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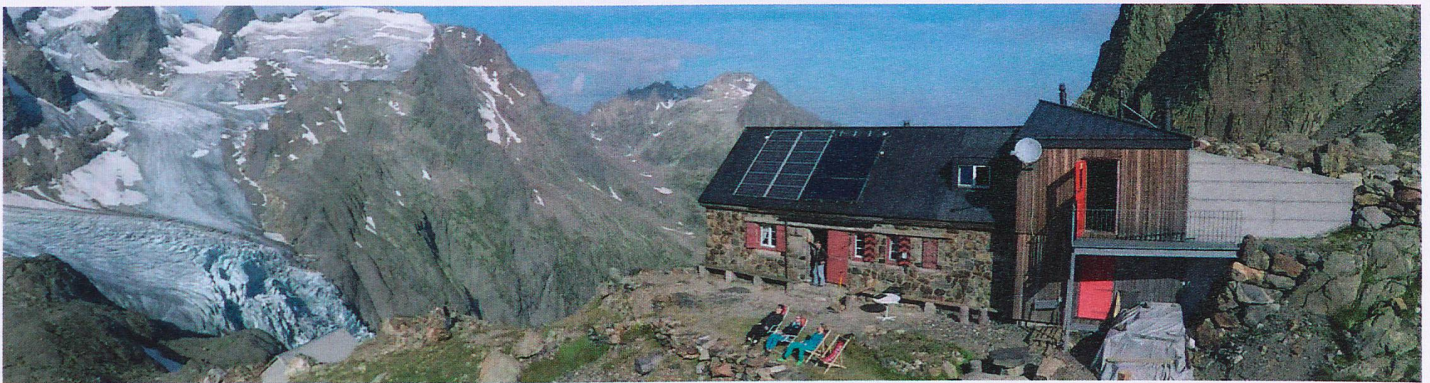
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# Trift Bridge



## Spectacular views but you need a head for heights

Just about wherever you drive or walk in Switzerland you are almost always guaranteed spectacular views – mountains, lakes, rivers, valleys. Here's another to add to your list but with a difference – you need a good head for heights!

The Trift Bridge is one of the most spectacular pedestrian-only suspension bridges in the Alps. In the past, the Trift Hut of the Swiss Alpine Club - a cozy mountain hut with a nice terrace looking out to Triftsee and Trift Glacier - was reached on foot via the glacier tongue but with global warming causing the glacier to melt, it was no longer high enough for visitors to access the hut. So in 2004, a suspension bridge was built. It was constructed to allow workers from the Trift hydroelectric plant to access a power plant that was built below the glacier to collect and use the run off. This bridge, modelled after Nepalese high wire bridges, turned out to be a tourist magnet.

However, in 2008 the local power company Grimsel decided to replace the first bridge with a more structurally substantial one and in 2009 it was replaced with a safer, more accessible bridge, which is now considered to be one of the longest and highest pedestrian suspension bridges in the Alps.

The Trift bridge is made of thick steel cables over which wooden planks have been bolted. The newer bridge looks similar to the old one but the handrails are higher and there are stabilizing cables to prevent strong oscillations from the wind. At 100m high and 170m long, it is poised above the region of the Trift Glacier, with spectacular views, of the turquoise blue glacier lake and the glacier tongue, guaranteed for those with a head for heights. In a record time of only 6 weeks, the project team was able to realize the new bridge. A lot of courage and a thirst for adventure was required to work in this very special place

Technical specifications:

- length 170 m
- height 100 m
- material 7500 kg steel
- 5 kilometers steel cable
- 6500 screws
- 340 larch wood planks
- building-costs CHF 350'000.-

To reach it, you need to take a cable car in Meiringen, followed by a gondola then a difficult 1.5 hour uphill hike to the bridge. The bridge receives approximately 20,000 visitors per year, and there is little wonder when you look at the photos.

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