

THE LOVELIEST SEASON OF ALL... VALAIS!

PRESS PACK SUMMER 2020.



ENGRAVED ON MY HEART.

Contents.

Valais in 10 figures.	3
10 top summer experiences.	4
Top 10 things to do on hot days.	5
Cycling.	6
Mountain biking.	11
Hiking and trail running.	16
Food and wine.	22
Families.	27
Culture.	31
Innovation.	35
Autumn.	39
New for summer 2020.	44
Key events.	47
Social media.	49
How to get to Valais.	50
Picture library.	50

Valais.

Dear friends of Valais,

In this press pack, we offer a sample of the best that Valais has to offer during the summer season. You will find all kinds of sports, gastronomic and cultural experiences, a calendar of events not to be missed, details of what's new this summer, and portraits of inspiring people who find inspiration in our region.

Discover the fascinating story of Kilian Volken, a mountain guide who has scaled the world's highest summits and who now offers guided walks on the Great Aletsch Glacier for children. Meet Ben Walker, a former professional mountain biker from the USA who fell in love with the Champéry region and where he has been developing the downhill mountain bike scene for some years. Enjoy a hike up to the Turtmann Swiss Alpine Club hut and meet its wardens, Fredy and Magdalena Tscherrig, who have been looking after hikers there for more than 23 years.

We also invite you to discover our region during the autumn, a season that attracts an increasing number of visitors in the know. Gourmets and foodies relish specialities such as the "brisolée", a dish of roasted chestnuts served with cold meat and cheeses and seasonal fruit; wine enthusiasts take part in the many events related to wine and the grape harvest; and nature lovers come to make the most of landscapes ablaze with colour to go hiking, mountain biking or simply to relax and enjoy the good things in life.

Valais boasts countless treasures in the fields of culture, traditions, sports, gastronomy, wellness and also innovation. We invite you to come and see for yourself.

We look forward to seeing you soon in Valais!



Damian Constantin,
Director of
Valais/Wallis Promotion

Contact.

Valais/Wallis Promotion press service
presse@valais.ch / 027 327 35 89

-  facebook.com/valaiswallis
-  instagram.com/valaiswallis
-  twitter.com/valaiswallis

How to use this press pack.

This document was designed so that you can find out more about subjects covered via hyperlinks.

These can be followed in different ways:



Direct link

Direct link

Valais in 10 figures.



8,000 kilometres of hiking trails



1 UNESCO World Heritage Site



40,000 hectares of natural parks



45 summits above 4,000 metres



1,500 kilometres of mountain bike trails



2000 kilometres of cycling routes



72 restaurants listed by Gault&Millau



10 restaurants with Michelin stars

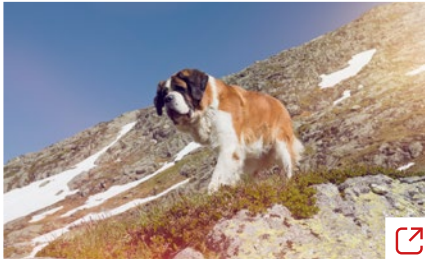


100 working “bisses” (historical irrigation channels)



8 AOP/IGP products

10 top summer experiences.



1 Meet the St Bernard dogs, emblems of the region.



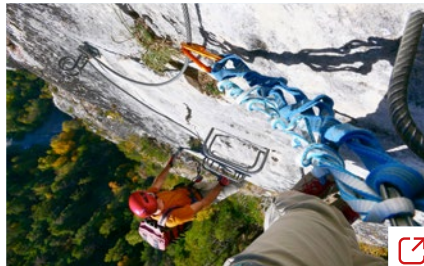
2 Visit a castle or fortress.



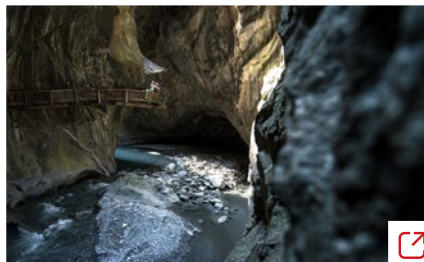
3 Stroll through a picture-postcard village with its wooden chalets and barns.



4 See any of more than 2,500 shows, concerts and exhibitions at the theatres, music venues, museums and galleries of Valais.



5 Tackle one of the 18 via ferratas of Valais.



6 Marvel at spectacular geological attractions.



7 Explore the countless mountain bike trails.



8 Spend the night in one of the 50 Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) huts.



9 Admire the Matterhorn, our iconic pyramid-shaped mountain, famous worldwide.

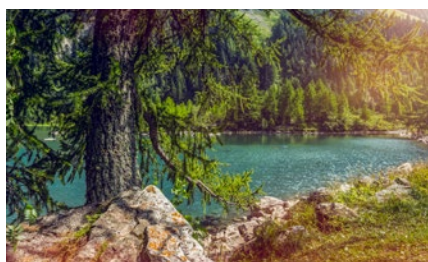


10 Savour some of the many gastronomic specialities of Valais.

Top 10 things to do on hot days.



Valais is famous for its exceptionally sunny climate: the long summer days are ideal for scenic hikes and many other outdoor activities. During hot weather, Valais also offers a wide choice of excursions that provide a welcome opportunity to cool off – up on high or deep underground, from trips to glaciers or dips in mountain lakes to walks in shady forests or visits to subterranean caves. Here are a few refreshing ideas for avoiding the heat while making the most of the summer!



1 Enjoy a dip in one of the Valais lakes.



2 Savour a picnic by the water.



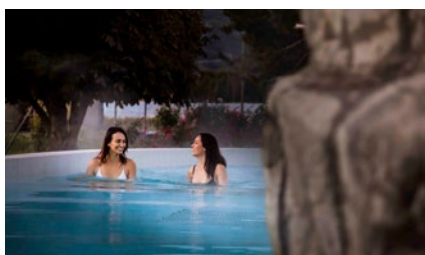
3 Stroll through a shady forest.



4 Walk along a glacier.



5 Cool off in a gorge or by a waterfall.



6 Relax in a pool.



7 Go for a day's summer skiing.



8 Head underground.




9 Explore the interior of one of our dams.



10 Try some water sports.

CYCLING.



Surname	Pellaud
First name	Simon
Date of birth	6 November 1992
From	Chemin, Valais
Activity	Racing cyclist
Achievements	Swiss under-21 champion, 2013 Winner of the 9th stage of Tour of Hainan 2018 with the Swiss team Best Climber and Combativity Award in the Tour de Romandie 2019
More info	www.simonpellaud.ch

Cycling experiences.

Cycling World Championships in Valais



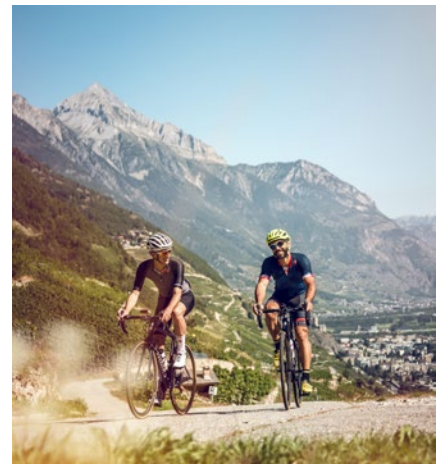
Over the course of eight days, more than 1,000 athletes will compete in the UCI 2020 Road World Championships. Starting in Aigle, the various courses lead along the floor of the Rhône valley as far as Martigny. Come and watch the thrilling road races, which finish with a multiple climb to the Col de la Petite Forclaz: an ascent of 400 vertical metres over a distance of 4 kilometres, to be looped seven times.



On the trail of the World Championships



This package offers a wonderful opportunity to cycle trails through the vineyards of the Rhône valley, to climb up to iconic Alpine passes and explore spectacular landscapes. From your hotel in the Martigny region, ride the roads that will host the UCI 2020 Road World Championships as well as some of the most beautiful cycle routes in Valais.



Ride through the vineyards



Set off to explore the vineyards of “Les Celliers de Sion” on electric bikes and stop off to enjoy fine local wines and delicious specialities from the region. Choose from a range of routes, depending on your wishes. To make the most of your tour, book a table at one of the partner vineyard restaurants for a memorable meal.



Chemin du Vignoble



Starting in Martigny, cycle up the Rhône valley along the idyllic Chemin du Vignoble (“Vineyard Trail”) as far as Leuk. The three-day package includes a wine tasting, Valais picnic basket, visit to the two sites of the Wine Museum in Sierre and Salgesch – and glorious views all along the route of the Valais mountains.



Shops for bike rental and repairs



Specialised cycle shops throughout Valais offer a wide range of bikes for hire as well as repair and maintenance services. Located in the main Rhône valley as well as in mountain resorts, they can provide professional, personal advice on the best bike for you as well as any equipment you may need to make the most of your rides.

Valais-Wallis Strava club



No matter how serious a cyclist you are – from occasional rider to serious athlete – Strava invites you to join the club and share your experiences. Start the app when you begin your ride, monitor your performance in real time, analyse your results after you finish and follow your progress in the weekly rankings.

Did you know?

One of Europe’s most important collections of historical bicycles is located in Chippis. Exhibits at the Musée du vélo (Bicycle Museum) include 600 bikes and nearly 2,000 jerseys.
www.museeduvelo.ch

With 8,200 metres of ascent over a distance of 240 kilometres, the Tour des Stations (“Tour of the resorts”) is considered the world’s toughest one-day cycle race.
www.tourdesstations.ch

740 kilometres, 18,500 metres of ascent and descent, 25 climbs, all divided in 10 stages: welcome to the Valais Cycling Tour, a thrilling itinerary created by the professional Valais cyclist Steve Morabito.
www.maps.valais.ch

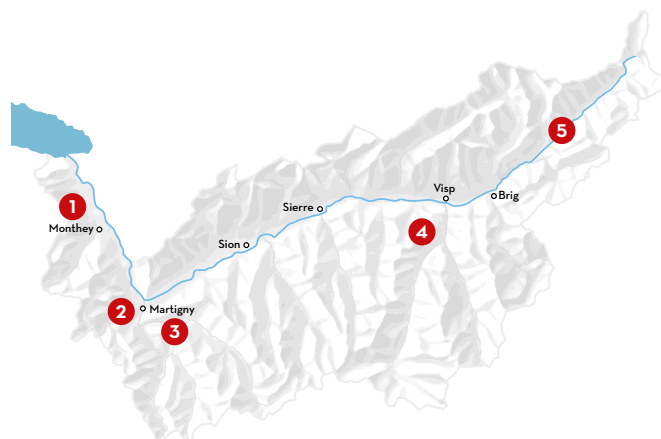
A new umbrella association called “vélo VS” was launched in 2019. Its goal: to promote cycling in Valais and defend cyclists’ interests.
www.velovs.ch

Every year, the city of Sion invests about 400,000 francs for bike facilities and for promoting cycling. Plans for the capital of Valais include 700 parking places for bikes as well as a “cycle highway” along the banks of the Rhône.

SlowUp Valais is an annual one-day event that celebrates the joys of un-motorised transport. The scenic route leads along the floor of the Rhône valley. More than 22,000 people took part in 2019: mostly on bikes, but also on tricycles, roller skates, etc.
www.slowupvalais.ch

Iconic routes of Valais.

Have you ever dreamed of cycling the iconic routes of Valais? The Tour de France, Tour de Suisse and Tour de Romandie are among the competitions that have organised stages in the region. Whatever kind of cyclist you are – from keen amateur to experienced athlete – our selection promises spectacular climbs along with the chance to experience all the beauty of the Valais landscapes at your own pace.



1. Vionnaz-Torgon climb

No fewer than 25 switchbacks feature along the steep climb from Vionnaz to Torgon, a small village in the Chablais region of Valais perched at an altitude of 1,200 metres. With 800 metres of elevation gain over a distance of 13 kilometres, the scenic ascent to the resort – part of the Portes du Soleil holiday region – was the crowning stage of the Tour de Romandie in 2019.



2. Martigny-Emosson climb

Starting in Martigny, a route of about 30 kilometres offers an exhilarating climb all the way up to the Emosson dam. The route includes an ascent of the Col de la Forclaz, along roads that hosted the Tour de France in 2016.



3. Croix de Cœur pass

In taking this sporting route, there are 35 kilometres between your starting point in Aproz and the summit of the Croix de Coeur Pass, along a route winding through the villages of Nendaz and Iséables and punctuated by a dozen bends. This climb up the mountainsides on the southern side of the Rhône valley constitutes the final ascent of the Tour des Stations.



4. Moosalp pass

The ascent between Turtmann and Moosalp consists of two steep segments of nine kilometres each, interspersed with a six-kilometer hilly section, involving a total altitude difference of 1,400 metres. The climb, which passes through the villages of Eischoll, Unterbäch and Bürchen, is ideal for experienced cyclists.



5. The three mountain passes of the Obergoms region

The Obergoms region, which welcomed the Tour de Suisse in 2007 and 2019, is the starting point for tackling three of Switzerland's iconic Alpine passes: the Furka, Nufenen and Grimsel. Along the way, you will pass the source of the Rhône and enjoy spectacular mountain views. Depending on your level of fitness, you could either attempt the three ascents one after the other or cycle the passes in separate stages.

See our selection of the 10 finest iconic routes in Valais at www.valais.ch

Events not to be missed.

For participants.

SlowUp Valais

Combine exercise and pleasure on a day of “soft mobility”. SlowUp Valais offers a route of 38 kilometres to enjoy by bike, skateboard or on foot, free of all motorised traffic.

7 June 2020 – Sion, Sierre

www.valais.ch

Haute Route Crans-Montana

This three-day ride in the international Haute Route series offers the biggest overall ascent in the 2020 programme. Expect exhilarating climbs along with spectacular views of the 4,000-metre summits of Valais.

3–5 July 2020

www.hauteroute.org

Cyclosporitive des Vins du Valais

The convivial “Cyclosporitive of the wines of Valais” offers cyclists the chance to ride through the beautiful vineyards of Valais in the company of professional cyclists. The various courses of all levels start in Sion; afterwards, enjoy the finest local wines and delicacies.

1 August 2020 – Sion

www.valais.ch

Tour des Stations

The third edition of this endurance cycling race offers five routes of varying distances and levels of difficulty. The “Tour of the Resorts” leads through emblematic landscapes of Valais, from vineyards to high mountains: an exceptional sporting challenge.

8 August 2020 – various locations

www.valais.ch

Chasing Cancellara

This Ultrafondo-style cycling race offers enthusiasts the opportunity to measure themselves against the double Olympic gold medallist Fabian Cancellara. The course leads from Zurich to Zermatt, a distance of 290 kilometres with 6,500 metres of ascent.

28 August 2020 – Zermatt

www.chasingcancellara.com

For spectators.

UCI 2020 Road World Championships

Over the course of eight days, Martigny welcomes the road cycling world championships. The road races finish with seven laps of the ascent of the Petite Forclaz.

20–27 September 2020

Various locations

www.valais.ch

Tour de Romandie

Valais is hosting several stages of the Tour de Romandie in 2020. The dress rehearsal for the UCI 2020 Road World Championships, when racers lap the Petite Forclaz ascent, takes place on 29 April. Another highlight will be the finish of the crowning mountain stage in Thyon 2000 on 2 May.

29 April and 2 May 2020

Martigny, Thyon

www.tourderomandie.ch

Tour de Suisse

Valais will be a host region for the Tour de Suisse in 2020. After a mountain finish in Leukerbad and a start in Fiesch, the race will end with an alpine circuit including ascents of the iconic Furka, Grimsel and Nufenen passes.

11 and 12 June 2020

Leukerbad, Fiesch

www.tourdesuisse.ch

MOUNTAIN BIKING.

Surname	Walker
First name	Ben
Date of birth	1979
From	Tucson AZ (USA)
Activity	Star of freeride mountain bike films and magazines, tester and designer of mountain bike trails
Key info	Shaper of mountain bike trails in Champéry and Morgins, organiser of rounds of the mountain bike world cup
More info	www.valais.ch

Mountain bike experiences.

For mountain bikes.

Perfect preparation for your bike ride



The mountain bike trails of Valais take you deep into wild and pristine natural landscapes, often far from towns and villages. For your safety, make sure you bring essential equipment to deal with any surprises along the way. Thanks to our selection of kit, you will be able to cope with the unexpected and enjoy your adventure in the great outdoors to the full.



Valais Bike



Starting in the spa resort of Leukerbad, set off to explore the finest singletrack in Upper Valais thanks to the new Valais Bike tour. Three days of top-class mountain biking guarantee high thrills in breathtaking landscapes. The package includes spa admission, daily luggage transfers and cable car ride, and promises an unforgettable experience.



Best of Valais with a guide



Explore the best of Valais in the company of a local mountain bike guide for an unforgettable day out. Whatever your level of experience and whatever your taste – from hard riding to gourmet breaks, from enduro to e-bike – any combination is possible. Book two nights at any of the 17 Valais resorts on offer, and simply follow the guide!

Resabike



This online platform allows you to book your journey with your bike on one of the many bus routes that offer a bike transport service, provided by vehicles equipped with bike racks or special trailers. During the main summer season, from mid-May to mid-October, more than 40 bus routes allow you to travel with your mountain bike.

For e-bikes.

The best e-bike routes



Electric mountain bikes offer a pleasant alternative way of exploring, and are suitable for riding on any of the region's mountain bike trails. A wide choice of routes will take you to all the most beautiful spots in Valais: through pristine natural landscapes, high above deep valleys, through fragrant forests and up to panoramic vantage points.

E-bike recharging stations

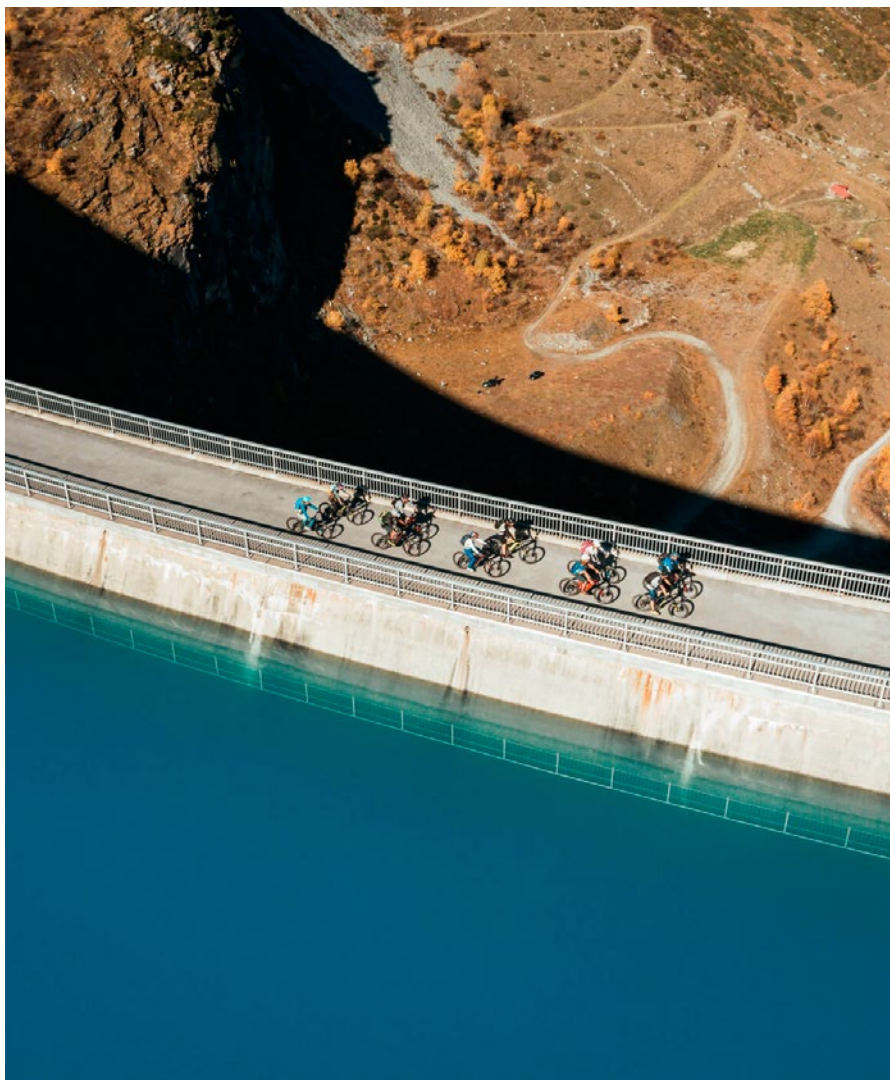


During the course of a long ride through the wild landscapes of Valais, take time to stop for a coffee, a refreshing beer or a leisurely meal to recharge your batteries – and also your bike's battery! Remember to take your charger with you to be able to use one of the e-bike recharging stations located along the various routes.

Family&Friends Haute Route for e-bikes

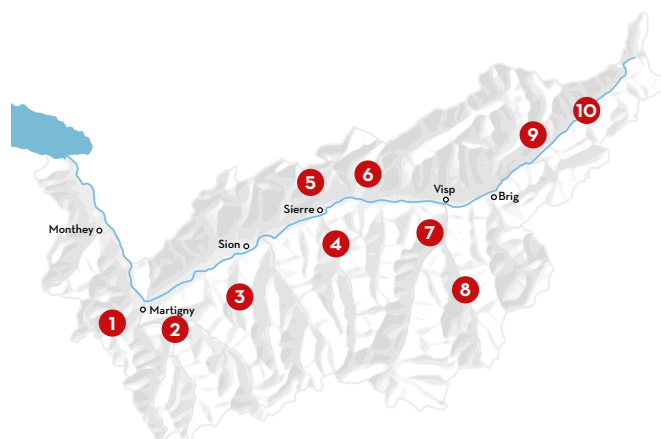


Enjoy all the charm of the Swiss Alps on one of the e-bike experiences offered by the company E-MTB Swiss Alps. The "Family&Friends Haute Route", accessible to all, takes you from Vercorin to Zermatt via easy trails through glorious alpine scenery. Over the course of four days, among family or friends, you will ride along the finest singletrack trails surrounded by 4,000-metre peaks. You'll sleep in accommodation typical of the Alps, and will even have the chance to relax in a hot tub at 2,000 metres above sea level as a reward for your efforts.



Selection of the best e-bike routes.

A mountain bike equipped with an electric motor allows you to ride all the same trails but with less effort, making the sport more accessible to all. Whatever your level of experience, from beginner to expert, you can enjoy dream conditions in Valais; with the help of our selection of routes, you can also discover some of our region's finest locations.



1 Trient Valley Tour, 52 km

Discover a wild and pristine valley that boasts breathtaking views of Mont Blanc, dramatic gorges, the fascinating site of Emosson with its dam and dinosaur footprints, the Trient Glacier and villages full of history.

www.valais.ch

2 Vens Bike, 26 km

This exhilarating mountain bike trail takes you up to the cols in the region above Vollèges, which offer superb views. Ride through alpine pastures and forests of larch trees, visit a former mine and if you are lucky, you may even spot marmots.

www.valais.ch

3 Nendaz-Barrage de Cleuson Bike, 31 km

A scenic trail starting in Nendaz takes you up to the Cleuson dam. The impressive structure, 87 metres high, has created a reservoir whose waters reveal shifting tones of blue and green that give the lake a distinctive charm.

www.valais.ch

4 Val d'Anniviers Bike Planet Tour, 25 km

Combine sports, culture and space exploration with a ride along the Planets Trail and a visit to the famous Hôtel Weisshorn high above St-Luc. The views up here of the Val d'Anniviers and across to the Rhône valley are sensational.

www.valais.ch

5 Crans-Montana Bike Marathon, 50 km

Physically and technically demanding, this route leads through ever-changing scenery, taking in forests, "bisses" irrigation channels, alpine pastures, vineyards, villages and lakes. Riders even have the chance to visit several museums along the itinerary.

www.valais.ch

6 Albinen-Leuk-Albinen, 19 km

This easy route passes through several historical villages that are fun to explore on two wheels. Because the trails lead across sunny, south-facing slopes, bikers can enjoy the ride from early spring.

www.valais.ch

7 Moosalp Plateau Bike, 48 km

Enjoy an impressive loop that leads through alpine pastures, larch forests and mountain villages, with tough climbs, flowing descents and superb views of the 4,000-metre summits of Valais.

www.valais.ch

8 Saas Valley Trail, 14 km

Starting in Saas-Balen, this route threads up the Saas valley as far as the top of the Mattmark dam. The ride promises a range of levels of difficulty as well as a wide variety of scenery, flora and fauna.

www.valais.ch

9 Galmihornhütte Bike Tour, 23km

Loop from the village of Reckingen in the Goms (upper Rhône) valley to the Galmihorn hut high above. The efforts of the climb are rewarded by superb views of the Blinnental and Bächtal valleys, of the towering peaks of the Weisshorn, Matterhorn and Galenstock, and of the whole Rhône valley.

www.valais.ch

10 Stoneman Glaciara, 127 km

This long circuit twists between sparkling glaciers, 4,000-metre summits and mountain villages that date back centuries: a spectacular backdrop to a unique mountain bike adventure that promises a real sporting challenge for all thrill-seekers.

www.valais.ch

See all e-bike routes at
www.valais.ch

Did you know?

A pumptrack is a mountain bike trail consisting of rollers and banked turns that you can use to generate speed through rhythmical movements. As a result, you can loop the entire circuit as many times as you like almost without pedalling.

www.valais.ch

In the first weekend of October, Bellwald welcomes more than 370 competitors, mechanics and their entourage plus more than 2,000 spectators for the annual iXS Swiss Downhill Cup.

www.valais.ch

Valais Bike is a new multi-day mountain bike tour that leads across some of the most scenic parts of Upper Valais. Participants ride from Leukerbad to Brig via some of the region's finest singletrack – without having to worry about luggage transfers.

www.valais.ch

In 2011, Champéry hosted one of the downhill rounds of the Mountain Bike World Cup. Today, the Champéry-Morgins bikepark boasts 9 downhill runs of different levels of difficulty: 1 blue, 6 red and 2 black.

www.valais.ch

In 2019, 26 new mountain bike routes were inaugurated in Valais.

www.valais.ch

The highest starting point for a mountain bike ride in Valais is located 3,100 metres above sea level, on the Gornergrat above Zermatt.

www.zermatt.ch

Events not to be missed.

Pass'Portes du Soleil MTB

This mountain bike ride invites participants to spend a day discovering the enchanting alpine world of the "Portes du Soleil" holiday area, which straddles the border between Switzerland and France.

26-28 June 2020

www.passportessdusoleil.com

Verbier E-Bike-Festival

The Verbier E-Bike Festival welcomes enthusiasts for its second edition. Over the course of four days, the resort is devoting itself to the joys of e-biking, with a variety of experiences on offer including equipment tests, a gourmet ride, discovery tours, a tour of the Val de Bagnes and various competitions.

13-16 August 2020

www.valais.ch

31st edition of the Grand Raid BCVS

Mountain bikers compete on a choice of six courses from various starting points to Grimetz. In addition to the classic races, the event features two non-timed routes, especially suitable for electric mountain bikes.

21-22 August 2020 – various locations

www.valais.ch

Traillove Alpine Mountain Bike Festival

Watch the final round of the Enduro World Series, explore Zermatt's sensational mountain bike trails, check out the latest equipment and enjoy the thrilling finish of the "Chasing Cancellara" race at this festival with a difference.

28-30 August 2020 – Zermatt

www.valais.ch

EWS and EWS-E Zermatt

The world's top enduro racers meet in Zermatt for the eighth round and final stage of the Enduro World Series. This year, Zermatt welcomes one of the three stages of a new e-bike series.

29-30 August 2020

www.enduroworldseries.com

HIKING AND TRAIL RUNNING.



Name
From
Activity

Fredy and Magdalena Tscherrig
Rarogne
Guardians of the Turtmann
mountain cabin

Key info
More info

Their Black Forest cake is superb!
www.valais.ch

Hiking experiences.

Prepare your hike



Summer is the perfect season for exploring Valais and for immersing yourself in nature as you breathe the fresh mountain air. Hiking is one of the most rewarding of all forms of exercise: it keeps you in shape, improves your fitness, recharges your batteries – and also offers one of the best ways of exploring magnificent natural landscapes. But the success of a hike depends on good preparation, to ensure a carefree excursion that promises safety as well as pleasure. Check out our selection of equipment for a happy outing all-round!

Refreshing walks to lakes



What could be more delightful, after a long hike through the enchanting landscapes of Valais, than treating your feet to a refreshing dip? The mountain lakes of Valais, with their cool, clear water, are highlights of many walks. Most of the lakes are accessible only on foot, so the tranquillity and magic of these natural gems make them a popular destination for hikers.

Easy walks for families



In Valais, going for a walk in nature is one of the most popular family activities. More than 8,000 kilometres of marked footpaths ensure that there are walks to suit people of all ages: in the mountains or natural parks, through fragrant larch forests, along historical “bisses” irrigation channels, across giddy suspension footbridges, via historical trails or through vineyards. Have a look at our selection of family-friendly walks.

Hikes up to mountain huts



A night in an alpine cabin offers a convivial communal experience in an exceptional setting – and a unique adventure. After a day’s hike, these mountain huts promise a welcome rest along with hearty cuisine. Accommodation options range from simple mountain refuges to large, ultra-modern facilities: discover the hikes that lead to these much-loved venues.

Suspension footbridges



Suspension footbridges are narrow walkways, suspended by cables, that pass high above an obstacle such as a glacier, valley, river or ravine. Some provide the goal of a hike; others off an additional highlight along a scenic trail. As you walk across, you have the feeling of floating on air as you enjoy a magnificent panorama – and a giddy view into the abyss. Here are trails that include a spine-tingling footbridge crossing.

Multi-day hikes



To make the most of the magnificent natural landscapes of Valais, nothing beats a multi-day hike in the mountains. Various long-distance trails promise high adventure, including the Matterhorn Tour, Monte Rosa Tour, Tour des Combins, Tour des Grands Barrages (“Tour of the Big Dams”), Tour du Mont-Blanc and the Tour du St-Bernard. Stay overnight in mountain cabins for a unique and authentic experience.

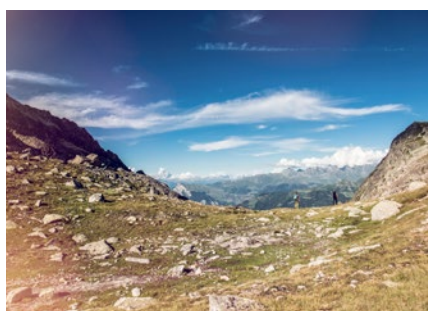
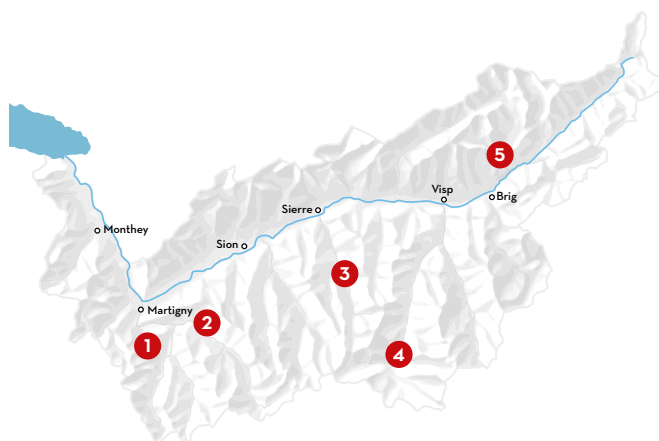
Walks along historical “bisses”



“Bisses” are the historical irrigation channels of Valais, constructed to bring precious water from mountain streams to the fields, vineyards and orchards. Several are still in use and carefully maintained. Footpaths run alongside these watercourses, offering walks without major inclines but full of variety along routes that have often been used for centuries.

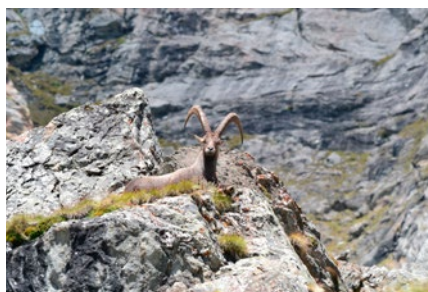
Selection of top hikes.

Valais is the ultimate holiday playground for hikers, with more than 8,000 kilometres of marked trails. Discover the bewitching variety of flora and fauna in Valais along our selection of top hikes with sights: sensational walks with a special point of interest. Prepare your rucksack and hiking boots, Valais is waiting for you!



1 Cabane d'Orny and Cabane du Trient, Pays du St-Bernard

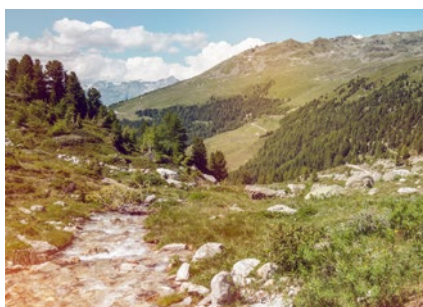
From Champex-Lac, take the La Breya chairlift to reach the starting point of a hike to the mountain huts of Orny and Trient. The route leads across scree, over glacier moraines, past year-round snows and along the Orny Glacier; breathtaking views take in the Dents du Midi, the Combins massif and the Aiguilles Dorées.



2 Sentier des Chamois (Chamois Trail), Verbier/Val de Bagnes

From La Chaux, cross lush pastures and then steep rocky slopes to reach the Col Termin: classic chamois terrain. From

the col, the path drops down to the Louvie pastures and the Louvie mountain hut, once a refuge of the legendary 19th-Century counterfeiter Joseph-Samuel Farinet. With a little luck, you may spot chamois, marmots and rare red-billed coughs, while enjoying glorious views of the Grand Combin.



3 Hike of the five 4,000-metre peaks, Val d'Anniviers

Tignousa, at the summit of St-Luc's panoramic funicular, is the starting point of the fascinating Planets Trail, which leads to the historical Hôtel Weisshorn. From here, the path continues at high level up the valley before dropping down to Zinal. Along the way, enjoy superb views of the ravines, villages and peaks of the Val d'Anniviers; you may spot marmots, chamois and even bearded vultures.

See our selection of the finest hikes at www.valais.ch

4 Höhbalmen, Zermatt

From Zermatt, this hike initially leads steeply up to Trift and its mountain hotel, where you can reward yourself with a delicious apple tart. A high-level path then brings you to one of Zermatt's finest vantage points, with glorious views of the iconic Matterhorn and the whole valley. Keep an eye open for edelweiss beside the trail. Continue towards the Zmutt Glacier and the picturesque Arben waterfall before heading back down to Zermatt.



5 Bettmerhorn, Aletsch Arena

The Great Aletsch Glacier – the longest in the Alps – offers a spectacular backdrop as you walk along the flanks of the Bettmerhorn to reach the Märjelen glacier lake. From the Gletscherstube mountain hut, a pedestrian tunnel leads under the Tälligrat ridge; at the far end, enjoy glorious views of the Rhône valley as you hike back to Bettmeralp.

Did you know?

As you walk along some of the “bisses” (historical irrigation channels), you may encounter warning hammers. Driven by a small waterwheel, these hammers were designed to strike a piece of wood or bell repeatedly. Any interruption to the regular sound would warn locals that water was no longer running through the channel.

A rare variety of tulip, unique worldwide, grows in the former rye fields in the Binn valley. The flower is known in local dialect as the “Roman tulip”, and can be seen on a [walk in the Binntal Nature Park](#).

The Bhutan bridge, located in the Pfyn/Finges forest, was built under the supervision of an engineer from the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. The structure symbolises the bond with mountain regions in other continents.
www.valais.ch

Different hikes in Valais offer the chance to see a remarkable diversity of flora including [orchids](#), [yellow restharrow & feather grass](#), [rhododendrons](#) and [spring meadow saffron](#) as well as [spruce trees](#), [Swiss stone pines \(also known as arolla pines\)](#) and [monumental fir trees](#) more than 450 years old.



The suspension footbridge of Niouc – nicknamed the “Spider’s bridge” – passes 190 metres above the ground, making it the highest in Europe.
www.pontsuspendu.ch



The SwissPeaks Trail, which crosses Valais from east to west via a 360-kilometre route with 25,000 metres of ascent, is Europe’s longest ultra trail running race. The winner of the 2019 edition took less than 82 hours to reach Le Bouveret from Oberwald.
www.swisspeaks.ch

The Trophée des Combins is Switzerland’s oldest trail running race, originally created by a group of friends. The course leads from Fionnay to Panossière; the first edition took place in 1965.
www.combin.ch

The lifespan of a pair of sports shoes is typically about 1,000 kilometres. Most trail running shoes, because of the way they are used, need replacing after 400 to 800 kilometres.

César Costa, from Martigny in Valais, was crowned trail running champion of Valais nine times between 2009 and 2019. He thereby holds the cantonal record in this category.

The Michelin-starred chef Didier de Courten ran the iconic Sierre-Zinal race for the 30th consecutive year in 2019. He established his personal record of 2 hours, 58 minutes and 57 seconds in 2012.

Top 10 trail running events.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1 Gornergrat Zermatt Marathon
45/42/24 km
4 July 2020
www.valais.ch</p> <p>2 Trail Verbier St-Bernard
111/73/43/31 km
4-5 July 2020
www.valais.ch</p> <p>3 Gondo Marathon
84/42/28 km
8-9 August 2020
www.gondoevent.ch</p> | <p>4 Sierre-Zinal
31 km
9 August 2020
www.valais.ch</p> <p>5 Swiss Alps 100
160/100/50 km
14 August 2020
www.swissalps100.com</p> <p>6 Matterhorn Ultraks
49/32/25/19/2.3 km
21-22 August 2020
www.valais.ch</p> <p>7 Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc OCC
56 km – start at Orsières
27 August 2020
www.valais.ch</p> | <p>8 Nendaz Trail
70/30/16 km
29 August 2020
www.valais.ch</p> <p>9 SwissPeaks Trail
360/170/90/42/21 km
30 August to
6 September 2020
www.valais.ch</p> <p>10 Trail des Patrouilleurs
55/40/25/15 km
26 September 2020
www.traildespatrouilleurs.ch</p> |
|---|---|--|

Top 12 vertical races.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1 Saillon-Ovronnaz
25 April 2020
www.vs-timing.ch</p> <p>2 La Monthey d'Illiez
23 May 2020
www.montheydilliez.ch</p> <p>3 Trophée du Scex Carro
June 2020
www.tropheeduscecarro.ch</p> <p>4 Täschalplauf
26 July 2020
www.valais.ch</p> | <p>5 Hohsaas Berglauf
29 August 2020
www.hdsports.at</p> <p>6 Le KM vertical de Chandolin
19 September 2020
www.kmdc.ch</p> <p>7 Fully-Sorniot
20 September 2020
www.fullysorniot.ch</p> <p>8 Vertic'Alp
September 2020
www.verticalp.ch</p> | <p>9 La Dérupe Gingolaise
October 2020
www.chaterodzingola.com</p> <p>10 Le KM vertical de Fully
24 October 2020
www.kmvertical.ch</p> <p>11 Jeizibärg Lauf
18 October 2020
www.berglauf.jeizinen.ch</p> <p>12 La Dérupe
October 2020
www.laderupe.ch</p> |
|--|---|--|

Events not to be missed.

Aletsch Half-Marathon

This demanding 21-kilometre course leads through the glacial landscapes of the Aletsch Arena, listed as a World Heritage Site. The route offers superb views of the Great Aletsch Glacier and the famous 4,000-metre peaks of Valais.

20-21 June 2020 – Aletsch Arena
www.valais.ch

Nuit Suisse de la Randonnée

Walks by moonlight, storytelling, wildlife watching, guided walks: since its creation in 2006, “Swiss Hiking Night” has offered a wide variety of unusual experiences every year, organised by enthusiasts in each region. Transport and refreshments for walkers are available throughout the night.

4-5 July 2020 – Various locations
www.nuitrando.ch

X4trail

This new competition allows participants to decide during the race how far they want to run, according to their energy level. Competitors can choose to stop after 25, 50, 75 or 100 kilometres.

15 August 2020 – Champex-Lac
www.x4trail.ch

Trail du Besso

At the heart of the “Imperial Crown” of 4,000-metre peaks, this alpine race links the five mountain refuges of the Val d’Anniviers by some very technical trails. Two glaciers and four passages above an altitude of 3,000 metres offer magnificent views of the surrounding summits.

29 August 2020 – Val d’Anniviers
www.traildubesso.com

Spartan Race

This famous obstacle race returns to Switzerland for a second edition in the heart of the Alps. Verbier offers a range of courses of different formats, lengths and levels of difficulty as part of an action-packed weekend. The various options promise thrilling challenges to participants of all ages and abilities, from novice to hardened athlete.

5-6 September 2020 – Verbier
www.spartanrace.ch

FOOD AND WINE.

Surname
First name
From
Activity

Varone
G rard
Bramois
Market gardener (meadow orchards
in Bramois)

Key info

The tradition of the meadow orchard
dates back centuries: a natural habitat
in which farm animals live among fruit
trees. Those in Bramois are the oldest
orchards in Switzerland. G rard
Varone belongs to the 4th generation
of his family to manage the estate.

More info

www.valais.ch

Special experiences for visitors.

Refreshments on the alpine pastures



It is not only the Herens cows that appreciate summer on the high alpine pastures with their fresh air, peaceful atmosphere, idyllic scenery and abundant sunshine. This is heaven for walkers and visitors, too; simple cafes offer a chance to taste cheeses made with raw milk from these cows and also to watch the cheese being made.



Apricot-based products



Velvety skin, sweet-and-sour flavour, orangey-red colouring and the taste of sunshine: the apricot, emblematic fruit of Valais, offers one of the gourmet pleasures of the summer season. Delicious eaten fresh, it also goes into making a range of other products – so that fans can enjoy all its flavour and goodness throughout the year.



Top 10 wine experiences



With nearly 5,000 hectares of vineyards, Valais is Switzerland's most important winegrowing region. The favourable climate – dry and sunny – and the diversity of soils allow 55 different grape varieties to flourish in vineyards lined with 3,000 kilometres of dry-stone walls. Learn all about the skills involved and explore the region's wine traditions through 10 experiences that are sure to delight all wine enthusiasts.



Wines certified with the Valais brand



The Valais brand is not just a territorial brand but also a cross-sectoral quality label that certifies Valais products. Consumers thereby easily recognise products of superior quality from producers in the region. Wines can now also be certified Valais brand, through their own certification process.

Sionwine.ch



Sionwine.ch is the first platform to offer wine-related tourism activities in Sion bookable direct online. Attractions include gourmet walks, tastings, vineyard visits – and even a flight in an indoor skydiving wind tunnel. Enrich your knowledge of wine, taste the best the region has to offer and enjoy a unique journey of discovery in the heart of Valais.

Mont d'Or vineyards



An educational trail and themed walks are among the attractions at this award-winning winery and vineyards, which offer a variety of fascinating wine-related experiences. Taste a fine wine in front of one of the many historical “guérites” – little vineyard houses – dotted around the Domaine du Mont d'Or, for example, or take part in a fun outdoor “escape game”.

Local markets



Every week, squares and streets in towns and villages throughout Valais burst into life for the local market. Come along to these convivial gatherings to meet local producers, who will be delighted to share their passion for local gastronomic traditions.

Baskets of local delicacies



Looking for the best places to buy local products and delicacies from Valais? At our selection of sales outlets, you will find baskets generously filled with cheeses, bread, dried meat, liqueurs, jams and other tasty products exclusively from the region.

Did you know?



97% of the Swiss apricot harvest comes from Valais.



The Valplantes company, located in Sembrancher, provides organically grown herbs for Ricola herb sweets.
www.valplantes.ch



In 2019, the Abbey of St Maurice became the first in Switzerland to brew its own beer.
www.abbaye-stmaurice.ch



In 2018, 2,396 tons of cheese made from raw milk were produced in Valais.



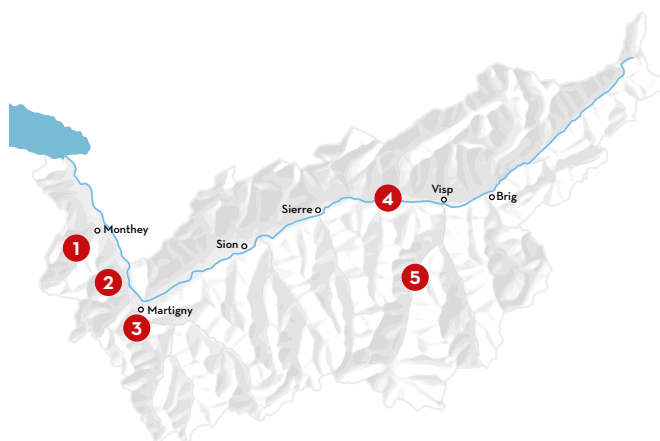
Beer sommeliers are experts in the varieties of beer and how they are served. They can advise which beer best accompanies any dish.



Valais is home to one third of Switzerland's vineyards.

Top 5 craft breweries.

In recent years, more and more craft breweries have opened in Valais, with great success. Throughout the canton, enthusiasts are brewing beers that are full of character – just like the people of the region. The styles vary enormously: take advantage of your stay in Valais try a few.



1 7Peaks

The 7Peaks craft brewery was founded in Morgins at the foot of the Dents-du-Midi. The massif inspired the brewery to create seven beers, each with a unique character and flavour and bearing the name of one of the seven summits.

www.7peaksbrasserie.ch



2 Abbaye de St-Maurice

Switzerland's first abbey brewery inaugurated its brewing vats in 2019. The Abbey of St Maurice offers three new monastic beers that are sure to delight enthusiasts.

www.biere-stmaurice.ch



3 WhiteFrontier

For WhiteFrontier, a beer is an invitation to embark on a journey, an exploration of nature or even an ode to adventure, in the style of the brewery's "Log Out and Live" beer. The original beers full of intense flavours are unlike any other, and have won numerous awards.

www.whitefrontier.ch



4 Heidnischbier

Heidnischbier takes its name from the Heidnischbiel, an undulating region between Raron and St. German where the beer was born. The Pale Ale won the "Swiss Beer Award 2019/2020", the first time the prize has been awarded: a fine recognition within the Swiss brewing scene.

www.heidnischbier.ch



5 Sunnegg

When the pure spring water of the mountains around Grächen meets the bitterness of hops, the result is an unfiltered, unpasteurised beer that offers an inexhaustible source of pleasure. The brewery's bottled beers, as colourful as the wild landscapes of the Mattertal valley, are unmissable – and delicious.

www.brauerei-sunnegg.ch

Find our selection of craft breweries at
www.valais.ch

Events not to be missed.

Gourmet walks

Local wines, products and delicacies are the focus of this selection of walks, which take place throughout the year.

All year – various locations
www.valais.ch

Salon de la bière

The second edition of this beer salon, which brings together a large number of craft breweries from throughout Switzerland, is taking place in Martigny. Enthusiasts can expect an ever-growing range of styles and flavours.

3–4 April 2020 – Martigny
www.salondelabiere.ch

Caves Ouvertes

Every year, more than 230 wine cellars welcome visitors to taste their wines during “Open Cellars of Valais”: an ideal opportunity to meet local winemakers, discover local grape varieties and taste many different wines.

21–23 May 2020 – various locations
www.valais.ch

Apricot festival

For three days, Saxon celebrates the star of the Valais vineyards! The programme of festivities includes a big apricot market, activities for children and adults, and concerts.

17–19 July 2020 – Saxon
www.valais.ch

Farm brunch on Swiss National Day

More than 20 farming families throughout the region welcome guests to their farms for brunch on 1 August: a delicious start to Swiss National Day. Visitors of all ages are sure to love the home-made specialities.

1 August 2020 – various locations
www.valais.ch

Tavolata

A convivial atmosphere and delicious local flavours are the hallmarks of this evening in the vineyards of the Pfyng/Finges nature park and at other unusual locations in Valais. Tables are set end-to-end to bring together the greatest possible number of people for a meal of six dishes from the region.

22 August 2020 – Pfyng/Finges forest
May to October – various locations
www.valais.ch

Au cœur des vendanges

Discover the work that goes into making a bottle of wine, from wielding the secateurs in the vineyards to the process of vinification. Various wineries open their doors to visitors for this event, dubbed “At the heart of the harvest”: a fascinating chance to experience the world of winemaking first-hand.

September 2020 – various locations
www.valais.ch

VINEA

The VINEA wine fair draws countless enthusiasts to Sierre during the first weekend in September. The event includes many tastings of different Swiss wines, conferences, workshops and cultural visits.

4–5 September 2020 – Sierre
www.valais.ch

Marche des cépages

The “Walk of the grape varieties” leads along the vineyard trail between Sierre and Salgesch. At numerous stops along way, dozens of winemakers offer tastings of their best wines along with local delicacies.

12 September 2020 – Sierre and Salgesch
www.valais.ch

Swiss Cheese Awards

Bagnes is hosting the 12th edition of the Swiss cheese championships, a competition that rewards the finest dairy products made with milk from cows, sheep

and goats. Visitors as well as professionals have the chance to taste the very best Swiss cheeses.

17–20 September 2020 – Bagnes
www.cheese-awards.ch

Semaine du Goût

The “Week of flavour” promises dozens of food and wine events throughout Valais. Meet the people who craft the flavours of Valais with passion, and enjoy a wide range of experiences to delight foodies of all tastes.

17–27 September 2020
Various locations
www.gout.ch

Bagnes Capitale de la Raclette

Raclette cheese – traditionally served melted with boiled potatoes, cornichons and silverskin onions – is the star of this gastronomic weekend in the region of Le Châble in the municipality of Bagnes. Visitors can enjoy other local specialities, too, in a convivial atmosphere.

19–20 September 2020
www.valais.ch

Marathon des Saveurs

The “Marathon of Flavours” is a convivial sporting event through the vineyards of Valais that combines gastronomy, pleasure and exercise. Various gourmet stops along the 23-kilometre route offer the opportunity to taste typical Valais wines and delicacies.

17 October 2020 – Sion to Salgesch
www.valais.ch

Chestnut festival

This key autumn event celebrates the sweet chestnut alongside other local produce. Highlight of the festive weekend is the chance to taste a traditional “brisolée”: roasted chestnuts served with cold meat, cheeses and autumn fruit.

17–18 October 2020 – Fully
www.valais.ch

FAMILIES.



Surname	Volken
First name	Kilian
Date of birth	1 January 1951
From	Fiesch
Activity	Mountain guide and ski instructor for 44 years
Achievements	Ascent of all the 4,000-metre peaks in the Alps 9 expeditions to summits above 8,000 metres, with 4 successful ascents: Mount Everest, Cho Oyu, Gasherbrum, Broad Peak 3 attempts to climb K2 - forced to turn back at 8,000 metres
Key info	The mountaineer regularly introduces children to the secrets of the Great Aletsch Glacier.
More info	www.valais.ch

Experiences for families.

Treasure hunts



This summer, the certified “Family Destinations” of Valais once again invite you to go on a fun treasure hunt with all the family. Adventure seekers of all ages can follow a water trail thanks to a booklet containing maps, puzzles and amusing anecdotes that will help locate the treasure.



Open-air and indoor pools



The Valais summer is particularly sunny, with plenty of hot days in store. Enjoy a refreshing dip at one of the region’s many open-air and indoor pool complexes – or why not linger for the day? These facilities also serve meals and snacks, and some even organise activities for children.

Kinderwelt Visperterminen



In Visperterminen, some old barns have been converted into play zones for budding explorers. Attractions include a labyrinth, a hall of mirrors and a flying dragon: an especially appealing option for days when the sun won’t shine.



Gletschi-program Aletsch Arena



The surface of the Great Aletsch Glacier is home to tiny invertebrates called glacier fleas. The mascot of the Aletsch Arena ski area, too, is a glacier flea called Gletschi. During the summer, she loves showing her magical world up in the mountains to children from across the globe. There’s lots going on, with a new programme every week – plus this summer, Gletschi is celebrating her fifth birthday on 12 July.



“Magic water” Grächen

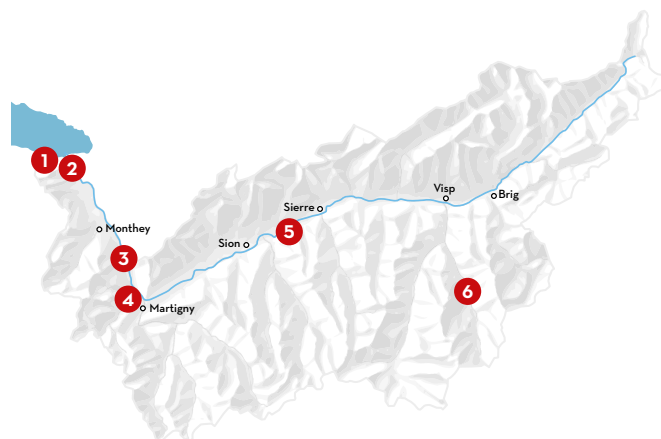


How about a walk along the “magic water”? Families will have lots of fun along Grächen’s “bisses” – the historical irrigation channels – with special activity stations and relaxation stops along the way. And of course nothing is more refreshing than dipping your feet in the deliciously cool water during your walk!



The finest theme parks and rides.

The theme parks and rides of Valais are among the region's most popular family attractions. No wonder: they promise fun and thrills for visitors of all ages. Best of all, Valais offers an exhilarating variety of adventures: in the Wild West, on water, on rails, on a toboggan, in a maze or on all kinds of entertaining rides. Take your pick!



1 Swiss Vapeur Parc, Le Bouveret

Spend a day with all the family in the wonderful world of miniature steam railways. Riding trains pulled by scale locomotives, you will travel through a delightful landscape featuring models of famous buildings and beauty spots throughout Switzerland.



3 Labyrinthe Aventure, Evionnaz

Set off in search of hidden treasure as you negotiate the vast maze of hedges in the adventure labyrinth in Evionnaz. The park also features slides, climbing walls, obstacle courses and all kinds of games: action and entertainment for visitors of all ages.



5 Happyland, Granges

Impossible to get bored with the huge choice of activities at Happyland in Granges: the only difficulty is choosing where to start! Highlights include Switzerland's tallest water slide, a giant bouncy castle, a big play area promising endless action and much more.



2 Aquaparc, Le Bouveret

Several thrilling water slides, a river to ride on inflatable rings, a pirate boat, a swimming pool with waves and a wellness area are just some of the many attractions at Aquaparc on the shores of Lake Geneva. A world of fun for all the family!



4 Western City, Martigny

Welcome to the Wild West! The Western City theme park near Martigny offers lots of attractions for all the family, including lassoing, target shooting, games of skill, a search for gold and much more.



6 Feeblitz toboggan run, Saas-Fee

The Feeblitz toboggan run on rails at Saas-Fee, one of the highest in the Alps, is a real adventure. After a steep climb, the ride through the forest promises thrilling speeds, a 360-degree loop, and a guaranteed blast of adrenalin for all the family.

Did you know?



Eight holiday resorts in Valais have been awarded the “Family Destination” label by the Swiss Tourism Federation. There are more than 1,665 accommodation options for families along with a wide range of other facilities.



Since the launch of the Valais treasure hunts in summer 2018, more than 4,000 children and adults from all over the world have taken part. And the adventure has only just begun!



Veysonnaz is now offering free admission to “Club des Oursons” and “Sun&Fun” activities to families staying in partner accommodation.

Events not to be missed.

Ravensburger children’s festival & SiSu family day

The 9th SiSu family day up on the Hannigalp pastures offers a magic show, a children’s musical troupe and other entertainment for all the family, while the Ravensburger festival promises puzzles to solve and challenges to tackle during a day of fun at the sports centre.

15 July and 2 August 2020 – Grächen
 Ravensburger children’s festival
 SiSu family day

Am Stram Gram

The second edition of the Am Stram Gram festival takes place in Crans-Montana in July 2020. This free family event with a difference promises a variety of play worlds, shows and workshops.

17-19 July 2020, Crans-Montana
www.valais.ch

Hérisson sous gazon

After a gap of a year, this children’s festivity – which means “Hedgehog under the lawn” in French – returns to Charrat in 2020 with lots of surprises. New this year: activities for children from the age of 2. The event now takes place just after the school summer holidays.

29-30 August 2020 – Charrat
www.valais.ch

Sheep festival

Zermatt’s mascot, Wolli the sheep, will be celebrating his birthday during this traditional sheep festivity up at Furi: a perfect day for all the family.

6 September 2020 – Zermatt
www.valais.ch

CULTURE.



Surname	Zurbriggen
First name	Dominic
Date of birth	19 June 1981
From	Saas-Grund, Valais
Activity	Children's book illustrator
Credits	Graphic novel of legends from Upper Valais Many illustrations for the "Papagallo & Gollo" show Video game project
Key info	Dominic lives in a traditional Valais wooden house in the secluded farming hamlet of Furggstalden above Saas-Almagell.
More info	www.valais.ch

Cultural experiences.

Carving wooden masks



During Carnival, scary figures in furs and grotesque masks – the legendary Tschägättä – prowl the alleys of villages in the Lötschental valley. Visitors can design and carve their own wooden masks in group classes run by an expert at the sculpture studio in Ferden. The lessons are organised on request for a minimum of five people.



Learn to play the alphorn

The alphorn evolved as an instrument for livestock herders; today, it is a feature of many local traditions, and its sound enchants all who hear it. Try your hand at playing an alphorn at one of the beginners' classes organised in [Nendaz](#), or take part in a folklore workshop during the summer in [Zermatt](#) – and let your first alphorn notes echo around the valleys!



Building dry-stone walls



Dry-stone walls are structures built to last generations, and form part of the identity of Valais. They blend beautifully into the landscape, are respectful of the environment and offer a habitat for many reptiles and insects. Discover the secrets of this traditional craft at a course for novices in the Pfyng-Finges nature park.

Herens cow fights

The stocky black cows of the Herens breed are a powerful symbol of Valais. They naturally lock horns to establish a hierarchy within the herd: an impressive sight. Come and see these magnificent creatures during the [procession to the alpine pastures](#) in early summer, or at an organised [regional cow fight](#) or a [summer fight](#).



Art Valais Wallis



The Art Valais Wallis association, in partnership with the canton, is launching a contemporary urban art course in an alpine setting as well as a new app. From the Obergoms to St Gingolph, Swiss and internationally renowned artists are creating exceptional works that draw on and showcase the environment, the heritage of Valais and local traditions.



PALP Festival.

From the Rhône valley up to the mountain peaks, from cities to villages, the PALP Festival brings you off the beaten track in Valais. Expect concerts with a difference in spectacular natural settings, unusual cultural experiences, and all kinds of shows and artistic creations. Enjoy electro music as you tuck into a Raclette, join a performance in a wine cellar, have brunch in a castle, hear gigs up on alpine pastures or visit an exhibition staged in the homes of locals: there's plenty to suit all tastes!



Bal Masqué

The masked balls of Versailles, with their mysterious opulence and giddy pleasures, continue to fascinate us centuries later. Over the course of a weekend, the Château de Venthône hosts a Bal Masqué that is sure to turn heads. The programme includes an introduction to 30s-style Renaissance dance, blues, electroswing, hits, dance music, live & DJ sets, Raclettes and a banquet; guests are expected to dress up to the nines!

8-9 May 2020 - Venthône



Carnötzet

Carnötzet invites you to spend a couple of days strolling from one wine cellar to the next as you discover the underground life of the old districts of Muraz. Enjoy a wild live set, watch a dance show, listen to a poem or take part in a silent disco. Choose from more than 100 free performances, as your mood takes you.

30-31 May 2020 - Muraz



Schlösser

See the capital of Valais in a new light over the course of two weekends. Expect all kinds of unusual and original events: visit the "Beauty & Rooms" exhibition in the homes of local residents; enjoy a musical brunch at the Château de Tourbillon; and treat yourself to concerts and banquets in exceptional settings in the Old Town of Sion.

17-19 July 2020 - Sion

24-26 July 2020 - Sion



Rocklette

Linking rock and Raclette at different mountain locations, Rocklette takes place over seven days at various alpine pastures of the Val de Bagnes. Daytime concerts in spectacular natural settings feature rock legends, a convivial atmosphere - and of course lots of melted cheese.

8-9 August 2020 - Val de Bagnes

12-15 August 2020 - Val de Bagnes



Electroclette

The Electroclette has set its sights high: the alpine pastures of La Chaux, with a weekend at 2,200 metres mixing live music and DJ sets featuring Swiss and international artists, dozens of cheeses, Fondant wine and a dance floor with a view of the snow-capped Grand Combin.

22-23 August 2020

Did you know?



In November 2019, the treasury of the Abbey of St Maurice gained a new attraction. A reliquary containing a piece of fabric from a coat belonging to Louis IX of France (commonly known as St Louis) has joined the many priceless exhibits on display.

The Valais singer Marc Aymon has researched 150 years of musical heritage up to 1970 to reinterpret the songs in a modern folk style at the Valais State Archives and at the Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts in Lausanne.

www.marcaymon.com



Europe's oldest surviving barn is located on a plot above Zermatt. Built in 1261, it has been carefully preserved to this day.

At an annual weekend in September celebrating local traditions in Bettmeralp, enthusiasts meet to play the game of Gilihüsine. This is an ancient form of the Swiss sport of Hornussen – a cross between baseball and golf.

www.valais.ch



The singer and composer Yannick Zenhäusern from Upper Valais has collaborated on the soundtracks of many international film productions, video games and advertising videos. His work has already won two prestigious prizes for film music.

www.goldenzen-music.ch

Events not to be missed.

PALP Festival

This highly original festival, now celebrating its tenth edition, is once again staging a wide variety of events and concerts at different locations in Valais.

May to September 2020

Various locations

www.valais.ch

National cow fighting finals

Cows of the Herens breed, who naturally lock horns to establish a hierarchy within the herd, meet in the arena at Aproz to determine winners in different categories and also crown the national "Queen of queens". In 2020, the Federation of Herens Cow Breeders celebrates its centenary, and as a result is staging various festivities; it is also presiding over this special 2020 edition of the national Herens cow fighting finals.

9-10 May 2020 – Sion

www.valais.ch

Sion sous les étoiles

The long-running "Sion under the Stars" music festival is welcoming a series of star international performers in 2020 including Deep Purple, Uriah Heep, Pascal Obispo, Yannick Noah, Francis Cabrel and many others.

8-11 July 2020

www.valais.ch

Open Air Gampel

Open Air Gampel is one of Switzerland's biggest music festivals. The varied programme and the magnificent backdrop of surrounding mountains draw tens of thousands of music fans to Valais every year.

20-23 August 2020

www.valais.ch

61st Valais yodellers' gathering

The Riederalp yodelling club has the honour of welcoming no fewer than 500 members of the Valais Yodellers' Association in summer 2020. Visitors can look forward to a convivial and authentic festivity.

22 August 2020 – Mörel-Filet

www.jodlertreffen2020.ch

Verbier Festival

Every year, the Verbier Festival unites international stars from the classical music scene with up-and-coming young talent. The event also features a series of workshops, free concerts and street performances.

17 July to 2 August 2020

www.valais.ch

INNOVATION.



The Valais of tomorrow.

Valais watches set new standards



Based in Sion, Loniswatches is the first upmarket “Made in Valais” watch brand. The two young founders, precision engineers from Valais with a passion for watchmaking, set out to create mechanically sophisticated watches with automatic winding and a timeless design at an affordable price. They succeeded – and changed the Swiss watchmaking scene in style!



Third place in SpaceX’s Hyperloop Pod Competition



In July 2019, a team from the EPFL university and research institute came third in a competition organised by Elon Musk’s SpaceX company to promote high-speed travel. And it was the Valais company Valélectric Farner, based in St-Pierre-de-Clages, that produced the entire electric motors for the futuristic vehicle entered in the competition. The cutting-edge knowledge and skills of this company are therefore making a significant contribution to revolutionising the transport of tomorrow.



From Baltschieder to Jamaica



MyAirSeat, a specialist in booking and payment systems for small and medium-size airline companies, is now exporting as far afield as Jamaica. The company in Upper Valais has produced a booking management system for a Jamaican company that offers helicopter flights for tourists.



© Captain's Aviation

Guaranteed electricity thanks to Studer Innotec



This Sion-based company provides solutions to solar and other energy needs. For example, its inverter/chargers fed by solar energy are ensuring a continuous electricity supply to a manufacturer of disposable plates made from palm leaves located in Bangalore, in the south of India: an innovative application that grants the company energy independence.



© Studer Innotec SA

Valais colours throughout the world



At every street corner across the world, there’s a little piece of Valais. For more than 35 years, the company Eckart SA has been producing zinc pigments that protect screws in the majority of cars, trains, trucks and bikes throughout the world from corrosion. The plant in Vétroz is also the only production site in Switzerland to manufacture these pigments. In future, they should also be used to protect bridges and roads.



© Guy Decelles

Top 5 Valais brand products to be enjoyed every day.

The Valais brand is an acknowledgment of origin and quality for emblematic products of Valais: a cross-sectoral quality label that gives consumers the assurance of buying and enjoying a superior product from a company that respects social and environmental standards. Here is a selection of Valais brand products for everyday use.



1 “Destefano” pasta

Pasta forms part of the Valais gastronomic scene thanks to the many Italians who have lived in the canton for generations. The pasta and filled pasta of the Valais brand are a blend of the two cultures as they are made according to Italian tradition with ingredients from Valais: eggs, flour, Raclette cheese and Herens meat.



2 Herbal teas

The many herbs and aromatic plants cultivated in Valais include camomile, lemon balm, sage, verbena, mint and thyme. Infusions made with them are refreshing, thirst-quenching and low in calories. They may be enjoyed hot or cold at any time of day to provide a moment of relaxation and well-being. The plants used are cultivated organically.



3 Honey

Honey of the Valais brand has a unique flavour, which can be enjoyed at breakfast or at tea-time, spread on a slice of Valais rye bread AOP or dissolved in an infusion. Other products of the hive, known for their health benefits, are also certified Valais brand: pollen, royal jelly, propolis and bee venom.



4 Yogurt

The yogurts of the Valais brand are made according to traditional methods with high-quality milk from Valais cows, sheep or goats that feed on grass of the mountain pastures. The yogurts may be flavoured or contain fruit. Full of authentic, natural flavour, they are ideal as a teatime snack or dessert as well as at breakfast.



5 Syrups

What could be more refreshing than a cool glass of squash? The cordials of the Valais brand reveal all the flavours of the fruit, plants and flowers of Valais, concentrated and sweetened with gourmet skill. Many different flavours are available, to be enjoyed at any time of day.

See all the products certified with the Valais brand at www.valais.ch

Did you know?



The Techno-Pôle opened its doors in 1989, bringing together a variety of cutting-edge technology and making Sierre the first city in Switzerland to boast a venue of this kind.



Valais companies are in the spotlight: Valais now occupies fifth place among Swiss cantons in the Top 100 Swiss start-ups. With four start-ups selected, Valais has drawn level with the canton of Geneva.

www.blog.theark.ch



Winsun, a company in Steg specialising in solar energy, won the Swiss Solar Prize 2019 for its photovoltaic installation on the roof of Ebmatingen church.

www.blog.theark.ch

Among Swiss regions, Valais is the No. 2 exporter of pharmaceutical products.

The start-up DePoly was the big winner in the “Hardware” category of the 2019 Venture prize thanks to its innovative chemical-based method for recycling PET.

www.blog.theark.ch

Events not to be missed.

Digital Health Connect day

This event brings together key players in the fields of health and digital technology to develop the health tools of tomorrow.

29 May 2020 – Sierre

www.digitalhealthconnect.ch

Smart Energy day

A conference to explore the stakes involved in intelligent management of electricity networks and the digitalisation of the energy environment. This year’s theme: “Norway and market liberalisation”.

28 August 2020 – Sion

www.eventsmartenergy.ch

AUTUMN.



Surname	Jeitziner
First name	Daniel
Date of birth	1950
Résidence	Mund, Valais
Activity	Producer and former master of the guild of saffron growers
More info	www.valais.ch

Special experiences for visitors.

The most beautiful larch forests

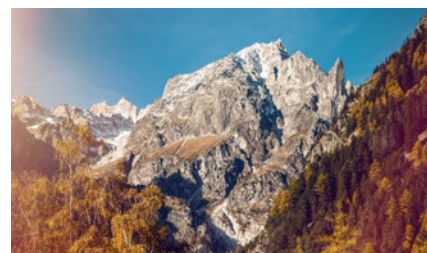
To see autumn colours at their most flamboyant, go for a walk in one of the many forests of Valais. Among the highlights are the larches, many of which are more than 100 years old, and whose needles turn golden at this time of year. This tree is the undisputed king of the forest in the regions of [Ovronnaz](#), [Isérables](#), [St-Martin](#), [Chamoson](#), [Visperterminen](#), the [Saas valley](#), [Zermatt](#) and the [Goms](#).



Photo competition #MyAutumnInValais



Capture the beauty of autumn in Valais on your smartphone and share your best photos on Instagram for the chance to win fabulous prizes. Find inspiration in our selection of the top [photo spots in Valais](#), set off on your adventure, and enjoy discovering and photographing the most magical places in the canton!



Season of “brisolée”



Roasted chestnuts served with cured meat from the region and local cheeses make up this classic dish, the focus of convivial gatherings all over Valais in early autumn. The “brisolée” is available in good-quality restaurants throughout the canton.



Winemaker for a day



In autumn, wineries throughout Valais offer enthusiasts the chance to experience first-hand the world of vines, vineyards and winemaking and discover what lies behind a bottle of wine. From the grape harvest to cellaring, see the knowledge and skill that go into creating the best wines.



Taste the finest Valais wines



The grape harvest is one of the key events of autumn in Valais. This is the ideal time for discovering the different local grape varieties. Visit the wineries and cellars of Valais to taste the specialities on offer at each: a mouth-watering adventure for any wine enthusiast!



5 top tips for autumn.

Autumn is the most convivial of seasons in Valais. While the blazing colours of the forests and vineyards lend an enchanting backdrop to outdoor activities, seasonal delicacies such as the “*brisolée*” (roasted chestnuts served with cold meat, cheese and fruit), accompanied by fine wines, tempt the taste buds. This is also an opportunity to enjoy your last hikes or bike rides before putting away your hiking boots and summer kit for the winter. Make the most of the treats this magical season has to offer with our colourful selection of autumn activities.



1 Taste the finest Valais wines with the Valais Wine Pass

Discover the vineyards of Valais and enjoy some of the fine local wines such as Johannisberg, Petite Arvine and Cornalin. The Valais Wine Pass allows you to taste ten different wines (a glass each of 1 dl) at a selection of cellars, wineries and wine bars and so experience the mouth-watering variety of Valais wine.



2 Collect sweet chestnuts and enjoy a tasty “*brisolée*”

Stroll through the beautiful forests of sweet chestnut trees in [Fully](#) or [Mörel](#) and gather some of the ripe chestnuts freshly fallen from the branches. The main events celebrating the chestnut are without doubt

the chestnut festivals in [Fully](#) and [St-Gingolph](#), at which several tons of chestnuts are consumed in just two days.



3 Cycle the Vineyard Trail

Ride through the sunny vineyards that overlook the Rhône valley via a dedicated cycle trail of 82 kilometres from Martigny to Leuk. Along the way, stop at a range of local producers to taste some of the region’s specialities; at the end of the trip, soothe your muscles in the blissfully relaxing thermal pools in the spa resort of Leukerbad.



4 Take part in the “*Marathon des Saveurs*”

The “*Marathon of Flavours*” is a gourmet sporting event that

takes participants along 23 kilometres of scenic trail from Sion to Salquenen. Several tasting stops along the way offer a chance to savour local wines along with delicious Valais specialities.



5 See the “*queens of Valais*” as they descend from the high pastures

Every autumn, the cows return down to the valley having spent the summer up on the high pastures of Valais. The descents, known locally as “*désalpes*”, happen on various dates at different locations, with the cows typically decorated ornately with flowers and ribbons. Watch one of these colourful processions to the sound of alphorns, and enjoy the chance to taste a variety of delicious local products.

Did you know?



The Foire du Valais in Martigny is the biggest autumn event in the canton; every year, it welcomes more than 220,000 visitors in ten days.

www.valais.ch



Ten tons of sweet chestnuts are consumed in two days during the chestnut festival in Fully.

www.valais.ch



The Balavaud forest, located within the municipality of Iséribles, is home to more than 250 larch trees between 300 and 800 years old – including some of the largest and oldest in Europe.

About 180 flowers are needed to obtain just one gram of saffron.



Events not to be missed.

At the heart of the harvest

Discover the work that goes into making a bottle of wine, from wielding the secateurs in the vineyards to the process of vinification. Various wineries open their doors to visitors for this event, dubbed "At the heart of the harvest": a fascinating chance to experience the world of winemaking first-hand.

September 2020 – various locations
www.valais.ch

Schafscheid

Every autumn, for centuries, hundreds of sheep have left the high pastures to return down to the valley where they are sorted and returned to their owners. This traditional event has given rise to a colourful popular festivity at Bettmeralp.

September 2020 – Bettmeralp
www.aletscharena.ch

Tohu Bohu

This weekend festival offers music fans the chance to hear internationally renowned artists and also discover local talent in an intimate and welcoming setting.

September 2020 – Veyras
www.valais.ch

VINEA

The VINEA wine fair draws countless enthusiasts to Sierre during the first weekend in September. The event includes many tastings of different Swiss wines, conferences, workshops and cultural visits.

4–5 September 2020 – Sierre
www.valais.ch

Vineyard hike

The "Walk of the grape varieties" leads along the vineyard trail between Sierre and Salgesch. At numerous stops along way, dozens of winemakers offer tastings of their best wines along with local delicacies.

12 September 2020 – Sierre and Salgesch
www.valais.ch

Semaine du Goût

The "Week of flavour" promises dozens of food and wine events throughout Valais. Meet the people who craft the flavours of Valais with passion, and enjoy a wide range of experiences to delight foodies of all tastes.

17–27 September 2020
 Various locations
www.gout.ch

Swiss Cheese Awards

Bagnes is hosting the 12th edition of the Swiss cheese championships, a competition at which experts show off their dairy delicacies made with milk from cows, sheep and goats. Visitors as well as professionals have the chance to taste the very best Swiss cheeses.

17–20 September 2020 – Bagnes
www.cheese-awards.ch

Bagnes Capitale de la Raclette

Raclette cheese – traditionally served melted with boiled potatoes, cornichons and silverskin onions – is the star of this gastronomic weekend in the region of Le Châble in the municipality of Bagnes. Visitors can enjoy other local specialities, too, in a convivial atmosphere.

19–20 September 2020
www.valais.ch

Foire du Valais

The "Valais Fair" is a key event of the autumn that transforms the town of Martigny for 10 days. Countless exhibitors, special guests and an original programme with a variety of activities and entertainment make for an incomparable atmosphere.

2–11 October 2020 – Martigny
www.valais.ch

Cow fight at the Foire du Valais

The Roman amphitheatre of Octodure welcomes about 200 cows of the Herens breed, who naturally lock horns to establish a hierarchy within the herd. The "Combat of the Queens" promises a day full of excitement!

4 October 2020 – Martigny
www.valais.ch

Marathon of flavours

The "Marathon of Flavours" is a convivial sporting event through the vineyards of Valais that combines gastronomy, pleasure and exercise. Various gourmet stops along the 23-kilometre route offer the chance to taste typical Valais delicacies.

17 October 2020 – Sion and Salgesch
www.valais.ch

Chestnut festival

This highlight of the autumn celebrates the sweet chestnut along with other local delicacies. The festive and gourmet weekend offers an ideal opportunity to taste the classic Valais "brisolée": a dish of roasted chestnuts served with local cured meat and cheeses and seasonal fruit.

17–18 October 2020 – Fully
www.valais.ch

NEW FOR
SUMMER 2020.



Cycling

Ciclissimo bike café Uvrier



A cyclo-café has opened in the heart of the Ciclissimo shop in Uvrier, alongside the existing sales space and workshop. This friendly venue, known as the Ravito, offers an ideal stop for refreshments during a ride – as well as a convivial spot to relax and chat with other cycling enthusiasts while your bike is being serviced.

Signposted ascents



This year, 11 new itineraries will be signposted in Valais colours, mainly in the Martigny region in the context of the UCI 2020 Road World Championships. This is the first stage of a general process of signposting the many cycle routes throughout Valais.

Haute Route Crans-Montana



Over the course of three days, participants in this exceptional cycling race compete against a backdrop of some of Switzerland's highest mountains. With an overall distance of 220 kilometres and a total ascent of 8,300 metres, the route promises spectacular views of the 4,000-metre peaks of Valais all the way until the final climb to the Col de Crans-Montana.

World Championships package



A new 3-night package has been set up specially for the UCI 2020 Road World Championships to allow enthusiasts to make the most of the scenic roads of Valais before and after the event. Starting in Martigny, the tour takes you through a sequence of magnificent landscapes, from the vineyards of the Rhône valley up to iconic alpine passes.

Mountain biking

Energy Bike District

In [Sierre](#), [Crans-Montana](#) and in the [Val d'Anniviers](#), visitors can hire an electric bike equipped with GPS system to explore a special itinerary, with 15 recharging stations available for use.

Crans-Montana bikepark



Crans-Montana's bikepark has a new blue run, located between Chetzeron and L'Arnouva. The 3-kilometre descent, aimed mainly at beginners, completes the bikepark's range of options – which also include one red and one black run, a pumptrack, an agility park and a North Shore zone.

Bietschhorn Bike



The new Bietschhorn Bike trail is a highly varied and fun route that takes you to the heart of the Lötschental valley, along trails that showcase spectacular views of the towering Bietschhorn. Starting in Lauchernalp, the itinerary leads through wild natural landscapes dotted with historical buildings.

New pumptracks in Valais



Several new pumptracks have opened, adding to the choice of venues in Valais. In the regions of [Turtmann](#), [Bettmeralp](#), [Riederalp](#), [Anzère](#) and [Steg](#), as well as outside the [Alaïa Chalet](#) in Lens, mountain bikers and kick-scooter enthusiasts can take advantage of these undulating tracks to perfect their technique throughout the summer.

Families

Record-breaking zip wire Verbier



With a length of 1,400 metres and a height of up to 383 metres off the ground, the new zip wire above the resort of Verbier will be the longest and highest in the Alps. Due to be inaugurated in August 2020, it will start at the summit of the Mont Fort, the highest point of the 4 Vallées ski area.

Underground lake St-Léonard



Following renovation works, the underground lake of St-Léonard reopens on 6 June 2020. The new entrance and reception area feature a souvenir shop, a café, a conference room and an information area with details about the cavern and its geology.

Culture

Culture Trail Zermatt-Zmutt



Walkers can find out what life was like in an alpine farming community about 100 years ago along the new Zermatt-Zmutt Culture Trail.

Virtual art space



The Upper Valais Art Association has set up a virtual art space for the Upper Valais to showcase the works of art in the German-speaking part of the region for the benefit of visitors as well as locals.

Miscellaneous

Yoga festival Aletsch Glacier



The first edition of the Mountain Glow Yoga Festival will take place from 3 to 6 September 2020 above Bettmeralp, beside the Great Aletsch Glacier.

Valais by public transport



Explore the whole of Valais in comfort thanks to the extensive public transport network: serving the entire region, it ensures access to the most beautiful destinations through the seasons while offering spectacular views along the way. The Swiss Federal Railways (CFF) website offers excursion ideas, tips for the best seasonal events and practical info on public transport – along with full timetable details for all the different forms of public transport.

Escape game



This summer, a special Valais escape game will launch on valais.ch. Explore the rooms of an authentic Valais chalet, search for virtual clues, gather objects and solve puzzles to try to open the exit doors in the shortest possible time.

Key events.

April

- 3–4 April [Salon de la bière](#), Martigny
- 28 April to 3 May [Tour de Romandie](#), various locations

May

- May to September [PALP Festival](#), various locations
- May to October [Tavolata](#), various locations
- 9–10 May [National Herens cow fighting finals](#), Sion
- 21–23 May [Open cellars of Valais](#), various locations
- 29 May [Digital Health Connect day](#), Sierre

June

- 6 and 14 June [Tour de Suisse](#), various locations
- 7 June [SlowUp](#), Sion
- 20 and 21 June [Aletsch Half-Marathon](#), Bettmeralp
- 26–28 June [Pass'Portes du Soleil MTB](#), Portes du Soleil

July

- 3 July to 13 September [Festival Musikdorf Ernen](#) (“Ernen, music village”)
- 3–5 July [Haute Route](#), Crans-Montana
- 4 July [Gornergrat Zermatt Marathon](#)
- 4–5 July [5^e Nuit Suisse de la Randonnée](#), various locations
- 4–5 July [Trail Verbier-Saint-Bernard](#)
- 8–11 July [Sion sous les étoiles](#)
- 9–12 July [Jumping Longines](#) (showjumping), Crans-Montana
- 15 July [Ravensburger children's festival](#), Grächen
- 17–19 July [Am Stram Gram](#), Crans-Montana
- 17–19 July [Apricot festival](#), Saxon
- 17 July to 2 August [Verbier Festival](#)
- 19 July [Summer cow fight](#), Zermatt

August

- 1 August [Cycloportive des Vins du Valais](#), various locations
- 1 August [Farm brunch on Swiss National Day](#), various locations
- 2 August [SiSu Family Day](#), Grächen
- 8 August [Tour des stations](#), various locations
- 9 August [Sierre-Zinal race](#) (trail running)
- 13–16 August [Verbier E-Bike Festival](#)
- 15 August [X4Trail](#), Champex-Lac
- 19–23 August [Jumping International de Verbier](#) (showjumping)
- 20–23 August [Open Air Gampel](#)
- 21–22 August [Matterhorn Ultraks](#), Zermatt
- 21–22 August [Grand Raid BCVS](#), various locations
- 22 August [61st Valais yodellers' gathering](#), Mörel-Filet
- 22 August [Tavolata](#), Pfyn/Finges forest

24 au 30 August	Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc®
27-30 August	Omega European Masters, Crans-Montana
28 August	Event Smart Energy day, Sion
28 August	Chasing Cancellara, Zürich - Zermatt
28-30 August	Enduro World Series / Traillove Alpine Mountain Bike Festival, Zermatt
29 August	Trail du Besso, Zinal, Val d'Anniviers
29 August	Nendaz Trail
29-30 August	Hérisson sous Gazon, Charrat
30 August to 6 September	SwissPeaks Trail, various locations

September

September	Au cœur des vendanges, various locations
September	Schafscheid, Bettmeralp
3-5 September	Tohu-Bohu festival, Veyras
4-5 September	Vinea, Sierre
5-6 September	Spartan Race, Verbier
6 September	Shepherd festival, Zermatt
12 September	Marche des cépages, Sierre/Salgesch
17-20 September	Swiss Cheese Awards, Bagnes
17-27 September	Semaine du Goût, various locations
19 September	Fête du Goût, Sion
19-20 September	Bagnes, Capitale de la Raclette
20-27 September	2020 UCI Road World Championships, Martigny

October

2-11 October	Foire du Valais, Martigny
4 October	Cow fight at the Foire du Valais, Martigny
17 October	Marathon of flavours, Sion to Salquenen
17-18 October	Chestnut festival, Fully

Social media.

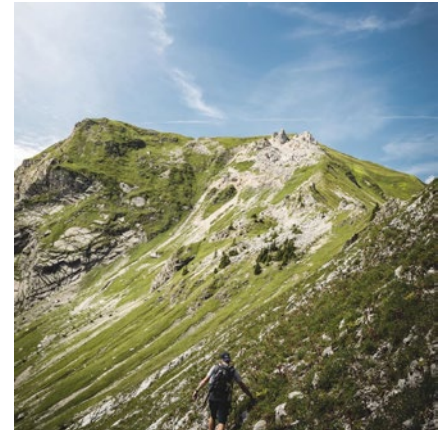
A selection of Valais influencers to follow on Instagram.



@ludo_may



@thomas.luisier



@davidboraley



@guiph



@davidcarlierphotography



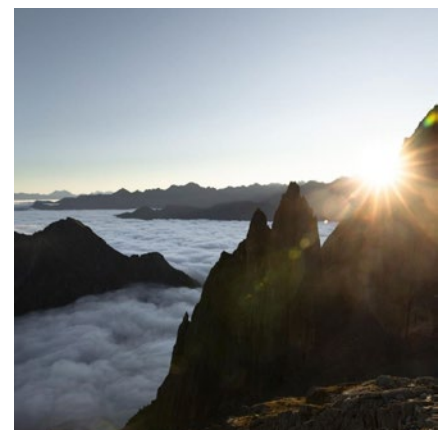
@agathe.sp



@frederic.huber



@didierdecourten



@gullerpat



How to get to Valais.

Travel in comfort

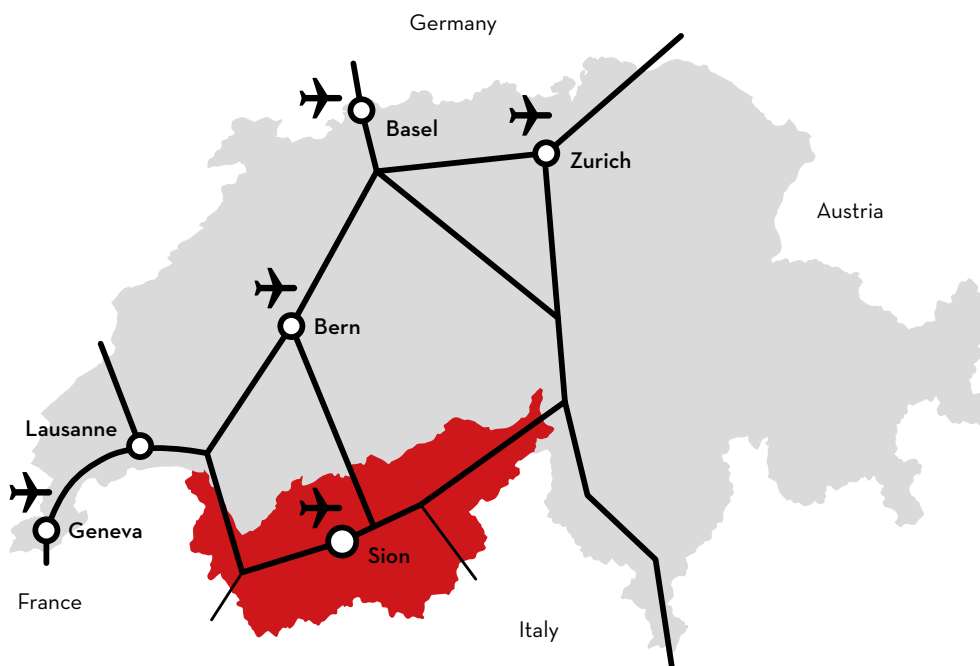


Whether you opt to travel by public transport, car or plane, you will find that Valais benefits from a superb transport network and outstanding connections. We wish you a good journey to Valais!

Getting around



Travel the easy way around Valais: trains, buses and cable cars will take you to the most beautiful destinations via the most spectacular routes. There is no better way of discovering the top spots in Valais!



Picture library.

Intersectoral picture library

Visit our digital photo library, where you will find top-quality pictures relating to tourism, agriculture, industry and culture, which you may use free of charge. The images are accessible to all, but must be used exclusively to illustrate activities linked to the promotion of the image of Valais. To the [intersectoral picture library](#)

Do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to obtain additional pictures.

© 2020 Valais/Wallis Promotion
All right reserved.

VALAIS/WALLIS PROMOTION

Rue Pré-Fleuri 6
Postfach 1496 / CH-1950 Sion

+41 (0)27 327 35 90
info@valais.ch / visitvalais.ch