

GROWING HEALTHCARE IN SAANENLAND

Gstaad International Healthcare has realised its first project, SarinaMed, in close cooperation with the municipality of Saanen. In the next phase, GIH and the municipality are now tackling the future of the area around the old hospital. The aim is to continue utilising the old building structures and contribute to expanding capacity.

Managing Director Dominik Unger explains that GIH's vision is to guarantee a balanced and competent healthcare. The SarinaMed practice has been open since 2 August – and already has over 400 patients. It symbolises the urgent need for GPs and the right decision to tackle this project first. “If we had pushed ahead with the development of the site with a completely new building first, the shortage of GPs would have become even more acute.” Half of the costs of the group practice were covered by the municipality of Saanen and half by GIH. We were also able

to count on the financial support of the Friends of Saanen Healthcare System and the municipalities of Lauenen and Gsteig.

We are in the process of building up a medical network so that we can refer our patients to the best specialists in such centers if necessary,” says Unger. GIH maintains excellent relations with Johns Hopkins Medicine International (JHMI). In addition, good relationships have been established over the past year with Swiss university hospitals, regional hospitals and the ETH.

“We have set ourselves the ambitious goal of significantly enhancing healthcare provision in Saanenland and aligning it with the region's quality standards. If we succeed, it will be a gain for both locals and guests. Our primary focus is on delivering the best possible care for our patients. This will not only fortify the medical structures for everyone but also bolster the tourism region as a whole,” says Unger, instilling a sense of optimism and hope for the future.

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GLACIER 3000 SEES 40% SURGE IN SUMMER VISITORS

While the mountain railway industry in Switzerland reported a five percent decline in visitor numbers for the first half of the summer, Glacier 3000 experienced a remarkable 40% increase, welcoming 65 000 guests between May and August. This surge represents a significant boost compared to the past five years average.

Glacier 3000 attributes this success to its four-season strategy, which has been in place for around 15 years and has transformed the mountain railway into a year-round attraction, focusing on year-round pedestrian access. The cable car, which remained operational after the ski season ended in April, saw a substantial uptick in visitors, transporting 40% more passengers than in 2023.

The mystery of last year's cable car breakdown has been solved

Just over a year ago, a mysterious breakdown involving the cable car's electrical inverters led to a 15-day shutdown in the middle of the summer season. The cause has since been identified: fine metal particles from renovation work on the Botta restaurant damaged the electrical system. Despite this setback, Glacier 3000's 2024 summer visitor numbers still exceeded the five-year average by 40%.

Botta Restaurant is set to open in November

Looking ahead to autumn, Glacier 3000 is focusing on completing the renovation of the Botta restaurant, which was destroyed by fire in September 2022. The new structure, featuring a south façade transformed

into an Alpine micro-solar power plant with over 600 photovoltaic modules, is on track to be ready for the winter season, with an opening planned for early November.

No Autumn Break Again This Year

Glacier 3000 will keep its lifts running throughout the autumn for the second consecutive year, responding to growing demand. The annual maintenance work will be carried out on the first section of the cable car between 17 September and 4 October, ensuring continued access via alternate routes during this period. Visitors from Gstaad and the Vaud Alps can still reach the summit of Scex Rouge without interruption.

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