

The adventures of



The mycological society of Entremont invites you to explore the mushroom pathway linking Champex-Lac to Orsières. Twelve panels along the trail present the fascinating world of mushrooms and their natural environment.

Environmentally friendly behaviour and better knowledge improve the protection of mushrooms, thus promoting their important role in nature.

For those most interested, a brochure provides additional information on the different biotopes (available at the Tourist Office or downloadable from www.randonature.ch/3).

Useful information

Length: 8 km

Walking time: approx. 3 h from Champex-Lac to Orsières.
Count 1 extra hour to solve Charlotte's games.

Return: Possibility to take the bus to Orsières to get back to Champex-Lac. The timetable on www.tmr.ch (line 12.271)

Difficulty: average (no passage for pushchairs)

Recommended period: from April to October

For more information

Cercle mycologique de l'Entremont: www.myco-entremont.com

Association cantonale valaisanne de mycologie: www.champi-net.ch

Association suisse des organes officiels de contrôle des champignons: www.vapko.ch

Centre régional d'études des populations alpines: www.crepa.ch



Charlotte the Marmot, an educational trail for children



The mycological society of Entremont and the Regional Centre for the Study of Alpine Populations invite you to follow Charlotte the Marmot into the unknown world of mushrooms. Along the path, various questions and games will allow you to know mushrooms better and to learn about some local characteristics.

This trail has been specially designed for children aged 8 to 12 years old. **To participate, simply stop by the Tourist Office to pick up Charlotte's brochure** (trail map and questions). At the end of the tour, at the place called La Valpière, overlooking Orsières, you will find all the answers to your questions, with a small culinary surprise.

The path is marked with signposts. Let's go!
Please, do not forget your pencil!

Thanks to Charlotte's sponsors and friends



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Post 1



The development of the Champex-Lac resort

Champex-Lac, it was once only a few alpine mayens. However, at the turn of the 20th century, its idyllic setting and enchanting lake made it a popular destination for international guests, who came to revitalise themselves and breathe invigorating air.

To meet the needs of their customers, hoteliers are gradually building various outbuildings near their establishment.

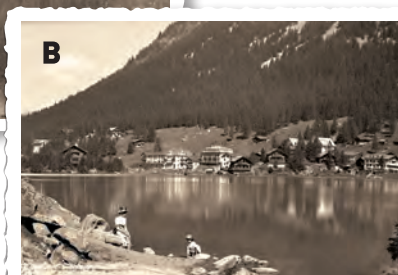
One of them, a simple wooden cabin, is still visible by the lake (a few meters from this sign on the left).

What could it be used for? One of the three testimonies below answers this question.



Lake of Champex and its mayens, before 1895.

Archives Famille Meilland,
Champex Lac



The same point of view, before 1939. The development was rapid since in 1907 Champex-Lac already had 9 hotels. It was then the main tourist resort (summer) of Entremont.

picture: Julien Frères - BGE, Centre d'iconographie genevoise



picture: Julien Frères - BGE, Centre d'iconographie genevoise

Cold rooms

"In January, in general, all the merchants of Champex «made their ice»: 60-70 cm ice cubes were sawn, loaded on a sled and pulled by the horse to the cooler where they were stacked, each cube separated by a sawdust; this ice was kept in the coolers until the end of September. All the hotels had their own cooler at the time."

Bathing hut or summer-house

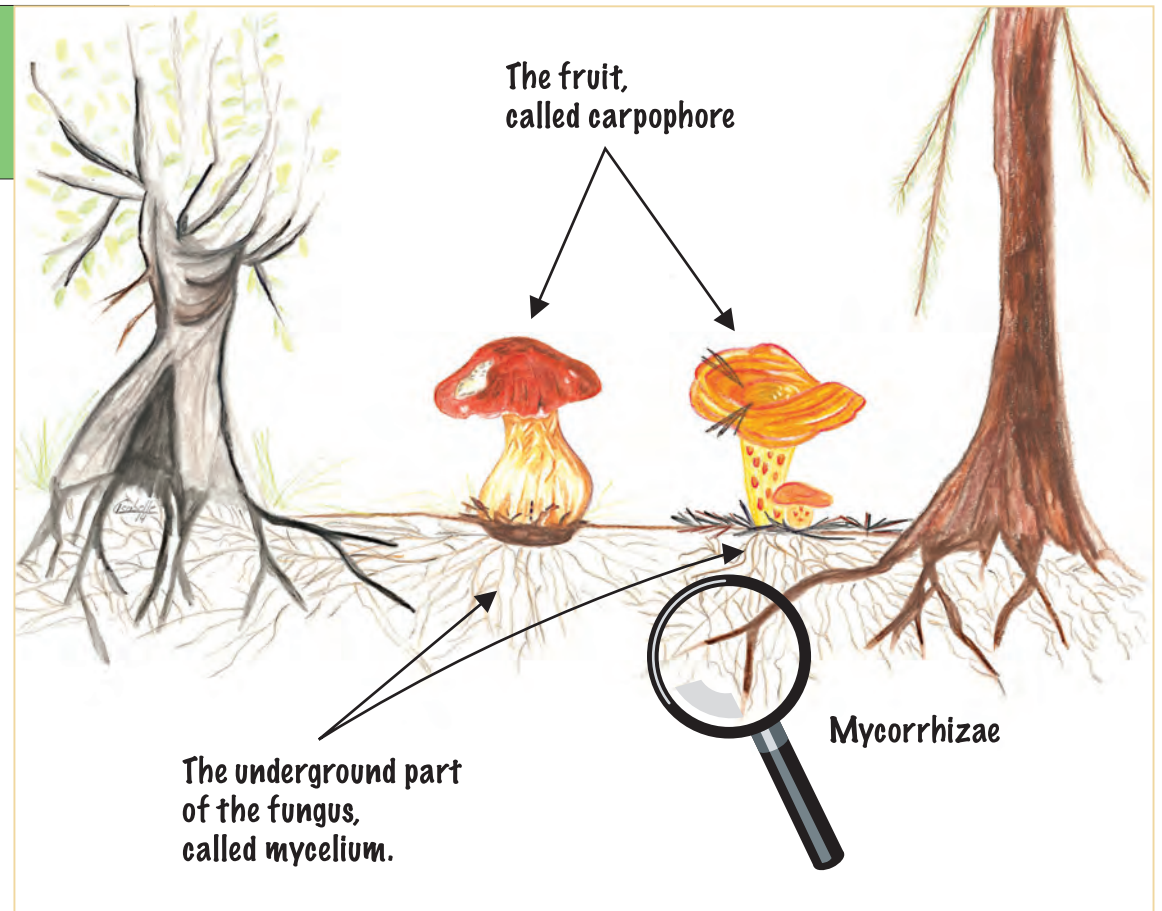
«Before having a swimming pool, there was a first step where each hotel had its own small summer-houses by the lake, which was its private bathing establishment. Each hotel had 3-4 cabins and guests would go down with a towel, change in the cabins and swim at the lake."

A possible warehouse for winter leisure activities

«In the past, we would clear the snow on a corner of the lake and then we could skate on it. Between 1930 and 1940, on the lake itself, we have created a trail where people could ski behind a horse. This was called skijoëring, which was abandoned around 1935 in favour of the ski joëring with a motorcycle, i. e. we were towed by a motorcycle."

Mycorrhizae

Mycorrhizal mushrooms live in association with plants such as trees.
By connecting to the roots of plants, mushrooms enable plants to get more mineral salts and water.
In return, the tree provides the mushrooms with carbohydrates.





Lépiote déguenillée
Shaggy parasol

Amanite panthère
Panther cap

Chanterelle
Chanterelle

Collybie radicante
Rooting shank



Post 5

I am not afraid of lush meadows, quite the contrary! Farmers regularly mow around me, water me and enrich my soil with manure or liquid manure: no wonder I am overweight!

Giant puffball



I prefer the sandy and humid soils on the banks of the river. Thanks to the nearby forest, I can stay in the shade.

Pézize veinée



I can handle the altitude and the cold very well. In summer, when I can finally grow, the cattle keep me company: it breaks my loneliness.

Meadow waxy cap



Did you know I could lift asphalt off the sidewalks? My name proves it! I am perfectly comfortable in the heart of the communities.

Agaric des trottoirs



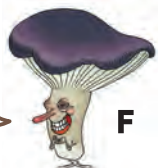
I need some sun! I look for arid and well-exposed slopes, even if their soil is poor.

King trumpet mushroom



I like the company of trees! They protect me from the sun and the cold and hide me from the gaze of the walkers.

Waxy caps



The Darbellay site between 1903 and 1955

What has been exploited here?
Here is a series of clues:

Extraction

The workers have dug tunnels and gigantic «rooms»! They were also called «li darbon» («moles»).

With a chisel and a hammer, the «cariéran» (workers) dug a hole in which the powder and the wick were threaded.



Tiré de « Li Tolmay », n° 6, Printemps-Fort, 1997

Inside of a gallery. Some excavations were more than 20 m high.



Propri. Lina Vernay

The powder magazine room, where the black powder and wicks were stored. The roof is covered with slate.

What was being made?

The soil, by its colour and nature, is a sign: it is composed of debris rejected by the workers for half a century. Over the years, the landfill has formed an artificial cone, clearly visible from place 9 downstream.

The objects manufactured here had a rounded edge, as shown in the grey shape below.

A former worker said: «There was a hole to nail the roof. It was the one who was cutting [the object] who was doing this, with a sharp hammer.»

[Tiré de l'interview
de Pierre Charrex d'Issert,
CREPA - 2003]

Propri. Lina Vernay



The workers in front of the factory, around 1940. The building was located upstream of this sign, approximately at the location of the trail.



Propri. Lina Vernay

On the right, the forge where the tools were repaired. On the left, the warehouse, in front of which are erected large slates called «brutes».

Some vestiges

The extracted materials were transported by rail-mounted wagons. Remnants of this means of transport are still visible in the field.

Nearby there are still remains of walls, including the base of the forge.

About a hundred metres below, along the road leading to Orsières, the entrance to the first gallery of the farm is clearly visible at the exit of the bridge. It is now abandoned and prohibited from access.

Post 8

Role of mushrooms
Parasite



Effects of mushrooms
on nature



Role of mushrooms
Mycorrhizial



Effects of mushrooms
on nature



Role of mushrooms
Saprophyte



Effects of mushrooms
on nature





Finish

Here you are at the end of Charlotte's trail. Congratulations!

To check the accuracy of your answers, all you have to do is manipulate your mobile phone on which you will find all the necessary information. You can also recompose, on the back of each piece, the image of a beautiful harvest of mushrooms.

When you will go out in the wild in search of mushrooms, do not forget to have your harvest checked by an expert.

If you want to cook them to delight your taste buds and those of your family, we offer you an original recipe by Chef Samuel Destaing, a restaurateur at "the Alps" in Orsières. Feel free to photograph it and keep it in your cookbook!



The egg with mushrooms

Mushroom sauce (inside of the eggshell)

30 g butter
150 g fresh mushrooms (Paris blanc, St George's mushroom, chanterelle, oyster mushrooms...)
5 cl white wine (Chasselas)
30 cl poultry broth
30 cl thick crème fraîche
1 lemon
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Brown the chopped shallots in butter with a pinch of salt. Add all the mushrooms already clean (without soil or fir needles), cut into julienne strips. Sauté them for 3 to 4 minutes over low heat. Pour in the white wine and reduce to three quarters. Then pour in the chicken broth. Mix and simmer for 5 minutes, covered. Then add the crème fraîche. Reduce a little until obtaining a slight liaison. Season with salt and pepper. Add a lemon juice to taste.

Puff pastry rounds

Chop one circle of puff pastry of 4 cm diameter. Then gild it (using egg yolk and some water) with a brush and bake for 6 minutes in the oven at 190° C.

Grilled Coppa

Cut thin slices of coppa and grill them quickly in a hot frying pan with a light drizzle of oil. Place them on a small kitchen paper.

Poached eggs

In a large saucepan, boil about 1.5 l of water with 10 cl of white vinegar. Break the egg into a small container; pour it gently into the boiling liquid. With a fork, wrap the white around the egg yolk. Count about 3 minutes of cooking time.

Presentation

Place a small circle on the plate and place a little coarse cooking salt slightly damp on it. Once the eggshell is empty, place it on the salt, fill it with the mushroom sauce and cover it with the puff pastry. Slightly set back, place 3 slices of grilled coppa and gently place the warm poached egg and some fresh mushrooms on top. A sprig of chives for the decoration and the recipe is ready.

Samuel Destaing's recipe

Les Alpes

Find out the adventures
of Charlotte the Marmot
on the following educational trails:

