

HIKES

Off The Beaten Track – the Vitznau Alps



INFO

16.9 km

↑↓ 435 hm - 435 hm

1190 hm

↑ 1499 hm ↓ 435 hm

medium

6.75 h

LOCATION

📍 Bahnhofstrasse 2
6354 Vitznau
Switzerland

Hike Description

This long hiking tour starts directly from the Rigi Bahn valley station and continues along the lake in the direction of Weggis for about 30 leisurely minutes, past the majestic Parkhotel and the secluded bathing spots, until reaching the Lützelau area. This bay once had a mineral bath and a chapel, which were buried in 1661 by a rock fall. From Lützelau you begin the ascent to Rigi First. The path first leads over meadows through an increasingly dense forest dotted with large nagefluh boulders, then climbs continually steeper until ascending the last rock outcropping to the Oberwilen area via a steep stairway. At the top of the rock steps, you can marvel at the excellent view of the lush pastures of the Oberwilen farm and the Vitznau Bay in the distance.

From here, you leave the official signposted hiking trail, but the path remains clearly visible. On the unmarked section, it is important to make as little noise as possible and to keep dogs on a leash. This trail passes through a designated wild grazing area, where small herds of deer often graze, especially in the early morning. The varied path continues through dense forest, passes small streams, and crosses lush forest clearings and wetlands. If you take the time, you will discover countless plant species.

After this multifaceted stretch, you reach 1028 m above sea level the historic Rigiweg, which connects Weggis with Rigi-Kaltbad. In the early days of tourism, wealthy tourists were

carried in sedans to the hotels on Rigi-Kaltbad. The Felsentor accommodation, still in use today, was a popular stop along the arduous path up at that time.

After about another 15 minutes, the Rigi railway tracks are crossed at the Romiti station and you follow the path to the mountain farm of Oberäbnet, meaning "even terrain", and which operates year-round. The open pasture offers a wonderful view of the rust-colored cliffs of the Rigi and the blue surface of Lake Lucerne far below, and across the horizon as far as Lucerne.

From there the trail climbs steeply uphill again through light forest and over lush mountain meadows. The area has always been called "Vorder Würz", which means "place with good plant and herb growth". These meadows were very popular with mountain farmers in the past, but today they are no longer intensively cultivated and over the last few decades a beautiful natural mountain fauna has taken over.

After arriving at the First settlement, you will have managed the strenuous ascent and can enjoy the breathtaking panoramic view from the high-altitude trail that follows. A highlight is the part of the trail carved into the rock in the early 20th century. Next, you continue along the old railway line to the Unterstetten restaurant. A stop here is highly recommended, not only for the spectacular terrace but also for the hearty traditional food. The railway line is a relic of the Rigi-Kaltbad-Scheidegg-Bahn (RSB), which once connected Rigi-Kaltbad with Rigi-Scheidegg. Operations ceased in 1931 and the railroad tracks were used for munitions production during World War 2.

Shortly after the Unterstetten restaurant, you enter the area of the Vitznau Alps, which greet you with fantastic mountain flora. Here, too, it is worth looking around. Three rustic summer alps follow upon each other: Alp Gletti, Alp Brüche, and Alp Gass. Only a few farmers still pursue the arduous work of tending to these age-old meadows, but summer farming is still a long-cherished tradition.

At point 1338 there is an extraordinarily species-rich wetland, which is sustainably maintained as a nature reserve. From there, the path leads steadily downhill via the Fälmis farmstead, which operates year-round, and the Ruffli forest clearing, until the tired hiker again reaches civilization in Vitznau after this long tour.

In-Between Stops

This hike is easily divided into parts and can be shortened with the use of public transport:

The bus running between Vitznau and Weggis every half hour, covers the flat stretch along the Seestrasse between Vitznau and Lützelau, reducing the hiking time by about 30 minutes.

The steep climb to Romiti can be made by Rigi Bahn. This takes about 3 hours off the total hiking time.

If you don't want to make the whole descent on foot, you can stop by the restaurant Hinterbergen, enjoy a cool drink and fine meal, then take a relaxed ride back to the village with the Hinterbergen gondola.

1. Startpunkt
2. Lützelau
3. Oberwilen
4. Wildgebiet
5. 1028 M. ü. M.
6. Felsentor
7. Romiti
8. Oberebnet
9. VorderWürz
10. Rigi-First
11. Panoramaweg
12. Unterstetten
13. Feuerstelle
14. Alp Glätti
15. Alp Brüche
16. Alp Gass
17. Feuchtgebiet
18. Flmis
19. Rufli
20. Ziel

Impressionen

