

15.10.2022 - Historic day at the Ferrovia Monte Generoso

Today, Saturday 15 October 2022, with an extraordinary double event, involving the entire management and staff, a new page in the history of the Monte Generoso Railway was written.

Open Day at the Bellavista Buffet

At 10:00 a.m., in front of the press and local institutions, including the Mayor of Mendrisio, the Open Day of the Buffet Bellavista, the meeting place for the inhabitants of the Mendrisiotto and the refreshment point for excursionists who love Monte Generoso, took place.

"Exactly ten months after the first pickaxe strike on 15 December 2021, the Buffet Bellavista is once again ready to welcome hikers from all over, but above all those whose memories are strongly linked to this place," says Monica Besomi, Head of Marketing & Communication and Vice-Director of FMG. "We are witnessing another important milestone achieved by the Ferrovia Monte Generoso, thanks to the will of the management, which followed the work with particular dedication, and to the support of the Migros Culture Percentage, which invested another million francs in favour of tourism in Mendrisiotto and Ticino".

The team of professionals entrusted with the renovation and formed by Luigi Brenni, a structural engineer from Mendrisio, Arch. Michela Pagani from Balerna and Arch. Désirée Rusconi from Mendrisio, aimed, in agreement with the FMG management, at a conservative restoration while respecting the building's history.

"There were many challenges, especially that of wanting to maintain the internal wooden structure dating back to the end of the 19th century and the current external appearance that everyone is (re)familiar with," explains Luigi Brenni, "this choice imposed localised structural interventions in the initial phase and the insertion of steel elements in symbiosis with the existing wooden ones to increase the building's stability. A sort of 'picking and piecing' that in the end, however, paid off, returning the late 19th century 'Buffet de la Gare' to the community with its ancient beauty, while respecting modern requirements, but above all the environment and the territory".

Close by the completely renovated station and railway track, the new Buffet Bellavista is once again the ideal place for a break after a walk, for a lunch with friends or to spend a few hours in peace and quiet surrounded by nature. Inside, the 160 square metres arranged on two floors and connected by a linear staircase are designed to dialogue with the territory.



"We paid great attention to the quality and authenticity of the individual materials, including indigenous chestnut wood," emphasises architect Michela Pagani of Studio Gaffurini Pagani Tresoldi in Balerna. "The aim was to recreate the cosy, hospitable and convivial atmosphere of the time, from the paintwork on the walls to the window shutters, from the floors to the roof. A harmony perfected by the large fireplace and the stoves, which will give off a comfortable warmth, as well as the large tables, along which we will sit spontaneously, side by side, occupying reclaimed chairs, which seem to have always been there".

Absolutely new and located just a few metres from the structure is, on the other hand, the phyto-purification plant for the treatment of waste water. Modern, efficient and ecological, this natural ecosystem boasts excellent purification standards at zero cost. "It is a tank, about 94 square metres in size, where purification takes place thanks to the synergic action between the roots of the luxuriant marsh plants that grow there, and the microbiological flora present in the substrate," explain the environmental engineers at Oikos Swiss in Bellinzona. "Quite simply, the roots of the plants absorb the water, purify it and release it back into the atmosphere from their leaves. In addition to fitting ideally into the landscape, all that is needed to make the phyto-purification system work is the sun and the force of gravity - no energy consumption!"

The mayor of Mendrisio, Samuele Cavadini, addressed special thanks to the FMG management, the Board of Directors, the planners, and all those who have worked on the renovation in recent months: "I thank everyone for the kindness with which the restoration of this place has been carried out, with respect for the territory and its history, which are fundamental for both the institutions and the community. I would like to quote the title of a famous film : "Back to the Future", because we have taken a step forward, but it is as if we were going backwards: I see myself on the terrace with my grandmother, drinking a gazelle during the countless summers spent here on the Generoso, and I cannot help but be moved".

Don Marco's words before the blessing and ribbon-cutting ceremony were auspicious and very meaningful: 'May the names of this place not remain just toponyms, but help us to live our daily lives better. 'Bellavista' should not be limited to the panorama, but I hope it refers to our gaze, the gaze with which we look at the world and the people around us, and that 'Generoso' is one of the aspects, together with the beauty of nature, that distinguishes us all for the common good'.

From tomorrow, five more open days - 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30 October - and the 50% discount on tickets for all routes will allow Monte Generoso lovers to discover the new eco-friendly look of the iconic Buffet. The bar and restaurant will be operating with a simple and reduced offer. In fact, its official opening is scheduled for 25 March 2023, which, with the end of the last phase of the track renovation work, will allow the Monte Generoso Railway to once again include weekends and winter holidays in its seasonality. The Bellavista Buffet will also be available for the organisation of private and corporate events.

Celebration Panel dedicated to supporters

Simultaneously in Capolago, a celebratory ceremony was held dedicated to the supporters who joined the initiative launched in 2020 for the 130th anniversary of the Ferrovia Monte Generoso.

In the covered forecourt of the workshop of the Ferrovia Monte Generoso, the almost 300 supporters were presented with certificates and pieces of the 1890 rack railway. Many people, families, companies and local institutions joined the initiative of the virtual sale of the posts, launched on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the only rack railway in Ticino (1890-2020).

"This morning another page of history was written for the Ferrovia Monte Generoso, which has been bringing hikers, travellers and tourists from all over the world to the top of Monte Generoso since 1890," said Chiara Brischetto, Marketing Project Manager of the FMG, in front of the supporters who had come to Capolago. "Your participation represents for all of us an extraordinary success that deserves to be remembered in the future. To thank you, in fact, we have chosen to put your names on a Celebration Panel which, displayed in the square in front of the offices in via Lüera, 1 in Capolago, will testify to future generations your special attachment to the railway and to Monte Generoso".

After the ceremony, supporters and accompanying persons went up to Bellavista to preview the new Buffet, taking advantage of the free tickets reserved for them.

Images: <https://we.tl/t-tiYmKF4bac>

For further informations please to contact:

Viviana Carfi

Media & PR Manager

T. +41 (0) 91 640 23 42 – M. +41(0) 79 307 00 94

E-Mail: media@montegeneroso.ch

Ferrovia Monte Generoso is one of the oldest rack railways in Switzerland and has been owned by Migros since 1941. It has been preserved thanks entirely to the personal commitment of the founder of Migros, Gottlieb Duttweiler. Today the Migros Culture Percentage supports the rack railway, the "Fiore di pietra" structure at the top of Monte Generoso, designed by architect Mario Botta, and Camping Monte Generoso. www.montegeneroso.ch – www.campingmontegeneroso.ch

The Migros Culture Percentage is a commitment undertaken by Migros, and consolidated in its articles of association, dedicated to activities for the promotion of culture, society, education, leisure time and the economy. www.migros-culture-percentage.ch

