



## Newsletter No. 4 – April 2016

On 15 April, our new excursion guides will be presented to the media. At the starting line are three attractive routes in the Lower Valais. On your mark, order, and go!

The interactive Atlas is also nearing public release. The Hydrological Atlas of Switzerland will be presented together with the Atlas of Switzerland on 20 June at the Kultur Casino Bern. Preliminary information about the event can be found below.

Typically, newsletters look into the future. In an interview with Alex Hermann, we take a moment to look back to the beginnings of HADES and at how the cornerstones set 20 years ago have influenced the current appearance of HADES.

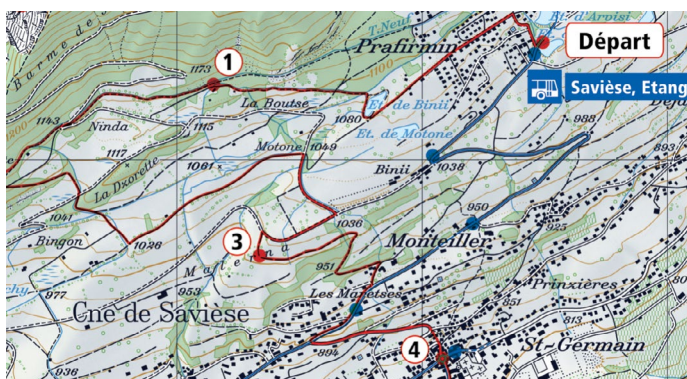


### 15 April 2016 – Series 7 excursion guides

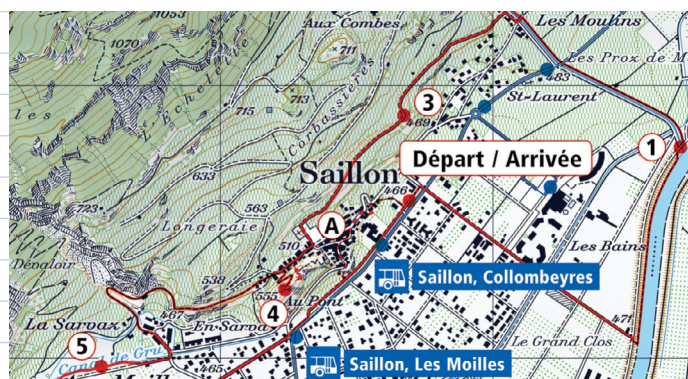
Following their debut in Saillon, the location of Excursion 7.3, the three new guides for the Lower Valais are officially available to the public. A preview of the routes and the related topics can be found in the 3rd newsletter, published in October 2015 ([www.hades.unibe.ch/en/current/archives](http://www.hades.unibe.ch/en/current/archives)). Additional information can be found on [www.hades.unibe.ch/en/products/excursions](http://www.hades.unibe.ch/en/products/excursions). The brochures are printed and available in French only.



Excerpt from the excursion route 7.1, Plaine Morte – Lac de Tseuzier (© swisstopo and HADES)

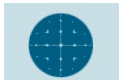


Excerpt from the excursion route 7.2, Savièse  
(© swisstopo and HADES)



Excerpt from the excursion route 7.3, Saillon  
(© swisstopo and HADES)





## Atlas event on 20 June 2016

After years of development, the new interactive atlas is nearing publication. On 20 June at 10:40 am, Simone Niggli-Luder (23-time world champion in orienteering), Sarah Springman (Rector of the ETH Zurich) und Marc Chardonens (Director FOEN) will turn on the new platform. Anyone who is subscribed to this newsletter is invited to join us for this event at Casino Bern. An official invitation will follow in April/May. Please note that although participation is free, a registration is required.



*An example of a 360° panoramic view of the River Aare in the new HADES RiverView maps (Photo: Fabian Kunz)*



## Creating an atlas

The Hydrological Atlas of Switzerland was first published in 1992. Until 2010, 63 plates covering various hydrological topics had been published in nine series.

Interview with Alexander Hermann, cartographer of HADES

**HADES:** What is an atlas, exactly?

**Hermann:** A collection of maps in various scales, either thematic like HADES or topographic.

**HADES:** Creating a new atlas is a tremendous challenge. Were any models for the planned thematic atlas available in the 1980s?

**Hermann:** There were already hydrological atlases for Canada and Germany, and in Switzerland there was the climate atlas and the Atlas of Switzerland. However, we did not want to simply copy existing templates. Instead, we engaged a graphic designer to create the layout, color scheme, etc. This led to new ideas, such as showing the scale at the top of the map. The final layout was decided by the whole team. The main task of the cartographer was to implement data and card designs in a map image.

**HADES:** The Swiss maps are mostly drawn to a scale of 1:500 000. This isn't a typical choice, is it?

**Hermann:** It is a relatively large scale for a printed atlas, of course, but one that was already used for the Atlas of Switzerland. One criterion was the basic information that the Federal Office of Topography could provide to us. The «crooked» scale of the smaller maps is rather special. At a scale of 1:1.1 million, we can fit four maps to a page. Thus, the layout determined the size. Even at that time, it was important to us that we could show the map and the text on the same page. To see and correctly interpret something today, you often have to zoom in on a section and display additional information. Unfortunately, when you do this you lose the overall view.



*Alexander Hermann is a qualified cartographer and has worked for HADES since 1989. In 2009, he assumed the role of «house cartographer» for the Institute of Geography.*

*(Photo: Hans-Rudolf Wernli)*

**HADES:** You have edited almost all of the previously released versions of the HADES. How has the work changed over the decades?

**Hermann:** When we started, almost nothing was available in digital format. The first computers were just used for typesetting. Place names designed on the computer were exposed on film, cut out and pasted on sheets. The linear elements were engraved by hand. For each card, multiple printing templates were created, one for each color. Everything had to be very carefully checked, as errors were much harder to correct than they are today.

**HADES:** Do you know every printing error in HADES?

**Hermann:** For example, I remember how a print plate copyist was just about to retouch a dust speck during a final check, when I could stop him. The «dust speck» was the dot on the i on the signature of Federal Councillor Flavio Cotti!

**HADES:** And which plate do you consider particularly successful?

**Hermann:** Color-wise, I really like precipitation map 2.6, which was produced digitally. If you look closely, though, you'll see that the automatically drawn contours are slightly squared. I also find the content in plate 5.3 «Influence on rivers» very interesting. This map was drawn by hand, so each element was individually glued.



*Imprint of the new guides series 7 at swisstopo*

*(Photo: Alexander Hermann)*

**HADES:** Your work has had a marked influence on the appearance of HADES. Will the appearance change significantly in the interactive version of the atlas?

**Hermann:** Of course. I am no longer responsible for the design of the maps, as the programmers are now in charge of these decisions. However, I still design the additional products: excursion guides, learning medium and homepage. Thus, I spend the majority of my time working as a cartographer and graphic designer for the Institute of Geography.

It makes me a bit sad that there is no longer a printed atlas. But that's just how things have evolved: we get more and more of our information through a computer screen. Someday, that might change again and we'll come back to individual printed maps.

We thank everyone for their interest in HADES and wish you all successful projects and enjoyable experiences on the water!

HADES Project Management, April 2016

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