



Press release

One for the bucket list: ride the Glacier Express in Excellence Class

St. Moritz, Switzerland – June 2019: The Glacier Express (www.glacierexpress.ch) has long been considered one of the world's great train journeys but now, in its first summer season, the introduction of Excellence Class has placed it firmly on the luxury travel bucket list. This new premium class, available to just 20 people per train, offers passengers a truly exceptional experience and breath-taking views as the train wends its way through the Swiss Alps, evoking memories of the golden age of train travel.



Typical Alpine scene; the famous Landwasser viaduct

The Excellence Class experience starts at the platform, where the red carpet is (literally) rolled out and a concierge checks in passengers, takes their baggage and offers them a glass of Champagne. Once onboard, passengers are waited on hand and foot by the experienced crew, who share anecdotes, point out highlights (such as the Landwasser Viaduct) and serve an exquisite five-course meal of authentic Swiss fare, freshly cooked, along with matching wines, followed later by afternoon tea.

In addition, every passenger is given their own tablet, which is packed with information about the journey and the regions passed through, which can be read from the comfort of their plush leather seat while admiring the unadulterated views from their guaranteed window seat. Alternatively, passengers can stretch their legs and head to the Excellence Class's well-stocked Glacier Bar, with its over-sized golden compass, which is a source of great amusement when it spins relentless as the train passes through spiralling tunnels.

A seat in this new carriage doesn't come cheap at CHF420 (in addition to the cost of a first-class ticket), but it is worth it for this once in a lifetime experience.

Dubbed the world's slowest express train, the Glacier Express takes roughly eight hours to carry passengers across the Swiss Alps, passing through 91 tunnels, over 291 bridges and over a single-

gauge track, part of which (“Rhaetian Railway in the Albula/Bernina Landscapes“) was included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 2008.

The route takes passengers from the Engadine in eastern Switzerland to the famous Matterhorn in the centre of the country, passing through remote valleys, past sheer rock faces and idyllic mountain villages, through the Rhine Gorge (the Grand Canyon of Switzerland) and scales the highest point of its journey, the Oberalp Pass at 2033 metres above sea level, with ease.

At either end of this train journey stand the dazzling (and legendary) St. Moritz and the equally sophisticated Zermatt, where three of the world’s best hotels have come together to offer the icing on the cake for this bucket list trip: a package offering a night at each.

A night at the iconic Kulm Hotel St. Moritz (www.kulm.com), which its panoramic views over Lake St. Moritz and the Engadine valley, and a night at Mont Cervin Palace (www.montcervinpalace.ch), within touching distance of the Matterhorn, costs from CHF 1020 for two people sharing a double room on a half-board basis (transfers to and from the rail station are complimentary), valid from 21 June to 1 September 2019. Train tickets are not included.

A night at the Grand Hotel Kronenhof (www.kronenhof.com), in the tranquil resort of Pontresina just a few miles from St. Moritz, and a night at Mont Cervin Palace (www.montcervinpalace.ch), within touching distance of the Matterhorn, costs from CHF 975 for two people sharing a double room on a half-board basis (transfers to and from the rail station are complimentary), valid from 14 June to 25 September 2019. Train tickets are not included.



Kulm Hotel St. Moritz; Excellence Class carriage; Grand Hotel Kronenhof

Notes for Editors

Kulm Hotel St. Moritz (www.kulm.com) was the first hotel to be built in St. Moritz. The Kulm Hotel opened its doors in 1856 and immediately became popular for summer spa and painting holidays, particularly among the British who comprised around 75% of the hotel guests. The then owner of the Kulm Hotel, Johannes Badrutt, initiated winter holidays to St. Moritz from 1864 and, as a result, the hotel, resort and Switzerland itself celebrated 150 years of winter tourism in the 2014/15 season.

Since the 19th century, the Kulm Hotel has changed considerably through expansion and renovation, but the fabulous location at the heart of St. Moritz with views over the Lake remains the same. A member of The Leading Hotels of the World, Kulm Hotel St. Moritz has 164 rooms, five restaurants (including formal dining in the Grand Restaurant, the Italian Pizzeria with 13 Gault Millau points and local Engadine specialities at Chesa al Parc), the extensive Kulm Spa St. Moritz (with a 20 m indoor pool with underwater music, various saunas and steam room, a Jacuzzi, a fully-equipped gym and treatment rooms, all with stunning views over Lake St. Moritz) and six conference rooms, with capacities ranging from 50 to 500 people.

Entertainment and summer sports facilities include the 9-hole Kulm Golf Course St. Moritz (the oldest golf course in the country), three tennis courts and the Marmotta Kids’ Club for younger guests.

Recent awards for the Kulm Hotel St. Moritz include:

- 2019 A Michelin star for “the k by Tim Raue”
Connoisseur Circle – Best Hospitality Grand Hotel
TripAdvisor Traveller’s Choice Award and Certificate of Excellence
Forbes Travel Guide Award
- 2018 GaultMillau Hotel of the Year
Bilanz Chef of the Year – Claudia Canessa
TrustYou: Award of Excellence
Top rating in the hotel rankings of *SonntagsZeitung*, the renowned Swiss newspaper
Trivago National Award
Private Luxury Hotel of the Year at The World Luxury Hotel Awards
Weltwochen Ranking No.2
- 2017 One of the top ten most welcoming luxury hotels in Switzerland at the PRIX BIENVENU awards
Traveller’s Choice Awards for the last five years in a row (2014-2018 inclusive)

In May 2016, Jenny and Heinz E. Hunkeler of the Kulm Hotel St. Moritz were named “Hoteliers of the Year 2016” by leading Swiss newspaper *SonntagsZeitung*, which publishes annual Hotel Rating Awards, the only honours sanctioned by Switzerland Tourism, the national tourist office.

Grand Hotel Kronenhof (www.kronenhof.com), located in Pontresina, six miles from St. Moritz, offers the best of both worlds: the chance to enjoy the glitz of St. Moritz, while staying in a peaceful mountain village.

Grand Hotel Kronenhof has a rich and interesting history, having first opened its doors in the first half of the 19th century as a guesthouse. However, the main part of the current building, which is a registered historical landmark, was built at the very end of the 19th century in Neo-Baroque style. The latest addition, completed in November 2007 and costing CHF 35 million (approximately £24 million), consists of 28 new guest rooms and a stunning spa complex covering more than 2000 square metres.

The spa is certainly one of the hotel’s highlights and has been named “the best Alpine spa” (according to Tyler Brule writing in the FT, November 2009). Facilities include a 20m indoor infinity pool with counter-current system, a flotation pool with underwater music, a wide range of saunas and steam rooms, a luxurious private suite for couples to enjoy wraps and massages together, and – for the perfect final touch – a crackling log fire in the relaxation room.

Gourmet cuisine is also a specialty at the Grand Hotel Kronenhof. Awarded the title of GaultMillau Hotel of the Year in 2009, it has three restaurants (the formal Grand Restaurant in an elegant Neo-Baroque vaulted room, Gourmet Restaurant Kronenstübli serving Italian-Mediterranean cuisine with 16 GaultMillau points and the informal Le Pavillon for light lunches). In addition, the hotel features a 19th-century original bowling alley where Swiss raclette is served.

Finally, Grand Hotel Kronenhof is renowned for its extensive children’s activities and facilities (a kids’ playroom and Rondelle, a restaurant just for younger members of the family).

Recent awards for the Grand Hotel Kronenhof include:

- 2019 TripAdvisor Traveller's Choice Award (five years in a row)
- 2018 André Soares named Executive Housekeeper of the Year by Swiss business magazine Bilanz
PRIX BIENVENU awards, one of the top ten best luxury hotels in Switzerland
Trivago, best 5-star hotel in Switzerland
- 2017 World Luxury Spa Awards winner
Second place in NZZ’s Swiss Hotel Ratings, named among the most beautiful holiday hotels

Both the Kulm Hotel St. Moritz and Grand Hotel Kronenhof are owned by the Niarchos family.

For more information, hi res images & to organise a review visit, please contact:

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