construction work is permitted year-round on weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (noise abatement regulations). This regulation does not apply to Sundays and public holidays. The following applies to noisy work: Noise may not be generated by technical equipment or personal behavior unless it can be avoided through reasonable precautions, such as protective walls, sound-insulated machinery, consideration in the selection of work times, and noise protection devices.

Use of public land – increased common use

In addition to the Matterhorn and its impressive natural surroundings, Zermatt offers another special feature: its "car-free" status. Article 1 (purpose article) of the municipal traffic regulations (VR) stipulates the following: "These regulations are intended to ensure the safety of pedestrians and vehicles, particularly by limiting vehicle traffic to what is absolutely necessary, while simultaneously preserving Zermatt as a car-free resort for pedestrians."

This determines the use of streets, paths and squares located in the traffic area: running/walking and driving. This purpose of the traffic area is also enshrined in Article 137, Paragraph 1 of the Road Act of the Canton of Valais of September 3, 1965 (StrG). This states: "Public property may be used by anyone free of charge and without special permission, within the scope of its intended purpose and in accordance with the applicable regulations."

Any use of the traffic area beyond this is considered increased public use or special use. Special use is the use of public property to an extent that exceeds public use or in a manner that does not correspond to its intended purpose (Article 138, Paragraph 1 of the Traffic Act).

For construction activities, this means: If traffic areas/roads, paths, or public spaces are used, for example, for erecting scaffolding, a construction fence, a skip, or for material storage , this constitutes increased public use or special use. Special use requires a permit (Art. 139 StrG) or a concession (Art. 138, paragraph 2, Art. 140 StrG).

The mandate of the municipality of Zermatt (EWG) is thus legally mandated: to ensure the safety of pedestrians and vehicles. To fulfill this mandate – the safety of all road users – an application must be submitted for the use of public land.

Just as a landowner doesn't appreciate a neighbor using their land to permanently store goods, there can be no sympathy for the unauthorized use or blocking of streets and paths with construction materials, scaffolding, and barriers. They obstruct third parties, put them under pressure, and thus create dangerous situations. They also hinder emergency vehicles on their way to people seeking assistance or heavy fire engines on their way to an emergency. Therefore, the use of public land requires a permit.



Increased public use – restricted passage

Traffic disruptions through construction site

Photos: EWG



The following information and documents must be enclosed with an application for the use of public land:

- Completed application for permission to use public land
- Site plan showing the required traffic area, including dimensions and, if located within the road area, the trafficable width.

In general, traffic disruptions must not occur. The safety of all road users must be ensured. There is no legal right to a permit to use public land.

Road closures

What is a road closure? A road closure is a temporary closure of a road, in one or both directions, for certain vehicle categories, pedestrians, or all road users.

There are various types of road closures with different legal /regulatory bases. The main road closures are:

- Road closures due to material handling or work on a construction site, such as crane assembly/disassembly – increased public use
- Closures due to road works, such as paving work or excavation work – Road Act (Art. 102)
- Safety closures of a road – police law

A road closure associated with a construction site always involves the use of public land and is subject to EEC approval. Accordingly, an application must be submitted. This application must include the following information and documents:

- A detailed explanation of where and why the closure is necessary – the necessity of the road closure
- Option to bypass the closure, i.e. an alternative route for moving traffic and pedestrians – diversion
- Signalization of the closure and possible diversion
- Use of a transport service

This information is essential for the EWG to fulfill its duty to ensure safety. The Public Safety Department requires sufficient time to review and approve such a request, as clarifications may need to be made with other parties (e.g., emergency services) . Conditions and requirements may then need to be established.

Excavation work

Excavation work in road areas may result in road closures or at least disruptions, depending on the type and scope of the work. A permit from the Civil Engineering Department is required for excavation work.

The Civil Engineering Department is responsible for work on and in the streets , so its employees review, assess, and approve applications for excavation work . A corresponding application must be submitted; the application form can be found on the EWG website (www.gemeinde.zermatt).

A mandatory component of the excavation work application are the utility plans for all utilities, namely EWZ, Water Supply, Swisscom, Valaiscom, and Wastewater Supply. Incomplete applications cannot be processed. Urgent work may not begin until the permit or approval of the Civil Engineering Department has been obtained.

For applicants, this means that sufficient time must be allowed for the approval of a request for excavation work. Every approval of a grave request is subject to conditions and requirements that must be met.

During the peak tourist season in winter and summer, only urgent, non-postponable work will be approved (e.g. pipe bursts in drinking water supply lines).

The excavation times for 2024 will be published in the next issue of “Zermatt Inside.”



Municipality of Zermatt

# Expansion of Zermatt's electricity supply is making great strides

As reported in the October 2022 issue of Zermatt Inside, Elektrizitätswerk Zermatt AG (EWZ) is completely renovating the Moos substation and further expanding the distribution network.

The medium-voltage distribution grid in Zermatt is supplied with electrical energy by the two substations Spiss and Moos. Due to the constantly increasing energy demand and ever-increasing load peaks, the two substations would soon reach their capacity limits and have also reached the end of their technical service life. To ensure long-term power supply, both substations and their cable connections must be repaired.

The expansion will be carried out in several phases and began in October 2022. Work on the Moos substation and the 65 kV cable connection to the Spiss substation will be completed at the beginning of 2025, and the new connection point to the 65 kV grid will begin operations. At a later date , the Spiss substation will also be replaced by a new building.

Construction of the new Moos

substation is in full

swing After excavation work at the new location began in autumn 2022, the actual construction work for the new building began in spring. The new substation will be built as a solid structure made of

Concrete. This is necessary in order to comply with the applicable regulations for electrical systems regarding fire protection, earthquake safety, contact safety , etc. The new building will be

It provides space for the high- and medium-voltage switchgear and five large oil-cooled power transformers. Additional space is required for auxiliary equipment and auxiliary systems . There is also a walk-in cable cellar beneath the main floor, which can accommodate all the cable systems.

In the summer everything went according to plan

Thanks to the favorable weather conditions, the cast-in-place concrete shell was constructed without major difficulties and completed on schedule. Anyone passing by the construction site today can already see the large openings for the power transformers.

The piping systems were also adapted, partially renewed, and introduced into the new substation. At the end of this year, all major high- and civil engineering work will be completed and the building will be temporarily sealed and cordoned off over the winter.



State of construction work at the substation

© Image: Electricity company Zermatt



New substation Moos

© Visualization: Arnold Zurniwen Architekten AG

During the winter months, the interior work will be carried out, including painting, electrical and ventilation installations, metal construction work, etc., so that the installation of the electrical systems can begin.

Spectacular heavy-duty transports in summer 2024. The

new medium-voltage systems are scheduled to be delivered in the spring, the high- and medium-voltage cable systems at the beginning of summer, and the power transformers at the end of summer. Due to their weight and large, bulky design, their delivery is proving to be a major challenge . The five power transformers will be transported to the new substation in spectacular heavy-duty transports , where they will be unloaded and moved into the building.

Laying the high-voltage cables between the two substations will also be challenging. Nearly 10 km of cable , with a diameter of over 6 cm and a total weight of approximately 40 tons , will be pulled into the existing piping and cable shafts at various locations.

Commissioning planned for early 2025

Delivery and installation of the high-voltage switchgear is planned for autumn 2024. Due to uncertainties in the global procurement market, delivery difficulties and resulting delays may occur. If everything goes according to plan, the first part of the plants can be commissioned in September 2024, and the entire plant in winter 2024/25. After full commissioning, the security of supply for Zermatt and the inner Nikolai Valley will be ensured for the coming decades .

be guaranteed permanently.

## Project team

Client
EW Zermatt, Valgrid AG
Project management
Schnyder Engineers VS AG
Electrical components
Schnyder Engineers VS AG
architecture
Arnold Zurniwen Architects AG
civil engineer
Lauber Civil Engineers AG
environmental engineers
Plan A+ AG and Forum Umwelt AG
Building technology
Schnyder Engineers VS AG
Contact and questions
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Municipality of Zermatt

# E-invoices and e-bills

In a world that is becoming increasingly digitalized, traditional paper invoicing has seen better days.

E-invoices and e-bills have not only revolutionized the invoicing process , but have also increased the efficiency of companies and simplified everyday life for consumers. E-invoices and e-bills are fundamentally very similar; the difference between the technologies lies in the invoice recipients.

## E-invoices

E-invoices are electronic documents that contain all the necessary information for a legally binding invoice in digital form . Private individuals receive an email. The PDF document of the invoice can be downloaded from this email. The QR code on the invoice can then be scanned and the outstanding amount paid. Companies import the data directly into their accounting system, triggering the accounts payable workflow there. E-invoices can be easily requested from the Zermatt Municipality (EWG). Companies use e-invoices to send invoices to other companies and customers in a digital format. This technology automates the invoicing process and offers numerous advantages: Environmental friendliness: Reducing paper consumption and transport is sustainable.

- Cost savings: E-invoices significantly reduce expenses for paper , printing and postage.
- Faster processing: Since e-invoices can be processed automatically, they significantly shorten processing times.



## E-Bill

By using e-bill, invoices are no longer sent in printed form by mail or email. Instead, invoices can be accessed and paid directly in e-banking. With just a few clicks, invoices can be reviewed and paid. Since September 1, 2023, EWG has also offered e-bill. Every EWG invoice, except for tax invoices, can now be paid in e-banking.

However, EEC tax invoices will continue to be sent in paper format and cannot be requested as e-bills.

Advantages of E-Bill are:

- Better management: Digital invoices are easier to organize , archive, and track, leading to improved invoice management.

Convenience : Consumers can check and pay their bills online without managing physical documents.

E-bills and e-invoices are significant innovations that have revolutionized invoicing. They offer the EWG the opportunity to work more efficiently, reduce costs, and act in a more environmentally friendly manner. For you, e-invoices and e-bills mean increased convenience and the opportunity to reduce your ecological footprint. These digital solutions are not only a symbol of digitalization, but also a decisive step towards a more efficient and sustainable future.

A contribution by Alena Schaller, trainee in the 3rd year of training at EWG

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Municipality of Zermatt

# Administrative management

The administrative management of the municipality of Zermatt consists of a team of five people. The administrative staff and the mayor can be found on the third floor of the community center.

## Head of Administration

Daniel Feuz is the head of administration and thus the direct supervisor of all departments . His workday as operational manager is characterized by diverse and demanding tasks and meetings of all kinds. Every day, he faces diverse challenges and oversees various large projects. He is responsible for ensuring customer-oriented and legally compliant services within the municipal administration, as well as for the implementation of municipal council, general assembly, and commission resolutions. Together with

For him, the municipal council and the mayor's office focus on achieving strategic goals and further development.

## Head of Administration

Oliver Summermatter serves as Head of Administration and Deputy Head of Administration. His responsibilities include Communications/ Media (in collaboration with the departments),

Legal services and complaints procedures, as well as subdivision, purchase, and easement contracts. He is also the coordinator of "Zermatt Inside," the Zermatt waste disposal service "THE RIGHT BIN," and is responsible for the implementation of the bike trails and public procurement. He is responsible for the financial system.

## Head of Human Resources

Amber Brantschen works in the function on as Head of Human Resources. She manages all personnel administration for the approximately 150 employees, is responsible for the recruitment process, advises and supports managers and employees on all HR matters, handles personnel development, and is responsible for apprenticeships.

## assistant

Caroline Fuchs-Andenmatten works as an assistant to the administrative management. From February 1, 2024, she will be supported by Ariane Bauer , who will take over the vacant position as assistant to the administrative management.

The secretariat in the administrative management is the hub of the administration. The two assistants support the Head of Administration , the Head of Administration, the Head of Human Resources, and the Mayor with various tasks and complex correspondence. They are responsible for preparing meetings of all kinds, including municipal council meetings; they plan and organize events such as the municipal reception or the general assembly; and they are the first point of contact for questions from internal and external stakeholders.

"The administrative management team has 50 years of professional experience with the municipality of Zermatt. In our varied and exciting area of responsibility, there are always new challenges. We hope that we have given you a brief insight into our work.

everyday working life and look forward to the exciting and challenging tasks ahead. »

Dani, Oli, Amber, Caroline and Ariane

from left: Daniel Feuz, Caroline Fuchs-Andenmatten, Amber Brantschen and Oliver Summermatter



Ariane Bauer will support the administration from February 2024.



In our varied rich and exciting There are areas of responsibility always new Challenges."

LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES

Municipality of Zermatt

# Zermatt Waste Disposal – Upcycling versus Recycling

Materials that can be reprocessed and reused without loss are considered permanent materials. Glass has this property and is ideal for recycling.

Today it is technically possible to produce a new bottle from recycled glass – without any loss of quality. Up to 60% recycled glass can be used to produce clear and amber glass , and even up to 100% for new green glass. To achieve the required color, in practice, "only" about 85% recycled glass is often used in production.

## Used glass collection in Zermatt

In Zermatt, around 900 tons of waste glass are generated annually, which has so far been recycled using the recycling process described above.

Our Zermatt Waste Disposal recycling center, "THE RIGHT BIN," regularly reviews how the recyclable materials disposed of by the public, guests, and businesses can be most effectively recycled and returned to the circular economy.

## The circular economy in practice

Circular economy works when

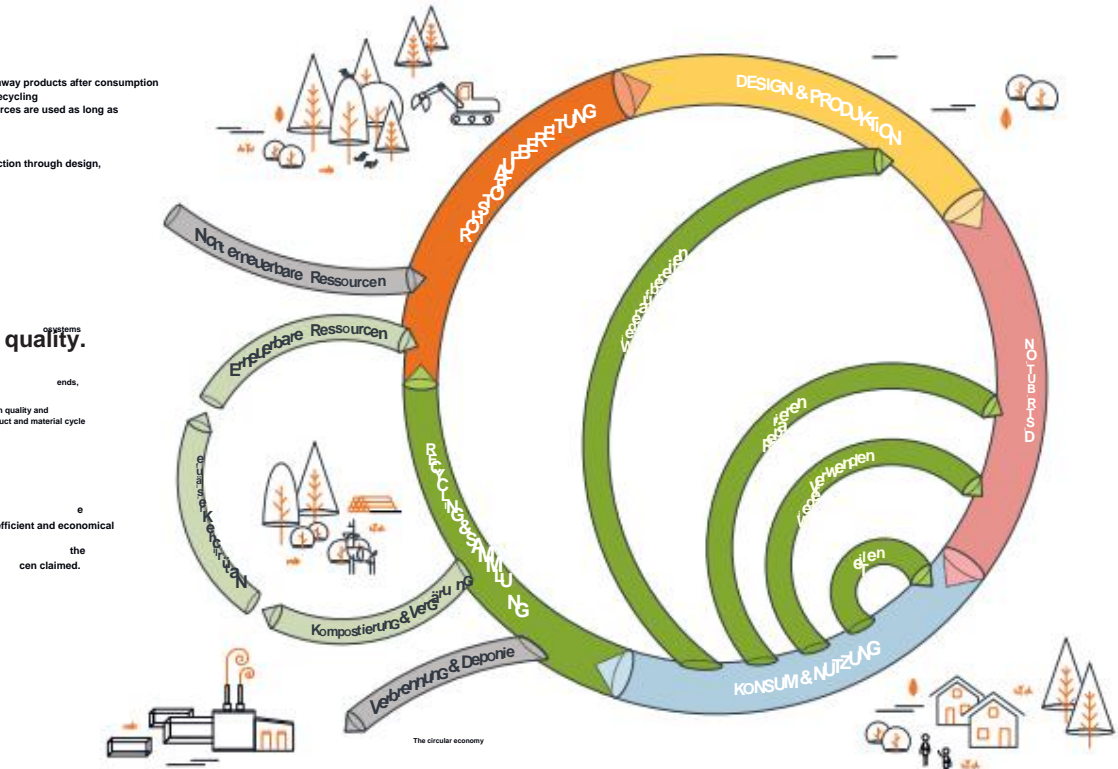
- Raw materials (formerly «waste materials») are constantly available in sufficient quantities
- Recycling and collection are designed efficiently (collect mixed / separate)
- an effective compensation model exists (e.g. Vetroswiss including bag/landfill fees)
- the processing is technically and regulatory possible
- the utilization of secondary raw materials is more lucrative
- procurement costs are stable

Cycles are more ecological if the cycles also have small radii, ie

- the collection is local
- processing and production are regional

## What happens to the collected waste glass from Zermatt?

A way has been found for the waste glass from the Matterhorn village, whereby the material is not fed into a permanent recycling cycle



Schematic illustration of the circular economy

but is refined once, so-called "upcycling ." For example, since this year, our waste glass has been processed into foam glass gravel in Switzerland. This end product has been used in various applications, primarily as insulation, for 40 years.

To become foam glass, the waste glass must first be ground. The glass powder is then baked. This occurs with 2% pure mineral "baking powder" in a kiln at over 950 degrees Celsius. During this process, the glass mass foams and ultimately leaves the kiln as foam glass . During rapid cooling, the product breaks down to the size of gravel.

## Properties of foam glass

Foam glass is insulating, frost-resistant, load-bearing, draining, lightweight, and non-flammable. Its insulating properties can save energy for years . Furthermore, 40 years of experience with foam glass demonstrates that its insulating properties are not lost, and the foam glass from the first projects completed 40 years ago can be easily reused in new construction projects today.

## Possible uses of foam glass

- Thermal insulation in building construction
- Garden and landscaping, sports fields
- Infrastructure and road construction
- Special applications



The production of foam glass could be viewed on site.

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Municipality of Zermatt

# The new four-legged colleague at the Zermatt Regional Police

"Culch," nicknamed "Cerberus," from the "von den wilden Mädchen" breeding facility in Vermes, began his first day as a service dog with the Zermatt Regional Police on October 13, 2023 .

Cerberus lives with his service dog handler in Zermatt and spends his Fridays playing and learning. Of course, evening cuddles are also allowed. Like any good employee, he maintains a healthy work-life balance, and of course, beauty sleep is not neglected.

He is a bright and curious Belgian Shepherd. Always the policeman, this four-legged colleague presents himself to the outside world.

strong and fearless, although he still has a lot to learn. Currently, the little one is three Months old and just getting to know the residents and his area of operation better. nen.

Cerberus will be trained in various areas by our police dog handler , making him a valuable and valued member of the Zermatt Regional Police. In the future, this four-legged friend will be seen more often in Zermatt and the rest of the Matter Valley. Beyond a friendly "hello" or a round of small talk,

He would definitely be happy about talk.

We welcome our new employee and wish him much fun and success in his future work.



Cerberus, the new four-legged employee of the Zermatt Regional Police.

Show



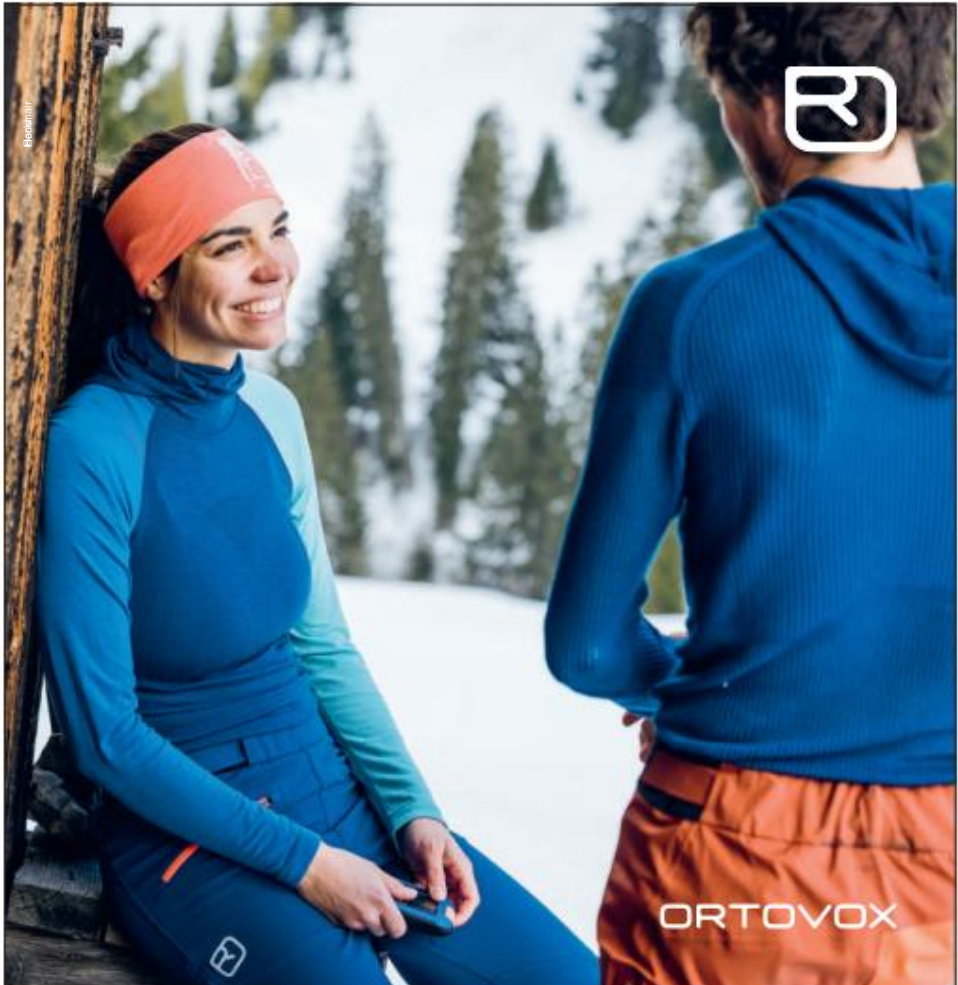
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Municipality of Zermatt

# Sale of brothels and other goods

Puffs, disposable electronic cigarettes, have been available in Switzerland since 2020 and are spreading unchecked among young people and even younger people.



study

According to a study by Unisanté and Gesundheitsför- According to the 2022 Valais survey , more than half of 14- to 25-year-olds say they have consumed this type of product at least once in their lives, and 12% consume it frequently.

For 14- to 17-year-olds, this figure is 9% and for 18- to 25-year-olds, it is 13%. Furthermore, almost one in five young people report consuming products with a nicotine content above the legal limit of 20 mg/ml, or 2%.

Nicotine is a highly addictive substance that activates the brain's reward circuit by providing a positive feeling when consumed. This effect

Over time, this leads to increased cravings for nicotine and withdrawal symptoms if the intake is insufficient. E-cigarette use among adolescents could therefore increase the risk of later use of other products.

For these reasons, puffs, like other tobacco and nicotine products, represent a real public health problem and therefore require measures to protect young people.

Trade Police Act (GGP)

Article 4, paragraph 5 of the GGP states that the sale and distribution of tobacco products, nicotine-containing products, electronic cigarettes, and legal cannabis to minors under the age of 18 is prohibited. According to Article 22, paragraph 2 of the GGP , the municipal council is responsible for enforcing the provisions on youth protection.

Controls

The Canton of Valais has called on municipalities to carry out more frequent checks at the respective sales outlets and to monitor compliance with the legal requirements.

The regional police will take on this task and conduct more frequent checks. We thank all sales outlets to always comply with legal requirements when selling and distributing brothels and other goods to minors.

Proper disposal of disposable electronic cigarettes

Most disposable electronic cigarettes end up in the trash instead of being recycled. This is despite the fact that e-cigarettes are electronic devices and should be disposed of properly. E-cigarettes contain many valuable materials that belong back in the recycling system.

At the same time, however, they are also highly flammable and contain heavy metals that are harmful to the environment. SENS eRecycling has therefore launched an industry solution for the environmentally friendly disposal of e-cigarettes with various partners. Please ensure that valuable materials are recycled and that pollutants do not enter the environment .

New industry solution since July 1, 2023

E-cigarettes are considered electrical devices and are subject to the Ordinance on the Return, Take-Back and Disposal of Electrical and Electronic Devices (ORDEE). Accordingly, manufacturers, importers, and retailers in Switzerland are legally obliged to dispose of all types of used e-cigarettes.

With the new industry solution for e-cigarettes, which has been in force since July 1, 2023, SENS eRecycling now offers manufacturers and importers a standardized process for the collection, transport, and environmentally friendly recycling of e-cigarettes.

Return point

As a consumer, you can easily return e-cigarettes to any retail outlet free of charge. Alternatively, you can dispose of them free of charge at Zermatt Entsorgung (recycling collection point in Spiss or mobile recycling collection point) according to the waste calendar – [www.zermatt-entsorgung.ch](http://www.zermatt-entsorgung.ch).

As a seller of e-cigarettes, you can support the industry solution by becoming a vape recycler, ordering the vape recycling bag, and making it as easy as possible for your consumers to return their disposable electronic cigarettes .

More information about vape recycling can be found here: [www.vape-recycler.ch](http://www.vape-recycler.ch)





Municipality of Zermatt

## “Reading Fever” – Manuela presents reading tips!



The Zermatt Municipal Library is open

**Mondays and Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and Thursdays and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**



Next event:

Manuela Hofstätter is a bookseller and one of Switzerland's most successful book bloggers ([www.lesefieber.ch](http://www.lesefieber.ch)). She's coming to Zermatt and will present interesting new books in her unconventional and humorous way. Prepare to be surprised!

Date: Monday, December 18, 2023  
Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Community Library

Cost: Free entry

Registration required by phone, 027 966 22 38 (during opening hours) or online.

We look forward to welcoming many reading enthusiasts.  
The library team



EVENTS

Municipality of Zermatt

## Radio week at Zermatt Primary School

**To get behind the microphone and make their own recordings? This dream came true for 8HB in November. For a week, the class was able to record audiobooks and rap songs.**

The "mobile recording studio" project was already discussed with the Zermatt School in 2021. Funding was secured through the Kiwanis Club of Zermatt and Kulturfunk, the Valais Department of Culture. For various reasons, the project could not be implemented at that time.

In collaboration with the school's social worker and the class teacher, the project was resumed, expanded, and implemented. This resulted in radio plays and rap songs by children for children.

But it wasn't just the students of 8HB who were involved in the project. The German class of 11 OS wrote short stories about Christmas beforehand. The children then set these to music and added their own sound effects. The results will be presented to the kindergarten in the form of an Advent calendar.

In a second part, the students explored the topic of rap. They learned how a rap is structured and what it takes. In groups, the children were then able to invent a rap of their own, set it to music, and also create and incorporate their own beats. The

Children's Rights Day was held, so this was chosen as the theme for the rap songs. Special rap songs were created for five important children's rights.

The final products are intended not only for use by the kindergarten children, but also to be made publicly available. Interested listeners can find the raps links on the school website. The Advent stories are uploaded every Advent Sunday.

We hope you all enjoy listening.  
The 8HB and the school social work Zermatt



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Municipality of Zermatt

# Zermatt Primary School is moving

The first stage of the “Niww Walka” is nearing completion.

Niww Walka – here we come!  
The classes of 4H – 8H will move in from the 22nd. January 2024 their modern classrooms and will paint the new school building and fill it with life. The schoolchildren in grades 1H – 3H will remain in the temporary building on the Obere Matten until the third building is completed . Preparatory work for the demolition and reconstruction of Walka III will begin in February 2024. It is scheduled to be ready for occupancy in August 2025.

January 2021: Move to temporary premises  
On 22 January 2021, the last day of school took place in the two school buildings Walka I and II . The 200 students of the

Cycle 1 students moved into the temporary school building in the heart of the village, Obere Matten. Classes in the school containers went smoothly despite the limited space.  
On the contrary – the special location in the heart of the village is highly valued by parents, schoolchildren, and teachers. The school complex boasts the largest playground in the village (sports and recreational facility). The "Rägeboge" daycare center/lunch table is also integrated into the pavilion.  
The schoolchildren of classes 5H – 8H and their Teachers moved closer together in Walka III . Classes continued while the adjacent Niww Walka was being built. The construction site was controlled by the school building.

Walka III was separated and secured, the noise emissions remained within limits and were  
The playground was set up between the school building in the courtyard and the fountain .  
ner-Lauber-Haus.

D’Niww Walka is taking shape

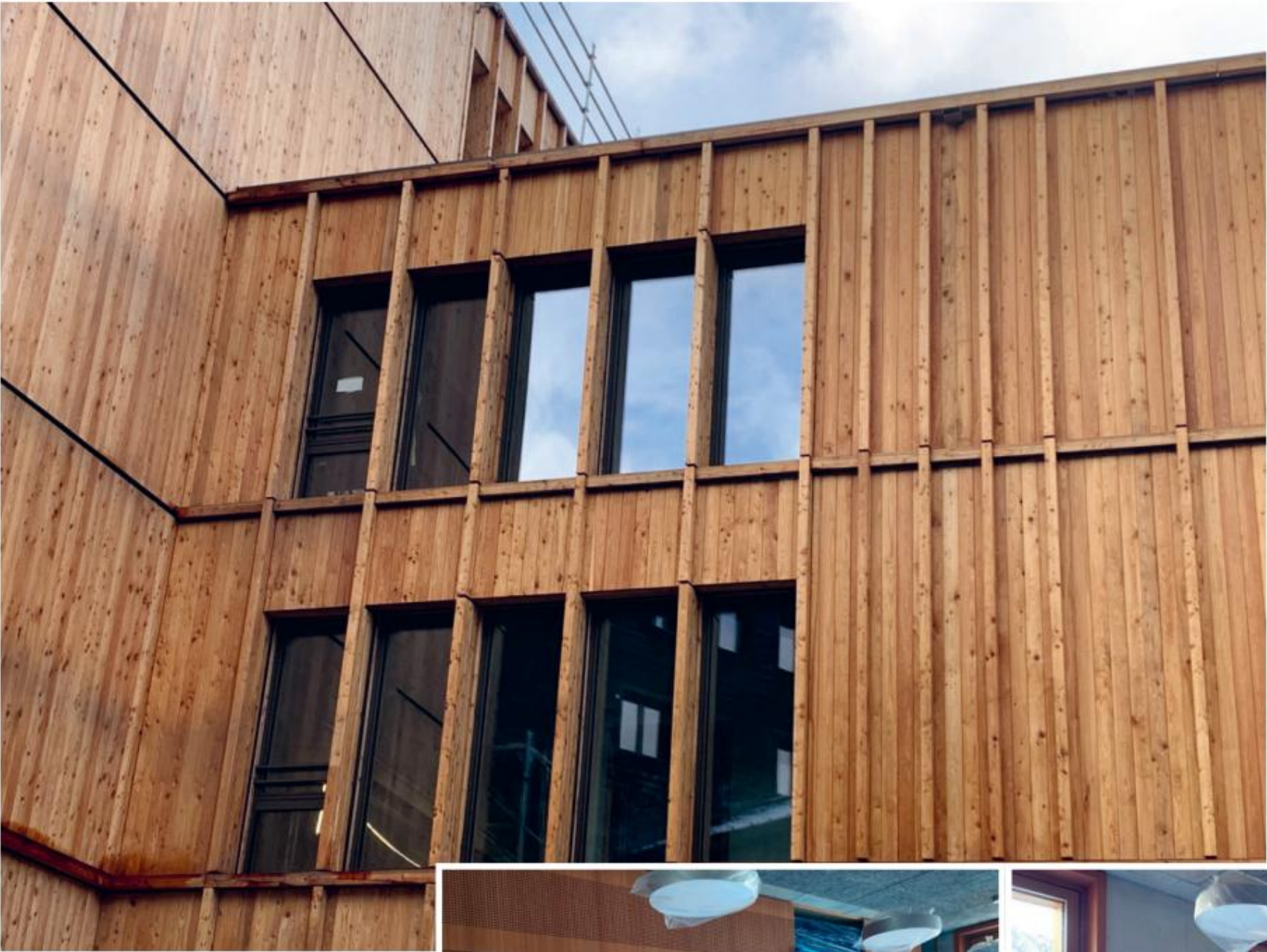
The school years flew by. We waited longingly, and now the time has come. The scaffolding at the school building

Walka has been removed, and the facade reveals its face. Wood, glass, and concrete are the dominant materials. Several craftsmen are at work inside .  
The first  
Classrooms are nearing completion; cloakrooms are being installed, plumbing fixtures are being connected, servers are being installed, and so on. Soon, the screens will be connected, the network installed, the building automation system will be commissioned, and the blinds, lighting, and ventilation systems will be tested.  
The floor and lamps are still protected, but soon the schoolchildren will take over the rooms and breathe life into the place . We’re looking forward to it

premises

Students will reach the school entrance from Metzggasse via a covered and secured walkway. The building will run underneath.

Street, which is being used for the construction of Walka III . This allows children to enter the school building safely. On the ground floor are the entrance hall (atrium), the library, two multi-purpose rooms, and the cafeteria with a stage for small performances. To the right of the entrance, the children enter the gymnasium, which is located in the basement.  
On the first floor of Walka I are the rooms for the technical and  
Textile designs. Opposite are rooms



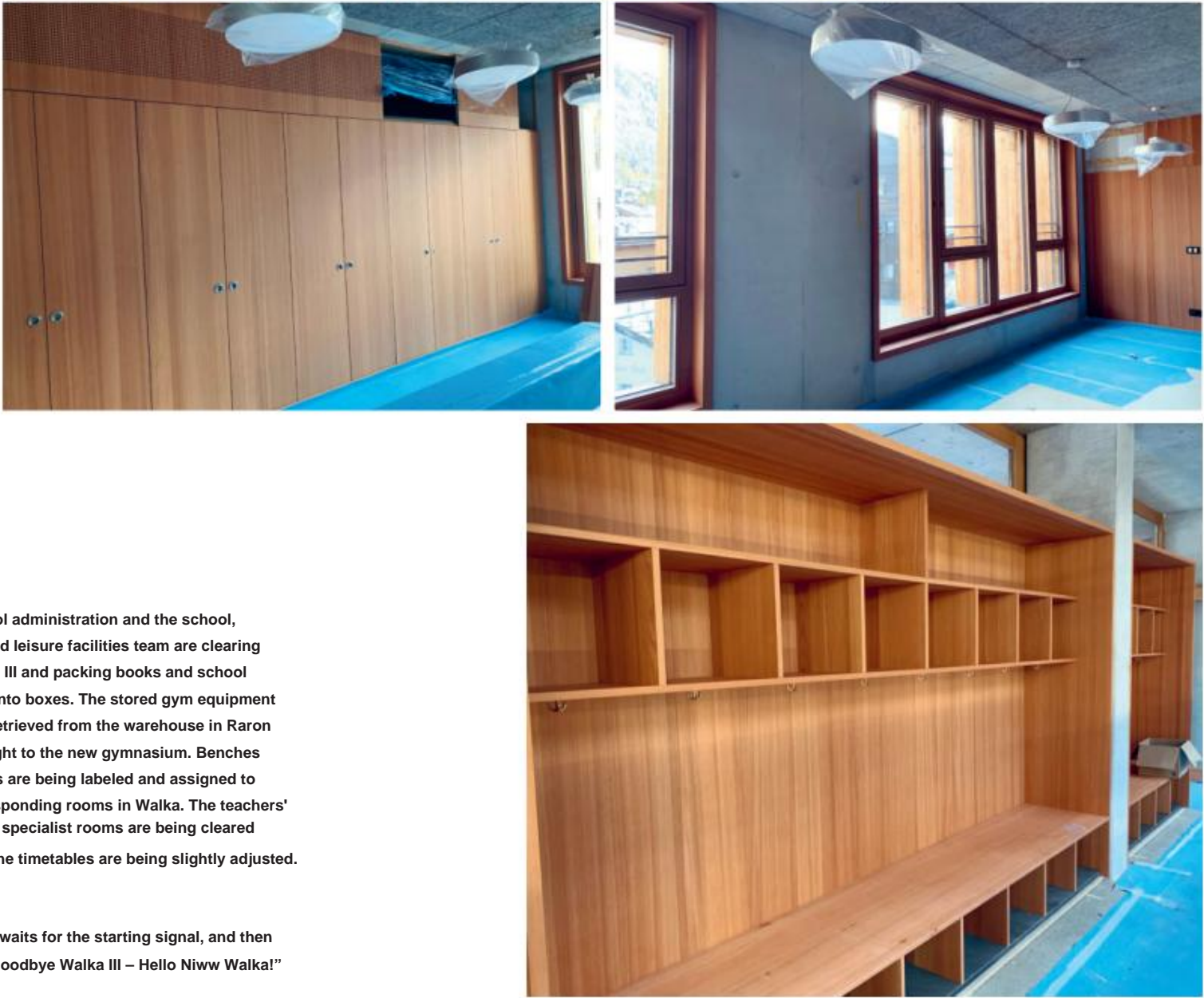
for Music and the General Music School of Upper Valais, various ZET services (speech therapy, psychomotor skills, and school psychology), and school social work are located here. The teachers' room, the school office, and the school administration are located on the same floor in the adjacent Walka II building. There is also a me-  
On the upper floors, the students are housed in 13  
Classrooms and 10 specialist rooms are used for teaching. Two break areas are available on the west side of both buildings for the transition  
period. The buildings are physically separated and secured from the Walka III construction site.

January 2024: Move to d’Niww Walka  
On 22 January 2024 the time has come – The Classes from 4H to 8H are moving into the "Niww Walka ." This will allow preparations for the demolition of Walka III to begin in a timely manner. The children in grades 1H/2H and 3H will remain in the temporary building until the third building is ready for occupancy in August 2025. A daycare center will be located on the ground floor. The kindergarten and grade 3H will occupy the upper floors.

The school administration is currently planning the move and furnishing together with a moving company and the orientation school. Teachers and children, the library team,

The school administration and the school, sports, and leisure facilities team are clearing out Walka III and packing books and school supplies into boxes. The stored gym equipment is being retrieved from the warehouse in Raron and brought to the new gymnasium. Benches and chairs are being labeled and assigned to the corresponding rooms in Walka. The teachers' room and specialist rooms are being cleared out, and the timetables are being slightly adjusted.

Everyone waits for the starting signal, and then we say “Goodbye Walka III – Hello Niww Walka!”



Niww Walka –  
we come!  
On January 22, 2024  
the time has come

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Municipality of Zermatt

## Zermatt School is an “Energy School”

Zermatt schools have received the "Energy School" award. Last school year, the younger students and teenagers, along with their teachers, implemented numerous projects on the topic of "energy."

### We are full of energy!

The aim of the cross-school project was to grow together as a school, to learn about energy together, to experiment and learn , and to become aware of the effects of inner energy.

### We are an energy school!

The Energy City Association has awarded the Zermatt schools the “Energy School” award for their demonstrable and exemplary

Anchoring the careful use of resources in school culture, for the implementation of energy campaigns and for the integration of the topics of sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energies into school lessons.

To achieve these goals, a working group was formed, consisting of the school administration, teachers, students, and members of the School, Sports, and Leisure Facilities Department (SSFA). The group was supported by energy city consultants from Swiss Climate in an advisory capacity . The working group created an annual program and jointly developed interesting projects. A huge thank you to all the schoolchildren, young people, and teachers for their commitment !

### Recognition of Zermatt schools as energy schools

The schools in Zermatt with pupils

After a thorough examination and careful assessment, the "Energy School" award was presented to schools from kindergarten to 11OS . This distinction recognizes the achievement of schools that pursue in-depth and continuous work on the topic of energy and are committed to the sustainable use of resources – both in the classroom and throughout school operations.

Unlike many other schools, Zermatt Schools address the careful use of resources not just on a one-off basis, but comprehensively and long-term. They have met the required criteria as an "Energy School" and have also demonstrated additional commitment.

### Aspects worth mentioning

The following aspects are worth mentioning:

• Power-free day to raise awareness of energy dependence

• A fantastic "Market Day" event: Bringing together the students' knowledge and experiences from the entire year with a public presentation. Students act as experts at the market stalls.

• Inclusion of “learning with and from each other”: Older students show the younger ones various experiments (workshop).  
• Good external communication with support for the commitment to “Zermatt Inside”

### What next?

If a school intends to remain an “Energy School” and re-award the award, it is required to implement the following criteria annually, starting with the first award:

- Continuation of the Energy Committee
  - Follow-up of energy accounting, processing the information (caretaker)
  - 1 action on the topics of energy efficiency, renewable energies, sustainable use of resources , biodiversity, climate and mobility.
  - Integration of energy topics in lessons/curriculum
- In addition, the school is implementing for the re-Awarded once per re-award cycle (usually 4 years), this is an intensive year of energy. The criteria for this correspond to those of the initial award.

### Solar Butterfly

On April 4, 2024, the solar bus will stop in Zermatt. This is an event taking place as part of the annual Energy School campaign. The Solar Butterfly is the first solar-powered, self-sufficient house that travels around the world and transforms into a butterfly. The project demonstrates how a family can travel, live, and work worldwide – without CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We're excited about the visit to Zermatt!

Zermatt Citizens' Community

## With the golden locomotive to culinary delights

The three-star superior Hotel Tannenhof, newly opened in June 2022, has been managed by the Matterhorn Group together with the neighboring Hotel Alpina since July 1, 2023.

The eye-catcher of the hotel is the golden locomotive in the Italian The hotel's restaurant, now called Golden Lok.

"It's great that our restaurant guests come to us not only for our excellent Italian cuisine and delicious pizza , but also because the golden locomotive is both a topic of conversation and an Instagram highlight at lunch or dinner ," says Markus Marti, director of the Grand Hotel Zermatterhof and the four other hotels belonging to the Burgergemeinde in the village. The fascinating story of the locomotive began in 1890 with a publisher from Biel who wanted to build a railway up the Gornergrat and to the Matterhorn, powered not by steam but by electricity. Construction of the Gornergrat Railway began in 1896, and the first locomotive, which ran on this route from 1898, now shines in gold in the heart of the Golden Lok restaurant, which is located on the lower ground floor of the hotel building.

The new chef from Tuscany breathed new life into the restaurant's menu at the beginning of December, and his pizzaiolo, who also traveled from Tuscany for the winter season, transforms even a simple pizza into a culinary experience. The restaurant's atmosphere is enhanced by cool lighting and a delicious wine list compiled by Peter Zimmermann, GaultMillau Sommelier of the Year 2023.

The Burgergemeinde is pleased to meet the culinary needs of its Guests from Zermatt and from near and far now also with an Italian

"The variety of restaurants offered by the Burgergemeinde in the village, from saycheese! to Brasserie Lusi and the Alpine Gourmet Prato Borni to the Japanese restaurant Shogun, is highly appreciated by guests," confirms Markus Marti. Nothing stands in the way of a culinary journey through the village this winter.



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Zermatt Citizens' Community

# Transformation of the 3100 Kulmhotel Gornergrat

At the end of October 2023, renovation work began at the 3100 Kulmhotel Gornergrat, a project that will take a total of one year. The building, which dates back to 1907 and last underwent a comprehensive renovation in 2005, will be completely renovated and offer a completely new experience by the end of 2024.



For a proud 116 years the Kulmhotel is on the Gornergrat.

Since the opening of the Gornergrat Railway 125 years ago, the Gornergrat has been one of the most popular destinations for stargazers and mountain enthusiasts. Thomas and Nicole Marbach, hosts of the highest hotel in the Swiss Alps for 13 years, are delighted that the local community has decided on a comprehensive renovation: "The Gornergrat is a unique destination. Those who travel from far away to have lunch or stay overnight with us will soon be able to do so in an ambience even more worthy of the destination."

During one year, not only the two restaurants but also the terrace, the facade and last but not least the shopping area will be completely renovated. The resorts are being fundamentally renovated and made fit for the future. "The evaluation of guest feedback over the past few years has shown that visitors want restaurants with high-quality local products and a high level of hospitality. The two new restaurants, each offering an individual concept, meet this demand," says Andreas Biner, President of the Burgergemeinde and Chairman of the Group Management of the Matterhorn Group, which operates the 3100 Kulm Hotel. For guests who use the Gornergrat excursion destination as a stopover on their Instagram feed,

Those who want to have a meal are also catered for. The Edelweiss shop at the train station will be converted into a self-service outlet and will offer a culinary offering for simpler tastes.

The exterior of the Kulmhotel owes its imposing appearance to the two towers that adorn the south and north facades. The south tower houses the Stellarium Gornergrat, which is operated by the research station of the "High Alpine Research Stations Jungfrau-Joch and Gornergrat" Foundation. Until the 1990s, the University of Florence, astronomical research was also carried out in the North Tower. After a long slumber, the North Tower will now crown the completion of the renovation work at the end of 2024. A luxurious suite will be created on three floors where guests can gaze at the stars from their private whirlpool, an unforgettable experience for 116 years.



Zermatt Tourism  
Column by André Lüthi

## Overtourism – soon a problem in Zermatt too?

Although not everyone wants to admit it, overtourism exists. Whether it's Lauterbrunnen, Venice, Angkor Wat, Machu Picchu, or the Taj Mahal, it needs to be addressed to make it more bearable for both locals and travelers.

If football matches or concerts are fully booked, they're fully booked—period. And that's how it should be for certain tourist attractions and destinations. Quotas must be introduced. A maximum of so many visitors per day—no problem thanks to digital ticket reservations.

We can and must solve the problems at the hotspots. This would be a clear benefit for both locals and tourists.

more pleasant.

A ticket system is the best solution for attractions like the Angkor Wat temple complex or the Taj Mahal. Visitors already have to purchase a ticket for many of these attractions; the Taj Mahal is just one example. Now the challenge is to set a maximum number of visitors per day.

While travelers' personal freedom to do exactly what they spontaneously feel like is limited, that would be the only sacrifice tourists would have to make. For many travelers, this is easily manageable.

I notice that fewer and fewer people simply set out and then spontaneously decide what they want to do. Most have clear plans. They

know in advance where they will stay on the third day of their trip and which sights are on the program for day 5.

The starting point is clear. More and more people live on our planet and more and more want to travel. This means we must somehow get overtourism under control in order to create travel experiences worthy of the name again in the hotspots.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution when entire villages or towns, such as Lauterbrunnen or Lucerne, suffer from mass tourism during peak season.

In such cases, the number of tourist buses allowed per day must be limited. This is undoubtedly much more difficult to implement than a visitor cap for tourist attractions.

Venice is leading the way. The lagoon city will introduce a fee next year. Day tourists will have to pay admission for 30 test days. The final introduction of the fee is planned for 2025. This measure is intended to limit the influx of visitors. In my opinion, this is exactly the right approach. Those in charge generally need more courage and the ability to sensitize locals and tourists alike to the new system. Will a model like the one Venice plans to apply soon be needed in Zermatt? Discussion open.

André Lüthi,  
Chairman of the Globetrotter Group

André Lüthi has been working in tourism since 1984. He studied tourism and was managing director of the travel provider Globetrotter Travel Service. Today, he is co-owner and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Globetrotter Group AG, which comprises 14 travel companies and employs 350 people. He summarizes his long journeys and expeditions to the people and cultures of every continent as follows: "It was and is the best school of life and leadership!"

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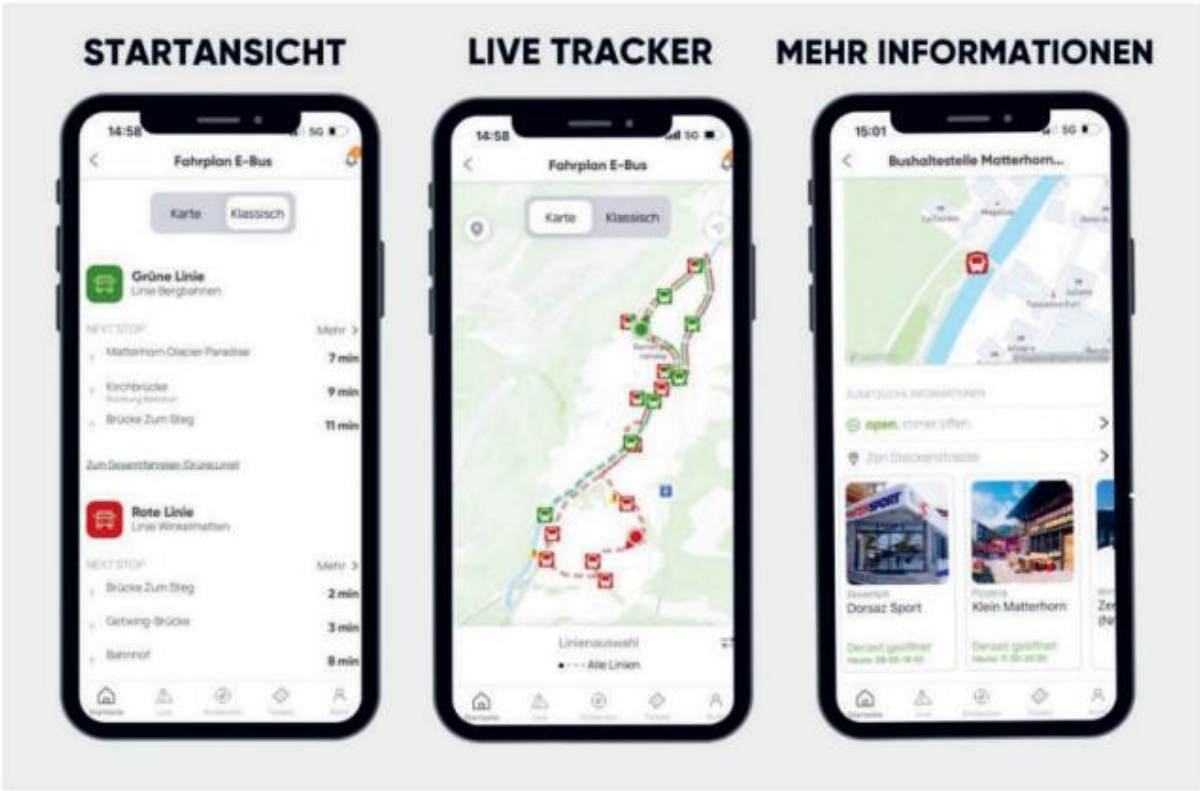
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Zermatt Tourism

## Now live in the Matterhorn app: The new e-bus timetable!

The time has come: a long-announced digitalization project has been introduced with the e-bus live timetable. The travel experience with our beloved Gruyère electric buses in Zermatt reaches a whole new level. Our optimized timetable offers numerous advantages:



### Real-time tracking

The new timetable shows you in real time where the bus is on its route. You can track the exact location of the bus on the map in the Matterhorn app and always know how far the bus is from your stop.

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«You will now find out where the bus is, and in how many minutes he arrives at them.»

Zermatt Tourism

## New label for regional and sustainable Zermatt products – Taste of Zermatt



Zermatt now has the Taste of Zermatt label – a seal of quality for products that are sustainably produced locally and stand for outstanding quality.

The eponymous umbrella brand Taste of Zermatt, which unites the culinary events of the Zermatt – Matterhorn destination, is taking a further step and introducing a label to celebrate the diversity and excellence of local food and beverages. The "Taste of Zermatt"

Label offers producers in the region the opportunity to label and market their products with a quality seal based on a comprehensive sustainability approach.

The main objective of this award is to promote uniqueness, verifiability, and quality assurance. Products awarded with the "Taste of Zermatt" label should not only demonstrate outstanding

represent quality, but also the connection with the region, its traditions and the memories they evoke.

The award offers producers the opportunity to communicate the quality of their products to customers. It opens up advantages for marketing both locally and online. With the support of the "Taste of Zermatt" association, award-winning products receive a place in various sales outlets, such as tourist offices and mountain railways. This allows producers to differentiate themselves from competitors and emphasize their value and uniqueness.

In a world where quality and origin of products are becoming increasingly important, the "Taste of Zermatt" label promises not only excellent products, but also a story that is told with every bite.

If you're interested in certification, please contact us at [info@tasteofzermatt.ch](mailto:info@tasteofzermatt.ch). We look forward to a fantastic collaboration!

Zermatt Tourism

## The tourist office and the post office Bag in a new Alpine chic look

From 4 to 29 September 2023, the tourist office and post office in Täsch were extensively renovated.

The interior of the tourist office was designed in a modern Alpine chic style, and the exterior facade was renovated. The room layout was redesigned to offer visitors more space and create a more relaxed and airy atmosphere. Throughout the renovation, the tourist office and post office remained open at all times – the services that the Zermatt – Matterhorn destination is known for continued to be offered in a container on the station square.

horn is committed to providing personal, individual, and high-quality guest communication and advice. Fabrizio Gull, Head of Destination Services at Zermatt Tourism, describes the new office as a modern and fitting calling card for the Zermatt – Matterhorn destination, which includes Zermatt, Täsch, and Randa. On November 7, 2023, the new location was inaugurated with a small opening reception for the entire community.



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Gornergrat Railway

# Golden times on the Gornergrat, in Zermatt and Täsch

How, thanks to an innovative idea and the right skills can turn scrap into gold.

The locomotive is down... on the floor slab of the new Hotel Tannenhof building.



## How it all began – The golden “lockdown”

125 years ago, the first train traveled to the Gornergrat. A vision had become reality. It was thanks to a vision that the early trains were not scrapped, but were given new life. And in a completely different way than one might initially imagine.

Visions require visionaries – people who, despite all adversities, persevere in implementing an idea. People who don't let themselves be discouraged and are also a little bit positively crazy. People like Benjamin Schaller.

A symbiosis of a hotel in need of renovation and a historic locomotive

His vision was to revitalize the traditional, yet in need of renovation, Hotel Tannenhof in Zermatt . He envisioned a restaurant underground, not an ordinary one, but one whose unique atmosphere would radiate from the depths of a carefully crafted quarry stone vault.

Further details were not yet fully defined at that time . But sometimes one piece of the puzzle fits together almost by itself. During an inspection for a construction contract awarded to Benjamin's construction company by the Gornergrat Bahn (GGB), he came across old motors and control cabinets. He asked if he could have it. When the GGB representatives realized that Benjamin was serious, they promptly offered him a decommissioned first-generation locomotive that was about to be scrapped.

Just like with the goods lift, he saw something special amidst the rusty steel and faded paint, and an idea formed in his head: This locomotive should become the centerpiece of his restaurant in the quarry stone vault. He took over the locomotive He 2/2 3001 and, in the midst of the coronavirus lockdown, continued with the renovation plans for the hotel and restaurant. Inspired by the circumstances , his brother named the project for the restaurant, with the historic locomotive at its centerpiece, "Lockdown". The name became a program: As the centerpiece, it should also shine and shine accordingly. And what could shine better than gold? Benjamin's idea was bold, but he believed in it, and the project's name evolved into "Golden Lockdown."

Oh, you sweet Lokji, do something again! He approached one of his colleagues with his idea. and asked him to research who could perform such a gilding . Pascal Piffaretti was soon identified as the person who would restore the locomotive to its former glory. However, he had assumed it was a model locomotive and was speechless when he finally saw a real locomotive standing before him.

Pascal was soon fascinated by the idea and enthusiastically accepted the challenge.

The historic vehicle was carefully and sensitively restored. At the same time, the pit, including the platform with the original tracks, was excavated and completed in the restaurant's basement. After the locomotive was lowered to its new location by crane , Pascal and his team got to work. In June 2022, the "Tannenhof" opened with the restaurant.

taurant «Golden Lokdown» and the locomotive 3001 as an incomparable unique selling point.



Visionary and entrepreneur Benjamin Schaller in locomotive 3001 at the start of the gilding work.

This special gem in his restaurant marked the beginning of Benjamin's relationship with the three GGB pioneers. Since 2007, locomotive 3002 had been standing by to welcome guests in Stalden at the entrance to the Matter Valley. This locomotive had to be removed due to construction work and found Benjamin as its new owner. Now it greets guests traveling to Zermatt in a new, also gold-plated version at the Schaller Ante Portas parking garage in Täsch.

The locomotive 3003 as a historic “Golden Spot”

But that's not all – in the course of the 125th anniversary of the Gornergrat Railway, the idea for a jewel was born, so that unique photos could be taken on the Gornergrat with the Matterhorn as a backdrop. One locomotive was still left – so it was obvious that it should be given a special place A project group, with Benjamin as a member, set about implementing it.

And so the new interpretation of the trilogy was born: three first-generation locomotives , brilliantly presented at three prominent locations – at the entrance to Täsch, in the heart of Zermatt, and on the Gornergrat.

Thanks to the sponsors Siemens Mobility AG, BS Schaller Holding AG, Stadler Rail Management AG, Sersa Group AG, Walliser Kantonalbank, Matterhorn Group AG and René Fischer GmbH, the historic locomotive He 2/2 3003 was transformed into the unique “Golden Spot” on the Gornergrat.



Gilder Pascal Piffaretti with employee Miranda Fierz to the work.



The finished gold-plated locomotive 3003 in the workshop in Herbrigen.

## “The people of Valais are a bit crazy”

Pascal Piffaretti of the Piffaretti Manufactory in Lucerne has gilded many things before—church altars, walls in wellness temples, and weather vanes. This commission, however, came as a surprise, and he wasn't sure at first if he was serious. An interview with the gilder of the golden locomotives.

What was your first thought when you received the request for gilding?  
Pascal: (smiles) My first thought was, the Valaisans are a bit crazy. They're probably talking about a model railway?!

What were the challenges or new experiences for you?  
The locomotives are made of different materials such as rubber, sheet iron, brass, etc. Gold plating them was and remains a challenge. In principle, however, it is feasible. We are used to large surfaces in everyday life, but most often these are altars, globes, weather vanes, or entire wall surfaces in wellness oases or staterooms.

Is there a special anecdote?  
Most visitors were or are always  
They are amazed that it's real gold and want to touch it. However, because the gold is so fine, it usually disappears immediately on the hand or finger. Nevertheless, people are happy to have held real gold in their hands.

You have the first locomotive on the construction site of the “Tannenhof” gilded – the 3002 and the 3003 in a specially erected enclosure.  
What was the difference?  
Exactly, the first locomotive was located in the basement of the Tannenhof, under artificial light. The difference is that the gold sparkles and radiates even more in daylight. It's important with this technique, called oil gilding, that there's no dust buildup . That was quite difficult back then at the Tannenhof with the other craftsmen, as everyone was working toward the opening. Now, working in the tent, we can enjoy the fresh air of the Matter Valley and the sunshine, which is not only very pleasant for us, but also benefits the oil gilding because it simplifies drying.

How many hours did you spend gilding a locomotive?

The work takes two people just under a month, and involves over 14,000 sheets of gold .

How exactly does this work?  
For the oil gilding, we used 23.35-carat Rosenobel red gold, each 8 x 8 cm. For this to work, the locomotive must be cleaned, primed, and finished with a high-gloss varnish. In the next step, a mixture (oil mixture) is applied with a brush and sponge, to which the gold adheres. Time plays a key role in this technique. The drier the applied mixture layer, the shinier and more durable the gilding will be.

That sounds like a lot of detailed work...  
This is indeed the case. The application of the gold, called "shooting," is done by hand. The gold leaflets used for this, made of transfer gold or storm gold, are specially prepared on fine tissue paper . Once the gold leaflets are in the correct position, they are swept out with a sweeping brush and lightly pressed down. The locomotives were double-gilded, as is done with churches and outdoor weather globes. A 23 ¼-carat gold leaflet has a thickness of up to 8,000 mm – 1/11,000 mm, meaning one gram of gold can cover approximately half a square meter .

Is there anything in particular that needs to be taken into account?  
Every single step requires great care and attention. Gilding uses a fine and very thin layer of gold that is not scratch-resistant. This layer is comparable to a delicate and expensive car paint.  
You have to be particularly careful here.

## Church gilder

The profession of church gilding is over 500 years old. Unfortunately, it only exists. It's very rare in the world, and can be officially learned in places like Munich. Pascal Piffaretti holds the title of Master Church Gilder and Restorer. During the gilding of locomotive 3001, which was carried out in the «Tannenhof», Pascal was supported by Frieda Gysin and Nadia Zoller. During the gilding of locomotives 3002 and 3003, which took place in Herbrigen, Nadia Zoller and Miranda Fierz were also involved alongside Pascal.



Gornergrat Railway

# New and proven Winter offers on the Gornergrat

The Gornergrat Railway offers exciting activities throughout the year. Below is an insight into this year's 2023/24 winter offers.



Every Wednesday, starting December 27, the brand-new NostalChic Class carriage travels to the Gornergrat.

## NostalChic Class – Experience the Gornergrat in an exclusive nostalgic car

Experience the Gornergrat in an exclusive and unforgettable way. Immerse yourself in the splendor of the Zermatt mountains, surrounded by the cozy ambiance of the nostalgic carriage with a guaranteed window seat. This extraordinary experience combines breathtaking views of the Matterhorn with linarian delicacies and fascinating stories of the Gornergrat Railway.

A true feast awaits you during your journey. A journey for the senses. An experienced and knowledgeable guide will lead you through the day trip and share fascinating stories about the origins and significance of the Gornergrat Railway. Enjoy regional specialties and matching wines, perfectly matched to the surroundings. An exclusive stopover

enables unique photographs to capture those unforgettable moments. The NostalChic Class experience extends over a period of approximately six hours and begins at 10:00 a.m. in the Hotel Tannenhof. There you will be greeted with a welcome drink and an exceptional aperitif. The journey then continues through old Zermatt to the valley station of the Gornergrat Railway, where the NostalChic Class carriage awaits. During the experience, a delicious four-course meal made with fresh, regional ingredients, accompanied by carefully selected wines, will be served in the historic Riffelhaus 1853 mountain restaurant. This special NostalChic Class experience will be offered every Wednesday from December 27, 2023, to April 17, 2024.



Have fun in the snow on the Gornergrat.

## SnowFunPass – for unlimited pleasure

Zermatt is a paradise for skiers. But even without skis on your feet, you can spend an unforgettable day in the snow. The SnowFunPass includes a return ticket from Zermatt to Gornergrat and unlimited rides between the Riffelberg toboggan run and Rotenboden. Rental of snow sports equipment such as sleds or snowshoes is also included in the ticket. You have the option of swapping your previous equipment and trying out a new one on each ride. For example, head up to the Gornergrat in the morning and go snowshoeing or hiking. On the return journey in the afternoon, you can take advantage of the winter sun and enjoy a few sled or snowboard rides on the highest toboggan run in the Alps. The SnowFunPass is your ticket for unlimited fun on the Gornergrat (daily until the end of April 2024).



Pure enjoyment with the gourmet ticket.

## The Gourmet Ticket – for gourmets, culinary lovers and mountain enthusiasts

Combine the mountain experience with a culinary tour of the various mountain restaurants on the Gornergrat. The gourmet ticket is not a guided hike. You decide how much time you want to spend at each station. You can hike from one gourmet station to the next, snowshoe, sleigh ride (Rotenboden–Riffelberg), or take a comfortable train ride for part of the route. Those seeking winter thrills can complete the route on skis or a snowboard.

For the ultimate in indulgence, start your day with an aperitif at the 3100 Kulmhotel Gornergrat. Enjoy a delicious three-course gourmet menu at the Hotel Riffelhaus 1853. Conclude your successful day with a delicious dessert at the Alphitta Restaurant on the Riffelalp.

The Gourmet Ticket includes the Zermatt-Gornergrat return ticket, culinary delights at the various stations, and sledge rental at Rotenboden. The ticket is available daily from December 28, 2023, to April 13, 2024. Seats are limited. Book your Gourmet Ticket no later than the day before.

The Gornergrat: Throughout the

A worthwhile destination throughout the year

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crossing point in red /  
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tunnel in blue.



The two portals  
in Zermatt.



Maximum security:

The new tunnel between

Täsch and Zermatt.

Matterhorn Gotthard Railway

## Safe rail connection between Täsch

## and Zermatt: preliminary project in progress

The train route between Täsch and Zermatt is one of the busiest in Switzerland. However, it is highly exposed to natural hazards such as avalanches and rockfalls, which repeatedly leads to disruptions.

Now the Matterhorn Gotthard Railway is planning a new, continuous tunnel between the two towns. The preliminary project is underway. The planned new Täsch-Zermatt tunnel will enable safe year-round access to Zermatt and improve the current situation: It will reduce the risk of line interruptions.

ences caused by natural events will be minimized. Furthermore, the frequency of connections between Täsch and Zermatt will be increased, leading to greater flexibility in both tourism and commerce. In addition to the existing

From now on , there will be a half-hourly service between Visp and Zermatt. This will make traveling to Zermatt faster, easier , and more convenient.

The planned route will leave Täsch station on a double track, cross the Vispa River after about 400 meters over a new bridge, and from there continue to just before Zermatt station. The tunnel is part of the Strategic Development

Development program (STEP), expansion step 2035, of the federal government. It is fully funded by the Federal Office of Transport . MGBahn is responsible for the planning and construction of this major project.

The new tunnel will bring numerous benefits to the region . It will create a safer and faster connection between Täsch and Zermatt. This will create added value for the entire region and protect against the consequences of any line disruptions.

No disruptions will be necessary for the construction of the tunnel. The tunnel is a completely new section of the route that, apart from the connecting sections, does not intersect with the existing route. Furthermore, the project will have no impact on the road, which will remain in operation under the same conditions.

The new tunnel will not affect Zermatt station

The track topology in the forecourt station will be optimized to ensure the crossing of 170-meter-long trains. Connections to the freight yard and the Grube line are guaranteed.

As the client, MGBahn will endeavor to minimize the impact on the local community in the form of noise and dust emissions during the construction period . These considerations are part of the planning and project development.

### The most important information

Tunnel length  
4,108 meters.

gradient  
38.5 ‰, which means no racks are necessary.

Travel time Täsch–Zermatt

The travel time is reduced from today 12 to 6 to 7 minutes.

Expansion

Single-track tube with crossing  
point and safety tunnel.

Project status 2023

Preliminary project, currently issues such as construction and railway technology, geology, natural hazards, environment and material management are being clarified.

Public circulation  
From 2025

Tunnel construction phase  
2028 to 2035

## Information event 2024

An information event about the project is planned for Zermatt during the first half of 2024. There, the public will learn more about the project and have the opportunity to participate and ask questions. Information about this event will be provided at a later date.

Current information about the project will soon be available on the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn website

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at any time by email at [ttz@mbahn.ch](mailto:ttz@mbahn.ch) or by phone at +41 (0)848 642 442.

Zermatt cable cars

# New Matterhorn Express valley station

The time has  
come – the new  
Matterhorn Express valley  
station on Schluhmattstrasse  
will be ready from mid-  
December 2023.



The sales outlets will be reintegrated from the temporary structure into the main building, where ski storage and restroom facilities will also be available to guests. The world's first AURO aerial tramway has also been in operation since the beginning of November 2023.

For one and a half years the company has been The Matterhorn Express valley station building is undergoing renovation. At the same time, the cable car from Zermatt to Furi was replaced with a more modern and spacious system. This has been in operation for about a month, and the Furi mountain station, which was integrated into the existing station, has also been completed. The entire project will be completed in spring 2024. Until then, various

Work was carried out on the valley station and an additional service for the cable car was integrated.

**Completion of valley station building**  
The work will be carried out during the winter largely discontinued. In the spring, the forecourt around the valley station will be completed and covered with the characteristic blue flooring of the Zermatt Bergbahnen. The canopy will also be installed in the spring. Regarding the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing, a baggage counter will be installed next to the ticket counters , and the transfer point in the station's basement will be completed. Even more work awaits the construction crews on the top two floors, where new

Office space for the Zermatt Bergbahnen administration is being built. It is expected to be ready for occupancy by spring 2024.

**In the rooftop ride towards Matterhorn**  
From summer 2024, the journey will be with the Cable car from Zermatt to Furi more exciting. In the RooftopRide, the ride can be enjoyed in the fresh air on the roof of the cabin and an unrestricted view of the Matterhorn can be enjoyed. The balcony can accommodate a maximum of 15 people; a ticket with an additional charge is required. A special feature is the ride through the magnifying glass-shaped support number one directly after the exit. from the valley station towards the Matterhorn.

Guests can

happy: sales outlets,

Ski depots and sanitary

Facilities are located

in the new building.



History of Zermatt

# Alfons Lerjen – Even in a bind

«Fons – an abbreviation for Alphons – was one of the oldest mountain guides in the valley. He was one of the few who practiced the profession of mountain guide and ski instructor year-round. Fons was no longer the youngest; we greatly appreciated his support when, years ago, after the founding of Air Zermatt, he spontaneously volunteered to be a mountain guide for air rescue. He was on missions with us countless times. Fons experienced and endured more in his work as a mountain guide than most of his colleagues.



Alfons Lerjen (\*1921)

As a mountain guide, his “Mülharfa,” like his ice axe and rope, was always a faithful companion on all his mountain tours.

His tours

- Alphubel, first ascent of the west ridge
- Alphubel, first ascent of the West Rib
- Allalinhorn, first ascent of the SSW Couloir
- Matterhorn, record Hörnligrat 3 hours ascent and descent with Hermann Biner
- Täschhorn, 13 times Teufelsgrat
- Peru, first ascent of the Lot East Ridge
- Awarded the Rescue Medal by the Central Committee of the SAC in rescue services
- Most difficult tours in Zermatt, Chamonix and the Dolomites



«As I became weaker and thought life was over, I began to pray.”



Fons as a rescuer in a crevasse himself in a jam

He only told me (Sigi. Dany, Stangier, Air Zermatt pilot) about his dramatic experience years later. In one of the latecomers, he was only two years old; and even the eldest was still in school. They all needed me and rescuers to lower him into a crevasse in the Theodul Glacier : "In the light of the headlamp, I saw the skier trapped in the narrow crevasse . I could only laboriously descend the last few meters ; the crevasse had become so narrow. The rope was relieved and slack. My misfortune began when I was pulling my friends up. If it was the mountain rope, my own strength could strangle me . If it was the mountain rope, my own strength could strangle me. In my desperation I arched my back, tried with all my strength to free one of the victim's arms. I lost my balance and toppled over. I was now wedged in myself and was getting weaker and weaker and thought life was over , I couldn't move. The radio had slipped under my chin. I couldn't reach it. I became very calm, breathing slowly and regularly. My heart was beating normally again. New hope and confidence. This time the worst thing for me was that I couldn't move my arms . I was totally blocked and afraid of slipping even further into the corner.

This could also mean my end. I resisted , growing weaker and weaker. Was this really my death? Here in the crevice on the Theodul, at the end of a rope length, 40 meters below?

Snow and ice pieces to the side. That took a lot of time and energy. After a few minutes, I was able to move a little, and soon my entire arm was free. The rest went easier. I was able to free myself, turn around, and get back on my feet. I was saved. Believe me, Sigi, those were and will always be the worst moments of my life."



A notice:  
Text and images are taken from the book «Focus Matterhorn – Zermatt History and Stories», 2015, Rotten Verlag

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We wish everyone a blessed Christmas and a happy new year 2024

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Gornergrat Railway (annual series)

# Gornergrat Railway – Fascination for 125 years

## The anniversary – a review

The Gornergrat Railway (GGB) has been in operation for 125 years. We reported on this historic anniversary in all six issues of "Zermatt Inside" 2023.

A very special year for the GGB is coming to an end. On August 20, 1898, Europe's highest outdoor cog railway began operations. Since then, a trip to the Gornergrat has become one of Switzerland's tourist highlights. Reason enough to celebrate the anniversary appropriately. A look back and a look ahead.



World premiere of the play "Hallelujah, Gornergrat!" by the well-known actors Sigi and Barbara Terpoorten, Stefanie Ammann, and Daniel Mangisch (from left) at the VIP event on August 20, 2023.

### Special exhibition at Zermatlantis



Since July, the Matterhorn Museum in Zermatt has been hosting a temporary special exhibition, "THE ONE AND ONLY GORNERGRAT RAILWAY," celebrating the 125 years of the Gornergrat Railway. The pioneering achievements surrounding the construction of the Gornergrat Railway are described on 17 information pillars, some of which feature multimedia content on iPads, in German, French, and English (until summer 2024!).

### Anniversary book

Under the title "Gornergrat Railway – Fascination for 125 Years / Told in 125 Stories," the 125 anniversary stories, which are available online at [www.gornergrat.ch/125](http://www.gornergrat.ch/125) in German, French, and English, are being published in book form in German. The 136-page book was published just in time for Christmas at a special price of CHF 18.98.

The book is richly illustrated with historical and contemporary photographs, and there has never been such a summary of the history of the Gornergrat Railway in this format. The book is available now at the K Kiosk in the Gornergrat Railway valley station, at the Zermatlantis Museum, and at the ZAP\* bookstore in Zermatt, Visp, and Brig.



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### Events 2023

- April 11 – 15  
Zermatt Unplugged, special stage on the Riffelberg for the anniversary
- April 20  
BVZ Holding AGM on the Gornergrat 3100 m above sea level with over 250 shareholders
- April 26th / 27th  
Employee event "We celebrate our stars" at the Glisergrund / Glis depot with over 300 employees
- July 1  
Gornergrat Zermatt Marathon with 1873 participants
- July 1  
Gornergrat Zermatt Marathon – Participation of 70 employees in the MGBahn and GGB running train
- 18 – 26 August  
COOP Open Air Cinema on the Riffelalp
- August 20  
VIP event on the Gornergrat with more than 230 guests (see ZI No. 5)
- October 20  
Opening of the year-round experiences on the Gornergrat: Golden Spot & Theme Trail

### Attractions and novelties

- Golden Spot & Theme Trail on the Gornergrat (see also page 24)
- Alpine garden on Rotenboden  
(Preparatory work – from summer 2024 with over 100 plant species)
- NostalChic Class (see also page 26)