



GOOD TO KNOW

START/FINISH

Gornergrat railway station,
Zermatt, Switzerland

SEASON

Best hiked in late summer, from August to September. As Stockhorn is at a high elevation, considerable snow remains on the ridge well into July, and fresh snow can fall at any time of year.

ACCOMMODATIONS

There is a three-star hotel at Gornergrat (Kulmhotel). The four-star Hotel Riffelhaus at Riffelberg, a little further down the mountain, is one of the oldest hotels in the Zermatt valley. Zermatt itself has numerous options to suit every budget, from a basic campsite up to five-star hotels.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1. The Gorner Glacier, seen up close
- 2. The view south to Lyskamm’s north face
- 3. Reaching the summit of Stockhorn
- 4. Views of the Matterhorn in the distance to the west

HELPFUL HINTS

WHAT TO BRING

Hot and sunny or cold and wet weather may be encountered, so pack a waterproof jacket and pants, a spare warm layer (fleece or insulated), gloves and a warm hat, plus a sun hat and sunglasses. High-factor sunscreen is essential; glare from snow can cause sunburn. An ice axe and crampons may be needed early in the season, along with the skill to use them safely.



FOOTWEAR

In snow-free conditions, lightweight trail-running shoes with good grip are recommended.

NAVIGATION

Navigation is straightforward in clear conditions, as the trail is marked as far as Hohtälli. After this, take care not to descend too far from the ridge when avoiding steep obstacles, and be sure you have identified Stockhorn’s summit correctly—there are several false summits.

SAFETY

This is a serious hike in a high-altitude Alpine environment, and potential hazards include falling loose rock, ice (especially early in the morning), and the risk of afternoon thunderstorms.

Do not attempt the route if thunderstorms are forecast, and turn back if one approaches. If inexperienced, or if you feel insecure, do not venture beyond Hohtälli.

SUPPLIES

Zermatt has many shops, supermarkets, and restaurants. There are restaurants at Gornergrat.

WATER

There is no water on the ridge; carry enough for the day with you.

ACCLIMATIZATION

Poorly acclimatized walkers may experience headaches or other symptoms at this altitude. Tackling an easier walk at about 3,000 m (9,843 ft) before attempting Stockhorn is suggested.

BONUS TRACK

GORNERGRAT TO ROTENBODEN VIA RIFFELSEE

An easier hike from Gornergrat heads downhill toward Rotenboden station, then makes a circuit of the beautiful Riffelsee lake before finishing at Rotenboden. At only 2.9 km (1.8 mi) it will take under an hour and is suitable for all abilities. The views, especially of the improbable rocky peak of Riffelhorn (2,928 m/9,606 ft), are dramatic, but it is one of the more popular hikes in the area and is likely to be very busy on a clear day.

BACKGROUND

THE GORNERGRAT BAHN

This is the oldest fully electric cog railway in Switzerland, and work began on it in 1896. The line opened two years later, and year-round rail journeys commenced in 1928. Gornergrat is the second-highest railway station in Europe (after the Jungfrau station further north in Switzerland).

Initially, there was considerable opposition to the idea of building a