On a bluebird day, the views from the 9,715-foot summit slay me. The optic white panorama encompasses more than 600 craggy peaks surrounding central Switzerland’s Urseren Valley. Puffy wisps trail skiers descending marked pistes and unblemished powder fields. Far, far below and out of view on the valley floor lies the once-sleepy eye-candy village of Andermatt, now emerging as a world-class destination resort with new hotels and luxury rental apartments layering contemporary chic upon its cozy, traditional town center, speedy new high-capacity lifts zippering surrounding peaks, and cross-country trails lacing a new championship golf course.

I discovered Andermatt four years ago while riding the Glacier Express excursion train that bisects the village and zigzags through the 6,706-foot Oberalppass, a highlight on my journey between two of Switzerland’s most glamorous ski destinations — chichi St. Moritz, with its modern town center, and chalet-style Zermatt, with centuries-old log-and-stone farm structures in the old village center. Noticing skiers and construction, I began keeping an eye on this rising Mama Bear staking out a Goldilocks-pleasing location between them as a new, major player positioned to rival, or perhaps more accurately, complement both. I kept returning, watching as a new village center took shape and mountain infrastructure improved. Now, I’m back to share the secret, so that other avid skiers like myself can discover Andermatt — before the crowds do.

Looking around, it feels as if I’m standing not only in the center of Switzerland, but also the center of Europe. Three mountain passes — Furka (think James Bond’s Aston Martin DB5 chase in Goldfinger), Gotthard, and Oberalp intersect the village and four major European rivers — the Reuss, Rhine,
Rhone, and Ticino — originate in the region. Thirteenth-century Benedictine monks labeled this divine landscape the Valley of the Devil, and mytho still haunts the Devil’s Bridge spanning Schöllenen Gorge. In Victorian times, Andermatt shined as an elite escape, attracting Queen Victoria, Charles Dickens, and Arthur Conan Doyle, among others. Then, in 1882, the Gotthard rail tunnel bypassed the village. In the 1990s, the Swiss Federal Army garrisoned the strategicallyHamilton-hamlet town to secure the barracks in the early 2000s, passes and tunnel. sited town to secure the garrisoned the strategicallyHamilton-hamlet town to secure the barracks in the early 2000s, passes and tunnel. sited town to secure the garrisoned the strategicallyHamilton-hamlet town to secure the barracks in the early 2000s, passes and tunnel. sited town to secure the barracks in the early 2000s, passes and tunnel. Given the area’s rich cultural heritage, the hotel will continue to help preserve the region’s unique character.

Andermatt’s cultural heritage comes in full swing during the fall, when the community celebrates the annual fruit harvest. Local growers showcase their produce in an event called the “Festival of Fruits.” This event attracts visitors from around the world who come to taste the region’s bounty and enjoy traditional Swiss cuisine. Additionally, the village hosts a range of cultural events throughout the year, including concerts, theater performances, and art exhibitions. The Andermatt Cultural Foundation supports local artists and promotes the region’s cultural heritage, ensuring that Andermatt remains a vibrant and dynamic community.

In conclusion, Andermatt is a unique destination that offers a blend of historical significance, natural beauty, and modern luxury. Visitors can experience the region’s rich cultural heritage, enjoy world-class skiing, and appreciate the latest in contemporary architecture. Andermatt is truly a place where the past and present coexist, creating a destination that is both timeless and forward-thinking.