

Press Release

Rotkreuz, July 09, 2024

Modernization of two ropeway installations in Saas-Fee

In June, Garaventa completed two major projects in Saas-Fee: the Metro Alpin funicular railway and the Hannig gondola lift. Both modernizations involved mastering technical as well as logistical challenges. In particular, they improve ride comfort and accessibility to the Allalin and Hannig excursion destinations.

Metro Alpin rebuild: new cars for the highest underground funicular

The Metro Alpin is the world's highest underground funicular and links the Felskinn with the glacier and summer ski resort of Mittelallalin at 3,500 meters above sea level. Originally built by Von Roll in 1984, the funicular was upgraded with new, ultramodern cars from Carvatech to mark its 40th anniversary. The new vehicles offer enhanced comfort and more space, while the new platform doors allow passengers to wait on the platform and therefore enable faster boarding. The electric control system was also entirely replaced by Frey Stans.

The geographical location and the tight time schedule posed a challenge for the rebuild. Precision logistics and planning were crucial when it came to transporting the new vehicles and equipment to their tunnel destination at an elevation of almost 2,980 meters. Delivery involved maneuvering special low-loader trailers through car-free Saas-Fee. The vehicles were then carried up the mountain by the Felskinn aerial tram and brought through the narrow access tunnels to their final destination. The rebuild was successfully completed within two months and the funicular went back into service on schedule.

Redesign of the Hannig gondola: a new chapter for a historical leisure destination

The Hannig gondola, which first opened in 1969 and has been an integral part of the Saas-Fee destination ever since, has been replaced by an extensive new build. Despite the fact that skiing operations were shut down on the Hannigberg in 1992, the mountain remains a popular destination for hikers, sledgers and mountain bikers. When the license for the last existing Giovanola lift in Switzerland expired in April 2023 and no extension was granted, the decision was taken in favor of a comprehensive redesign and the construction of a new gondola.

The new, modern 10-passenger cabins from CWA meet high expectations in terms of ride comfort and allow recreational equipment like sleds and bikes to be carried without any difficulty. The cabins feature barrier-free design to allow people with impaired mobility and families with strollers to use the lift with ease. The modernization of the Hannigbahn ensures that the Hannigberg will remain accessible to the public all year round in the future.

95-FUL Felskinn–Mittelallalin (Metro Alpin), Saas-Fee, Switzerland

Customer: Saastal Bergbahnen AG
Inclined length: 1,447 m
Vertical rise: 464 m
Capacity: 1,240 PPH
Speed: 10 m/s
Opened: June 2024

10-MGD Saas-Fee–Hannig, Saas-Fee, Switzerland

Customer: Saastal Bergbahnen AG
Inclined length: 1,104 m
Vertical rise: 515 m
Capacity: 800 PPH
Speed: 5 m/s
Opened: June 2024

Images Metro Alpin:

<https://coco.doppelmayr.com/pinaccess/showpin.do?pinCode=eZxXomeEJq9G>

Copyright: ©Saastal Bergbahnen AG/ ©Nicolas Bodenmüller

Images Saas-Fee–Hannig:

<https://coco.doppelmayr.com/pinaccess/showpin.do?pinCode=jxUmhuCHqUVK>

Copyright: ©Alpine Cableways

Video: 95-FUL Felskinn-Mittelallalin "Metro Alpin" – Spectacular transportation of the cars:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sL20RDdzy_Y

Copyright: ©Garaventa AG

About Garaventa AG

Garaventa AG is a Swiss company headquartered in Rotkreuz, with additional sites in Goldau, Uetendorf and Sion. It is the Swiss branch of the Doppelmayr Group and has established itself as the competence center with international reach for reversible aerial tramway, funicular railway and material ropeway systems as well as for complex rope installation work. Garaventa is also responsible for all ropeway projects of the Doppelmayr Group in Switzerland. All functions and competencies for special ropeways are made available to the Group worldwide from Switzerland. Garaventa employs 380 people in Switzerland.

For inquiries, please contact:

Andreas Bonifazi +41 79 476 51 15 / media@garaventa.com