

Festive beginning to "The year of the alps"

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Cosmopolis Above the Clouds

Back to the classic land of winter-sports — the Grisons. We have already described how reckless, luxurious, sophisticated, socially active or simple and homely life in St. Moritz can be. Exactly the same gamut of individual choice and possibilities is offered by other communities in the South-east corner of Switzerland. Davos, with its population of over ten thousand has moved up to be the "highest" city in Europe. And in winter it swells to a cosmopolis with an abundance of gala events. The horse races and the skating contests are world famous. World famous, too, is the Parsenn, defined as the most glorious mountain for ski-ing on earth. It is just as easily accessible from the neighbouring village, Klosters, where for some years half of Hollywood has spent the winter. For years Arosa has had a magic attraction for the youth of the world between 10 and 80 years of age. With its 3,800 hotel beds, its places of entertainment and its happy landscape quilted with easy walks and sleigh paths, Arosa is counted among the most soigné and versatile winter resorts in Switzerland.

The list of other attractive spots is almost endless, even if we only include those in the Grisons — Pontresina, Silvaplana, Sils-Maria, Zuoz or Scuol-Tarasp-Vulpera in the Engadine; Flims, Sedrun, Bergün, Tschierschen, Lenzerheide-Valbella or Parpan in other parts of the Canton.

Palm Trees in the Snow

Two of Switzerland's "Riviera" resorts — Montreux on Lake Geneva and Locarno on Lake Maggiore — are attracting increasing crowds of winter visitors. While occasional snowfalls may blanket their palm-studded lake-side promenades, the idea is that you can enjoy all the snow you desire without dispensing with such lovely conveniences as Mediterranean sunshine, sidewalk cafés, camellias in bloom and gambling at plush casinos. All you will have to do is to hop uphill in a toy train or aerial tramway, from Montreux to the virgin snowfields of Rochers-de-Naye (6,710 feet) and from Locarno to an elevation of 4,430 feet at Cardada and on by chair lift to the 5,480 feet high Cometta, one of Europe's sunniest winter meccas. At all three points, restaurants and sun terraces command tremendous panoramas, and — what a bliss for snow-haters! — transportation is always on hand for a fast return to the gardens of Eden below.

To cut a long story short: There are Swiss winter holiday joys galore, into which you may plunge without any obligation to become a ski hero, as you would joyfully plunge into the fountain of youth.

S.N.T.O.

INTERNATIONAL ALPINE CONFERENCE

Under the chairmanship of Dr. Paul Bernecker, Director of the Austrian National Tourist Office in Vienna, the heads of the tourist offices of the seven Alpine nations — Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Monaco, Switzerland and Yugoslavia — met at Grindelwald on 20th January in conjunction with "The Year of the Alps". The main theme of their discussions was the joint advertising campaign in North America to promote the Alps as "Europe's top tourist attraction".

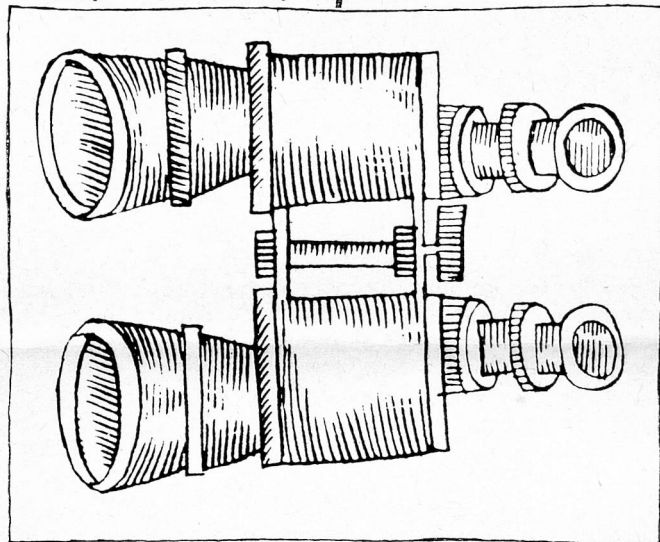
[S.N.T.O.]

FESTIVE BEGINNING TO "THE YEAR OF THE ALPS"

"In sixty million years the Alps will be worn away — so let's make the most of the time that's left!" This was one of the many references to "The Year of the Alps" at the recent international press conference held by the Swiss National Tourist Office at St. Moritz, where there was a simultaneous celebration of the centennial of the arrival of the first winter guests in that now famous resort town. What's the point of celebrating the Alps, if they will still be around for another sixty million years? The celebration has primarily historical roots: 1965 marks the first centennial of St. Moritz, Davos and Villars as winter resorts, and the 100th anniversary of the first successful climbing of the Matterhorn. And so an attempt is being made to impress more people with the climatic and geographic attractions of the Alps, their beneficent effects on modern man's body and spirit, and their excellence as a unique region for rejuvenation and the enjoyment of nature. As Dr. Werner Kämpfen, Director of the Swiss National Tourist Office, declared at the press conference: "In the 'Year of the Alps', anyone interested in building up his health by partaking of the very special atmosphere which the Alps offer, can celebrate his own personal festival — a festival of health and rejuvenation."

[S.N.T.O.]

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