

15 July 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Nendaz : the Alphorn will sound once again!

After the cancellation of its 2020 edition, the Valais Drink Pure Alphorn Festival is indeed taking place from the 24th to the 25th of July 2021. On this special occasion, it is celebrating its twentieth anniversary!

The Valais Drink Pure Festival in Nendaz has been bringing together around 200 Alphorn players every year for the past 20 years, with its unique competition and enchanting ensemble pieces. It is also the perfect opportunity for spectators to experience a world of folklore and tradition.

It is back in 2021 in a somewhat different form due to the health crisis. Nevertheless it intends to celebrate its 20th anniversary in style.

Exhibition and sculpture

An exhibition at the Nînd'Art gives visitors the opportunity to discover the history of the Alphorn in Nendaz in general and that of the festival in particular. It presents the 20 posters of the event, numerous photos, Alphorns, costumes and pieces by local artists. Visitors can also watch a film specially produced for this anniversary, which includes archive footage and various recent interviews. Dates: from the 16th of July to the 8th of August on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 4pm to 7pm (except on Saturday 24th of July: from 10am to 8pm). Also to mark the jubilee of this event, a life-size alphorn sculpture with a commemorative plaque is being erected in the centre of the resort, near the Plaine des Ecluses. Visitors can take a photo of themselves with this ancient instrument.

Music and folklore bandstand

No big event, no parade and no tent on the Plaine des Ecluses, as the situation does not allow this. The festive part of the event is being held on Saturday in front of the multi-purpose hall in the centre of the village of Haute-Nendaz if the weather is favourable (indoors if no other alternatives are possible). From 11h to 12h30, the public can attend the recording of the renowned RTS-La 1ère programme "Kiosque à musiques" hosted by the no less famous Jean-Marc Richard. The afternoon continues with performances by various folklore groups. A shuttle bus connects the venue to the competition site and the various car parks.

The official competition and the OFF competition

The Alphorn players compete in an official blind competition: the jurors are inside a tent where the identity of the player is kept hidden, thus ensuring complete impartiality. Defending champion Adolf Zobrist, winner in both 2016 and 2019, is taking part. The qualifying rounds take place during the day on Saturday at the usual location, at a short distance from the centre of the resort. The OFF competition is also held there on Saturday from 12:45 to 14:15. With its rules offering more freedom to the players and composers, it allows the most experienced among them to stray from the beaten track and opens the door to contemporary pieces in multiple tonalities. It is also an opportunity for the public to discover this ancestral instrument in a more modern perspective..

Grand final and 'ensemble' pieces at Tracouet (2'200 metres)*

As usual, Sunday takes place at Tracouet, where the grand final and the 'ensemble' pieces are played. In this idyllic alpine setting, on the banks of a small lake, the Alphorn returns to its natural setting. The Alphorn, which was originally used to communicate from one valley to another, echoes once again in the mountains, offering spectators a truly unforgettable experience.

** Please note: due to the guidelines for major events, the Covid-19 certificate is required for access to Tracouet on Sunday the 25th of July. On that day, it will be possible to take a test directly at the bottom of the gondola (no appointment necessary and free of charge for Swiss citizens).*

Full programme at www.nendazcordesalpes.ch

For further information:

President of the organizing committee – Beat Eggel – Tel: +41 79 277 59 12