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The non Swiss perspective

The Jungfrau, Eiger and Mönch are a trio of imposing mountains that lord over the Berner Oberland. They are majestic in appearance, menacing in nature and awesome in scale.

Throughout history, man has felt the need to conquer all obstacles nature placed in his way.

Cast your mind back to 1865. In case you don't remember, I'll set the scene...

Interlaken, The Beer Garden at the recently opened Victoria-Jungfrau Hotel, summer, a group of young men having a "few" gets talking...

"Hey, you fellas, remember what a complete mission it was to get to the top of the Jungfrau?"

"Sure," the others replied.

"Well... I reckon it would be cool to build a train up there. It shouldn't be too hard. We just dig tunnels where we need to. I reckon the longest tunnel will be about 7km long. No worries. I know some people who know some people..."

This conversation carried on for the rest of the evening. Gradually, a plan was made.

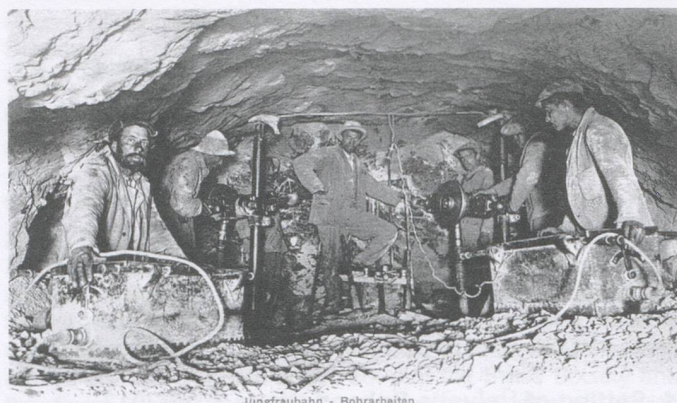
Sadly, this particular plan did not pan out in the end. I believe it had something to do with insufficient financing. Apparently it's quite an expensive thing to dig tunnels inside mountains. Who knew?

Eventually, a tunnel with a train track was built. A fellow called Adolf Guyer-Zeller began construction in 1896. The whole project took 16 years.

Back to modern times...

I rode the Jungfrau Bahn in the summer of 1999 or 2000. I don't quite remember when. The train takes you through some of the most exquisite scenery I've ever seen. I won't bore you with the details except to point out that I did see a real St. Bernard dog, complete with a small barrel of Kirsch. (At least I hope it was Kirsch).

The final portion of the train ride takes you past windows at the Eigerwand (Eiger face) and Eismeer (sea of ice), where



Construction of the Jungfrau Bahn

Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia

you are given the opportunity to take photos. At some point during the trip, the train is climbing at a grade of 1:4. That's 25% in Swiss. I think Herr Guyer-Zeller and his successors enjoyed a private joke at the expense of travelers. See, they made the seats in the train as smooth as possible. When you have a rear facing seat on the ascent, you need to hold on tight so as not to slide off the seat and join the young and frail piled up at the back of the train car.

At the top, it's everything you expect. There is a massive glacier; and some mountain climbers who, I suppose, suffer from *Diderodromophobia* - fear of trains, railroads or train travel.

You will also find: A restaurant, skiing, an observatory and an ice-cave cut into the glacier.

I found it a bit difficult to draw breath up there. At the Jungfrau Bahnhof (3,454m), effective available oxygen in the air you breathe is approximately 35% less than at sea level.

If you have the opportunity to visit the "Top Of the World" then take it. The Jungfrau will not disappoint you.

By David Latham

Sources: <http://www.phobia-fear-release.com/phobia-dictionary.html>, <http://www.victoria-jungfrau.ch/inform/history/>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jungfrau_railway, <http://>

Consigli della Nonna (Grandma's hints):

Una manciata di sale di cucina sciolto in un bicchiere d'acqua tiepida e versato in lavatrice, sostituisce l'ammorbidente.

A handful of kitchen salt dissolved in a glass of lukewarm water and poured into the washing machine replaces the softener.

Per eliminare l'odore di bruciato nell'aria, bollite alcuni spicchi di limone in un po' d'acqua.

To eliminate the smell of burned things in the air, stew some slices of lemon in a little water.

Per evitare che i formaggi non diventano secchi, non dovete far altro che avvolgerli in un strofinaccio

imbevuto d'aceto.

To stop cheese from getting dry, all you need to do is wrap it in a cloth soaked with vinegar.

Solo ora vi accorgete che il vostro deodorante è terminato? Provate a sostituirlo con un batuffolo di cotone imbevuto di succo di limone.

Have you just noticed that your deodorant is finished? Try to substitute it with cotton buds soaked in lemon juice.

By Ursula Nixon

