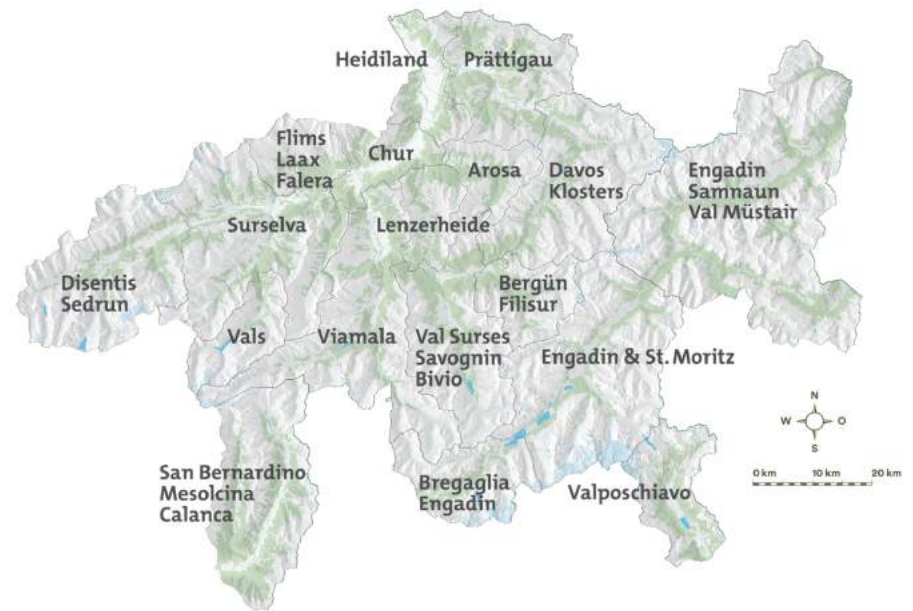


News & Research Ideas



A Warm Welcome to You



Whether you want to research a specific topic in Graubünden or are still looking for the right story – we are happy to be at your service.



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New Experiences & Offers

Arosa, Davos & St. Moritz: New Offers for Ice Bathing



Hardy swimmers enjoy taking a dip all year round by punching holes in frozen lakes or climbing into cold rivers. When the water temperature falls below 5°C, this is referred to as ice bathing. Some people are attracted by the adventure, others hope for positive health effects. You can learn how to ice bathe at Eisbadi Arosa, at the "Breathing & Cold Workshop" in Davos, and with the activities on offer from the Carlton Hotel in St. Moritz.

<https://graubuenden-erleben.ch/eisbaden> (in German)

Davos: Ice Mini Golf by the Lake



Davos has a long tradition when it comes to ice sports. This story is now one chapter richer: the world's first 18-hole ice mini golf course was opened last winter at the "von Sprecher Haus" guest house, right on the shore of Lake Davos. Ice mini golf is played with a straight hockey stick and a small puck and, just like its warmer counterpart, special obstacles have to be overcome on each course. <https://graubuenden-erleben.ch/ice-mini-golf>

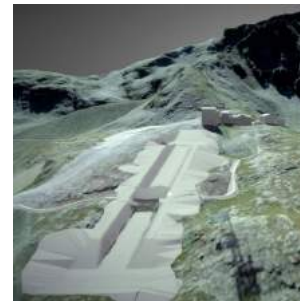
Engadine: Ice Concerts Come back to Life



Until the 1940s, orchestras in the Engadine Valley played concerts for guests, who dined and skated on ice rinks. The musicians performed on wooden podiums or in small pavilions. After a pilot run in 2021, eight tourist resorts decided last year to resume the tradition of ice concerts. As a result of their success, you can skate to live music in the Upper Engadine once again this winter.

<https://graubuenden-erleben.ch/eiskonzerte> (in German)

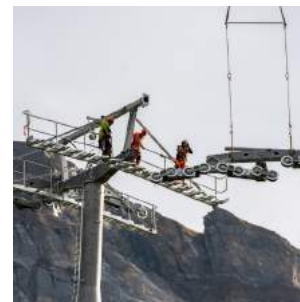
Engadin: Superpipe on the Corvatsch



In the past, Corvatsch was a mecca for Backcountry film crews, but today the mountain above all represents freestyle culture. Over the last decade, the "Corvatsch Park" has developed into one of the largest snow parks in the Alps. From February 2024, its facilities will be enhanced by a new superpipe, which at 180 m long, 21 m wide and 6.8 m high, is one of the largest in the world. It will be open to everyone outside of competitions and professional training sessions.

<https://www.corvatschpark.ch/en/halfpipe>

LAAX: Opening of the First Section of the FlemXpress



The FlemXpress is improving access to the UNESCO World Natural Heritage Tectonic Arena Sardona in the LAAX ski area in an innovative and sustainable way. The gondola lift is a pioneering project, as it is the first to run fully automatically and on demand. Thanks to its lower energy consumption, the FlemXpress pays into the "Greenstyle" sustainability concept pursued by the Weissen Arena Group, the ski resort's operator.

<https://flemxpress.ch>

Pontresina: Beam over the Ova da Bernina Gorge



The area around the village gorge in the heart of Pontresina is being upgraded as a local recreation area, as part of the "Ova da Bernina White Water Gorge" project. A variety of locations along the adventure trail invite visitors to discover, marvel and stay for a while. This winter will see the opening of a beam over the gorge, which offers visitors a great view of the ice climbers.

<https://graubuenden-erleben.ch/ova-da-bernina> (in German)

New Accommodation & Restaurants

St. Moritz: Cresta & Bob Museum



St. Moritz is considered to be the birthplace of winter sports, as it is where sports like the cresta run and bobsleighbing became popular. A brand new museum in the "Scala" centre enables the great stories of ice and speed, of daring, physical strength and sensitivity to be experienced. In addition to the museum, the reopened Art Deco-style building in the heart of St. Moritz houses a cinema, a restaurant and an OMEGA boutique. <https://scala-stmoritz.ch> (in German)

St. Moritz: SunIce Festival



St. Moritz is known as a destination of choice for the rich and beautiful; but the SunIce Festival, with techno and EDM DJs, attracts other guests to the Engadine mountains at the end of the winter season. After a slow start due to the coronavirus pandemic, the festival attracted 20,000 people by the time it was held for the second time in 2023. In addition to electronic sounds, it offers a sporting supporting programme with skiing, snowboarding, paragliding and quad rides. <https://www.sunicefestival.ch>

Arosa: Hotel Postresidenz by the Lake



This lakeside hotel in Arosa looks back on a long history. The then state-of-the-art hotel with an integrated post office was built on the initiative of the PTT (Swiss Postal Telegraph and Telephone agency) in 1928. Its appearance has changed again and again over the last 100 years. Most recently, a project to build an upscale suite hotel with a restaurant, bar and spa has been underway since 2021. It is scheduled to open in November 2023. <https://en.postresidenzamssee.ch>

Arosa: New KuhBar Building



© Prof. Robert Albertin, Albertin Architekten

The KuhBar is an institution for all those who love après-ski. After spending six years in a temporary building, which had to be erected in autumn and dismantled again in spring, it will be given a new permanent home this winter. This building boasts a sustainable energy concept, an attractive appearance and an impressive interior design. What hasn't changed is that the KuhBar will continue to be "the place to be for après-ski" in Arosa. <https://www.kuhbar-arosa.ch> (in German)

Davos: Spending the Night on the Weissfluh Summit



The Weissfluhgipfel mountain restaurant is perched high at 2843 m a.s.l. in the Davos Parsenn ski resort. Easily accessible by cable car, it offers an unforgettable overnight stay. The three new bedrooms of different sizes are suitable for couples, families and groups of up to eight people. The new tenants, Pascal Racine and Kevin Reinsch, have given the mountain lodge, with its terrace, winter garden and restaurant, a new elegance. <https://restaurant-weissfluhgipfel.ch> (in German)

Pontresina: Sunstar Pontresina



The Sunstar Group is launching a new hotel concept with the opening of the Sunstar Hotel Pontresina. It is aimed at individualists who appreciate comfort and flexibility. Guests check in autonomously and the hotel is completely cash-free. The centrepiece is the social area with its bar, terrace and fireplace. The new hotel with 46 rooms – 21 of which are lofts with a kitchenette – is scheduled to open in December 2023.

<https://pontresina.sunstar.ch/en>

Anniversaries

500 Years Graubünden



In 2024, Graubünden will be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the union of the Three Leagues (Bünde), which laid the foundation for today's canton in 1524 with the sealing of the Letter of Confederation. At that time, a kind of independent federal state emerged, in which the judicial municipalities enjoyed the greatest possible autonomy. The region joined the Helvetic Republic, later Switzerland, in 1799, under the name Canton of Raetia. The present-day canton of Graubünden was created in 1803 in Napoleon's Act of Mediation.

100 Years: "The Magic Mountain" by Thomas Mann



© ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Bildarchiv

In the spring of 1912, Thomas Mann came to Davos for the first time to visit his wife Katia, who was receiving treatment for tuberculosis in the forest sanatorium. The spa served as inspiration for the later Nobel Prize winner's Bildungsroman "The Magic Mountain". However, many consider the Schatzalp sanatorium high above Davos to be the setting for the work, which was published in 1924. The historic building is now run as a hotel.

<https://graubuenden-erleben.ch/thomas-mann>

10 Years: Ski Area Connection Arosa Lenzerheide



The Urdenbahn aerial tramway from Hörnli in Arosa to Urdenfürggli in Lenzerheide opened ten years ago on 18 January 2014. The aerial tramway has a special importance: it marked the completion of connections between the Arosa and Lenzerheide ski resorts, creating the largest ski area entirely on Graubünden soil with 225 kilometres of pistes. Switzerland's fastest passenger cable car, with a speed of 12 m/s, cost CHF 24.3 million to build.

<https://arosalenzerheide.swiss/en/Ski-Area>

Hideaways for the Winter

These six accommodations are located far from the ski areas and so far off the beaten track that you can't reach them by car in winter. To get there, people rely instead on horse-drawn sleighs, snowmobiles or funiculars.

By Train: **Gasthaus Spinas**



The Gasthaus Spinas, first mentioned as the Suvretta Restaurant in a document in 1876, lies in an idyllic location in Val Bever. Inside, guests will find two cosy parlours, an original French bowling alley and twelve rooms. The guest house's host is Roland Gruber, better known as "AK". His South Tyrolean origins are reflected in the menu, with its Graubünden and South Tyrolean specialities.

<https://www.spinasbever.ch>

By Funicular: **Romantik Hotel Muottas Muragl**



The Romantik Hotel Muottas Muragl can only be reached by funicular, regardless of the time of year. It is perched on the mountain of the same name and offers one of the most beautiful views over the Engadine lakes. The elegant mountain hotel, at 2453 m a.s.l., is also Switzerland's first plus-energy hotel. Guests with a taste for speed can take the toboggan on their return journey into the valley. But beware: the 20 bends are quite something.

<https://www.muottasmuragl.ch/en>

By Sleigh: **Berghaus Piz Platta**



On Alp Flix above the Julier Pass, the nights are so dark that you can see the Milky Way clearly in the night sky. Unless there is a full moon. The Berghaus Piz Platta with double and four-bed rooms, can be reached on foot from Sur in just over an hour. This involves a climb of about 400 metres in altitude. It's faster and more fun heading back down into the valley: there is a toboggan run and the mountain lodge rents out the appropriate equipment.

<https://www.flix.ch> (in German)

By Snowmobile: **Mountain Hotel Heimeli**



The old wooden house from the 18th century is located in the Sapün Valley, above Langwies. The mountain guest house with nine rooms and a dormitory for groups offers a successful mix of rustic comfort and original mountain charm. The mountain hotel can be reached on foot from Langwies in less than two hours. Alternatively, your hosts will pick you up by snowmobile. You can hire toboggans for the journey back into the valley.

<https://www.heimeli.swiss> (in German)

On Cross-Country Skis: **Hotel Roseg Gletscher**



In addition to its idyllic location in the Val Roseg with a view of the Sella group and the Bernina massif, the Hotel Roseg Gletscher is known for its dessert buffet: tiramisu, cream slices, apple strudel or Engadine tarts – there is something for everyone. You can reach the hotel, with single, double and multi-bed rooms, from Pontresina in about an hour on cross-country skis. If you prefer a more leisurely pace, you can travel by horse-drawn sleigh.

<https://www.roseg-gletscher.ch>

By Horse-Drawn Sleigh: **Gasthaus Mayor**



Gasthaus Mayor is secluded in the tiny hamlet of S-charl on the edge of the Swiss National Park. From November to February, no rays of sunlight find their way here and the tiny place is a haven for those seeking peace and quiet. The guest house has 16 rooms, a 400-year-old pine tavern (Arvenstübli), as well as a hot tub and sauna. The journey by horse-drawn sleigh takes about one and a half hours. On foot, it takes 2 hours 45 minutes.

<https://gasthaus-mayor.ch> (in German)

Research Idea

Inspired by the Engadine

The Engadine is known for its magical combination of mountains, lakes and the vastness of the valley. Since time immemorial, artists, writers and thinkers have raved about the extraordinary landscape and the unique light that gives the Engadine a special glow.

Numerous artists, including Ferdinand Hodler, Alberto Giacometti, Marc Chagall and above all Giovanni Segantini, are associated with the Engadine. Their footsteps and stories lead to some of the most beautiful places in the high valley. For example, to the Muottas Muragl mountain, which is a popular excursion destination. This is where Giovanni Segantini painted and where he died while completing his famous triptych of nature. The work "Becoming, Being, Passing Away" can be admired today in the Segantini Museum in St. Moritz.

If we consider the Engadine as a cultural treasure trove, idyllic Sils Maria may well be called its most dazzling gem. This place owes its fame to the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who spent seven summers here. He was inspired by water and vastness, drawing inspiration for his main work, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", at the lake. A pyramid-shaped granite block on the lake shore near the waterfall in Surlej bears the name "Zarathustra Stone" to this day.

Nietzsche may have been the first to draw inspiration in and around Sils, but he is far from the only one. If you walk through the village, following in the footsteps of Charlie Chaplin or Albert Einstein, you will come across a bar that is depicted in Marc Chagall's paintings. Hermann Hesse described the idyllic Engadine side valley of Val Fex as a "pre-dreamed paradise".

These famous guests stayed in the historic "Waldhaus" grand hotel above the village. The guest list of illustrious personalities contains almost 40 names, among them Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Thomas Mann, Carl Gustav Jung and Richard Strauss.



Research Idea

Pschuuri, an Old Custom

The village of Splügen resembles an anthill on Ash Wednesday. Schoolchildren and single girls appear in every nook and cranny, disappearing into the darkness again in an instant. All of this chaos is due to the "Pschuurirolli", the unmarried boys dressed in furs, wearing "Maschgärä" masks and carrying sacks of ash, who chase the children and girls around the village.

A leather belt studded with ball-shaped bells that is tied around the boys' waists gives them away, allowing their victims to enjoy a small head start, although it is usually not enough for them to escape the boys' clutches. The girls and children then run around the village with their faces as black as soot like a bunch of chimney sweeps. All of them have to be "pschuuret" (blackened) by sunset. The recipe used to prepare the black ash mixture is a closely-guarded secret, known only to a select few.

Things look a little different in the evening. The pursuers, now disguised as "Mannli and Wibli" (men and women), go from house to house, begging for eggs. The "Mannli and Wibli" keep their masks on and disguise their voices during their visits to the villagers' houses until their true identities are correctly guessed.

The beggars will often disappear into the darkness with their booty, without being recognised. The collected eggs are used to make egg salad and "resimäda", a drink made from wine, eggs and other ingredients. These delicacies are served from midnight at the "Eierschmaus" (egg feast). Everyone is invited to this celebration. According to tradition, these egg dishes and drinks are supposed to strengthen the marriageable young people and promote fertility among this generation and in the fields.





Winter hikers in Guarda © Dominik Täuber

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