



The Goms region, the high valley nestled between the Grimsel, Nufenen and Furka passes and the stepped valley at Grenchols

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Dualski Bellwald: New skiing experience for people
with disabilities
www.dualski-bellwald.ch

Three new snowshoe trails in Ernen: Muehlebach -
Chaeserstatt, Chaeserstatt - Erner Galen, Erner Galen
- Steinmannli
www.ernen.ch

The new Swiss national culinary team known as the
Rhone Chefs have their roots in Goms - The spirit of
Caesar Ritz
www.rhonekoeche.ch
www.goms.ch



Tourism in the Goms region – in brief

The Goms high valley stretches from the Nufenen, Grimsel and Furka passes, where the Rhone river has its source, to the stepped valley at Grenchols, below Fiesch.

According to the latest census from 2000, 5,261 inhabitants live in an area of 650 km². The "Jungfrau-Aletsch" area was added to the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites in 2001. The Goms region has 66 hotels/guesthouses, 3,350 holiday apartments/chalets, 25 group accommodation facilities/mountain huts and 7 campsites. There are also more than 90 restaurants, tea rooms and mountain restaurants as well as various bars.

Overnight stays in fiscal year 2007/08: In fiscal year 2007/08, the Goms region recorded just under **1.1 million overnight stays**, with half of them (511,205) in the summer.

Winter: One hundred km of cross-country ski runs, 170 km of pistes and approximately 180 km of prepared and signposted winter hiking paths, plus various sledge runs and 14 marked, secured, but not groomed snowshoe trails.

Summer: Over 700 km of marked hiking trails, 300 km marked bike routes, the 9-hole golf course in Obergesteln, the steam locomotive on the Furka mountain route running between Gletsch and Realp, the Eggishorn with magnificent views of the Aletsch glacier, the landscape park in the Binn Valley and 11 signposted Nordic walking routes in the Swiss Nordic Park.

Caesar Ritz – www.caesar-ritz.ch: Caesar Ritz built up his business in accordance with his motto "Service comes before profit". Based on this philosophy, the son of a mountain farmer in Goms set new standards in the luxury hotel industry. Thanks to him, Paris has the "Hotel Ritz" at Place Vendôme and London has the "Carlton". More information on the "king of hoteliers and hotelier to kings" is available on the themed trail "The life of Caesar Ritz" in Niederwald or in the book "Cäsar und Marie-Louise Ritz, Hôteliere des Rois". Journalists can order a reviewer's copy from the publishers "Brunner AG" by phoning +41 (0)41 318 34 77.

Culture/Tradition: The Goms region boasts over 70 Baroque churches and chapels, Gothic altars and traditional arts and crafts. It also has a bell foundry, the music village of Ernen with its "Music Festival of the Future", writing seminars with thriller writer Donna Leon in Ernen, and the legendary "Night of the Poor Souls" procession from Fiescheralp to Märjelen Lake



Awards for the region

UNESCO World Heritage Site Jungfrau-Aletsch (2001)

Archicultura medal for the hamlet Imfeld in the Binn Valley (1999)

Henry-Louis Wakker Prize for the preservation of the historical character of the village of Ernen (1979)

Unique features in the Goms high valley

Uniquely natural: **Binn Valley Nature Park**
www.landschaftspark-binntal.ch

Uniquely classic: **Ernen Music Village**
www.musikdorf.ch

Uniquely breathtaking: **Eggishorn**
www.eggishorn.ch

Uniquely sporty: **Cross-country skiing**
www.loipe-goms.ch
Ski arena
www.eggishorn.ch
www.bellwald.ch
www.hungerberg.ch

Uniquely polyathletic: **Fiesch Sports and Holiday Centre**
www.sport-feriencenter.ch

Uniquely culinary: **Caesar Ritz**
www.caesar-ritz.ch

Uniquely spectacular: **Nufenen, Furka, Grimsel**
www.ig-alpenpaesse.ch

Uniquely nostalgic: **Furka steam locomotive**
www.furka-bergstrecke.ch

Uniquely family-friendly: **Bellwald, www.bellwald.ch;**
Fiesch, www.fiesch.ch;
Ernen, www.ernen.ch

Uniquely cultural: **Upper Goms**
www.kulturlandschaft.ch



Special anniversaries in 2009

700 years	St. Peter's Church, Muenster-Geschinen	
500 years	High altar, Muenster-Geschinen (one of the most beautiful Late Gothic high altars in Switzerland)	
230 years	since Goethe spent the night of 11 November 1779 in Hotel Post in Muenster	

Events

21-23 Nov 08	Goms Christmas Market	Fiesch	
Nov 08 - Mar 09	Theatrical performance "D's Gaeld lit uef daer Bank"	Muenster	
5-7 Dec 08	9th winter opening	Fiescheralp	
6-7 Dec 08	Cross-country race Atomic FIS Cup	Ulrichen	
13-14 Dec 08	Cross-country ski test weekend	Obergesteln	
13 Dec 08	Season opening (Baergrueef)	Bellwald	
20 Dec-3 Jan 09	Binn cultural evenings	Binn	
26 Dec 08	Christmas in the forest	Reckingen- Gluringen	
27 Dec 08	Christmas in the forest	Binn	
28 Dec 08	Christmas concert	Ernen	
30 Dec 08	New Year's Eve Concert	Ernen	
31 Dec 08	New Year's Eve cross-country ski race	Ulrichen	
31 Jan 09	Power of Gospel Oberwallis	Fiesch	
11 Feb 09	6th Night jump tour	Bellwald	
12-14 Feb 09	3rd Snowpenaircinema	Bellwald	
21-22 Feb 09	37th Int'l Goms cross-country race	Upper Goms	
25 Feb 09	World's steepest torch downhill	Fiescheralp	
11 Apr 09	4th waterslide contest	Bellwald	
18 Apr 09	Winter's end party	Fiescheralp	
23 May 09	Walking tour through the park	Binn Valley	
6 June 09	District Music Festival	Fiesch	
11 July 09	11th Goms Summer Market	Reckingen- Gluringen	
26 July 09	Mineral exchange	Binn	
1 Aug 09	Swiss national holiday	Goms	
1 Aug 09	Street party	Fiesch	
2-15 Aug 09	23rd Festival of the Future	Ernen	
6 Aug 09	8th "Gratzugnacht" (walk of the poor souls) at Maerjelen Lake	Fiescheralp	
19 Sep 09	Autumn market Nature Park	Ernen	



Nufenen, Furka, Grimsel

Furka Pass

The Furka Pass forms the connection to the north-south axis of Switzerland, and links the cantons of Valais and Uri. In Realp you can decide whether to drive over the pass or prefer to use the convenient vehicle loader of the Furka Oberalpbahn.

An unparalleled view rewards guests at the top of the pass. From here you can begin extremely interesting hikes all around the pass.

The Rhone Glacier almost reaches the Furka Pass road – humans rarely get to experience a glacier up close like this!

The glacier has receded and formed a fascinating glacial lake.

Grimsel Pass

The Grimsel Pass connects the cantons of Valais and Bern. The pass road is generally open from mid-June to mid-November. As of late February the Grimsel Pass is the ideal starting point for skiing and snowshoeing excursions. The Central Alpine High Trail from Andermatt to Loetschental also runs through here.

When the road reaches the highest point of the pass at 2,165 metres (7,103 feet), it runs along the Totensee (a small natural lake), in which several of the most imposing and famous peaks of the Bernese Alps are reflected.

Gigantic ledges of up to two hundred metres (656 feet) in diameter cover the flanks and lend the Grimsel a vaguely abstract appearance which is further enhanced by the hydroelectric facilities, high-voltage lines, huge aluminium towers, dams, pedestrian walkways and dam walls that are occasionally over one hundred metres (328 feet) high. It's a gigantic landscape in which man and nature meet.

Nufenen Pass:

The Nufenen Pass is the highest pass in Switzerland that is accessible to motor vehicles. Where only a mule track previously existed, a highway runs from Goms across the Nufenen Pass to Ticino. This is the starting point for a magnificent bike tour that will even take you through Italy over long stretches. The Nufenen Pass is the most beautiful link to the south.



Culture

With over 70 Baroque churches and chapels, Gothic high altars and many other artistic jewels, the Goms region also has a wealth of cultural treasures in store for you. Today, tradition still lives on in arts and crafts and folk theatre as well as in concerts and folklore performances. Good things come in small packages with the region's museums. The Jost-Sigristen museum in Ernen, the cultural museum in Bodmen at Blitzingen and the regional museum in Binn are just a few examples.

<http://www.goms.ch/erlebnisse/kultur.php>

Families welcome

Relax, indulge, have fun – here you'll find ideal conditions for your family holiday. The villages of Bellwald, Ernen and Fiesch are the family heartland of the Goms region and have been awarded the "Families Welcome" quality seal for their attractive, family-oriented holiday packages. In winter, there are 13 kilometres (8 miles) of toboggan runs to ride, and the Snowli kids' club where children can learn to ski; in summer you'll find host of family attractions including the magic forest, the children's adventure weeks, the celebrated Gogwärgiweg, the Aletsch Animal Park and a wide variety of sports activities.

<http://www.goms.ch/erlebnisse/familienwillkommen.php>

Steam locomotive on the Furka mountain route

Start from Realp station in the Canton of Uri (1,420 m/4,659 feet above sea level) on an unforgettable, thrilling trip which takes two hours in carefully restored old-timer trains to Gletsch in the canton of Valais. First, the over 80 year old steam engine climbs the rack rail uphill along the rushing waters of the Furkareuss. It travels at a leisurely speed over the bold Wiler bridge, through the three Senntumstafel tunnels and across the famed Steffenbach folding bridge. A first stop in Tiefenbach is used to fill up with water. With a full boiler the journey continues past Alpine meadows full of flowers. Puffing rhythmically, the locomotive with its coaches crosses the Steinstafel viaduct. This is followed by a short stop at the Furka, the highest station (2,160 metres/7,086 feet above sea level). After that, the train runs through the 1,874 metre/6,148 foot summit tunnel towards the Valais. At the Muttbach-Belvédère stop, the rake begins the descent on the rack track which has a gradient of up to 11.8%. You experience an exceptional spectacle of nature and technology with the enchanting Rhone glacier, which soon comes into the passengers' view between snow-covered mountain peaks. The adventurous trip over the Furka pass ends for the moment in Gletsch (1,760 metres/5,774 feet above sea level). The expansion to Oberwald is planned for 2010.

www.furka-bergstrecke.ch



The cross-country skiing paradise

In winter, the Goms region is bathed in sun, and snow cover is guaranteed. With its cross-country skiing tradition, the high valley is a meeting point for cross-country skiing fans. Around 100 km (62 miles) of prepared cross-country ski runs are at the skiers' feet – for both the classic and the skating techniques, over 80 km (50 miles) of which are on the Loipe Goms between Oberwald and Niederwald.

The following is an excerpt from the cross-country network of the Loipe Goms: the home of cross-country skiing

Rottenloipe (Rhône cross-country ski run, 20 km/12.5 miles)

This run stretches from Oberwald to Niederwald along the Rhône river. The Rhône cross-country ski run is situated at about 1,300 metres/4,265 feet above sea level. It is the ideal run for a relaxing trip to enjoy the gorgeous scenery.

Hangloipe (Slope cross-country ski run, 22 km/13.7 miles)

This cross-country ski run also reaches from Oberwald to Niederwald. It leads along the north facing slope and incorporates an easy gradient. It suits all sporty cross-country skiers.

Sonnenloipe (Sunny cross-country ski run, 7 km/4.4 miles)

This run leads from Obergesteln to Münster along the right-hand side of the river Rhône. Enjoy the sunshine on a relaxing ski excursion – or while practising your classic or skating technique.

Waldloipe / Pischäloipe (Forest cross-country ski run, 4 km/2.5 miles)

A real Nordic atmosphere can be experienced on this circuit in the Pyschen forest with the start and end points in Oberwald.

Night cross-country ski run, 3 km/1.9 miles

This circuit between Obergesteln and Ulrichen is illuminated every night until 9:30 p.m.

FIS training cross-country ski run, 5 km/3 miles

The Goms region has numerous cross-country ski runs that are especially prepared for athletes whose goal is to train hard. This course is absolutely perfect for ambitious cross-country skiers. The route with steep ascents, exciting descents and demanding changes in direction has been homologised by the International Ski Federation (FIS), and is situated at the "Nordic Centre" between Ulrichen and Geschinen.



Specific characteristics

The fact that the Goms cross-country runs connect 12 villages makes them unique. Every village has direct access to the cross-country ski runs and a station or train stop for the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn. And if you are tired of cross-country skiing, you can simply wait for the next train to take you conveniently back to the starting point.

Competitions / Gommerlauf

The cross-country skiing paradise of Goms is one of the top cross-country ski regions in Switzerland, and has decades of tradition in hosting cross-country events. Countless world champions have won their titles here, and the location has staged many FIS World Cup races.

The annual legendary Gommerlauf (Gommer run) takes place on the third weekend of February. In 2008, this popular open cross-country race will for the first time be included in the Eurolappet* overall rankings.

Information on the cross-country ski runs

Information on the cross-country ski runs is available from the end of November by phoning 0901 567 614 (CHF 0.80/min.) or at www.loipe-goms.ch.

Nordisches Zentrum

Mit dem des Nordischen Zentrums in Ulrichen/Münster entstand eine wichtige Basis zur Optimierung des Nordischen Skisportes im Goms. Ein zentrales Anliegen ist es dem Nachwuchs optimale Bedingungen für das Training zu bieten. Das Gebäude steht auch allen Langlauf- und Winterwandergästen täglich von 10.00 bis 16.00 Uhr offen. Behindertengerechte Duschen und WC-Anlagen, Garderoben, Wachsraum und eine Dauerausstellung: «Geschichte – Gegenwart und Zukunft Langlauf Obergoms» stehen zur Verfügung.

Other cross-country routes in Goms

Bellwald (4 km), Ernen (6 km) and Fieschertal (4 km) prepare further cross-country circuits when there is sufficient snow.



Skiing areas

You can enjoy winter sports on 170 kilometres (105 miles) of pistes.

Between altitudes of 1,100 and 2,800 metres (3,608-9,186 feet), fifty cableways will get you there swiftly. The [Fiescheralp-Aletsch Plateau](#), [Bellwald](#) and [Hungerberg](#) ski areas offer carving fun at its best. The Reckingen-Gluringen, Münster-Geschinen, Ulrichen and Binn ski lifts are especially suitable for beginners.

Aletsch Ski Arena

The Aletsch Ski Arena includes three skiing areas – Riederalp, Bettmeralp and Fiescheralp – and offers 99 kilometres (61.5 miles) of skiing fun, with a total of 7 aerial cable cars, 4 gondolas, 6 chairlifts and 18 ski lifts. The skiing area on Fiescheralp stretches over 45 km (28 miles) and is located between altitudes of 1,050 and 2,900 metres (3,445 and 9,514 feet). It has two four-seater chairlifts, six ski lifts and a fun park, as well as panoramic pistes with views of the Matterhorn, difficult, steep slopes, broad carving runs and gentle hills for beginners.

Bellwald

This family-friendly snow sports area covering altitudes from 1700 to 2550 metres (5577-8366 feet) above sea level, offers runs appropriate for everyone – beginners and experts, snowboarders, carvers and sledgers.

Hungerberg

Small is beautiful! Hungerberg in Oberwald offers runs of all difficulty levels for skiers and snowboarders. This area is equally suitable for beginners and experts.

Planned projects

Erner Galen skiing area making good progress

In addition to the required catering and restaurant businesses, a unique children's idyll is planned for Erner Galen. A connecting gondola will provide a link to the public transportation network. This connection and the planned construction of hotels with a capacity of over 800 beds will secure the full utilization of the facilities. It is expected that the license will be issued in 2010. An international architectural competition will be held to find the builder of the hotel complex.



How to get to the Goms region

The Goms region can easily be reached by private or public transport. The roads and Alpine passes are well-constructed and the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn (MGB) railway line takes you through varied, beautiful scenery. The famous Glacier Express runs through the Goms area on its way from St. Moritz to Zermatt.

Directions by public transport

By Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) Basle-Berne-Brig, Geneva-Lausanne-Sion-Brig, Zurich-Lucerne-Göschenen-Realp. From Brig or Göschenen take the Matterhorn-Gotthard Bahn (MGB) to the Goms region. Additional information is available from: www.sbb.ch, www.mgbahn.ch.

Directions by car

The car transport train at Furka (Realp-Oberwald), Lötschberg (Kandersteg-Goppenstein) and Simplon (Iselle-Brig) operates all year round. Additional information is available from: www.sbb.ch, www.mgbahn.ch. In summer, a trip over the Alpine passes is well worth it. The Goms region can be reached via the Furka pass (2,431 metres/7,975 feet above sea level), Grimsel pass (2,478 metres/7,103 feet above sea level), Nufenen pass (2,478 metres/8,129 feet above sea level) or Simplon pass (2,500 metres/8,202 above sea level).

Goms - It's closer than you think ...



Traffic information

Call 0900 571 00 (CHF 0.86/min.) for general information about road conditions and the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn (MGB).



Summer (selected options)

- Ice grotto in the Rhone glacier (June-October) _____
- Guided glacier hikes _____
- The longest natural Kneipp path in Switzerland _____
- "Flyer" electric bike _____
- Paragliding and mountain climbing schools _____
- Hiking paradise _____
- Nordic walking routes in the Swiss Nordic Park _____
- Educational nature trails/themed trails _____
- Lengbach mineral pit in the Binn Valley/stone grindery _____
- Climbing garden and walls _____
- Fixed rope route "Via Ferrata Eggishorn" with a 23 m suspension bridge and a 40 m three-rope bridge _____
- Wildlife observation tours _____
- Petting zoo (Aletsch zoo) _____
- Steam locomotive on the Furka mountain route, Gletsch – Realp) _____
- Guided village tours _____
- "Festival of the Future", international concerts in the music village of Ernen _____
- Sunrise ascent with the Fiesch-Eggishorn aerial cable car (July-mid-October) _____
- "Source du Rhone" golf course in Obergesteln (9-hole golf course) _____
- Scooter trails in Bellwald and Fiesch _____
- Bike and mountain bike routes _____
- Downhill bike route in Bellwald and Fiescheralp _____
- Fishing _____
- River rafting and Fun Yaks on the river Rhone close to its source _____
- Exercise trail in Ulrichen _____
- Outdoor swimming pool in Reckingen-Gluringen _____
- Mini-golf _____
- Numerous playgrounds and campfire sites _____



Cultural treasures

- Caesar Ritz "King of hoteliers and hotelier to kings" _____
- Over 70 Baroque churches and chapels* _____
- Baroque, Roman, Gothic and neo-Gothic cultural treasures _____
- Church museums in Muenster and Ernen _____
- Demonstrations on baking and cheese-making _____
- Folk theatre _____
- Folklore evenings _____
- Classical concerts _____
- Alt-Reckingen _____
- Muehlebach – the oldest village centre built in wood in Switzerland _____
- Cultural and historical tours _____

Various museums: The Alpine and farming museum in Bellwald, the regional museum in Binn, the mineral museum in Imfeld/Binn, the church museum and Jost-Sigristen museum in Ernen, the sacred art museum in Münster, the cultural museum in Blitzingen, the crystal museum in Obergesteln, local history museum Oberwald. _____

*The parish church of Reckingen is one of the most important sacred buildings of the post-Baroque period in Upper Valais. _____

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