

CLASSIC DRIVER

The Bernina Gran Turismo brings motorsport back to the Engadin

Lead

What's a more exciting way to end the season than on the Bernina Gran Turismo, held in the mountains of the Engadin? From 21 to 24 September, this historic hillclimb, now in its third year, will take place once again...



While it may be hard to believe today, with the amount of classic and sports cars currently available, in the Swiss canton of Graubünden, automobiles were prohibited for a quarter century, from 1900 to 1925. This made motorists all the more ambitious to tackle the alpine passes at great speed — a highlight of such was the motorsport movement known as 'St. Moritz Automobile Week', which took place in 1929 and 1930. The third annual Bernina Gran Turismo, which takes place from 22 to 24 September, brings back memories of the pioneering period of motorsport in the Engadin.



The unofficial kick-off party takes place on Thursday evening at the Dracula Club, which was founded by Gunter Sachs in

1974 and is now run by his son Rolf Sachs. On Friday, you can admire the participants and their race cars during their technical inspection at the Kempinski Grand Hotel de Bains in St Moritz, before the train moves to the paddock in the Bernina Pass. The runs up the 5.7km road, closed to traffic, on Saturday and Sunday are the sporting highlight of the weekend — here, drivers can truly prove their skills, as the route is challenging and the mountain weather is unpredictable.

Starting next year, various events that occurred during ‘St Moritz Automobile Week’ will be celebrated at a revival during the Bernina Gran Turismo. A small taste of what to come can already been seen in a film series shown in the historic hall of the Hotel Reine Victoria. During the Bernina weekend, historical trains and buses will also be running, as well as a Hickory golf tournament, which will take place on Saturday at the Golf Engadin in St. Moritz and feature golfers in historical clothing, using classic sports equipment.

Photos: Bernina Gran Turismo

Gallery

Includes video

Has video

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