

MATTERHORN ALPINE CROSSING – VISION BECOMES REALITY

Zermatt, 30 June 2023

The waiting is over: The opening of the new 3S cableway from the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise mountain station at 3883 metres above sea level to the Testa Grigia valley station marks the completion of the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing. With immediate effect, passengers can embark on the scenic trip around the Matterhorn, which includes the highest border crossing by cable car in the Alps at 3480 metres. The opening ceremony was hosted by celebrity presenter Michelle Hunziker and attended by Christophe Dabellay, President of the State Council of the Canton of Valais, Renzo Testolin, President of the Gouvernement of the Valle d’Aosta Region and other representatives of the political and business worlds from both Switzerland and Italy.

It was an emotional moment for many of those present on Friday afternoon when the symbolic red ribbon was cut and the new 3S cableway, the Matterhorn Glacier Ride II, declared officially open. After years of planning and construction, the project was successfully completed in the face of enormous challenges: another milestone achievement for Zermatt Bergbahnen. The total investment in the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing project so far amounts to some CHF 140 million. Markus Hasler, CEO of Zermatt Bergbahnen, is confident in his assessment: *“The new trans-Alpine connection between Switzerland and Italy further enhances the offering from Zermatt Bergbahnen and the Zermatt-Matterhorn resort. It is an attractive addition to our services, both for individuals and small groups of travellers, creating a range of options for existing international guests and opening up fresh markets. The pricing strategy will not serve to promote mass tourism or visitors in transit but focus on the experience of the individual guest.”* Federico Maquignaz, President & CEO of Cervino S.p.A. adds: *“The Matterhorn Alpine Crossing is a joint endeavour that intensifies the partnership between Zermatt and Cervinia. We collaborate on a wide range of activities and attractions, from winter sports to the year-round visitor experience. The new crossing is a very welcome development and a great boost to the services offered by both partners.”* The godfather of the Matterhorn Glacier Ride II, Anton Lauber, has served for many years as construction manager and head of planning at Zermatt Bergbahnen. He has had overall responsibility for the construction work at almost 4000 metres above sea level and significantly influenced operations.

Sustainability as a cornerstone

Zermatt Bergbahnen continued to demonstrate its commitment to greater sustainability in the Alpine region during the construction of the new Matterhorn Glacier Ride II 3S cableway in collaboration with ropeway manufacturer Leitner. The façade of the new mountain station houses another photovoltaic facility, supplying around 16,875 kWh per year. This installation supplements the existing renewable energy resources in the Zermatt area.

A visionary project

The Matterhorn Alpine Crossing is a unique achievement in many respects. On the one hand, because of the pioneering work at extreme altitudes that was involved. On the other, because of the cooperation between two countries on a project that ensures a year-round connection between neighbouring tourist

resorts. Michelle Hunziker says of this once-in-a-lifetime project: *“I am proud to be involved in the opening of this unique connection between Italy and Switzerland. This is a special moment for me as a Swiss-Italian.”* According to Franz Julen, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Zermatt Bergbahnen: *“People started to think about creating a year-round cableway connection between Zermatt and Cervinia as long ago as 1939. Now, more than 80 years later, this vision is becoming a reality. Pioneering spirit, innovation and tenacity are synonymous with Zermatt. We have faith in tourism and will continue to develop our services step by step – including the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing. The name is a premium brand that stands for a unique high-level experience spanning two countries and cultures. Over the next ten years, Zermatt Bergbahnen will invest some CHF 200 million in the two cableways and the staging of events focused on the crossing experience. These investments further enhance the appeal of the Zermatt-Matterhorn resort and are expected to generate an annual income stream of approximately CHF 40 million.”*

Fresh experiences

The Matterhorn Alpine Crossing extends the scope of the Matterhorn Summer Paradise. The new cableway opens up the Valle d’Aosta region for visitors to explore its spectacular scenery and discover the quaint houses in typical Walliser (Valaisan) style. Activities on offer include riding, biking, hiking and golf. On the Theodul glacier close by the new Testa Grigia valley station, the Plateau Rosa SnowXperience world of adventure is due to open in August 2023. It will offer winter sports beginners the chance to hire all the equipment they need and book ski instructors on the spot.

Online guide for travellers

To get ready for the new adventure trip and plan the highlights you want to visit along the chosen route, the www.matterhornalpinecrossing.com online guide offers useful information such as timetables, prices and an overview showing the complete route between the two countries. A further service starting in 2024 will enable travellers to arrange convenient baggage transport between the two destinations.

Further information and images are available at the following link:
matterhornalpinecrossing.com/media

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