

GR-085 Schwarzhorn

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Summary: If you are looking for a 3000 meter summit to activate (one that doesn't involve simply riding up a cable car), this is a great choice. Technically it's not difficult at all, and it is very popular even on weekdays. A highly recommended hike we greatly enjoyed.

As the date indicates, we're now into the relatively narrow window of time where it's possible to activate some very high summits without worrying about snow. The recent heat wave has cleared much of the snow, and going to these altitudes also brings welcome relief.

I got the idea for this summit from Reference 1 (*Leichte 3000er in der Scheiz -- Easy 3000ers in Switzerland*), which says "If conditions are good, one of the simplest summits in this altitude."

The weather on this day was absolutely perfect for hiking: temperatures in the low 20s, just a very slight breeze (but in the afternoon there was a very strong wind in the valley), and literally not a cloud in the sky with 0% risk of thunderstorms -- which is extremely important to keep in mind for such a hike where you are so high and so exposed. We could not have ordered better weather if we wanted.



Key facts: the climb to the summit is 4.3 km long with an ascent of 839 meters. The ascent took us just over three hours, and the descent was 1.5 hours. Technically it is a T2 for most of the route, only several spots on the final ascent to the summit are T3. We crossed about a dozen patches of snow of varying length, but they were not very steep or exposed on the sides and were not dangerous at all.



View of the small parking lot directly at the bus stop (Susch, Abzw. Schwarzhorn) and the trailhead.

I did this activation together with Jürg HB9BIN, who picked me up in Chur and we then drove through Davos and then to the Flüelapass (which goes from Davos to Susch/Zernez/Scuol). Note, there is a bus stop directly at the trailhead.



The first third of the hike follows a gently climb; at this point you cannot yet see your destination.



On the second part of the hike leading to Schwarzhornfurgga you start to encounter some patches of snow that are not at all dangerous.



As you approach Schwarzhornfurgga you get your first good views of the summit.

From the parking lot, the first third of the trail involves a gentle, steady climb, but you don't gain much altitude very fast. The second section of the trail leading to Schwarzhornfurgga is somewhat steeper and is where we started running into the patches of snow. The third section, from Schwarzhornfurgga to the summit, is the steepest part but for the most part is not technically difficult.



The last third of the hike leading to the summit is the steepest. To give you an idea of the scale, look for the person in the blue coat. This section alone took almost an hour.

On this particular day -- still a weekday -- we saw just how popular this summit is, and we must have encountered 20 other hikers on the way up or down. Many of them were faster than us and already on the summit when we arrived, but there was enough room for both of us to set up antennas. For his mast support Jürg used the summit cross, and not far away was another pole supported by rocks that I was able to use for a mast support.

On our trip home, we both concluded that this SOTA is well worth recommending to others. It's not often a 3000er is so easy!



There are convenient supports for two masts on the summit, which is large enough to comfortably hold a gathering of hikers -- who were there on this particular day.



Jürg at his operating position, too busy running stations to enjoy the fantastic scenery. Visibility on this day was just excellent. In the background you can see the pass road leading east to Susch.

Note: thanks to Guido HB9TNF, who had activated this summit the week before, for his tips.

Reference 1: Peter Deuble, *Leichte 3000er in der Schweiz*, Bruckmann Verlag, ISBN 978-3-7654-4959-8.