



# NEW TRACUIT HUT

## ZINAL, SWITZERLAND

The story of this cabin goes back to 1929. Extended and developed several times in the past century, it was finally replaced by a brand new hut designed by Savioz Fabrizzi Architectes to meet the standards of mountaineers and hikers of the 21st century. The latest technologies allow for comfort for the guests but also ensure that the building respects the striking natural environment of the Val d'Anniviers in the heart of the Valaisan Alps. The building offers comfortable dormitories (for 4, 12, and 24 guests) on the top floor as well as a refectory on the ground floor, filled with natural light and open to spectacular views over the Val de Zinal. The below-ground level houses lavatories and technical rooms. As it sits between a cliff and a glacier, both the placement and the shape were perfectly adjusted to fit the site's topography – the building literally becomes an extension of the rugged rocks. The most striking element of the volume is the south façade: envisioned to extend from the cliff, it acts as an extensive sun radiation collector through generous openings and solar panels, which profit from exposure to the sun. The other sides were planned with only a few and relatively small openings to reduce heat loss, which is also achieved through the compact shape and efficient wall insulation.

Access to the hut leads from the village of Zinal through a long, 5-hour yet pleasant walk. To optimise the construction, the architects limited the use of concrete, which can be found only in the foundations, while the structural frame of the building is made entirely of wood. All other elements like the wall and floor components were prefabricated and brought to the site by helicopter. To adapt the building to adverse weather conditions, the architects wrapped the volume in protective stainless steel cladding. Low-tech ventilation is used to cope with the heat emitted by the guests and prevent excess humidity during the months the hut is closed. The interiors are entirely lined with light wood and are furnished in a minimalist but comfortable manner. New Tracuit Hut is open from March to September, but a spare room remains open in the off-season with a wood-burning stove both to heat the room and to cook. A dormitory with room for 24 guests is also available. It is used as a perfect 'base camp' to attack several neighboring peaks including the Bishorn and the Weisshorn.

### ACCESSIBILITY

A path from the village of Zinal is said to be of average difficulty, but it is a relatively long route of nearly 5 hours and with a 1500-metre difference in altitude.

### ARCHITECTURE

Savioz Fabrizzi  
Architectes, 2013

### LOCATION

Zinal, Switzerland

### ALTITUDE

3256 m

### NUMBER OF BEDS

120

### PHOTOGRAPHY

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