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## The Uristier

The black and yellow are taken from the black eagle on yellow field of the Holy Roman Empire, and the substitution of a bull is perhaps a pun. The bull is actually an auerochs, a now extinct European bison, thought to have been plentiful in Uri and domesticated by the locals (hence the nose ring). To the original Helvets (Celts), the bull was a royal symbol and a symbol of their god Cernunnos. Uriers, the people of Uri, have long been teased by other Swiss that the nose ring signified they were wild men who had to be tamed. The ring was originally gold, meaning it was an augmentation of honour. According to legend, a pope granted this honour for military services rendered.



The Uri flag is thought to have been in existence since at least 1231 when King Heinrich, son of Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich II, granted the region "imperial freedom". This meant they were sovereign and owed no feudal allegiance to anybody but the emperor, and that they were entitled to their own flag. The flag was definitely carried at the battles of Morgarten (1315) and Laupen (1339). A flag carried in those battles is preserved in the townhall of Alt-dorf.

*from the internet*

## Urserental

The Urserental (also Urseren) is the valley of the upper Reuss River in Uri, running southwest to northeast, from Realp to Hospental and Andermatt.

Separated from the main valley of Uri, it connects to the Valais via the Furkapass, to the Grisons via the Oberalppass and to the Ticino via the Gotthard Pass.

In 1798, Urseren became part of the canton of Waldstätten of the Helvetic Republic, and in 1803 became part of the canton of Uri.

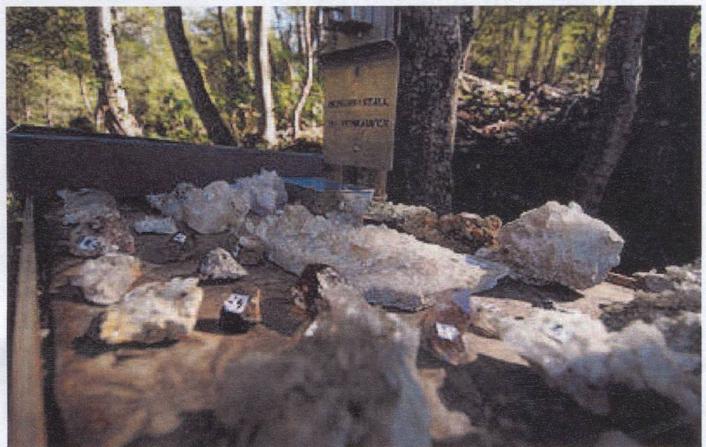
In 1946, there were clashes between locals and the Swiss Army over a disputed dam project which intended to flood the entire valley.

## The Maderanertal



Golzerensee and the beautiful Maderanertal

This east-west running side valley of the Reuss valley is another quite famous mineral location in Switzerland. The name of the Maderaner valley goes back to a noble family who mined in the 16th and 17th centuries the iron ores at the Windgällen locality. After the Madran family diminished in 1631, the mining came to an end. In the 19th century, some wanted to start it again but the people of Silenen prohibited the use of wood out of the forest, a quite remarkable move at that time.



Often found in the Maderanertal: Crystals for sale. The crystals are displayed with an honesty box beside them.

The list of minerals that have been found in the south side of the Maderanertal goes on and on; the Maderanertal has an international reputation. But the Canton Uri has firm restrictions for collecting minerals, even for its own citizens. A normal collector should not go up in those high and very steep ravines to look for minerals. Instead of paying a high fee and finding nothing, one is much better off to buy from a strahler or at local shows. It still is interesting to hike through the valley even if it's only to have a look at all these famous localities from a distance.

*from the internet*