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Autor: Roch, André

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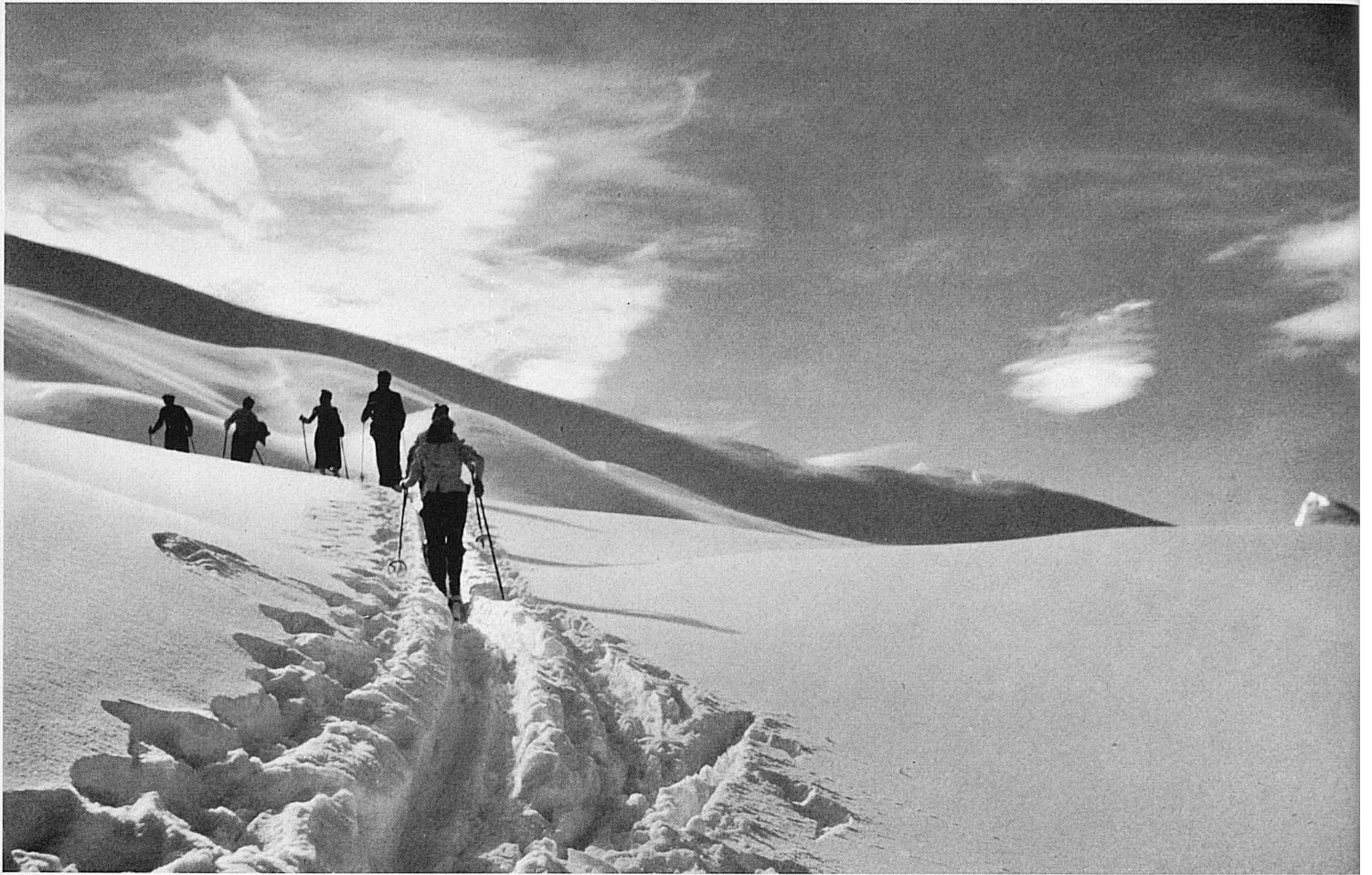
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WANT A WONDERFUL WINTER? GET YOUR SUN AND FUN IN THE MOUNTAINS!

When I left beautiful Switzerland to study at an American university, I soon felt a kind of pity for all the sports people go in for over there. Right at home in the Swiss Alps we have a sport that beats all the rest—skiing. I realize that many Stateside colleges and universities include skiing in their courses of physical education, but there is such a difference! Sometimes the quality of the snow is better in the States, but Americans have no practice grounds that come up to Swiss ski runs.

Winter is supposed to be a dead season. Trees, shrubs, rocks and animals lose their colours. The mountains change in appearance. They slip on a heavy white blanket . . . now torn by the winds, now piled up on the rocky crests, swept in deep drifts in the ravines, and drawn in soft cottony drapes over the hills. The colours are gone, but the light is stronger. Everything sparkles, everything glistens. At night in the high mountains, a hungry fox will range for miles in search of a partridge. An inquisitive marten comes out to roam about houses, huts and chalets. People who venture into this fairyland where trees bend under their burdens of white and the sun's rays burn clean, can see the traces of these savage battles better than at any other season. Their skis carry them easily. They can get up high mountain sides. As they climb higher, hundreds and thousands of other peaks rise into view around the horizon. It is all an incomparable miracle. To go down, all they need is to turn the points of their skis towards the valley and let the powdery snow fly where it will. Knees bent and body leaning forward, they zip down in wide curves, leaving a series of giant S's in the virgin snow.

How varied are the sports that winter offers us! Little boys prefer their sleds. Older ones go in for ice hockey and skiing. Girls pirouette on ice skates, and older folk play at curling. But most visitors come for skiing.

The author of this article, André Roch, is an engineer on the staff of the Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research at Weissfluhjoch near Davos and has been a member of various expeditions to the Himalayas. Mr. Roch has published numerous articles on the Swiss Alps and the mountains of other continents.

Some make long trips, while others shoot down the polished ski runs at dizzying speeds. But the real enthusiasts who appreciate nature, go out into the mountains.

Winter holidays bring untold joys. We escape from the foggy gloom of cities and towns . . . into pure air, glistening nature and healthy sunshine. The dry cold at high altitudes is pleasant and bracing. Everywhere in the Swiss Alps we find ski-lifts that enable us to get more fun and more runs into our day, without having to lose time and energy climbing up again. We can thus perfect our technique and soon are able to set out on other more captivating, more exciting excursions—those delightful springtime skiing tours in the high Alps. There are ski trips like this for every taste. Some skiers prefer to cross mountain passes; others like to climb up high amongst the peaks. Personally, I get the most fun out of climbing the summits that offer the best downhill runs for the descent. There are mountains like this all over the Alps: enormous mountains covered with glaciers, delightful to climb and even more glorious to go down. Here are just a few: Piz Palü, Bernina, Piz Plata, Basodino, Tödi, Titlis, Finsteraarhorn, Great Wannehorn, Strahlhorn, Monte Rosa, Breithorn, Pigne d'Arolla, Grand Combin, Mont Vélan and Mont Blanc. And there are hundreds more!

Obviously it is a big adventure for skiers used to well-travelled ski runs to start out into the high mountains in the spring. Such trips require expert technique and some knowledge of snow conditions, weather, etc. But for this very reason this type of sport is so fascinating. Every climb involves a bit of personal pioneering. But the memory of these climbs is unforgettable. That is why I say, if you want a wonderful winter you will find it in the high Alps.

André Roch

Links: Wie weiten sich die Alpen im Winter! Blick auf das Skiland von Oberberg in der Zentralschweiz. – A gauche: Les Alpes s'étendent à l'infini en hiver! Vue sur les champs de ski de Oberberg en Suisse centrale. – A sinistra: Colpo d'occhio grandioso sulla regione sciistica di Oberberg nella Svizzera centrale. – Left: In the vast expanse of snow-covered Alps is this delightful ski terrain at Oberberg in Central Switzerland. – A la izquierda: La inmensidad de los Alpes en invierno. Vista sobre las pistas de esquí de Oberberg, Suiza central. Photo Källn

Unten: Der Gornergrat (3136 m ü. M.) und der Monte Rosa (4638 m ü. M.), der höchste Berg der Schweizer Alpen. Ein großartiges hochalpines Skiland erschließt sich Zermatt im Wallis durch die Gornergratbahn. – Ci-dessous: Le Gornergrat (3136 m d'alt.) et le Mont-Rose (4638 m), la plus haute montagne des Alpes suisses. Le chemin de fer de Zermatt-Gornergrat, en Valais, conduit aux champs de ski qui comptent parmi les plus grandioses des Hautes-Alpes. – In basso: Il Gornergrat (3136 m s. m.) e il Monte Rosa (4638 m s. m.), la vetta più alta delle Alpi svizzere. La ferrovia del Gornergrat dischiude agli ospiti di Zermatt (Vallese) una delle più belle zone sciistiche d'alta montagna.

Below: The Gornergrat (10 300 ft.) and the Monte Rosa (15 200 ft.), Switzerland's highest mountain. The Gornergrat Railway makes the magnificent ski runs in the Matterhorn area accessible from Zermatt, south of the Rhone Valley. – Abajo: El Gornergrat (3136 m s. el mar) y el Monte Rosa (4638 m s. el mar), la montaña más alta de los Alpes suizos. El ferrocarril del Gornergrat abre a Zermatt el acceso a grandiosas pistas de esquí en alta montaña. Photo Friedli, Swissair

*Hat nun die müde Welt sich in den Frost begraben,
Der Berge Thäler Eis, die Spitzen Schnee bedeckt,
Ruht das erschöpfte Feld nun aus für neue Gaben,
Weil ein krystallner Damm der Flüsse Lauf versteckt:
Dann zieht sich auch der Hirt in die beschneyten Hütten,
Wo fetter Fichten Dampf die dürren Balken schwärzt,
Hier zahlt die süße Ruh, die Müh, die er erlitten,
Der Sorgen-lose Tag wird freudig durchgescherzt,
Und wenn die Nachbarn sich zu seinem Heerde setzen,
So weiß ihr klug Gespräch auch Weise zu ergötzen.*

ALBRECHT VON HALLER

Albrecht von Haller: «Die Alpen», Bern 1729



Weltoffenheit, gepaart mit der Zähigkeit des von den Naturgewalten abgehärteten Berglers, rief in der Schweiz einer großzügigen Hotellerie. So brannte in St. Moritz elektrisches Licht, kaum daß Edison seine Erfindung 1878 in Paris gezeigt hatte. Und die Technik unserer Tage erschloß mit raschen Verkehrsmitteln dem Städter den Bergwinter; sie ermöglicht ihm heute, das Land über den Wolken in Stunden zu finden.

La clairvoyance, alliée à la ténacité du montagnard endurci par les éléments naturels, confère à l'hôtellerie suisse son caractère avancé. A peine Edison avait-il démontré son invention à Paris, en 1878, que la lumière électrique brillait à St-Moritz. Les moyens de communications rendent aujourd'hui nos montagnes accessibles à tout citadin, en hiver aussi; ils lui permettent de découvrir en quelques heures seulement les régions qui semblaient autrefois perdues bien loin dans les brumes hivernales.

La tenacia e l'intelligenza degli alpigiani temprati alla lotta contro la natura diedero vita in Svizzera ad un'industria alberghiera modernamente attrezzata. Edison aveva appena presentato la sua invenzione a Parigi, nel 1878, che già la luce elettrica faceva il suo ingresso a St. Moritz. La tecnica odierna,

con la rapidità dei nuovi mezzi di trasporto, ha dischiuso ai cittadini le bellezze dell'inverno in montagna, permettendo loro di raggiungere in poche ore le regioni soleggiate oltre i banchi di nebbie.

A cosmopolitan way of thinking, together with the typical tenacity of mountain people are what caused the Swiss to build up a system of fine hotels. Edison had scarcely finished demonstrating his electric lamp in Paris in 1878 when St. Moritz started to use it. And modern engineering has built speedy transportation systems to whisk city-dwellers up into the glories of mountain winter... up into the land of blue skies and warm sunshine... up into the lap of the gods.

Un espíritu amplio y una energía vigorizada en los montañeses por la lucha con las fuerzas naturales, ha hecho surgir en Suiza una hotelería de grandes vuelos. Así, en St. Moritz alumbró la luz eléctrica apenas Edison había mostrado en París su invento, en 1878. Y la técnica de nuestros días, con los rápidos medios de transporte, ha abierto a la gente de la ciudad el acceso al invierno de los montes, permitiéndole llegar en pocas horas a esas tierras situadas por encima de las nubes.



Pferderennen in St. Moritz. — Course de chevaux à St-Moritz. — Corse ippiche a St. Moritz. Horse Racing in St. Moritz. — Concurso hípico en St. Moritz. Comet-Photo

Rechts: Festlicher Abend in einer St.-Moritzer Hotelhalle, ein Bild, aus dem die Tradition vornehmer Gastlichkeit spricht. — A droite: Soirée de fête dans le hall d'un hôtel de St-Moritz; cette photographie montre le triomphe de la tradition de l'hospitalité la plus élégante et la plus distinguée. — A destra: Festa in un albergo a St. Moritz. Atmosfera brillante e distinta, suggello di una grande tradizione. — Right: Festive evening in a hotel in St. Moritz, a picture typical of a great tradition of hospitality. — A la derecha: Brillante velada en el hall de un hotel de St. Moritz. Photo Jakob Tuggener



Skiwanderung im Bereich des Mürtschenstocks in den Ostschweizer Alpen. Rechts:
Eislaufen, die graziöseste aller Wintersportarten. Photos Gemmerli und Raußer
Promenade à ski dans les parages du Mürtschenstock, dans les Alpes de la Suisse orientale.
A droite: Patinage, le plus gracieux de tous les sports d'hiver.



Regione del Mürtschenstock nelle Alpi orientali svizzere. - A destra: Pattinaggio, il più
grazioso degli sport invernali.

A hike on skis in the Mürtschenstock area in Eastern Switzerland. - Right: Ice skating,
the most graceful of all winter sports.

Excursión de esquiadores en la región del Mürtschenstock, región alpina del a Suiza
oriental. - A la derecha: Patinaje el más airoso de los deportes de invierno.

