

100 years of the Albula

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An Albula line train ascends the spirals.
Photo: © RhB

The Albula Line, built between 1898 and 1903, is well known for its many tunnels, galleries, viaducts and bridges, particularly on the stretch between Filisur and Preda. In June 2003 this part of the Rhätische Bahn celebrates its 100th anniversary and a number of events will mark the occasion. This will include special trains running on the Albula line during the summer of 2003. The anniversary will begin with a festival at Bergün on 27th, 28th and 29th June 2003 and this weekend in particular will see the start of the special trains running from Chur to Samedan and vice-versa. These trains will run every

weekend from Saturday 28th June until Sunday 12th October (except 26th July). In addition on 12th July, 16th August and 27th September there will be vintage goods trains with passenger coaches (GmP).

Two vintage trains will be available and will, subject to availability, be hauled by the historic Ge6/6¹ Krokodil locomotives of which only three are now in operation. On Saturdays the train will consist of the 1st class coach A1102 (ex A2 of 1903) from the early years of the Albula Bahn, the 3rd class coach B2060 from 1906, another 3rd class coach from the early years of the Landquart-Davos Bahn (C2012 of 1889), the newly restored Filisur Parlour (to be commissioned in October 2002), the Rhaetian Parlour (D4052 II) from 1928 as well as three 3rd class carriages from 1928 (B2245-47).

On Sundays the newly restored Alpine Classic Pullman Express from the 1930's will be used. The train will consist of the luggage van D4062, two Pullman coaches As1141 and As1142, the Gourmino Bar WR-S3814 and three further Pullmans As1143, A1144 and As1161.

Although not guaranteed, photo stops are planned with each train at Naz, on the stretch of double track near Preda, and at Stuls. In addition trains running from Samedan to Chur will make a photo stop at the Landwasser Viaduct. The vintage trains will leave Chur at 10:00 arriving in Samedan at 13:21 and the return to Chur will depart from Samedan at 15:20 and arrive at Chur at 18:00. The full price of one-way tickets will be SFr70 for first class travel and SFr50 for third class travel with the usual reductions for children and holders of various Swiss season tickets. All RhB and Swiss national railway stations will sell the tickets from 1st January 2003.

The RhB is an inclusive organisation and has structured the celebration for all: customers, railway enthusiasts, business partners, local politicians, children and above all their own workers. The festivities will centre on Bergün, although Samedan will also be involved on the first day. Multi-media shows, beer and sausage refreshments, dancing and music are all included. It is also the 200th anniversary of Graubünden and the celebrations surrounding this will be a major part of the RhB's year. This will develop through the year and more information will be given in future editions of Swiss Express. Watch this space.