

**Press release**

Verbier, 26 August 2022

## **“An encounter with a glacier”: a themed trail running from the Gentianes to the Tortin glacier**

This summer, work was completed at the Col des Gentianes to create a themed trail all about the **melting of the glaciers**. Its purpose is to offer visitors a **rare and precious experience** in which they can connect with a glacier by contemplating it, touching it and discovering both its history and its future.

*“Alpine glaciers have hardly ever been as topical as they were this summer. This new trail gives everyone the chance to get up close and personal with one of these magnificent ice giants that are in danger of disappearing. You will be able to see it and touch it. We hope that this simple, authentic experience will deeply move you!”.* **Bureau d'étude Relief (Swiss Relief Research Bureau)**

The Bureau d'étude Relief carries out studies and runs outreach projects relating to natural heritage and tourism. Their team worked closely with several researchers from the University of Lausanne to create this educational trail. The researchers provided scientific data on the melting of the glaciers as well as information about how the landscape is likely to evolve in the future.

The marked trail starts at an altitude of over 2,800 metres and takes you down from the Gentianes station to the Tortin glacier. The route is punctuated by various stopping points along the way, including:

- A photo spot with a bench where you can take a photo with the glacier (with its “personal ID card “ in shot), giving you the perfect souvenir of your encounter
- Dated markers indicating where the glacier extended to in the past
- An explanatory panel about the glacier's past, attached to a large boulder in the moraine that marks the glacier's position in 1995
- An information station near the ice, explaining the role the climate plays in the health of the glacier
- A terrace inviting you to contemplate the glacier and to meditate on what the landscape will look like in 2100, after the glacier has disappeared

- A walk on the ice (optional) to an ablation stake that measures how much the glacier is melting – it usually loses 2 m in thickness each summer season, but it has already lost 5 m this year!

[The educational trail in pictures](#)

**Practical information about the trail:**

- Starting point: Col des Gentianes cable car station.
- Activity duration: 45–50 min, with 20 min of walking.
- Walking on the glacier: optional; only possible in good weather and with suitable shoes.
- Accessibility: the path is not suitable for people with reduced mobility; accessible for families.

For further information, please contact:

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