

THE WALKING GUIDE

TO ZERMATT AND THE MATTERHORN

Welcome to some of the world's most magnificent mountain walks and hikes! Whether you are looking for one memorable afternoon stroll, or series of high mountain adventures, "The Walking Guide" presents to you much of Zermatt's stunning best.

Summer 2002 Edition

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Enjoy browsing and planning your visit to this beautiful mountain walking area. Look at all the walks [at a glance](#), read some [recommendations](#), look at some [visual highlights](#) (photos) of the walks, or jump to the [large map](#) for orientation.

Note - The full screen photos are not included as part of this PDF document. You will require an internet connection to view them.



At a Glance - Walk Facts and Figures

Name of walk	Highest Altitude	Popularity	Difficulty	Hours of walking			Where? Starts at:	Where? Ends at:	Lift	Trail Open	Trail features	Highest Altitude	Name of walk
<i>Villages & forests</i>													
Easy forest walk	1720m	****	*	1/3	1/3	1	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	Year round	Forest, views	5660ft	Easy forest walk
Zum See & Blatten	1770m	****	*	1/2	1/2	1	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	May-October	Villages, restaurants, forests, gorge	5820ft	Zum See & Blatten
Zmutt	1936m	*****	**	1 1/4	1	2 1/4	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	Year round	Village, restaurants, flowers, views	6370ft	Zmutt
Tufteren	2288m	*****	*	flat	flat	1	Sunnegga	Sunnegga	sFr.20	May-October	Village, views, forest	7530ft	Tufteren
Findeln	2070m	****	**	1 1/2	1	2 1/2	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	May-October	Village, restaurants, views	6810ft	Findeln
Edelweiss	1961m	***	***	1	3/4	1 3/4	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	May-October	View, restaurant	6450ft	Edelweiss
<i>Mid-Alpine rambles</i>													
Höhbalm	2743m	**	***	3	2 1/4	5 1/4	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	June-Oct	Stunning views, waterfall, wildlife	9025ft	Höhbalm
Glacier Gate*	2290m	**	***	1/4	2 1/4	2 1/2	Riffelalp	Zermatt	sFr.17	June-Oct	Views, alpine pastures, massive cliffs	7535ft	Glacier Gate
Gornergrat descent	3130m	****	***	3	3		Gornergrat	Zermatt	sFr.34	June-Oct	Super views, lakes, forests	10300ft	Gornergrat descent
<i>High mountains</i>													
Hörnli hut	3260m	***	****	2 1/2	1 1/2	4	Schwarzsee	Schwarzsee	sFr.33	Jul-late Sep	Classic hike to base of the Matterhorn	10725ft	Hörnli hut
Schönbiel hut	2694m	**	***	4	3 1/4	7 1/4	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	Jun-October	Matterhorn views, waterfall, glaciers	8860ft	Schönbiel hut
Rothorn hut	3200m	*	****	4	3	7	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	Jul-late Sep	Views, glaciers, a remote trek	10530ft	Rothorn hut
Mettelhorn*	3406m	**	*****	5 1/2	3 1/2	9	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	Jul-late Sep	Stunning 360° panorama, 'long' trek	11205ft	Mettelhorn
Ober Rothorn	3415m	***	****	1 1/2	1	2 1/2	Unter Rothorn	Unter Rothorn	sFr.50	Jul-late Sep	Stunning 360° panorama, 'short' trek	11235ft	Ober Rothorn
Monte Rosa hut	2815m	**	*****	2 1/2	2	4 1/2	Rotenboden	Rotenboden	sFr.56	Jul-mid Sep	Stunning views, glacier walk	9200ft	Monte Rosa hut
<i>Orientation walks</i>													
Around Zermatt	1620m	*****	*	flat	flat	20min	Zermatt	Zermatt	None	Year round	Town highlights and useful locations	5330ft	Around Zermatt

Difficulty: The more stars given, the more difficult a walk will be. We have rated each walk according to how strenuous the walking is. But another important factor is if the walk requires any particular care or preparation. Read each walk description for specific details. A walk of one or two stars difficulty could be accomplished by anyone who can walk, including young children. A three-star-difficulty walk requires a reasonable level of fitness. i.e. Regular exercise is part of your life. I would not recommend taking a walk of 4 or 5 stars difficulty as your first Zermatt walk, unless you are fit and have previous mountain walking experience. All the High Mountain walks require respect for the mountains and appropriate clothing (see below).

Popularity: The greater the number of stars 'popularity', the more people you can expect to share the trail with. In the high season (July and August), taking a 5 star popularity walk in the middle of the day will see you sharing the walk with dozens of other people. But whatever the season, you can have any walk to yourself by walking early mornings or late evenings (after 6pm). You will see more wildlife then too.

Hours of Walking: This is a bit of a guide for the time required for actually walking, assuming a couple of short breaks each hour. Allow more time for picnics and extended stops in particularly beautiful areas.

Lift Costs: Some of the walks make use of Zermatt's impressive mountain lift system, and prices are given here. Walking purists and those on a very tight budget can therefore easily choose alternatives.

Trails Open: The given dates indicate when each particular trail is normally free of snow and therefore 'open'. The highest walking trails don't open until well into summer, simply because they are snow free for a only a few months of the year. Some of the lower walks have been marked as open 'Year round', not because they are always snow free, but these are all gentle and relatively safe - even when snow is on the ground during the winter months (late November to end of April). On the 'year-round' trails, local authorities make efforts to clear deep snow, put gravel on any ice, and provide ropes for handholds. Even down in the village of Zermatt snow might fall a few days each summer. Although summer snowfalls melt within hours at lower altitudes, a large snowfall might close the highest walks for days (which makes for great [summer skiing!](#)). As autumn comes to the alps, cooler temperatures prevail and the snow line marches back down the mountains towards the village of Zermatt.

As a rule of thumb, winter snows normally melt as follows:

@ 3000m/9900ft altitude 'Snow free' from the start of July to late September

@ 2500m/8200ft altitude 'Snow free' from late May to mid October

@ 2000m/6600ft altitude 'Snow free' from the end of April to November

@ 1600m/5300ft altitude (Zermatt village itself) 'Snow free' from the end of March to November

Call the Tourist Office (+41 (0)27 967 01 81) if you wish to confirm if a particular walk is open. Remember you can also check the local weather forecast at our website [here](#), and watch the [live cameras](#) for local conditions and perhaps to follow the 'snowline'.

What to bring on a walk:

Clothing: At the altitude of Zermatt itself (1600m) temperatures can get to 30 degrees centigrade (80s Fahrenheit) in summer, and even high in the mountains (3000m altitude) it can be pleasantly warm in the sun on a good day. Short trousers can be most comfortable on a fine day, although I recommend packing long trousers on hikes ascending to 3000m. The basic rule is this: the higher one goes, the cooler the air becomes and the more quickly the temperature can change from one extreme to the other. Therefore the higher one goes the more important it becomes to 'be prepared' for any eventuality.



Any walk at altitudes of 2000m or above should include a waterproof and windproof jacket as a precaution. Any walk to 3000m altitude really must include such a jacket. At an altitude of 3000m (10,000 ft) the temperature can drop 20 degrees in five minutes, even in mid-summer. Combine that sudden drop of temperature with freezing rain and strong winds and hypothermia becomes a real danger to anyone unprepared. A good goretex jacket can mean the difference between freezing to death and remaining quite comfortable. A very good range of high-quality mountain clothing and equipment is available for sale in Zermatt itself. Nb. Shop sales and discounts are often available in April/May and October/November. You can also get a year-round [10% discount](#) on all gear at one of Zermatt's best sports shops.

Shoes: Check the difficulty rating of the walk. A walk of 1 or 2 stars difficulty could be accomplished in any decent walking shoes. A three star walk would be a real test for a standard pair of Nikes or Reeboks. Four and five star difficulty hikes require hiking shoes or boots with really excellent grip, some water resistance, and perhaps ankle support.

Food and water: On any longer walk it is important to keep drinking. The mountain air is fresh and clean but very dry. The higher one goes the more one must drink to avoid dehydration. Fresh drinking water is normally available for free at the climbers' huts, and soft drinks (et al) at the mountain restaurants. Otherwise you are advised to take sufficient water supplies to cover your whole walk. Many of the lower walks feature superb mountain restaurants with professional table service. Food quality is good, but never cheap (17 sFr. for a typical plate of pasta). Don't forget there are countless opportunities for memorable picnics in the mountains. Take a daypack and buy your supplies at any of the supermarkets or bakeries in Zermatt.. and don't forget the Swiss chocolate!

Accessories: A small backpack to safely carry a few necessities is a recommended inclusion. Sunglasses and suncream are recommended inclusions for all walks, becoming essential for any of the high mountain walks. A sun hat and/or warm hat could also be useful under certain conditions. Gloves are rarely necessary unless you really feel the cold and plan on going to 3000m. Perhaps gloves could be useful if you plan to stay at a hut and linger outside for a sunset or sunrise. Nights are always cold above Zermatt - expect it to drop to freezing at 3000m - even in mid summer..

Special Walk Recommendations:

Mountain Views: All of the walks have very nice views, but for the most absolutely outrageous, jaw dropping views, I recommend these (weather permitting): to the [Monte Rosa Hut](#), [Ober Rothorn](#), [Hörnli Hut](#), [Höhbalmen](#), [Schönbiel Hut](#), and Mettelhorn.

Matterhorn Views: Most every walk about Zermatt features a nice view to the Matterhorn (except those up the narrow Trift valley (Edelweiss and to the Rothorn Hut). For a particularly memorable experience, try the [Hörnli Hut hike](#) for unmatched close up views and great ambience by the Matterhorn. For outstanding views up the dramatic north face, try the walks to [Höhbalmen](#) or the [Schönbiel hut](#). The [Gornergrat descent](#) and Glacier Gate walks feature nice views to the east and north-east faces, while the walk to [Findeln](#) has a really nice mid-range view to the postcard north-east face.

Wildlife: The following walks can be recommended for wildlife: the "[Easy Forest Walk](#)" (deer at dawn or dusk), [Edelweiss](#) (marmots), [Zum See and Blatten](#) (deer), [Gornergrat descent](#) (Ibex, Steinbok, mountain sheep, marmots, mountain goats, deer), [Höhbalmen](#) (marmots, Ibex, Steinbok, mountain sheep, Stone Eagle), etc. It should be noted that you increase your chances of seeing wild life considerably by walking early mornings or toward dusk. The Bambi-like deer in particular are very shy and will rarely be seen outside of dawn and dusk - when they are quite common.

Wildflowers: These walks feature outstanding wildflower displays: [Zmutt](#), the [Easy Forest Walk](#), [Zum See and Blatten](#), [Edelweiss](#) and Trift, as well as [Findeln](#). The prime time of year to see wildflowers is from mid May to mid June at the altitude of Zermatt itself (1620m). After mid June, try ascending above 2000m to find the prettiest wildflower displays.

Good walks in Bad Weather: The forested trails deep in the valleys offer some protection from rain and winds. Try [Zum See and Blatten](#), which also offer charming & excellent mountain restaurants for breaks. The [Easy Forest Walk](#) is quite short and protected. Both of these do not feature constant mountain views even if the weather is good, so you won't feel that you are missing Zermatt's best views on a bad day. The walks to [Zmutt](#), and [Findeln](#) are a bit longer, but also offer some protection from the worst elements, as well as featuring charming restaurants for shelter and sustenance. Remember you can check the local weather forecast at our website [here](#).

Winter walks: The following walks are also open in winter: [Zmutt](#), the [Easy Forest Walk](#), [Zum See and Blatten](#), as well as [Findeln](#) and [Tufteren](#), and the [walk around town](#) of course. On these 'year-round' trails, local authorities make efforts to clear snow, put gravel on any ice, and provide ropes for handholds. Phone the Tourist Office (+41 (0)27 967 01 81) if you wish to confirm if a particular walk is open. Some of these winter walks will not be opened until a few days after a big snowfall.

Some Visual Highlights of the walks:

Click on the photos to see a larger version of the photo. Click on a text link to take you to the appropriate walk description.



[Walk around Zermatt](#)



[Easy forest walk](#)



[Walk to Zum See & Blatten](#)



[Walk to Zmutt](#)



[Walk to Tuferen](#)



[Walk to Findeln](#)



[Walk to Edelweiss](#)



[Walk to Höhbalmen](#)



[Gornergrat descent](#)



[Walk to the Hörnli hut](#)



[Walk to the Rothorn hut](#)



[Walk to the Ober Rothorn](#)



[Walk to the Monte Rosa hut](#)



[Walk to Schönbiel hut](#)

Don't forget to use the [large map](#) for orientation.

I wish you a truly memorable time in Zermatt. Sharing these walks has been a labour of love for me. If you wish to share some of your unique experiences, or have any constructive feedback about the Walking Guide, I would love to hear from you. Please [Email me](#)

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The Walking Guide

Easy Forest Walk

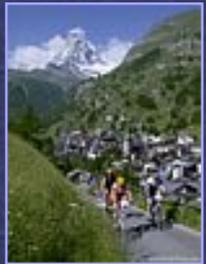
Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

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[Map of the surrounding mountains](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This is a lovely easy promenade just above Zermatt featuring nice views to the Matterhorn. It features a generous flat section through beautiful forest and there exist many park style benches for lingering in the sun.

Time required: About 1 hour total (15-20 mins uphill at start / 15-20 mins flat traverse / 15-20 mins downhill)

Difficulty: * Gentle **Popularity:** **** Popular

Begins at: Zermatt (1620m altitude)

Ends at: Zermatt

(1620m)

Goes via: "AHV Weg" (1720m), Winkelmaten

(1672m)

Track Notes: This is a good sheltered trail in bad weather. On the eastern side of the Zermatt valley, this is a fine walk in the morning of a hot day or the afternoon of a cold, sunny day. Trail open all year.

Variants: It is possible to continue from the high point of this walk (railway track crossing at 1720m) to [Findeln](#) and return - adding ~90 minutes.

The walk begins and ends at the Papperla Pub (1620m altitude) – which is something of a local landmark and one of Zermatt’s best-known après ski pubs. To get to the Papperla Pub from the main street of Zermatt; walk up to the main church, turn left just before the church and head downhill to cross the river to the Papperla Pub at its busy four way intersection.

A signpost at the intersection points you in the direction of “Tiefenmatten” & “Ried”. Coming from the church, continue straight on through the intersection towards the big “Pizza Roma” sign. The road shortly curves left by the “Pizza Roma” and passes the beautiful little restaurant Stockhorn. Follow the main road past two beautiful hotels and under the Gornergrat railway bridge. Ignore the walking path going up to the right and continue up the gentle curves of the main road past the Hotel Schöneegg and just after that a pasture (in winter a piste) on the left.

One may continue on a footpath paralleling (and above) the road to avoid descending mountain bikers. After a few more minutes pass a



small car park (1671m) on the left, where on the other side of the road a sign on the right indicates a footpath to Winkelmaten zigzagging back up in the opposite direction. Take this and one hundred meters on the path switches back again with a sign (direction Tiefenmaten/Winkelmaten) with ropes to assist winter walkers. The rope ends and the path curves back right (south) to begin the beautiful flat traverse that makes this stroll so delightful.

Stroll through the tranquil larch forest before reaching a clearing of charming Swiss pastures – with fine views to the Matterhorn and (right) up the Trift valley to the peaks of the Ober Gabelhorn and Wellenkuppe. Watch for wild deer in this area around dawn or dusk. In summer it is not unusual to see local families cutting and gathering these charming alpine meadows by hand.

Shortly after this pasture is an intersection (1704m). Continue on straight on the flat path to Winkelmaten. After another 10 minutes the path parallels the Gornergrat railway tracks and shortly thereafter joins it for a brief uphill leg to another three-way intersection (1720m). Take the right path across the railway tracks down in the direction of Winkelmaten. Walk downhill a few minutes until the towering bridge of the Gornergrat railway is seen nearby, where it crosses the Findelbach gorge. It is possible to deviate here to investigate more closely the waterfall which often flows here in summer, otherwise continue right and gently downhill in the direction of Winkelmaten. After a few more minutes walking through the pleasant chalet suburbia of Winkelmaten, arrive at the white Winkelmaten chapel (1672m).

From here signposts and a whole host of different paths lead back to the center of Zermatt. To return to the Papperla Pub – take a right at the chapel onto the road north. Pass the corner store “Shopping Winkelmaten” on your left, go straight on 50 meters to the renovated barn “Zer Trächa” and take the footpath to your left just after the barn away from the main tarmac road. Take the winding footpath downhill several minutes through fields and chalets until crossing the tarmac road again onto a steeper cobbled footpath. Follow this further down to a road where you turn left. Walk to the left of the phone booths and by the Hotel Rhodania/North Wall Bar and on quickly to the Papperla Pub once more.

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[The Walking Guide](#)

Zermatt to Zum See and Blatten

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Map of the surrounding mountains](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This is a beautiful and gentle ramble of great variety. It features pastures of wildflowers, pleasant forests, ancient mountain villages, as well as a visit to the interesting Gornergorge. Further more, the walk passes two superb mountain restaurants, encouraging extended breaks. N.b. Being deep in the valley, this walk does not feature the most striking mountain views, at least relative to the other Zermatt walks.

Time required: About 1 hour of walking (30 mins uphill at start / 30 mins downhill), but makes a relaxing morning or afternoon

Difficulty: * Gentle **Popularity:** **** Popular

Begins at: Zermatt (1614m altitude) **Ends at:** Zermatt (1614m)

Goes via: Zum See (1770m), Blatten (1733m)

Track Notes: The forests and narrow valleys of this trail offer some shelter from bad weather. There is a charge for entry to the Gornergorge: Adults: sFr.4 Children: sFr.2 Trail open all year (Gorge section – summer only)

N.b. Zum See is pronounced 'ts-um Zay'. The 'u' in 'tsum' is spoken like the 'oo' in 'cook'.

Variants: This walk can be combined with [walk to Zmutt](#) - the Zmutt section being best completed first..

The walk begins at the “Gemeinde Zollhaus” (Customs office) at the southern end of Zermatt, just by the river and not far from the Matterhorn lifts (“Matterhornbahnen”). To get to the Zollhaus; find the main river flowing north through the center of Zermatt, and take the road upstream and alongside so that the river is on your left. I.e. You want to be on the west bank.

The Zollhaus is about a fifteen-minute walk from the main train station of Zermatt, next to the river and the electric bus depot. Nearby a wooden footbridge crosses to the other side of the river and the Matterhorn lifts, and by the bridge is a big signpost indicating trails in all directions. We continue on the road upstream in the direction of Zum See and Blatten.

Walk further along the road to some park benches and a public telescope with a view of the Matterhorn. Just beyond this, pass to the right side of a quarry/gravel pits onto a broad footpath. A fenced path



ascends gradually through pleasant pasture ([photo left](#)) in the direction of the Matterhorn. After five minutes take a right at an intersection (1645m altitude) in the direction of Zum See. The path ascends to the right through stands of trees and past barns to another intersection (1705m). At this one take a left onto the lower path in the direction of Zum See again. Soon enter a beautiful forest ([photo left](#)) and down to a delightful bridge over the “Zmuttbach” (Zmutt brook). The path then climbs uphill two minutes to another intersection and a cross (1711m). Take a right here past a barn to Zum See, which is very close now. In a final rise to Zum See, the Matterhorn and the Breithorn come into view and after about 10 minutes Zum See (1770m) is reached. Zum See is a truly beautiful old farming hamlet. As you walk through the cluster of barns and farmhouses, you can't help but notice the fine restaurant “Zum See” (also known as Max and Greti's). This particular restaurant is quite often cited as the single best mountain restaurant in the Alps, and we can certainly recommend trying the menu here.

Perhaps fortunately after Max and Greti's, the path is all downhill. Continue through the hamlet of Zum See in the direction of a sign on a barn wall which points to “Furi and Schwarzsee”. After a hundred yards the path reaches another intersection. Take the lower left towards the nearby hamlet of Blatten. Stroll down a gentle slope to Blatten in the direction of Zermatt. Blatten (1733m) itself is another beautiful old gaggle of barns and classic Swiss farmhouses and a delightful little chapel. Blatten features its own very charming restaurant tempting one to enjoy another leisurely break. There is also the Riccola herb garden, which may interest some.

At Blatten one must decide where to head next. It is recommended to visit the Gornergorge, unless you have a strong fear of heights or you feel you cannot negotiate a short series of very steep wooden stairs. Just by the Blatten chapel, a signpost offers the alternatives: directly north back to Zermatt in order to skip the Gornergorge, or south past the restaurant in the direction of the “Gornerschluht” (German for Gornergorge). If you decide to skip the Gornergorge, take the path by the chapel directly out of Blatten north and downhill for a few minutes past the Aroleidwald restaurant. From there down a couple more minutes to a wide bridge (piste in winter) where the trail joins the one exiting the gorge - see the last paragraph below.

From the chapel to the gorge, one passes by the restaurant Blatten and walks downhill under the gondola lift. The roar of water is soon to be heard and after a couple more minutes cross a bridge over the upper gorge ([photo left](#)). After another few meters one comes to an



intersection. Take the lower left in the direction of the “Gornerschluht”. Ramble north through nice forest another five minutes to approach another intersection. Take the path left down to the gorge. Walk down rocky steps to ladders and the beginning of the gorge. A signpost indicates (in German) the prices and the requirement to pay at the other end of the gorge. There will be someone to collect the fee at the far end of the gorge during “office hours”. It takes five to ten minutes to wander through the gorge and care must be taken on the first very steep steps. While far from being the most spectacular gorge in Switzerland, the gorge merits a look if you are walking nearby. There is often a huge torrent of water gushing through its narrow walls. One would not want to fall in accidentally - although there are handrails of course.

From the exit of the gorge, a path descends three minutes back to join with the direct path from Blatten at a broad wooden bridge (piste in winter). Take this wide bridge over a stream downhill and after a few minutes pass a sports field. Following the river north, soon cross over a bridge to join up with the start of our walk by the park benches and just further on, the Zollhaus or Customs House.

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The Walking Guide Zermatt to Zmutt

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

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Photos from this walk:



Description: A well prepared path leads uphill through scattered forests and summer pastures to a beautiful and ancient mountain hamlet. Three pleasant mountain restaurants invite one to break the walk in Zmutt. This walk features almost constant views to the Matterhorn and is justifiably popular - in every season.

Time required: About 2 hours of walking (70 mins uphill at start / 50 mins downhill)

Difficulty: ** Modest **Popularity:** ***** Very Popular

Begins at: Zermatt (1614m altitude) **Ends at:** Zermatt (1614m)

Goes via: Zmutt (1936m)

Track Notes: This broad footpath is in very good condition. Any walking or sports shoes should be suitable. Trail open all year. There are fine fields of wildflowers in the pastures before Zmutt, especially mid-May to the end of June.

Nb. Zmutt is pronounced 'Zm-oot' rhyming with 'foot'.

Variants: This walk can be extended with the walk to [Zum See and Blatten](#), after visiting Zmutt. Alternatively, if you find yourself fascinated by the impressive north face of the Matterhorn, one can continue on towards the [Schönbiel Hut](#) to make a big day of it.

The walk begins at the "Gemeinde Zollhaus" (Customs office) at the southern end of Zermatt, just by the river and not far from the Matterhorn lifts ("Matterhornbahnen"). To get to the Zollhaus; find the river flowing north through the center of Zermatt, and take the road upstream and alongside so that the river is on your left. I.e. You want to be on the west bank.

The Zollhaus is about a fifteen-minute walk from the main train station of Zermatt, next to the river and the electric bus depot. A wooden footbridge crosses to the other side of the river and the Matterhorn lifts, and by the bridge is a big signpost indicating trails in all directions. We continue on the road upstream in the direction of Zmutt.

Walk further along the road to some park benches and a public telescope with a view of the Matterhorn. Just beyond this, pass to the right side of a quarry/gravel pits onto a broad footpath. A fenced path



ascends gradually through pleasant pasture (photo left) in the direction of the Matterhorn. After five minutes take a right at an intersection (1645m) in the direction of Zmutt. The path ascends to the right through stands of trees and past barns to another intersection (1705m). At this one take the upper right on in the direction of Zmutt again.

Fine views can be had behind to the Mischabel group of peaks ([photo left](#)) - the Täschhorn, and Dom. Shortly the Breithorn can be seen over the village of Zum See to the left. The Matterhorn begins to fade from view as one climbs the path higher. A zigzag or switchback goes by a stand of trees before the trail swings west again and flattens out a bit. Pass a couple of pleasant chalets before reaching another intersection (1910m). At this stage the village of Zmutt is in sight ahead. Go straight on past the restaurant Edelweiss (not to be confused with the more famous restaurant [Edelweiss](#) on cliffs above Zermatt) and in five minutes the hamlet of Zmutt (1936m) is reached amongst very fine pastures and wildflowers. In the village can be found a charming little chapel, and two nice restaurants: the Jägerstuße and Zmutt. The hamlet of Zmutt features many fine old barns and wooden houses. Some old residents of Zmutt apparently never even visit Zermatt. They feel it is too much like the "big city"!

Tip: From Zmutt itself only the tip of the Matterhorn is visible. If you want an unobstructed view of the impressive north face, it is possible to get a good view with an extra 15 minutes of walking. To do so turn right by the Jägerstuße and continue uphill on the path north out of Zmutt. Shortly the path swings left (west) and a large dam can be seen straight ahead. Walk along the path on a gentle uphill gradient until the north wall view of the Matterhorn is unobstructed - which is about when you are above the far end of the dam ([photo left](#)).

Return to Zermatt at leisure the same way.

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[The Walking Guide](#) Sunnegga to Tufteren

Related pages:

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[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This is an easy stroll through beautiful forest to a romantic mountain village with restaurant. This mid-alpine walk features fine views to the Matterhorn (4478m), Breithorn (4164m), Wellenkuppe (3903m), Ober Gabelhorn (4063m) and Weisshorn (4506m). This walk makes use of the Sunnegga mountain lift.

Time required: About 1 hour return (almost all a flat traverse)

Difficulty: * Gentle **Popularity:** ***** Very Popular

Begins at: Sunnegga (2288m altitude) **Ends at:** Sunnegga (2288m)

Goes via: Tufteren (2215m)

Track Notes: This broad trail is also a four wheel drive track and is shared by mountain bikers in summer.

Sunnegga Underground train costs - one way trip: Adults: sFr.20
Children 6-16: 50% off. Discounts for holders of SwissRail Pass (25% off) and Half Fare cards (50% off).

The walk begins and ends in the mountains at the Sunnegga lift station and restaurant (2288m altitude). To get up to Sunnegga from Zermatt you can walk (100 mins), but for this gentle walk we recommend taking the Sunnegga underground express lift (4 mins). You can easily find the lower lift station in Zermatt by looking for one of a multitude of signs pointing towards the "Sunneggabahn" (Sunnegga railway). Alternatively follow these directions for the five minute stroll from the main train station: Across the street from the main train station is the valley terminus of the "Gornergratbahn" (Gornergrat mountain railway). Follow the street which runs next to the glassed in queuing areas for the Gornergratbahn, and continue on this road as it follows the "GGB" tracks for 250 metres to a busy intersection by the river. Cross the river, going under the railway bridge and then take the first left alongside the river downstream 100 metres to the Sunnegga lift station.

Buy your tickets to Sunnegga and walk the long (and quite cold!) tunnel to the underground train. Trains leave normally every 20 minutes. After whistling up the mountain, exit the Sunnegga lift station and enjoy the panorama. Then walk below the restaurant's sun terrace in the direction of the Matterhorn. A four wheel drive track leads right (north) towards the forests. Signposts near the restaurant



also indicate Tufteren. An almost flat track winds gently north through beautiful forests of larch and Swiss stone pine to the mountain village of Tufteren.



Fine views along the whole traverse include south to the Breithorn (4164m), the Matterhorn (4478m) and west over Edelweiss and the Trift valley to the Wellenkuppe (3903m), Ober Gabelhorn (4063m) and to the north west - the Weisshorn (4506m).

After about half an hour the charming little village of Tufteren is reached, where there is a restaurant with refreshments. Incidentally watch for Marmot's in the evenings or early mornings on the grassy slopes (piste in winter) just beyond Tufteren.



Return to Sunnegga the same way.

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The Walking Guide Zermatt to Findeln

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This walk passes through beautiful forest to a romantic mountain village set amid green summer pastures. Findeln is also home to many excellent restaurants. This walk features classic views to the Matterhorn. This trail is open all year and receives a lot of sun.

Time required: About two and a half hours (1½ hours uphill at start / 1 hour downhill)

Difficulty: ** Modest **Popularity:** **** Popular

Begins at: Winkelmaten (1672m) or Zermatt (1620m)

Ends at: Winkelmaten or Zermatt **Goes via:** Findeln (2051 to 2177m)

Track Notes: This broad footpath is in very good condition. Any walking or sports shoes should be suitable. There are also many park style benches along the way, strategically placed for relaxing in the sun.

Variants: Continue from Findeln up to Sunnegga and take the underground train down to save time or energy.

The walk begins and ends in the satellite village/suburb of Zermatt called Winkelmaten (1672m altitude). To get up to Winkelmaten from Zermatt takes about 10 minutes of walking. Follow these directions for the stroll from the main church square (1620m) in Zermatt: Walk over to the Marmot statue/fountain in the corner of the square by the church. Turn your body so the Marmots are just to your left and you should be facing (east) down a gently sloping busy street by the church.

Head downhill past a little park, cross the bubbling Triftbach, pass the graveyard, and cross the river on to a busy four way intersection with the Papperla Pub on one corner. A signpost at the intersection points you in the direction of "Winkelmaten". So coming from the church you need to take a right (south) at this intersection. Walk up this road, after 150 yards passing the Hotel Rhodania/North Wall Bar. Continue on straight for a 120 more yards to a three way intersection, where the road becomes two footpaths. Take the left path up a steep cobbled path past the Youth Hostel until you reach a road curving moderately upwards towards Winkelmaten. Take this 'main road' as it curves up 600 yards on to the center of Winkelmaten and the little



white Winkelmatten chapel (1672m).

Turn left to walk on (east) behind the chapel. Follow the paved path as it heads 200 yards towards the imposing Gornergrat railway bridge over the Findelbach gorge. A signpost before the bridge indicates (Findeln) path leading to the left up a good gravel track. The path continues uphill for a few minutes before crossing the tracks of the Gornergrat railway to a three way intersection (1720m). Take the right path uphill (east) in the direction of Findeln.

A good broad path ascends steadily through the larch forest in a series of zigzags, before reaching a corner and lookout (1780m) over the Gornergrat railway bridge and often (in summer) a waterfall with a view towards the Matterhorn ([photo](#)). There are no fences or guardrails at this improvised lookout, so be careful - there is a very big cliff with bushes concealing its edge.

A further series of zigzags ascend the steep forested slope, before ending finally at a couple of old barns and a three way intersection (1887m). Take the right path in the direction of Findeln. The path then traverses across steep pastures and scattered forest far above the "Findelbach" (Findeln brook). Look back over your shoulder for superb views of the Matterhorn from one of its most beautiful angles. After another ten minutes (800 yards) another intersection is reached. Take the lower right straight on in the direction of Findeln. The unique shape of the Rimpfischhorn (4200m) can be seen far ahead and after another five minutes one reaches the lower and main village of Findeln (2051m).

Findeln itself is a loose collection of charming old farmhouses, chalets and restaurants sprawled over a large area of summer pastures (pistes in winter). This particular part of Findeln you first reach is also known as "Ze Gassen" to locals.

As you enter this cosy cluster of sunburned wooden buildings, you immediately pass the restaurant Findlerhof, and a minute further on is the Findeln chapel. Behind the chapel is the restaurant Enzian. It would be worthwhile to stop at any of these charming restaurants in the Findeln area.

If you wish to explore further uphill some more of Findeln, then continue on the path past the chapel, to reach in four or five minutes another very fine restaurant: "Chez Vrony" (2075m). Beyond that the path can be followed up a to another charming line of barns known as "Eggen" (2177m). There can be found the restaurant Paradise, and if

you have made it this far, you might be tempted to also go the little extra distance to the mountain lake "Leisee" (2230m). From the Paradise continue along the path before a left turn uphill (north), which finds its way to the lake five or ten minutes beyond the Paradise. The lake is popular with families for swimming, and being quite shallow, it is surprisingly warm in summer.

Wherever you made it to in Findeln, return to Winkelmaten and Zermatt the same way (~45mins down to Winkelmaten). Alternatively if you have made it up to the lake "Leisee" and wish a quick descent, one can climb a bit higher up to Sunnegga (2288m - ten minutes walk above the lake) and take the underground express down to Zermatt in quick time.

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[The Walking Guide](#) **Zermatt to Edelweiss**

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This satisfying hike takes one up to the superbly positioned and historic restaurant Edelweiss. Edelweiss perches dramatically on cliffs a thousand feet above Zermatt and can be seen from much of town. Apart from the interesting restaurant, this walk passes through nice pastures, forests, and by a pleasant waterfall. There are also views east to some of Zermatt's big mountains (but no view to the Matterhorn). Marmots can also be seen around the pastures, particularly in the evenings.

Time required: About 1¾ hours (1hour uphill at start / 45 mins downhill)

Difficulty: *** Short, but steeply uphill

Popularity: ***

Begins at: Zermatt (1620m altitude)

Ends at:

Zermatt

Goes via: Edelweiss (1961m)

Track Notes: This is a consistently steep path with quite a few steps. Nb. "Edelweiss" is shown as "Alterhaupt" on most local maps.

Variants: Many superb hikes continue up beyond Edelweiss, including to Trift, the [Mettelhorn](#), the [Rothorn hut](#), and [Höhbalmen](#).

The walk begins and ends in center of Zermatt's main street (1620m altitude), just by the very well known Hotel Post complex and Grampi's Pub. You can find them in the main street, just 130 yards back down from the church towards the main railway station out of Zermatt. Opposite the Hotel Post is Grampi's Pub. A small cobbled laneway borders Grampi's Pub and leads off the main street uphill to the west. An inconspicuous signpost on the (laneway) wall of Grampi's also points uphill in the direction of Edelweiss, Trift, etc.

Begin up the cobbled path behind Grampi's for 60 yards to a three way intersection. Continue straight on uphill past barns and smart wood and glass chalets as the path loops around past the glamorous new "Into the Hotel". Shortly beyond that the path reaches welcome pastures with a fine view to the right of the Mischabel group of peaks (Täschhorn, Dom). A few minutes of walking up through the fields brings one to a four way intersection (1720m). Take the highest path (right) to Edelweiss. The path ascends very steeply with the rushing waters of the Triftbach (Trift brook) below to your left. As one climbs higher there are clear views up to Edelweiss perched on its cliff top eyrie.

After another few minutes another intersection (1780m) is reached below some cliffs. Take the left path to Edelweiss and shortly the path crosses the Triftbach below a gushing waterfall. The trail threads through forest and continues steeply upwards via zigzags between a series of cliffs. Just below the largest cliff on which the restaurant Edelweiss perches is a good area for rock climbing. Beyond that one quickly reaches the restaurant (1961m). Edelweiss offers snacks, drinks, meals, and also accommodation for those wanting a night in the mountains. There are terrific views from the restaurant terrace over Zermatt and (left to right) on to the Täschhorn, Dom, Unter Rothorn, Gornergrat and Breithorn. Nice sunsets over the mountains are also a feature from Edelweiss. There is also a beautiful little pasture behind the restaurant.

Return quickly to Zermatt the same way. It is possible to jog down in 15 minutes if your knees are up to it.

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The Walking Guide

Zermatt to Höhbalmen

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This stunning hike has it all: unbeatable views to the Matterhorn north wall, excellent views to most of Zermatt's other big mountains. There are wildflowers, wildlife, and a real wilderness feel to most of the trail. There are even some nice mountain restaurants towards the beginning and end of the walk. Without a doubt this is one of the finest hikes in the Alps and indeed, the whole mountain world.

Time required: About five hours (3 hours uphill at start / 2¼ hour downhill)

Difficulty: *** Long and steady uphill

Popularity: ** Quiet

Begins at: Zermatt (1620m altitude)

Ends at:

Zermatt **Goes via:** Edelweiss (1961m - 1 hour walk from Zermatt), Trift (2337m - 2 hours), Höhbalmen (2665m - 3 hours), Zmutt (1936m - 4¾ hours)

Track Notes: Good shoes are required for some loose rocky sections. A picnic among the heights of Höhbalmen can be recommended in fine weather. Beware of the shaggy mountain sheep on the higher reaches of this walk. Some of the rams can be surprisingly aggressive.

Variants: It is possible to extend this walk to the [Schönbiel Hut](#) from the intersection just by the big waterfall.

The walk begins and ends in the center of Zermatt's main street (1620m altitude), just by the very well known Hotel Post complex and Grampi's Pub. You can find them in the main street, just 130 yards back down from the church towards the main railway station out of Zermatt. Opposite the Hotel Post is Grampi's Pub. A small cobbled laneway borders Grampi's Pub and leads off the main street uphill to the west. An inconspicuous signpost on the (laneway) wall of Grampi's also points uphill in the direction of Edelweiss,/Trift, etc.

Begin up the cobbled path behind Grampi's for 60 yards to a three way intersection. Continue straight on uphill past barns and smart wood and glass chalets as the path loops around past the smart new "Into the Hotel". Shortly beyond that the path reaches welcome pastures with a fine view to the right of the Mischabel group of peaks (Täschhorn, Dom). A few minutes of walking up through the fields



brings one to a four way intersection (1720m). Take the highest path (right) to Edelweiss. The path ascends very steeply with the rushing waters of the Triftbach (Trift brook) below to your left. As one climbs higher there are clear views up to Edelweiss restaurant perched on its cliff top eyrie. Nb. Edelweiss is shown as 'Alterhaupt' on some local maps.

After another few minutes another intersection (1780m) is reached below some cliffs. Take the left path to Edelweiss and shortly the path crosses the Triftbach below a gushing waterfall. The trail threads through forest and continues steeply upwards via zigzags between a series of cliffs. Just below the largest cliff on which the restaurant Edelweiss perches is a good area for rock climbing. Beyond that one quickly reaches the restaurant (1961m). Edelweiss offers snacks, drinks, and meals. There are terrific views from the restaurant terrace over Zermatt and (left to right) on to the Täschhorn, Dom, Unter Rothorn, Gornergrat and Breithorn.

The second section of this walk is that to Trift (2337m), which is a further hour beyond Edelweiss. This section of the trail follows the rushing waters of the Triftbach up the the narrow and rocky Trift valley. Behind the restaurant Edelweiss a signpost at the three way intersection points uphill (west) in the direction of Trift. Begin by walking through a beautiful little pasture before the trail enters a magical mountain forest. Thankfully the trail is actually flat for a while here to give the legs a bit of a break from the relentless uphill nature of this walk.

After while the path does a zigzag through a cliff above the Triftbach, before crossing a bridge by a waterfall and a small Hydro electricity outflow . On the north bank of the Triftbach now, the path continues its steady ascent west. Soon the view begins to open up - first to see the crown of the Wellenkuppe, then to its left the Ober Gabelhorn, and finally to their fine glaciers at the head of the Trift valley.

Trift itself (2337m) is a delightfully intimate pastureland of wildflowers, marmots and mountain streams. It is protected from winds and makes a fine place to stop for a break. The Trift hotel and restaurant offer walkers a place to relax, but equally fine is a picnic by one of the crystal clear mountain streams. Trift is already very tranquil, but beyond Trift, this walk engenders a wonderful feeling of remoteness. Until the Chalbermatten restaurant in another three hours, you'll be beyond human habitation.

From Trift the trail ascends the steep grassy hillside to the south. A

signpost behind the Trift hotel indicates 'Höbhalmen'. Cross the lovely Triftbach by one of several bridges and walk south to the hillside. The path rises rapidly above Trift via a series of zig zags, before traversing gradually uphill (south east). As one climbs higher the views begin to take one's breath away. Firstly back west towards the Gabelhorns and Wellenkuppe, then east to the Dom, Täschhorn, Alphubel, Rimpfischhorn, Strahlhorn..

Rounding a corner one reaches the large terraces and plateaus of the Höbhalmen. Views west to the Gabelhorn fade rapidly, but are replaced by an unobstructed panorama east to all of Zermatt's great mountains and perhaps most impressively - to the north wall of the Matterhorn. The views from here are simply magnificent. Be alert for wildlife for the next 90 minutes of this walk. This is one of the best areas around Zermatt for seeing Ibex, Steinbok, mountain sheep, and Stone Eagles. But beware amongst any mountain sheep in this area. Some of the rams can be surprisingly aggressive.

The trail then rambles across a pleasant mix of rocky scree and high alpine pasture directly south towards the awesome North Wall of the Matterhorn, until a branch in the path is reached by a park style bench. The left path descends directly to Zermatt, but take the right path straight on to a corner with an unbeatable view to the Matterhorn (good spot for a picnic).

Beyond that the trail continues for 40 minutes in an easy and interesting traverse in a westerly direction far above the Zmutt valley, all the while with impressive views across to the north wall of the Matterhorn. The path skirts below the faces of the Gabelhorns to your right and crosses pasture, tiny streams and fields of rubble and scree before descending south in a few easy zigzags towards the valley floor.



At the bottom of the zigzags the trail reaches a flat section by a stream and another intersection (2327m). Take the path left (east) back in the direction of Zmutt and Zermatt. Variant: continue right (west) upstream to the beautiful [Schönbiel Hut](#) at the end of the Zmutt valley.



Heading back to Zermatt, the path descends immediately beside a plunging waterfall of great beauty - one of the most attractive in the whole area (photo left). The path is relatively indistinct by the waterfall, but turns left (east) at the valley floor (2240m). From now on, the path follows the broad Zmutt valley the whole way back to Zermatt in a leisurely downhill stroll. From the base of the waterfall the trail makes its way through light larch forest on a pleasant easy trail (1 mile/1½ km) east to Chalbermatten - marked by its single restaurant (2105m).

Another kilometre along the path passes above a dam and beyond that reaches a four way intersection (1972m). Continue straight on through down in the direction of Zmutt, which is reached in another 10 minutes. Zmutt is a beautiful and ancient mountain hamlet (1936m) set amid very fine pastures and wildflowers. In the village can be found a charming little chapel, and two nice restaurants: the Jägerstuße and Zmutt. The hamlet of Zmutt features many fine old barns and wooden houses. Some old residents of Zmutt apparently never even visit Zermatt. They feel it is too much like the "big city"!

From Zmutt to Zermatt is a straight forward downhill ramble of 50 minutes or less.

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[The Walking Guide](#)

Gornergrat descent to Zermatt

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This beautiful walk features fine views to the Matterhorn and all of Zermatt's other great peaks. A long, but moderate descent takes one through a vast diversity of alpine environments; from rocky tundra, to alpine lakes and pastures, through peaceful forests, even by some fine mountain restaurants. Wildlife of all descriptions can be abundant on this walk, especially in the early mornings and evenings.

Time required: About three hours walking (All downhill), plus about 45 minutes on the Gornergrat train.

Difficulty: *** A long moderate descent

Popularity: ****

Popular

Begins at: Gornergrat (3100m altitude)

Ends at: Zermatt

(1620m) Goes via: Rotenboden (2815m), Riffelalp (2222m), Winkelmaten (1670m)

Track Notes: The top section of this descent - from Gornergrat to Rotenboden - can be crowded with casual walkers in July and August (**** popularity). After Rotenboden however the trails become progressively quieter. To have this walk all to yourself - even in July/August, try walking early morning or in the evening after 5 or 6pm. As an added bonus, there is almost the certainty of seeing lots of wildlife at these times.

Be prepared for potentially cold and breezy conditions on the upper part of this walk. Equally suncream may be a necessity. Be prepared for every eventuality.

Gornergrat train costs - one way trip: Adults: sFr.34 Children 6-16: 50% off. Discounts for holders of SwissRail Pass (25% off) and Half Fare cards (50% off).

Variants: Using the Gornergrat train it is possible to break your journey at any of the intermediate stations should you wish (Riffelalp, Riffelberg, Rotenboden). Although there is no great necessity to do so as you will walk nearby all of them in the descent.

The walk begins in the mountains at Gornergrat (3100m altitude). To get up to Gornergrat from Zermatt you can walk of course (5 hours uphill), but for this walk we recommend taking the train in order to save time and energy.



The Gornergrat railway ('Gornergratbahn') is located directly opposite the main train station in Zermatt. Buy your tickets to Gornergrat and wait for a train. Trains normally depart every 24 minutes, and take about 45 minutes to ascend to Gornergrat. The view from Gornergrat station (3090m) is simply magnificent - certainly one of the finest mountain panoramas anywhere in the world. Eyes can feast upon uninterrupted views extending for 180 glorious degrees from Monte Rosa to the Matterhorn (photo below).



The magnificent panorama from near Gornergrat.
Available in [Half Size](#) - 86kb or [Full size](#) - 262kb

For fine views in all directions, walk uphill for five minutes past the big hotel and restaurant, to the gentle rounded summit of Gornergrat (at 3130m). Benches, telescopes and maps naming the various mountains are all on hand.

When ready, walk back down to the railway station. Behind the station a signpost points downhill to Rotenboden, Riffelalp, and Zermatt. Follow the trail downhill, next to the railway track, in the direction of the Matterhorn. The first section of this walk - from Gornergrat to Rotenboden and the Riffelsee lakes - is very popular. Consequently there are paths descending everywhere. Simply take any path down, keeping the railway line in sight to your right. After a few minutes reach a three way intersection, and take the left to Rotenboden. This wide trail stays to the left of the railway line, and in another minute goes over a gentle rise. The view opens up below to the little peak of the Riffelhorn and the lakes of 'Riffelsee'. We are aiming for the lakes, so proceed with any of the well used paths downhill. The trail zigzags down a short rocky section.

Approaching the lakes, the tiny railway station of Rotenboden is passed above to your right. Continue on any path to the lakes (2757m). Fine photos of the Matterhorn can be had in the lakes' reflection, but only if there is no breeze to ruffle its surface. Early mornings are best for this.

Continue on to the second lower lake by any path, walking under the rocky wall of the Riffelhorn. Just past the second lake there is an



unmarked intersection. Take the left path descending. The trail goes down gradually a few more minutes before another three way intersection. Again take the lower path to the left in the direction of the Matterhorn.

Keep your eyes peeled for Steinbok, Ibex, marmots and other wildlife from now on. The path descends through a pleasant mix of rolling pasture and rocky outcrops for about ten minutes to another three way intersection ("Gagenhaupt" - 2565m). Take the left path and after a bare 100 yards/metres come to another three way intersection. Take the lower left in the direction of the 'Gornergletscher' and Riffelalp. Walk around a big rocky outcrop.

The path then becomes a delightful single track as it traverses a very steep high alpine pasture. Far below to one's left are the rushing waters of the 'Gornera' river, which has come from under the Gorner glacier. Always towering overhead is the Matterhorn, and there are fine views ahead to the Dent Blanche, Gabelhorn massif, Zinal Rothorn, and soon after to the beautiful white pyramid of the Weisshorn.

After another kilometre the path reaches an 'X' intersection. Take the left front route in the direction of Riffelalp, Ritti and Zermatt. After a few more paces Zermatt itself can be clearly seen below, as well as the lift station of Furi further up the valley. The path curves around to the right and fine views can be had north over Riffelalp to the Täschhorn and Dom.

Soon the path drops steeply towards Riffelalp in a series of zigzags and steps, before levelling out at the treeline. Cross a small stream or two and then the path parallels another just below. The two trails meet by a large wooden sign advertising the 'Chämi-Hitta' restaurant. Indeed that is where we are aiming, so take a steep narrow trail as it descends to a four wheel drive track (piste in winter). Follow this wide clearing the last few hundred yards down to the Chämi-Hitta. The Chämi-Hitta (2114m) is a truly charming little restaurant with superbly intimate view across to the Matterhorn.

The path goes left by the Chämi-Hitta with a signpost by a cross. Descend on a broad footpath another ten minutes through delightful forest, until reaching another broad grassy slope (winter piste). A sign points in the direction down the slope to Ritti. The piste turns left very soon, passing another sign, before another sign points the way into the forest onto a footpath again in the direction of Ritti's. The broad path continues its downhill journey through zigzags and forest



to a clearing and the charming restaurant Ritti (1900m).

Continue to the right of the restaurant onto another series of steep zigzags descending through the forest, until one reaches the tarmac of the Furi-Zermatt road (1800m). A sign points to the continuation of the footpath just across the road in the direction of 'Moos'.

More zigzags descend downhill through the forest until another clearing cutting through the forest (piste in winter). Take a right turn (north) onto the 'piste' in the direction of 'Moos'. Continue straight on the piste/four wheel drive track, passing barns and pastures until shortly reaching the tarmac road again. A signpost points downhill in the direction of Winkelmaten. Follow the road as it winds gently down past the restaurant Moos, past more barns and pasture to Winkelmaten - which is an outskirt of Zermatt. Cross the big road bridge to the north. From the nearby restaurant Waldhaus one can go right through Winkelmaten to Zermatt or continue straight past the restaurant and onto Zermatt via the 'Matterhorn' lift station ('Matterhornbahnen'). A multitude of paths lead back to the center of Zermatt from Winkelmaten, none much longer or prettier than any other.

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The Walking Guide

Schwarzsee to the Hörnli Hut

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This is the classic high mountain trail to the climbers' hut at the very base of the Matterhorn. This hike features unrivalled close-up views to the majestic north-east face. There are also excellent views to Zermatt's other big mountains, and the impressive glaciers at the Matterhorn's base. This is a 'must-do' hike for Matterhorn lovers.

Time required: About four hours (2½ hours uphill at start / 1½ hour downhill)

Difficulty: **** A rocky mountain ascent

Popularity: ***

Begins at: Schwarzsee (2575m altitude)

Ends at:

Schwarzsee

Goes via: Hirli (2775m - 50 mins walk from Schwarzsee), Hörnli (or Matterhorn) hut (3260m - 2½ hours)

Track Notes: Good shoes with excellent grip are required for this rocky walk. There is the possibility of encountering patches of snow and ice towards the hut. Be prepared for potentially cold and windy conditions, as most of the trail is completely exposed on the Hörnli ridge. Equally sunscreen is normally a necessity.

Schwarzsee lift costs - return trip: Adults: sFr.33 Children 6-16: 50% off. Discounts for holders of SwissRail Pass (25% off) and Half Fare cards (50% off).

Variants: Stay at the Hörnli Hut for a memorable night with the Matterhorn climbers (170 dormitory beds - sFr.33. Plenty of blankets provided. Also a few double rooms. Reservations recommended. Meals available. Phone 027 - 967 2264).

The walk begins and ends in the mountains at the Schwarzsee lift station and hotel/restaurant (2575m altitude). To get up to Schwarzsee from Zermatt you can walk (3 hours uphill), but for this hike we recommend taking the lifts. You can find the lower lift station in Zermatt at the southern (Matterhorn) end of town. Look for one of a multitude of signs pointing towards the gondolas of the "Matterhorn Bahnen" (Matterhorn lifts). Alternatively just follow Zermatt's main river upstream until the gondola lifts come into view. The gondolas are on the east side of the river, but there is a foot bridge just before the lifts and various signs point the way.



Buy your ticket and board the gondola lift for the first stage up to Furi. Pleasant views out the Gondola are a feature over pastures and the mountain hamlets of [Blatten and Zum See](#). After a few minutes arrive at the massive (and none too pretty) lift station of Furi (1850m). Here one leaves the gondola and boards the cable car directly to Schwarzsee (2575m).

Exit the Schwarzsee cable car station and enjoy the beautiful panorama and superb view to the Matterhorn. Follow the obvious path down to the pretty "Black Lake" (Schwarzsee) with its ancient chapel. Continue from there directly up the steep grassy hill south west in the direction of the Matterhorn. A multitude of choices offer different zigzagging routes up the grassy knoll behind the lake, and then on over rocky slopes to the top of a winter ski lift known as Hirli (2775m). By now vegetation is scarce and you are entering the rocky scree of the high mountains. The Matterhorn looms ever closer and the trail leaves no doubt as to its final destination.

The trail ascends up and across to the left of the massive rocky outcrop - a true flank of the Matterhorn - known as Hirli. Shortly a metal staircase and gangway skirt the sheer east face of Hirli, before a zigzag takes one to its crest (2870m). Follow this pleasant easy track across slopes of rubble directly towards the Matterhorn. After about 15 minutes the trail reaches the final steep ascent to the hut.

This is the hardest and most dangerous section of the track and requires a reasonable head for heights. The path ascends the very steep base of the Matterhorn by a series of zigzags, taking another 40 minutes to the hut (3260m). These steep slopes face north and receive little sun. Beware of ice and snow on the path at any time of year, although there are various fixed ropes for handholds should the path be slippery. Beware also of dislodging rocks onto any path below.

One of the most exciting sections of the walk is a very short two yard/metre wide section of path with a sheer drop of a thousand feet (300 metres) on both sides (and no rope handholds). Needless to say some people with a fear of heights have difficulties here. It is certainly not a section I would want to cross in high winds! Not long after this the hut comes into view above and the final walk up the slopes of rubble passes quickly.

From the Hörnli hut are brilliant views in all directions to all of Zermatt's great mountains. The Matterhorn itself towers over the hut, and interestingly, this climber's hut is the only one which has a clear



view of the mountain on whose flanks it rests. Drinks and meals are available at the hut, but they are not cheap (sFr.7 for a 500ml Coke). Everything has to be brought in by helicopter.

It is worth walking up another easy 5 minutes beyond the hut to the very beginning of the climb proper. A series of fixed vertical ropes and various plaques mark the start of this most famous of climbs.



Available in [Half Size](#) - 101kb or [Full size](#) - 305kb

Although quite a few hikers make it up to the hut, not many stay the night with the climbers. It can be quite an experience to stay at the hut and chat with the brave mountain men. Bring warm clothes for the very cold evenings. Sun rises are very spectacular from the Hörnli hut. Due to the very high altitude, many people do not experience a perfect night's sleep. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids. It is very easy to get dehydrated at this altitude, even if the weather is cool.

The descent from the hut is quite fast. It is easy to return to Schwarzsee in just over an hour, and even walk back to Zermatt in two and a half hours if one hurries.

Still fascinated by the Matterhorn? Join the climbers on our special [photo tour](#) which continues from the Hörnli hut up to the very summit of the Matterhorn.



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[The Walking Guide](#)

Zermatt to the Schönbiel hut

Related pages:

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[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Map of the surrounding mountains](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This magnificent walk offers constant views to the Matterhorn's most dramatic angles - particularly to the fearsome North Wall. A delightful trail follows the remote Zmutt valley to the Schönbiel hut and climaxes with a magnificent view to the Matterhorn's little seen north west face, and across wild glaciers to the beautiful Dent D'Hérens (4171m). This walk is also notable for additional reasons: firstly it follows a very long but gentle uphill gradient - which is something of a rarity around Zermatt. Secondly it enables one to penetrate deeply into a remote mountain region, far from ski lifts and habitation. If you have visited Zermatt in winter, this walk is particularly interesting because it offers uniquely beautiful perspectives inaccessible to downhill skiers.

Time required: About 7¼ hours of walking (4 hours uphill at start / 3¼ hours downhill)

Difficulty: *** Long but mostly gentle **Popularity:** ** Quiet after Zmutt

Begins at: Zermatt (1614m altitude)

Ends at: Zermatt

(1614m) **Goes via:** Zmutt (1936m - 1¼ hours from Zermatt), Schönbiel hut (2694m - 4 hours)

Track Notes: This is a good earth footpath with few rocks and a fairly gentle uphill gradient for the most part. There are fine fields of wildflowers in the pastures before and around Zmutt, especially mid-May to the end of June. This long trail receives a lot of direct sun; remember the sunscreen.

Nb. Schönbiel is pronounced 'Sh-urn-beel'

Variants: Stay at the Schönbiel hut for a memorable night before an easy walk back to Zermatt (80 dormitory bunk beds - sFr.28. Blankets provided. Meals available. Reservations and enquiries. Phone 027 - 967 1354).

This walk can also be combined with the walk to [Zum See and Blatten](#), visiting these two lovely hamlets on the return walk from the hut.

The walk begins at the "Gemeinde Zollhaus" (Customs office) at the



southern end of Zermatt, just by the river and not far from the Matterhorn lifts ("Matterhornbahnen"). To get to the Zollhaus; find the river flowing north through the center of Zermatt, and take the road upstream and alongside so that the river is on your left. I.e. You want to be on the west bank.

The Zollhaus is about a fifteen-minute walk from the main train station of Zermatt, next to the river and the electric bus depot. A wooden footbridge crosses to the other side of the river and the Matterhorn lifts, and by the bridge is a big signpost indicating trails in all directions. We continue on the road upstream in the direction of Zmutt.

Walk further along the road to some park benches and a public telescope with a view of the Matterhorn. Just beyond this, pass to the right side of a quarry/gravel pits onto a broad footpath. A fenced path ascends gradually through pleasant pasture ([photo left](#)) in the direction of the Matterhorn. After five minutes take a right at an intersection (1645m) in the direction of Zmutt. The path ascends to the right through stands of trees and past barns to another intersection (1705m). At this one take the upper right on in the direction of Zmutt again.

Fine views can be had behind to the Mischabel group of peaks ([photo left](#)) - the Täschhorn, and Dom. Shortly the Breithorn can be seen over the village of Zum See to the left. The Matterhorn begins to fade from view as one climbs the path higher. A zigzag or switchback goes by a stand of trees before the trail swings west again and flattens out a bit. Pass a couple of pleasant chalets before reaching another intersection (1910m). At this stage the village of Zmutt is in sight ahead. Go straight on past the restaurant Edelweiss (not to be confused with the more famous restaurant [Edelweiss](#) on cliffs above Zermatt) and in five minutes the hamlet of Zmutt (1936m) is reached amongst very fine pastures and wildflowers. In the village can be found a charming little chapel, and two nice restaurants: the Jägerstuße and Zmutt. The hamlet of Zmutt features many fine old barns and wooden houses. Some old residents of Zmutt apparently never even visit Zermatt. They feel it is too much like the "big city"!

Zmutt to the waterfall: In Zmutt turn right by the Jägerstuße restaurant and continue uphill on the path north out of Zmutt. Shortly the path swings left (west) and a large dam can be seen straight ahead. Approaching the dam wall one reaches a four-way intersection (1972m). Continue straight on through. Walk along the path on a gentle uphill gradient until the north wall view of the Matterhorn is unobstructed in view - which is about when you are



above the far end of the dam ([photo left](#)).

The trail continues its gentle ascent through beautiful rolling pastures of wildflowers another mile (1.6 km) to Chalbermatten/Kalbermatten - marked by a little summer restaurant (2105m altitude) superbly situated below the north wall of the Matterhorn. Continue from Kalbermatten on the path west as an enticing waterfall comes into view ahead in the distance. The trail rambles to the base of the waterfall for a mile (1.6 km), passing through some stony ground and delightful scattered larch forest.

At the base of the waterfall, follow any one of a multitude of tracks up to the right, until reaching the top of the waterfall where it pours over a ledge ([photo](#)). Anywhere by the waterfall makes a fine spot for a refreshing break, being one of the prettiest waterfalls in the whole Zermatt area. At this point one is almost directly under the north face of the Matterhorn.

Waterfall to the Schönbiel hut: From the top of the waterfall (2300m altitude) to the Schönbiel hut is a further 4km (about 1½ hours walk). The waterfall itself marks the end of a moraine wall (rubble) carried and pushed by the Zmutt glacier years ago. The trail flattens and follows the top of the moraine wall almost the whole way to the hut.



A few hundred metres west beyond the waterfall the trail crosses the Arben brook. There are fine views up to the right (north) to the black pyramid of the Ober Gabelhorn (4063m).

The trail continues west on a very gentle gradient for 1½ km (1 mile) to a series of small lakes. There are fine views to up above (north/right) to the fresh glistening ice of the Hohwäng glacier. Skirting past the lakes, the trail makes a short climb to the very top of the moraine wall of ancient glacier rubble. Not far below at the bottom of the Zmutt valley lies the vast glacial ice wasteland of the Zmutt glacier, although much of its lower reaches are difficult to distinguish due to its coverage in rubble. The path follows the edge of the moraine wall for another 1½ km (1 mile), as a superb view opens up to the beautiful Dent D'Hérens (4171m). Soon the hut becomes visible 150m/500 feet above, and the trail makes the last climb by a short series of steep zigzags.

The hut itself is beautifully located on a grassy sun-soaked terrace. A final reward is the superb 160° panorama to the Matterhorn (4478m), and across the Zmutt glacier to the Dent D'Hérens (4171m).



The view from the hut. Available in [Half Size](#) 56kb or [Full Size](#) 208kb

Admire the view and perhaps enjoy a well earned picnic. Drinks and set meals are available at the hut (when it's open), but they are not cheap. Everything has to be brought in by helicopter. Fresh snow melted water is available at a faucet and trough outside the hut.

It can be a fine experience to stay at this remote climber's hut for the night (when open) and chat to the mountain climbers attempting the local peaks. Bring warm clothes for the cold evenings. Strangely, the hut is only open from *the end of June* to about the 20th of September. But the trail should be open and free of snow from early June. Even if there are patches of snow early in summer towards the hut, this is not a dangerous path, and it is an easy matter to turn back if you want to keep your feet dry...

Return to Zermatt in a pleasant downhill stroll the same way.

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[The Walking Guide](#) Zermatt to the Rothorn Hut

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This hike ascends steeply to the Rothorn climbers' hut. Hikers are rewarded with excellent mountain scenery up Zermatt's most remote (and steepest) mountain valley. The walk passes through a vast altitude range. Consequently the climate and scenery is very diverse: from warm forests, pastures, and wildflowers to rocky alpine wilderness and spectacular glacier scenery. There is also a good chance of seeing wildlife.

Time required: About seven hours (4½ hours uphill at start / 3 hour downhill)

Difficulty: **** Long steep uphill

Popularity: * Very quiet

Begins at: Zermatt (1620m altitude)

Ends at:

Zermatt **Goes via:** Edelweiss (1961m - 1 hour walk from Zermatt), Trift (2337m - 2 hours), Rothorn hut (3200m - 4½ hours)

Track Notes: Good shoes are required for very long and steep rocky sections. Be prepared for potentially cold and breezy conditions at the hut. There is also the possibility of encountering snow towards the hut. It is not recommended to ascend beyond Trift in bad weather. Watch for wildlife - especially at Trift and during the walk for 45 minutes above it. Marmots, Ibex, and mountain goats can often be seen - especially mornings and evenings.

Variants: Stay at the Rothorn Hut for a memorable night with the climbers (100 dormitory beds - sFr.24. Plenty of blankets provided. Breakfast and dinner available. Phone 027 - 967 2043). Optionally continue the next day from the hut via Trift to [Höhbalmen](#) and the [Schönbiel Hut](#) for a superb 2 or 3 day high mountain adventure.

The walk begins and ends in the center of Zermatt's main street (1620m altitude), just by the very well known Hotel Post complex and Grampi's Pub. You can find them in the main street, just 130 yards back down from the church towards the main railway station out of Zermatt. Opposite the Hotel Post is Grampi's Pub. A small cobbled laneway borders Grampi's Pub and leads off the main street uphill to the west. An inconspicuous signpost on the (laneway) wall of Grampi's also points uphill in the direction of Edelweiss,/Trift, etc.

Begin up the cobbled path behind Grampi's for 60 yards to a three



way intersection. Continue straight on uphill past barns and smart wood and glass chalets as the path loops around past the smart new "Into the Hotel". Shortly beyond that the path reaches welcome pastures with a fine view to the right of the Mischabel group of peaks (Täschhorn, Dom). A few minutes of walking up through the fields brings one to a four way intersection (1720m). Take the highest path (right) to Edelweiss. The path ascends very steeply with the rushing waters of the Triftbach (Trift brook) below to your left. As one climbs higher there are clear views up to Edelweiss perched on its cliff top eyrie. Nb. Edelweiss is shown as 'Alterhaupt' on some local maps.

After another few minutes another intersection (1780m) is reached below some cliffs. Take the left path to Edelweiss and shortly the path bridges over the Triftbach below a gushing waterfall. The trail threads through forest and continues steeply upwards via zigzags between a series of cliffs. Just below the largest cliff on which the restaurant Edelweiss perches is a good area for rock climbing. Beyond that one quickly reaches the restaurant (1961m). Edelweiss offers snacks, drinks, and meals. There are terrific views from the restaurant terrace over Zermatt and (left to right) on to the Täschhorn, Dom, Unter Rothorn, Gornergrat and Breithorn.

The second section of this walk is that to Trift (2337m), which is a further hour beyond Edelweiss. This section of the trail follows the rushing waters of the Triftbach up the the narrow and rocky Trift valley. Behind the restaurant Edelweiss a signpost at the three way intersection points uphill (west) in the direction of Trift. Begin by walking through a beautiful little pasture before the trail enters a magical mountain forest. Thankfully the trail is actually flat for a while here to give the legs a bit of a break from the relentless uphill nature of the this walk.

After while the path does a zigzag through a cliff above the Triftbach, before crossing a bridge by a waterfall and a small Hydro electricity outflow . On the north bank of the Triftbach now, the path continues its steady ascent west. Soon the view begins to open up - first to see the crown of the Wellenkuppe, then to its left the Ober Gabelhorn, and finally to their fine glaciers at the head of the Trift valley.

Trift itself (2337m) is a delightfully intimate pastureland of wildflowers, marmots and mountain streams. It is protected from winds and makes a fine place to stop for a break. The old Trift hotel/restaurant offer walkers a place to relax, but equally fine is a picnic by one of the crystal clear mountain streams. Trift is already very tranquil, but beyond this the walk becomes a truly remote one. Very few hikers go



beyond Trift.

Be sure to have a look at the [photomap of the upper section of the walk](#) from Trift to the Rothorn hut.

From behind the Trift hotel, a signpost points in the direction of the Rothorn hut. Follow that path uphill a few minutes to another intersection (2397m). Take the left path in the direction of the Rothorn hut. The trail ascends a steep hillside via a series of zigzags before flattening out at another plateau. A last intersection (2453m) is reached in the trail. Take the left to the Rothorn hut. From here it is still over two hours to reach the Rothorn hut. Already one feels quite high, but this is still half way to the hut from Zermatt..

By now the peaks of the (left to right) lower, middle and upper Gabelhorn, Wellenkuppe and Trifthorn are truly towering straight overhead. Behind you there are fine views back to Monte Rosa, Liskamm, and the Twins. From this position here it is just possible to make out our destination ahead.. there are three distinct glaciers in view. From the left, between the second and third glacier is the big grey spine of a lateral moraine. The trail ascends this pile of rocky rubble to its top, from where just above and to the right - under a big brown rocky outcrop - lies the hut. It is not easily seen due to its construction out of local stone. Look for its man made shape giving it away.

The path ascends through the rubble of a moraine with fine views left to the beautiful snow domes of Unter and Mittler Gabelhorn. After 15 minutes the trail reaches something of a flat flood plain, criss-crossed by streams. The moraine to be climbed is visible immediately to the left and shortly one begins the relentless and grindingly steep rubble path to the hut. This part of the track really puts a strain on the calf muscles due to its unforgivingly steep uphill gradient.

As the trail rapidly ascends it brings into view some incredibly spectacular glacier and icefalls to the left. The path zigzags relentlessly up the rocky moraine, until after an hour of steep climbing, the tip of the Matterhorn becomes visible to the left (south). The hut itself then shows itself as a welcome sign and the final few hundred metres of trail are relatively gentle.

From the Rothorn hut there is a fine unobstructed 90° panorama of Zermatt's big peaks. Views east encompass the Alphubel all the way round to the Klein Matterhorn. The tip of the Matterhorn is still visible, and the Wellenkuppe towers over the nearby Trift glacier ([photo](#)). A



hundred metres from the hut lies the edge of this beautiful glacier. Creaks and groans can often be heard as the ice cracks and grinds its way downhill. Do not stray on to the ice without appropriate equipment and/or guidance - there are hidden crevasses.

Drinks and (normally) meals are available at the hut, but they are not cheap. Everything has to be brought in by helicopter. It can be quite an experience to stay at the hut and chat with the brave mountain men. Bring warm clothes for the very cold evenings. Sun rises are spectacular from the hut. Due to the very high altitude, many people do not experience a perfect night's sleep. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids. It is very easy to get dehydrated at this altitude, even if the weather is cool.

The descent from the hut is very fast. It is possible to return to Trift in an hour, and Zermatt in two hours - if one hurries. Being quite steep, the descent is a bit of a test on the knees.

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[The Walking Guide](#)

Unter Rothorn to Ober Rothorn

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This relatively short but satisfying adventure ascends 'the highest peak that is possible to be climbed in Europe without a mountain guide'. The 360° panorama from the top is certainly one of the finest views in Zermatt and the Alps, similar in quality to the Mittelhorn. Every big peak in the Zermatt area is on show from the Ober Rothorn, including particularly fine close up views to the Täschhorn, Dom and Alphubel. Utilising some mountain lifts, this makes for a relatively fast and spectacular summit hike.

Time required: About two and a half hours walking (1½ hours up / 1 hour down), plus about 1 hour using the mountain lifts

Difficulty: **** A high summit **Popularity:** ***

Begins at: Unter Rothorn (3100m altitude) **Ends at:** Unter Rothorn
Goes via: Ober Rothorn (3415m)

Track Notes: Good shoes are required for this steep and rocky hike. Because this is a very high altitude walk, be prepared for potentially cold and breezy conditions on this walk. Over summer this walk should be snow-free, but as these photos from mid-July can attest, there is the possibility of encountering snow on the walk at any time of year. It is not at all recommended to attempt this walk in bad visibility. The trail is never far from huge cliffs on the top third of the walk.

Because of the close proximity to the mountain lift station, this walk is quite popular. If you want the trail all to yourself, try catching the first lift in the morning from Zermatt, or catch the last lift and walk the whole way down from Unter Rothorn (an extra 3 hours).

Rothorn lift costs - return trip: Adults: sFr.50 Children 6-16: 50% off. Discounts for holders of SwissRail Pass (25% off) and Half Fare cards (50% off).

Variants: Using the mountain lifts it is possible to break your journey at either of the intermediate lift stations (Sunnegga, Blauherd). This Walking Guide includes a short easy stroll (1 hour return) through the forests from [Sunnegga to Tufteren](#).

The walk begins and ends high in the mountains at the Unter Rothorn lift station and restaurant (3100m altitude). To get up to Unter Rothorn from Zermatt you can walk of course (4 hours uphill), but for this walk we recommend taking a few mountain lifts in order to save



time and move quickly over some slightly ugly sections of ski pistes (especially above Sunnegga).

We make use of the Sunnegga underground express lift for the first part of the ascent. You can easily find the Sunnegga lift station in Zermatt by looking for one of a multitude of signs pointing towards the "Sunneggabahn" (Sunnegga railway). Alternatively follow these directions for the five minute stroll from the main train station: Across the street from the main train station is the valley terminus of the "Gornergratbahn" (Gornergrat mountain railway). Follow the street which runs next to the glassed in queuing areas for the Gornergratbahn, and continue on this road as it follows the "GGB" tracks for 250 metres to a busy intersection by the river. Cross the river, going under the railway bridge and then take the first left alongside the river downstream 100 metres to the Sunnegga lift station.

Buy your tickets to Unter Rothorn and walk the long (and quite cold!) tunnel to the Sunnegga underground train. Trains leave normally every 20 minutes. After whistling up the mountain, exit the Sunnegga lift station (2288m). Enjoy the nice panorama by the restaurant if you wish, before taking the next Gondola lift to Blauherd. Watch for Marmots from the Gondola, before disembarking at Blauherd (2570m), which I must say is a much prettier place in winter. Jump on the flash new cable car the final quick stretch to the rocky rounded peak of Unter Rothorn.

Enjoy the impressive view from the Unter Rothorn ('Lower Rothorn'), but remember the view from the Ober Rothorn ('Upper Rothorn') is even more spectacular.

From the cable car terminus at Unter Rothorn, walk by the restaurant and it is possible to see the first half of the track up the nearby Ober Rothorn, as it skirts up the south flank. Walk downhill 10 minutes east in the direction of the Ober Rothorn ([photo](#)). This very wide section down is a busy piste in winter. Arrive without drama at the broad 'Furrggi' saddle (2980m). At the junction a signpost points the way to the Ober Rothorn.

The path ascends uphill east for half an hour, before a rocky shoulder where it turns left (north). The path zigzags up a steep rocky slope until nearing the edge of the northerly cliff faces of the Ober Rothorn. By now there are superb views east to the nearby Rimpfischhorn (4200m) and Strahlhorn (4190m). Before the cliff edge, the path turns west on a further series of zigzags. These take one close to the

summit ridge, from where the summit itself is achieved in another 15 mins or so.



Panorama from Ober Rothorn 360°. Available in [Half Size](#) - 150kb or [Full size](#) - 371kb

From Unter Rothorn, the Ober Rothorn appears little more than a very steep rocky hill, however attainment of its summit reveals it to be an impressive mountain in its own right, with a huge north wall falling thousands of feet into a deep ravine above Täschalp. From the summit of the Ober Gabelhorn (3415m) there are magic 360° views to all of Zermatt's great mountains - especially to the very close Täschhorn, Dom, Alphubel, Rimpfischhorn, and Strahlhorn.

Return to Unter Rothorn and Zermatt the same way.

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[The Walking Guide](#)

Rotenboden to the Monte Rosa Hut

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Simple mountain map](#)

[Local weather](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This awesomely spectacular hike takes one into the midst of an enormous mountain amphitheatre. A feature of the hike is the crossing of the Gorner glacier - which is a fascinating river of permanent ice. There is almost an other worldly beauty to this hike, as it takes you so far beyond any semblance of green and 'summer' into a true wilderness of rock, ice and snow.

Time required: About four and a half hours walking (2½ hours up / 2 hours down), plus about 1½ hours using the Gornergrat train.

Difficulty: ***** The glacier requires care

Popularity: **

Quiet

Begins at: Rotenboden (2815m altitude)

Ends at:

Rotenboden **Goes via:** Gorner glacier (2600m), Monte Rosa hut (2795m)

Track Notes: This walk had been given a difficulty rating of 5 stars, not because it is consistently strenuous, but rather because the crossing of the glacier requires knowledge and due respect of the danger of crevasses. Crevasses (very deep fissures) in the ice are common and some can be hidden. A fall into a deep crevasse will result in serious injury at best, and fatalities are not unusual. However most crevasse accidents are a result of ignorance of the danger and/or sheer recklessness. This hike follows a safe, very well travelled route marked across this glacier. **It is very important to be able to see and follow the trail marker poles on the glacier.** It would be dangerous to attempt the glacier crossing in bad visibility and/or stray too far from the marker poles.

There are also potentially tricky sections getting on and off the glacier (detailed in the walk description below). Otherwise this is not a strenuously hard hike.

It is only recommended to hike across the glacier if the route is officially open. To ascertain this, call the Monte Rosa hut (027 967 2115) or the Tourist Office (027 967 0181), or ask at the Gornergrat railway ticket office.

Good hiking shoes with excellent grip and some water resistance are required for this walk. You will encounter short very steep sections, loose rock and rubble, ladders, and a walk on glacial ice for almost two kilometres. A walking stick can be useful on the glacier. Ropes, ice axes, crampons (and local mountain guides!) are not required if



you stay on the marked glacier crossing. Be prepared for potentially cold and breezy conditions on this walk. Equally suncream may be a necessity. Be prepared for every eventuality.

Rotenboden train costs - return trip: Adults: sFr.56 Children 6-16: 50% off. Discounts for holders of SwissRail Pass (25% off) and Half Fare cards (50% off).

Variants: Using the Gornergrat train it is possible to break your journey at any of the intermediate stations for the view (Riffelalp, Riffelberg).

It is also possible to stay at the Monte Rosa Hut itself for a memorable night with the climbers (150 dormitory beds - sFr.24. Plenty of blankets provided. Breakfast and dinner available. Phone 027 - 967 2115).

It would also be possible to walk from Rotenboden back to Zermatt (adding 2½ hours walking) - a particularly fine end to this walk on a pleasant evening. See the '[Gornergrat descent](#)' walk description for directions.

The walk begins and ends in the mountains at the tiny Rotenboden railway station, which is high on the Gornergrat railway line (2815m altitude - last stop before Gornergrat). To get up to Rotenboden from Zermatt you can walk of course (4 hours uphill), but for this walk we recommend taking the train in order to save time and energy.

The Gornergrat railway ('Gornergratbahn') is located directly opposite the main train station in Zermatt. Buy your tickets to Rotenboden and wait for a train. Trains normally depart every 24 minutes, and take about 40 minutes to ascend to Rotenboden. Unless stopping for views at Riffelalp or Riffelberg, exit at the Rotenboden station (2815m). The view from Rotenboden is simply magnificent - certainly one of the finest mountain panoramas anywhere in the world. Eyes can feast upon uninterrupted views extending for 180 glorious degrees from Monte Rosa to the Matterhorn (photo below).



The magnificent panorama from the trail near Rotenboden.

Available in [Half Size](#) - 86kb or [Full size](#) - 262kb

After admiring the view and perhaps exploring the nearby alpine lake ('Riffelsee'), join the foot path as it descends south across the saddle towards the Breithorn. After a few hundred metres it turns left (east)

on its long gentle descending traverse. This delightful easy trail continues its traverse three kilometres (2 miles) down to the Gorner glacier ('Gornergletscher') at 2600m altitude. All the while one has the awesome panoramic view to admire, so even if one did not cross the glacier this walk would be worthwhile. The Gorner glacier is the second longest in Europe.

Now comes the part of the walk which requires some care. The path nears the edge of the glacier by a series of steps and roped handholds. The vast river of ice of the Gorner glacier stretches away before one's eyes...

A note about glaciers and glacier safety: Glaciers are enormous rivers of ice and they are very much alive. They move constantly, albeit slowly (1-2 metres a day). Therefore the conditions of the glacier and its surface are also changing. The most dangerous aspect of this glacier crossing are 'crevasses'. Crevasses can be effectively 'bottomless' cracks in the ice. New crevasses open and old ones close every day. Moreover they can be hidden by snow bridges. To anyone less than a roped team of mountaineers, glacier crossing can be very dangerous. Fortunately for us, this part of the Gorner glacier is well marked, well travelled and safe - if you follow the poles. It can be easily crossed by experienced and fit hikers with an awareness of the dangers, a good sense of personal responsibility, and a spirit of adventure. But for your own safety do not cross the glacier in bad visibility and do not attempt the crossing if you are unsure. If you turn back before the start of the ice, you will have seen most of this walk's best views as a consolation.

Boulders and the piles of rubble (moraines) on the surface of the ice can also be unstable. Because of all these changing conditions, the safe path onto and across the ice also changes regularly - and the pole markers are re-positioned accordingly..

Getting onto the surface of the glacial ice can be tricky and may require the use of one's hands. Because the glacier is moving and changing constantly, the last bit of trail onto the ice also changes constantly. One must look for the first of a series of poles which mark the safe route across the glacier. The poles are metal, a couple of metres high, sometimes with flags, spaced every 100 yards/metres or so on the ice.

So to get onto the glacier, one must look for the first pole on the ice, or wait for someone to direct the way. Climbers (or other hikers) returning from the Monte Rosa hut are happy to point the best way

onto the ice. Please take care getting on and off the glacier. The last metres of rock are often steep and strewn with rubble and slippery gravel. The use of hands can be necessary, although ropes and other technical equipment are not required. There can also be crevasses as the ice cracks hitting the solid rock of terra firma.

Thankfully, once on the glacier things become much easier. The trail is generally flat, and the actual surface of the glacier is not very slippery. Most of the ice is peppered by a layer of tiny rock fragments, which provide reasonable grip. The safe path marked by the poles avoids the heavily crevassed areas, although normally it comes close to a few bigger ones. Just watch where you put your feet.

The glacier is crossed more or less in a straight line, marked by flags. The poles are metal, a couple of metres high, sometimes with flags, spaced every 100 metres or so on the ice. Even in good visibility it is sometimes difficult to see more than one pole ahead. For your own safety, make sure you can always see the next pole before leaving the previous one.

The walk across the glacier surface is easy and fascinating. Everywhere there are different patterns in the ice and the fields of mountain rubble on the surface. There are beautiful little streams of water cutting across the ice (which often have to be jumped), ice 'rockpools', and mushrooms of ice supporting massive boulders. There are dark and mysterious crevasses from tiny to huge. In the distance there are massive icefalls as the glacier tumbles over rocky cliffs. The sounds are also fascinating: gurgles of running water, creaks, groans and cracks as the ice moves somewhere. It is truly a very interesting and very beautiful place. One feels quite aware of some of nature's most ancient and powerful forces at work. And all around tower the truly great 4000m peaks over the ice. It is like being in a magnificent white amphitheatre of the grandest scale...

Towards the middle of the glacier crossing, the trail takes one across a large central moraine of boulders, rocks, and rubble. Remember this is still on top of the glacier, and consequently a few of the rocks are likely to be unstable.

One reaches bare ice once more and after another interesting kilometre of glacier travel the trail approaches the solid rock (2580m), still far below the Monte Rosa hut. Again it can be a bit of a challenge getting off the ice and onto the rock. The first sections of the trail may include ladders and fixed ropes to haul oneself up some short steep sections of rock, boulders and moraine rubble ([photo](#)). After ten

minutes these challenges are surmounted and the walking trail turns into a series of straightforward zigzags to ascend rapidly to the Monte Rosa hut (2795m). From the last clamber off the glacial ice to the hut is still a solid ascent of almost an hour.

The hut itself is spectacularly located, with superb views to nearby Liskamm, the Twins (Castor and Pollux), the Breithorn massif, and far across the vastness of the Gorner glacier stands the Matterhorn. Although from the hut area itself it is not possible to see the peak/s of Monte Rosa itself. There are plenty of pleasant smooth rock platforms to sit upon, admire the view and perhaps enjoy a well earned picnic. Drinks and set meals are available at the hut, but they are not cheap. Everything has to be brought in by helicopter.



Panorama from the Monte Rosa hut. Available in [Half Size](#) - 98kb or [Full size](#) - 327kb

Return to Rotenboden and Zermatt the same way.

PS Unless you plan to extend the walk from [Rotenboden back down to Zermatt](#), take note of the Gornergrat train timetable. People at the Monte Rosa hut can advise you of the last train down if you don't have a timetable with you.

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The Walking Guide Around Zermatt

Related pages:

[The Walking Guide](#)

[Walking Guide Map](#)

[Map of the surrounding mountains](#)

Photos from this walk:



Description: This short walk gives a solid introduction to the main features and attractions of the village of Zermatt. Discover the best sports shops, supermarkets, bars, nightclubs and viewpoints in one pleasant stroll.

Time required: About 20 minutes total (All pretty much flat)

Difficulty: * Gentle **Popularity:** ***** Very Popular

Begins at: Zermatt railway station (1605m altitude) **Ends**

at: Bahnhofstrasse (1607m) **Goes via:** Church square (1620m), Steinmatte

Track Notes: This is a nice walk day or night. Walk open all year.

Variants: Be sure to have a look at old Zermatt. Explore any little cobbled alley which captures your attention.

The walk begins and ends at the main train station of Zermatt (known as 'Bahnhof' in German).

There are horses and sleighs, electric taxis, and most of the year this square is a hive of activity. On the square itself is the Tourist Office, which is useful for posters and free maps of the village. Nearby the Tourist Office is Fotofast - a good photo shop. Just across the main street from the railway station restaurant is the valley station of the Gornergrat mountain railway (in German 'Gornergratbahn'). It is certainly worth a visit to Gornergrat while in Zermatt. Also across the main street is the 'Viktoria CO-OP' center, which features one of Zermatt's biggest and best supermarkets - the 'CO-OP'.

The main street of Zermatt is known to locals as the Bahnhofstrasse. It runs from the railway station 500 metres south to the main church square of Zermatt.

So walk south up the very gentle incline of the main street, past banks, bakeries, jewellers, and sport shops. A rather inconspicuous McDonalds is on the right, not far from the station. Continue straight on through a three way intersection to the Pollux hotel. Downstairs below the Pollux lies the T-bar nightclub. Walk past the attractive old Walliserhof and Walliserkanne restaurants on your right.



Immediately after the Walliserkanne, on the left is the very popular WEGA souvenir shop, which features an excellent bookshop downstairs. Opposite the WEGA is the post office centre. The post office itself is back a block from the main street. Look for the yellow "Die Post" signs.



Moving back up the main street, a few metres further on is the new Snow and Alpine Center. Visit there for mountain guides, and bookings of ski lessons. It is possible to buy multi day lift/ski passes at the center, although you can also get these at any of the lift stations themselves.

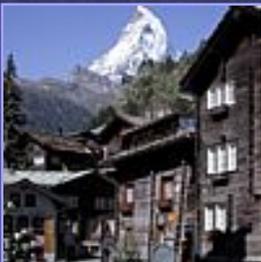


Just behind the Snow and Alpine Center is Zermatt's museum - an interesting collection of Zermatt and Matterhorn memorabilia.

Opposite the Snow and Alpine Center is the famous [Hotel Mont Cervin](#). Continuing on a few yards beyond the Snow and Alpine Center is a delightful little creperie on the right.



Walk through a small twist in the road, and on to the Hotel Post complex on the left, and opposite on the right - Grampi's Pub. The Hotel Post is one of Zermatt's most famous establishments offering a multitude of restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and now internet access in the street side Brown Cow bar. Grampis is a very popular pub and nightclub for young people.



Continue up the main street to the historic [Hotel Monte Rosa](#), where the first climbers of the Matterhorn stayed. Opposite the Monte Rosa are the luxurious grounds of the Hotel Zermatterhof. Just beyond the Hotel Monte Rosa is the local library (in German 'Gemeinde Bibliothek'), situated in a charming old building.



Walking along a few more metres one comes to the main church and square of Zermatt, surrounded by some of Zermatt's oldest wooden buildings. The cobbled main square is focal point for local events and is a good place to sit down and watch the world go by - and gaze at the beauty of the Matterhorn ([photo](#)). Across the main square is the large Gemeindehaus - or local council building. Walk past the council building to the Weisshorn restaurant/cafe/hotel and the Cafe du Pont ([photo left](#)). These are two of the cheapest restaurants in Zermatt, in very pleasant locations by the gushing waters of the Triftbach (Trift brook). Just by the Triftbach itself are public telephones and toilets.

Turning around to look back towards the church square, Zermatt's



third largest supermarket is on your right, marked with the sign "Lebensmittel, Frischprodukte". Walk back to the church square, and turn right down the 'Kirchstrasse' (church street), by the Marmot statue/fountain. Walk downhill towards flagpoles and a free Matterhorn telescope at the east end of the church. There is also a nice little park with benches for relaxing.

Continue downhill over the Triftbach which has run behind the church, to the climber's graveyard on your left, and opposite it - the trendy 'Pipe' bar, which also has public internet access. Just beyond this is ROC Sport on the right. Nb. [10% discount at Roc Sport](#) Walk on to the bridge over Zermatt's river (the 'Mattervispa'), where there is a fine view to the Matterhorn ([photo left](#)).

Continue on past the 'Old Zermatt' bar and grill, past Slalom Sport to a busy four way intersection. The 'Papperla Pub' is a feature on one corner - it is one of Zermatt's top après ski pubs. The intersection is an important one on this east side of the river. A signpost points to a multitude of destinations. The area surrounding the intersection is known as 'Steinmatte'.

One of Zermatt's best (and most down to earth) bars serves the tastiest pizza in town. The 'North Wall Bar' is well known to Zermatt regulars and is very popular with English speakers. It is a friendly place, and a good place to meet prospective skiing or climbing partners. Open every evening from about 6.30pm to midnight (in main winter & summer season), you can find it by turning right (south) at the Papperla intersection and walking a hundred metres or so.

Back at the four way intersection, continue the Zermatt circuit by walking around the Papperla Pub - heading north and keeping the pub on your left. Pass the Hotel Astoria and walk down this quieter street. Walk by a couple of less glamorous ski and sport shops, and past some gardens. Over the gardens to your left you get a fine view up towards the restaurant [Edelweiss](#) - perched on its cliffs a thousand feet above Zermatt ([photo](#)). Higher up and behind the Edelweiss and the narrow Trift valley is a fine view to the Wellenkuppe (3903m).

Continue downhill past the charming old chalets Franzen and Maria until the road turns left and downhill to a busy intersection by the river. On the right corner is the [Hotel Parnass](#), on the other is the 'Biner' bakery and tea rooms. Walk over the bridge to stand between the restaurant Le Mazot and Hotel Excelsior. Walk uphill on the main road between them and on to the fine old Chalet Adler on the right. In clear weather, from here one can look high up to the right to the rocky

rounded summit of the Unter Rothorn (3100m).

Continue uphill past the 'PAM Super Discount' supermarket and walk straight on to the big orange 'M's of Migros. Along with the Co-Op by the station, Migros is the largest and cheapest supermarket in Zermatt (and Switzerland for that matter). Migros also features a department store downstairs.

Just beyond Migros on the right are the tennis courts (summer)/ice skating rink (winter). Opposite the courts is the very groovy cinema and bar 'Vernissage'. The Vernissage was very creatively designed and decorated by a local artist, and I recommend catching a movie there for another unique Zermatt experience. Next to the Vernissage is one of Zermatt's best sport shops: Julen Sport & Mode (fashion) Nb. [10% discount at Julen Sport](#).

Continue on past Zap Books and stationary back to the intersection with the main street or Bahnhofstrasse. The Hornli Tea Rooms are straight ahead. The Pollux and Walliserkanne are to your left. To your right is McDonalds and just beyond McDonalds is the railway station where we started.

That's it! You now know the main shopping and nightlife areas of Zermatt.

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Walks featured in [The Walking Guide](#) are boxed in Green. This map looks toward the south. Altitudes are given in metres. (Feet = metres / 3.3)
To help further with your orientation, we also have an [aerhead map of the area](#).
You can save this (or any other) graphical image with a right mouse click on it.



Photomap of the Ober Rothorn walk

Visiting Zermatt? Get all the very best angles on Zermatt and the Matterhorn in the new [Walking Guide](#).

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ZINAL ROTHORN 4221M

ROTHORN HUT 3200M

'FLOOD PLAIN'

TRIFT 2337M

WWW.THEMATTERHORN.NET

LOOKING NORTH-WEST TO THE UPPER HALF OF THE ROTHORN HUT WALK

TO EDELWEISS & ZERMATT ▲

Photomap of the Rothorn hut walk

