

## **Bernina Express – from glaciers to palms**

**Travel up to shimmering glaciers and then down again to waving palm trees – a trip aboard the Bernina Express is a unique experience. The Rhaetian Railway's showpiece line doesn't just connect north and south: it is a strand of red, threading its way through the 3 language regions in canton Graubünden all the way to Italy and you see how nature meets culture, especially on the UNESCO World Heritage leg of the journey. 55 tunnels, 196 bridges and gradients of up to 70% are no problem for the panorama train, which makes the trip entirely without cog-wheels. Rugged but seductive landscapes, glaciers that flow down mountainsides plus a touch of Italian *dolce vita* to finish with make this a very diverse journey in a class of its own.**

Take a seat and enjoy yourself! Sitting in a comfortable Panorama coach on the Bernina Express allows passengers a close up view of the impressive beauty of the Alps. Daring structures from the age of the rail pioneers soar above the Albula valley and complicated helical tunnels and switch-backs allow the train to climb past the fabled Bernina glaciers and then to descend gently southwards. Since its inauguration in 1973 the Bernina Express - the highest alpine rail track – has never stopped delighting young and old alike. Yearly, 250,000 guests come to travel over this fascinating line of ascents and descents, to see its amazing landscape and be aware of the varied cultures and languages that only this part of Switzerland has to offer. This multi-faceted rail journey takes about four hours with highlight after highlight along the way, so we recommend you to just sit back and be amazed.

## **A blaze of impressions all the way – from the glacier regions of the north...**

The Bernina Express and its panorama coaches travel from Chur, St. Moritz to Tirano – and back again of course! From now on, there is an additional departure time, with the train leaving Chur for Tirano at 1:30 pm. Whether you simply want to arrive later or spend time exploring the oldest town in Switzerland – the new connection opens up a world of totally new excursion possibilities. As you start off your railway adventure in Chur, you will soon see the picturesque houses and alleys of Graubünden's capital give way to a hilly landscape. After the picturesque villages and proud castles of the Domleschg, the red train pushes on through the deep Schin Gorge and takes the 85-metre-high Solis Viaduct to reach the rugged rock faces and wild mountain streams of the Albula Valley.

Not far now to the RhB's famous landmark, the Landwasser viaduct, the bridge which disappears into a steep rock-face shortly before Filisur station. Ingenious structures and serpentine tunnels dominate the route up to Preda before the train reaches beautiful

Engadine on the south side of the Albula tunnel. See sophisticated St. Moritz while the train continues its winding route through Engadine's pure mountain air and the glorious Bernina glaciers seem close enough to touch.

### **... to 'dolcefarniente' on the Mediterranean side**

Way up high, above Ospizio Bernina, you might say it's the roof of the Rhaetian Railway at 2,253 metres, the endless freedom of mountains becomes tangible. Problems fade, busy city life is forgotten and the view across turquoise Lago Bianco lake and dark Lej Nair lake entice the visitor to stay a while, simply to enjoy the astounding panorama. But the journey continues and the attractions of the south are not so far away. The next stop is Alp Grüm, whose claim to fame is being the one Swiss hotel and restaurant that is accessible only by rail. Here the magnificent Palü glacier dominates the view and the world – and the train - stand still beneath it. While you are here you have the enough time to photograph an incomparable vista. Capture this unforgettable moment forever – with the new photo stop, you are bound to get the perfect shot of the Palü Glacier.

Photos taken, the train continues downwards with more bends towards the herb-garden of Puschlav. Not long after having experienced the cold majesty of the mountains you are heading for a Mediterranean climate. Following the circular viaduct in Brusio you roll into Tirano with its palm trees – so typically Italian! If you'd like to see a bit more of Italy and get some southern feeling then you can board the red Bernina Express bus. On its way from Tirano to Lugano the bus passes the extensive Veltlin vineyards, pretty little villages and runs alongside Lake Como. The day's finale is a speedy train trip from Lugano northwards through the Gotthard Basis tunnel and home.

### **A rail experience for all the senses**

While on board the Bernina Express our passengers don't only get to enjoy the view but also culture and nature. The views are fantastic and so is the rolling minibar for trying out some regional specialities: Churer Nusstorte (tart with a nutty filling) or an aromatic herb tea from Puschlav, for example. Yet another highlight on a very special journey. In addition to free Wifi, the free modern Info(T)ainment ensures your railway experience will appeal to all the senses.

This is a multi-lingual travel guide with audio that will give you a lot of background information about the Bernina Express and the RhB UNESCO World Heritage directly via your mobile phone or tablet. A great source of interesting facts and details for curious travellers.

**UNESCO World Heritage**

The Bernina Express route goes through a UNESCO World Heritage site. The line from Thusis to Tirano in the Albula/Bernina landscape was added to the UNESCO World Heritage sites in July 2008 and is one of only three incredible rail routes worldwide featured on their list. The line itself is over 100 years old and a truly magnificent achievement of engineering and route planning. The line harmonises perfectly with its surroundings over the entire 122 kilometres and the structures are spectacular – helical tunnels, soaring viaducts and safety-galleries all merge inconspicuously with the landscape in perfect unity. Technology and nature become one on this historic but daring north-south connection across the Swiss Alps. Making the journey on the Bernina Express is therefore not only for railway buffs but equally fascinating for nature and culture lovers. Something for everyone.