



LA VUE DES ALPES ↔ TÊTE DE RAN
History and anecdotes (1950-2000)
1.12.2024 → 27.4.2025 - Photographic walk



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Following the success of the first photographic walk during the winter of 2023–2024, the ADVAT (Association for the development of La Vue des Alpes – Tête de Ran) presents its second edition with a participative touch.

While the first edition focused on the history and prestigious past of La Vue des Alpes and Tête de Ran mountain-passes up to 1950, the second will take you to discover the sporting and tourism activities so closely associated with the strong development of each of these emblematic sites which became readily accessible as from the 1950s.

Itinerary

As soon as spring sets in, the land made available for this walk is occupied by small livestock (goats), hence this year's trail has been shortened. The committee of the ADVAT sincerely thanks the landowners and farmers without whom this event could not have taken place.

Participative Edition

During the summer of 2024 around 100 photos were gathered, mostly taken by amateurs and held in private collections. These oral interactions were an opportunity to reconstruct a rich history embellished with vibrant living memories. These are genuine archives which bear witness to an era when leisure activities became democratised, as did photographic equipment.

The fifty or so years which separate the oldest from the most recent image illustrate the extent to which time passes, with its evolving fashions and habits.

Given the limited presentation space at our disposal, and equally the lack of visual documents available, the selected images only relate to a small part of the story. Unfortunately, certain events do not feature along the trail. In particular, the 150th anniversary of Neuchâtel's Independence (1998), car and bike races, flea markets, flower markets and lottery matches and many more come to mind.

Taken by amateurs or professionals, the images presented along the trail have been slightly touched up before being reproduced in a large format. Certain even recount their own story [scratches, burns, stains and folds].

Please, share your memories with us! Feel free to send them by e-mail. We would be delighted to read them and even to share them on our social networks.

Place names

The name «Vue des Alpes» first featured in the area in 1843 when the Neuchâtel State Council granted the right to the Commune of Fontaines to build a hotel in les Loges, bearing the sign «À la vue des Alpes». As from 1814, the pass on the heights of Les Loges was frequented by a great number of troops when the name Vue des Alpes was adopted, it was only towards the end of the 19th century that it became the pass of La Vue des Alpes.

As for the name «Tête de Ran», its etymology calls for some deciphering. The peak [«Tête», meaning «head»] rises to an altitude of 1422 meters. The term «Ran» is more controversial; in the Neuchâtel dialect, it refers to a pile of wood while others associate it with steep rock faces [«rans» or «rancs»] and yet others to the name of the Dorant family. Are these fabrications of a cartographer, geographer or printer? Over the centuries various spellings have appeared such as Teste Dorant (1630), Teste de Rang (1707), Tête de Rang (1713) or even Tête Dérand (around 1925).

Concerning the pass itself (altitude: 1329 m), Ostervald's revised map (1838–1845) refers to it as «La Sauge», where the Tête de Rang Inn was built around 1810. Nowadays, the name «Tête de Ran» refers to both the pass and the peak (commonly known as la Bosse).

ADVAT

This open-air photography exhibition is brought to you by the ADVAT (Association for the development of La Vue des Alpes – Tête de Ran). In 1986, a group of entrepreneurs set up the ADVA in response to a project to de-zone the Montagne de Cernier area. In 2010, the association extended its activities to include Tête de Ran and added a final T to its acronym. Today, the ADVAT focuses more specifically on the region's potential for tourism (sports and leisure activities, accessibility, restauration), while ensuring a harmonious relationship with the natural environment.

Support ADVAT

Should you wish to support ADVAT and its activities, please consider making a donation, becoming a member of our association or buying a set of 6 postcards (CHF 15.-).

www.advat.ch/DevenirMembre

Points of sale: Buvette-Relais of La Vue des Alpes, Nordic Center of La Vue des Alpes, Crêt-Meuron Ski Lift, Juice Food Truck Pétillant Tête de Ran, Tourism Offices in La Vue des Alpes and La Chaux-de-Fonds, Payot Libraire La Chaux-de-Fonds, Laiterie de Chézard-St-Martin.

Please respect the images and the environment, take your rubbish away with you, and keep your four-legged friends on a leash. Thank you!

Design and texts: Anouk Hellmann

Graphics: Aline Henchoz

Installation: Daniel and Denis Christen, Philippe and Ryan Reichenbach, Armand Studer

Members of the ADVAT committee: Philippe Carrard, Peter Donker, Nicolas Grandjean, Anouk Hellmann, Jérémy Huguenin and Léonard Reichen

Acknowledgements

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Information and activities

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