

MATTERHORN ALPINE CROSSING: MICHELLE HUNZIKER TO OPEN HISTORIC PROJECT IN ZERMATT

Zermatt, 3 May 2023

The opening of the new Matterhorn Glacier Ride II 3S cableway marks the realization of a once-in-a-lifetime project laden with superlatives: the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing will be the first continuous connection between Switzerland and Italy over the Alpine ridge. The opening ceremony on 30 June 2023 will be hosted by the Swiss-Italian presenter Michelle Hunziker.

The ceremony to mark the opening of the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing will take place on 30 June 2023 before an audience of invited guests. The venue is the new Testa Grigia valley station situated at an altitude of 3,480 metres above sea level, right on the Swiss-Italian border. To do full justice to the historic moment, the opening ceremony will be hosted by celebrity presenter Michelle Hunziker. She will introduce an entertaining programme with guests from Switzerland and Italy, celebrating the significance of the collaboration between Zermatt and Cervinia and the realization of the long-cherished vision of the Matterhorn Alpine Crossing.

Tourist potential

The once-in-a-lifetime Matterhorn Alpine Crossing project is set to bring the resorts of Zermatt and Cervinia (IT) even closer together. Instead of skiing or snowboarding, from 1 July 2023 onwards visitors will be able to traverse the Alps from Italy to Switzerland and vice versa for the first time ever by cable car – with no need to get their feet wet. The new Matterhorn Glacier Ride II section will close the last remaining gap between Zermatt and Cervinia and make the long-dreamt-of vision of the highest Alpine crossing by cableway a reality. Markus Hasler, CEO Zermatt Bergbahnen AG, says: *“The Matterhorn Alpine Crossing will generate great potential for tourism with the new connection between Zermatt and Cervinia across the Alps. The creation of new travel routes for our existing international visitors and the opening of new markets constitutes an exciting additional product – for individual travellers and small groups alike.”* Franz Julen – Chairman of the Board of Directors of Zermatt Bergbahnen – adds: *“The Matterhorn Alpine Crossing is much more than a cable car ride. The name is a premium brand that stands for a unique high-level experience spanning two countries and cultures. The focus at all times remains on the majestic Matterhorn, as seen from both the Zermatt and the Italian perspectives.”* He goes on to say: *“No one epitomizes the Swiss-Italian connection better than Michelle Hunziker.”*

The final phase of construction in May 2023

The building sites around the new cableway are now in their final stages of completion. In May and June, the gondolas will be installed, the facility brought into operation internally and safety checks carried out by the Federal Office of Transport. The new cableway will run from the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise mountain station at an altitude of 3,883 metres to the Testa Grigia valley station at 3,480 metres. Markus Hasler, CEO of Zermatt Bergbahnen, comments: *“The construction teams have worked in extremely difficult conditions to achieve the extraordinary.”* He adds: *“The new cableway is suspended above the glacier without the need for supporting towers. This offers passengers a wonderful experience that is thrilling as well as sustainable!”* Due to the challenging conditions high in the Alps, an exceptionally wind-resistant three-cable system manufactured by the South Tyrol cableway specialists LEITNER was selected for the project – the same system was previously used in the construction of the Matterhorn Glacier Ride I. The

cabins, created by Ferrari designers Pininfarina, offer outstanding comfort. The new lift will also feature Crystal Ride cabins, which are fitted with a glass floor to give clear views of the Theodul Glacier below.

Opening day offer for the public

On 1 July 2023, the day the new cableway goes into operation, the public will be invited to enjoy a free trip on the Matterhorn Glacier Ride II from the Klein Matterhorn mountain station to the Testa Grigia valley station and back. Full details of the offer can be found online at: www.matterhornparadise.ch/testa

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