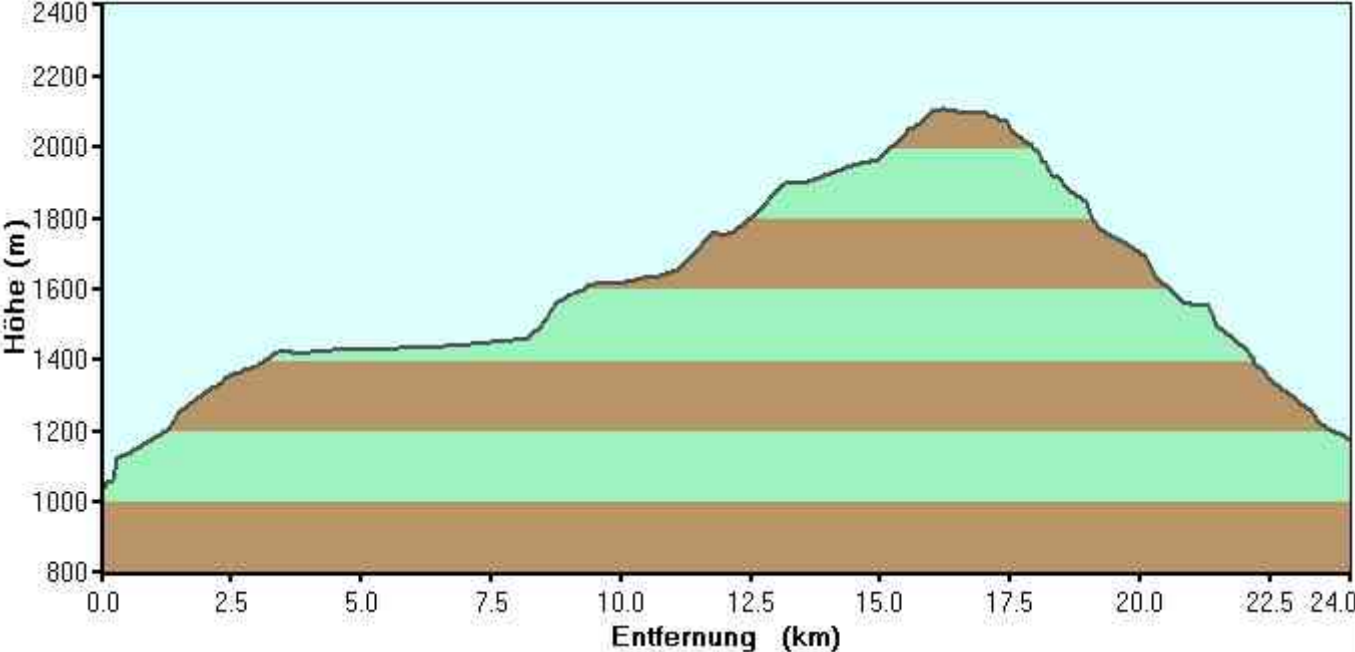


# Gotthard Pass

## Goeschenen-Schoellenen-Andermatt-Hospental-Gotthard Hospiz-Tremola-Motto Bartola-Airolo

Total time: ca. 8 hrs

<b>Goeschenen-Hospenthal-Gotthard-Airolo</b>	h
Zug - Goeschenen (train, SBB)	
Goeschenen - Teufelsbruecke - Andermatt or train, MGB	1.5
Andermatt - Hospenthal or train, MGB	1
Hospenthal - Maetteli - Brueggloch - Gotthard Hospiz or Postauto in Summer (reservation may be necessary)	3
Gotthard Hospiz - Tremola - Motto Bartola - Airolo or Postauto in Summer (reservation may be necessary)	2.5
Airolo - Zug (train, SBB)	



30.7.2007

Basis: GPS-Route  
**GHGA.gpx**  
© gruxa.ch



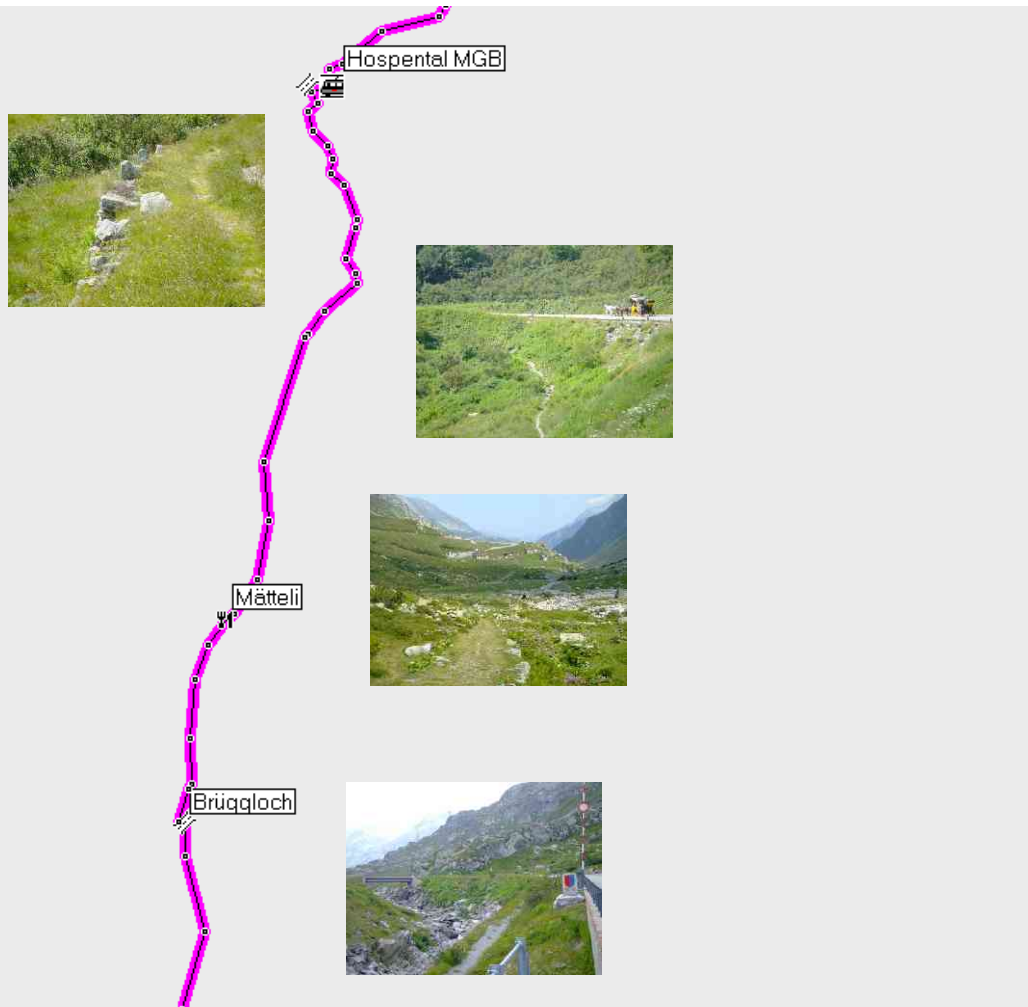
The track begins right at the Railway station **Goeschenen SBB / MGB**. The track is excellently marked all the way.

After crossing the square, a short stair is leading up to the main road, proceeding over to the newer bypass road and to the Gotthard pass road. After the Reuss bridge there, for a short part, the track follows the busy traffic line. Before the next hairpin bend though, the hiking track turns off to the right. It is leading towards the Reuss river and after some 100m the bow bridge **Haederlisbruecke** is reached.

The hiking trail is partly a nature track, at other places it runs along a pedestrian walk right along the pass road, either directly in a Gallery or on their roof (sometimes closed because of falling rocks). Traffic noise is usually overlaid by the roar of the river.

After about an hour the rock wall with the **Suworow** memorial is visible: one other bend in the road and we are in front of the devils bridge (**Teufelsbruecke**).

A short distance now along the pass road, and **Urnerloch** (Uri-hole) in form of a traffic tunnel will permit an easy access to Urseren valley with Andermatt. For the hiker there is a special treat: to the right, in a separate room there is a spiral staircase, ready for the ascent atop the tunnel roof and the continuation of the track, away from vehicle traffic. - The change of scenery is astounding: the plain of Ureren is opening, with Andermatt close by.



Proceeding on to **Altkirch**, with the old Kolumban church on the left, the hiking trail now follows the main road, passing the barracks, the Tourist center and the **Andermatt** railway station. The church is of the 13th Cent. and at that time it had replaced an older, smaller church from the 1st Cent., built by the Disentis monastery. Shortly after the Andermatt railway station, by an underpass, we're on the lovely track along the Reuss river.

Reaching **Hospenthal**, just over the railway track (unguarded RR crossing), another witness from times gone by can be admired: the **Tendlenbruecke**, a small stone bow bridge over Furkareuss.

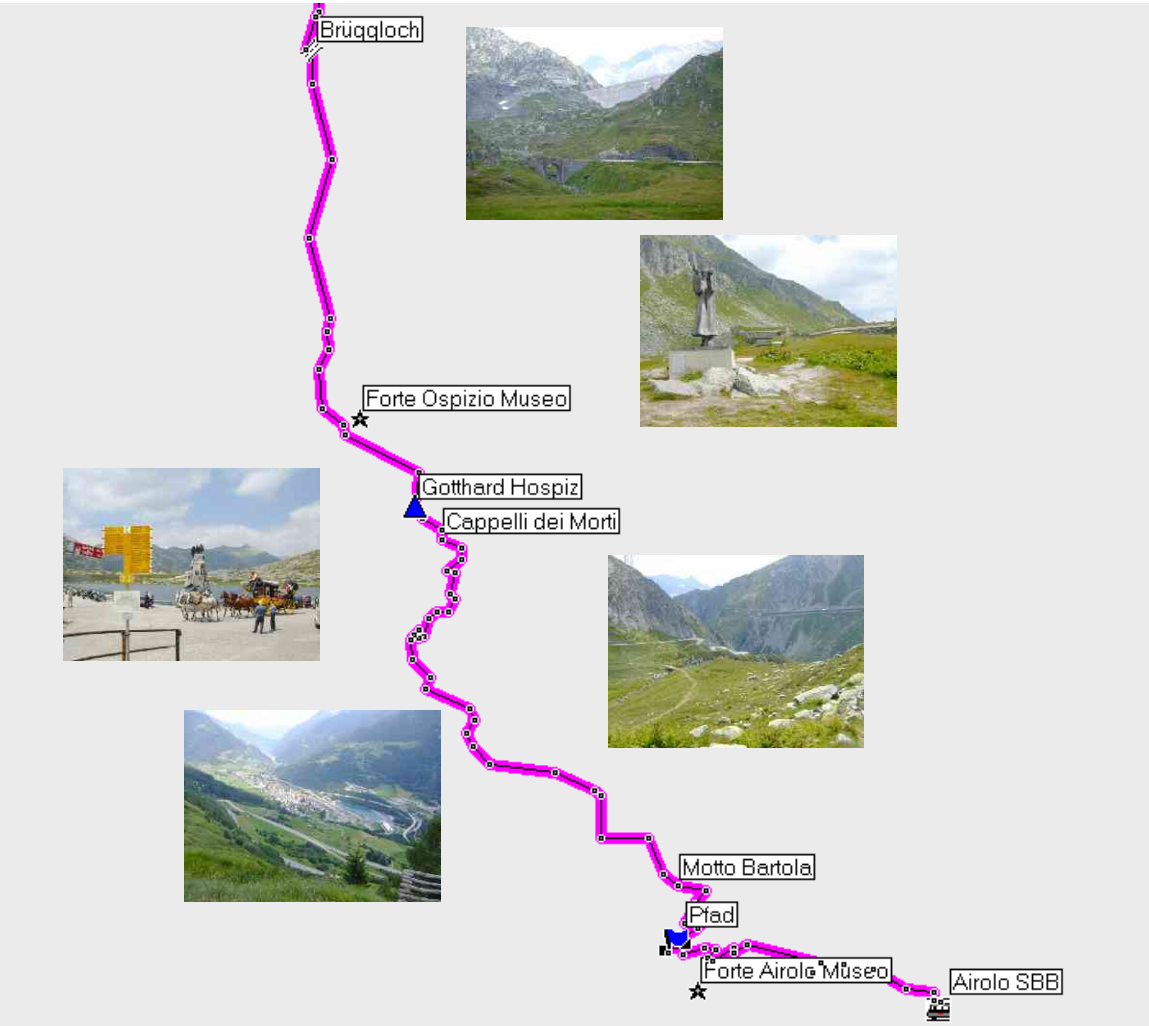
In Hospenthal, the two rivers Furkareuss and Gotthardreuss merge into Reuss.

Guided by trail markers we're pretty soon above the village, on the way towards **Maetteli**, all the time along the Gotthardreuss. - Carefully observed by Marmots, who will time after time give warnings by a sharp whistling.

The pass road with the motorized traffic hardly disrupts the peaceful impression along the track. Pretty often we recognize the old mule track with old stone layer.

At **Brueggloch** we're entering Canton Ticino. The track is getting a bit steeper now, but soon the dam of the Lucendro lake is getting visible: Gotthard Hospiz will be reached pretty soon.

Gotthard-Pass



On **Gotthard Hospiz**, the trail continues, passing **Totenkapelle** (chapel of the dead) towards the cobblestone Tremola pass road. Usually the track shortcuts most of the sharp bends of the pass road. The art with which the Tremola road has been adapted into the cut of the valley is admirable. Obviously also the few motorized users feel a kind of respect and enjoy the scenery.

At **Motto di dentro** the pass road has to be crossed and unexpectedly the track then climbs rather sharply, though only for a short stretch. The vista then, passing meadows and woodland on the way to Motto Bartola is quite marvelous. Below **Motto Bartola** the track to the right of the main road can easily be overlooked. The Marker although is absolutely correct. The grass track for the first 50m follows on the right the main road, then underpasses it, later the “autostrasse” as well. The rest of the trail will be on local roads, **Airolo** and the railway station just ahead.

The trail from Goeschenen over Gotthard pass to Airolo is marked excellently. Only the part passing Tremola is steep, but for the most part it’s on nature surface.

**On Gotthard Hospiz** a visit to the museum (*Museo Nazionale del San Gottardo*) is a good idea. Gotthard in the last 100 years was an important and well equipped fortress. The one from WW1 is a museum for some time (*Museo Forte Ospizio San Gottardo*). The newer one from WW2, will be open by 2008 (*SASSO SAN GOTTARDO*). Already part of the modernized fortress can be used for Hotel / Seminar, Events.  
A third fort, above Airolo is open for inspection too, the *Museo Forte Airolo*.

**Info – board (left side)**



**Info - board (right side)**

*(Text rechts neben Bilder auf Info-Tafel:)*

Die dreibogige Haederlisbrücke oberhalb Goeschenen wurde immer wieder als markantes Beispiel einstiger Brückenbaukunst bewundert. Historiker bringen sie mit der Wegbarmachung des Saumpfades der Schoellenen im 12. Jahrhundert in Verbindung.

In einer Urkunde von 1470 werden erstmals zwei Bezeichnungen für diesen Reussübergang genannt, "St.Niklausenbruog, welche man namset die lange bruog in der Schellena." Offenbar wurde die "Langebrücke" schon beim ersten Brückenschlag unter Schutz und Schirm des Heiligen Niklaus von Myra gestellt. Den dritten Namen, "Haederlisbrücke" findet man in einer Abrechnung im Alten Talbuch von 1496. Keine genauen Hinweise bestehen in Bezug auf die Herkunft dieses Namens. Nicht belegt ist, ob die Bezeichnung «Haederlisbrücke» vom Wort Hader, im Sinne von Zank und Streit oder im Zusammenhang mit Meinungsverschiedenheiten hinsichtlich des Arbeits und Baukostenanteils stammt. Denkbar waere auch die Ableitung vom Familiennamen «Haederli», der sich folglich auf den Erbauer der Brücke beziehen würde und die Jahrhunderte so überlebt hat.

In der Nacht vom 24. auf den 25. August 1987 ging ein Unwetter über dem Gotthard-Gebiet nieder. Das Hochwasser der Reuss schwemmte die Haederlisbrücke in der Schoellenen weg.

1991 hat der Kanton Uri mit Hilfe des Bundes und des Schweizerischen Baumeisterverbandes die Haederlisbrücke originalgetreu wieder aufgebaut. Dazu wurden Lehrlinge verschiedener Branchen aus der ganzen Schweiz beigezogen. Steinmetze, Zimmerleute, Maurer und Pflaesterer kamen in die Schoellenen und leisteten Grosses, um die Brücke wieder aufzubauen und begehbar zu machen.

1649 wurde die Haederlisbrücke an der Stelle eines früheren Holzsteges erstmals aus Stein gebaut. Das Material dafür stammte aus einem Steinbruch nahe der Brücke. Dieser wurde speziell für den Wiederaufbau nochmals in Betrieb genommen. Der besonders harte Goeschenener-Granit wurde gesprengt, gespalten und behauen. Die Bogen, welche im Verhaeltnis 1:2:4 zueinander stehen, wurden sorgfaeltig rekonstruiert. Sie woelben sich nun wie anno dazumal über die bestimmende Reuss.

**Basler & Hofmann, Zürich**

Gotthard-Pass

## **Translation:**

The triple-bow Haederlisbruecke above Goeschenen has always been admired as a striking example of former bridge construction art. Historians connect it with the opening up of the mule track through the Schoellenen in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century.

In a record of 1470 for the first time two indications for the crossing have been named, “ **St.Niklausen bridge** which has been the name for **the long bridge in the Schoellenen**”. Obviously already the first bridge, the “Long bridge”, was put under the protection and shield of St.Niklaus von Myra. The third name “Haederlis bridge” can be found in a bill in the old “Talbuch” (record) of 1496. There are no hints about the origin of the name. There is no proof, that the name would have been adapted from the word “Hader” (quarrel, gr: - hades). Perhaps in the sense of quarrel, dissens, concerning the share of work- and construction costs? Imaginable is that the name derives from the family name “Haederli”, accordingly the builder of the bridge and his name would have outlasted the Centuries.

In the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 1987 a heavy thunderstorm was raging in the Gotthard region. The flood of the Reuss river destroyed the bridge and tore it away.

1991 the Kanton Uri, with help from the Swiss Federation and the Swiss “Baumeisterverband” (master builder union) rebuilt the bridge according to original plans. For that task apprentices from all over Switzerland were cooperating. Stonemasons, carpenters, bricklayers, cobblestone layers, would arrive in the Schoellenen and rebuild the bridge. - And they did a great job!

1649 the Haederlis bridge, as a replacement for a former wooden foot bridge, was for the first time built with stone. The material used came from the nearby quarry. This quarry was again put into use for the reconstruction in 1991. The extremely hard Goeschenen-Granite was blast, split, hewn. The bows, presenting the ratio 1:2:4 were carefully reconstructed. They now are arching over the Reuss river as they did time ago.

**Basler & Hofmann, Zuerich**

(translation by gruxa.ch)

## **Urnerloch**

The Urnerloch area used to be a major obstacle, with the rocky, steep and narrow cut of the Reuss river.

There were alternatives, e.g. the passage over the Baezberg. Today there is a road from Schoellenen somewhat below, up to Baezberg in the vicinity of the military installations and then descending to the area with the training grounds.

That track was not suitable for a trade route. In the 13<sup>th</sup> Cent. the passage in the Urnerloch was improved by the construction of a foot bridge, hung on the rock wall, which made the crossing easier. Although ice, snow, froth from the wild river must have made the going slippery and awful.

The idea was most likely from people coming in from the Wallis: Suonen-specialists.

Up to these days we can marvel at the old Suonen in Wallis, some hanging on rock walls in astonishing heights, carrying water from remote places to the dry fields far away.

A remarkable improvement was reached in the 18<sup>th</sup> Cent. by a tunnel, constructed by Piero Morettini from Ticino. At that time it was probably the biggest tunnel with a length of 70m and a width of 2m. Later, early 19<sup>th</sup> Century it was extended to a height of 4m and a width of 5m.



***Mosaic in the Urnerloch: Werner Müller***