

WHITE OVER RED 05 – COMPLICATION

Posted on 2023-04-06 2023-04-09 by spd_wp_admin



Dear Reader (2023-04-06),

Forward and Table of Contents can be found [here](#).

Note: Some of this post's content was previously introduced in the teaser post ([click here](#)).

Date: Sunday 2022-08-07 through Monday 2022-08-08

Location: Bernex to Dent d'Oche to Chalets des Bise

The luxury of yesterday has come to an end. I'm 30 minutes along today's trail when I realize I have forgotten my hat at Le Boi Joli. As much as I liked the hat, it is replaceable, and I'm not willing to walk an hour to rescue it, especially as I'm not sure of what is in store for me. Just outside the village of Bernex is the ski resort of the same name. In summer, people come here to go mountain biking. None of the ski stores are open, but the ticket booth has a small selection of hats. I buy the first billed cap I have ever owned. It is a blue hat with a yellow bill. Yellow embroidery spells out Bernex Mountain Bike. The cap may be slightly tacky now, but by the time I reach Menton, it may have cachet. Over the next 5 and half weeks only one person commented on it and that was because he used to live and work in the area.

The trail winds part way up a ski run, drops down to a road, which ends at a café. I walk on for another hour and then have the pleasant experience of stopping at a cheese shop and café. In the Canadian Rockies, cafés are few and far between. Here in the northern section of my route, I was never more than a 3 hour walk from a café, hostel, or restaurant where a walker can have un peu de fromage et un bière. Not only is this incredibly civilized, it also helps to stay hydrated.

I leave Les Chalets d'Oche (alt 1630 m) as clouds descend. I am headed to Refuge Dent D'Oche (alt 2114 m). Though it is a detour from the main trail, the location comes highly recommended. The first section is a series of mist covered switch backs. Only my huffing and puffing tells me I am climbing. One of my walking rules is that I walk, I don't scramble, and I certainly don't climb. The final 150 m of elevation is gained using a series of chains anchored into the rock. Lessons in concentration – don't look up – don't look down – check footing – trust the chain. Rule broken and not to be broken again. The descent the next morning is no easier.

It is now Monday 2022-08 08, and I am back on the more regular route headed towards a gîte beyond Chapelle D'Abondance. It has been less than a week since I left Calgary. I am still jet lagged. The excitement of beginning, and the adrenaline required to get to and from last night's refuge has caught up with me. I think I'll just lie down in this field and rest a little. I fall asleep for an hour or two.

It is now late afternoon and it's obvious that I am not going to make my planned destination. A little while later I am at Chalets des Bise. It is composed of 2 or 3 farms, a café, a restaurant, a dormitory for walkers, and one for goats. Plan A – I will call for a taxi to take me as close as possible to my pre-booked lodging. I am in a valley surrounded by mountains. There is no cell service. Plan B – Cell service is available an hour away at the top of the next col. That is not happening. Plan C – A bed for the night is available. The shadows are lengthening.

The yellow umbrellas are losing their glare and are starting to glow. I am watching the daily cow parade. I will witness this many more times. None though will be as dramatic as tonight's parade. In single file the herd winds its way through this settlement along the trail I recently walked headed for the milking barn. The bulls know that they need not apply and go off to their paddock. Someone from somewhere has a photo of me watching the parade as I pet a goat that came to stand beside me. The shadows lengthen a little more, and then there is a goat parade from out of the forest.

Aside: One school of thought says that one should not book ones lodging too many days in advance in case plans have to change. Then there is my approach. During my planning I decided to book all my nights and lodging in advance because the thought of having to deal with logistics and my own inevitable exhaustion was too daunting to consider. As the weeks progressed, I came to appreciate my decision. The night of August 8th was the only off-plan night.



01 13:20



02 (15:10) 150m of elevation to go



03



05 Good Evening





06 Good Morning



07 Cows Soon



08



09

“Finished” images merit my standard black stroke and white framed border. Beginning with this post I am introducing a second class of images. These images don’t have a border and ones I normally wouldn’t share but they do have significance from a diary perspective.



01



02 (14:45)



03 Path to Refuge de la Dent D'Oche



04 (16:05) Looking up from Refuge de la Dent D'Oche



05



06 Lake Geneva 1.5 days away



07 Chains to Refuge de la Dent D'Oche



08



09 Neither top nor bottom



10



11



12

You are welcome to share a link to this page with others.
As always, all comments are welcome and sought.
Cheers, Sean

4 Replies to “White Over Red 05 – Complication”

1. **Keith Cartmell** says:

2023-04-08 at 18:13 Edit

And here we go, another round of comments. It took a bit of browser-fun to navigate between groups of images. I've actually taken to looking at the images in one browser, and commenting on another, so I'm not flicking from tab to tab.

1: I translate that as house of ouch. Which might be appropriate, if most people are arriving by foot.

2: A lovely landscape! Did you go out that board and scramble to the top of that little knoll to get a better view? I have to admit the board looks kind of sketchy.

3: Maybe this is the view from the knoll. I love me some foggy/cloudy mountain valleys.

5: And that guy is using a smart phone to take a semi-photo of a beautiful landscape.

6: I'm torn in half by this image. I love the landscape, and I love the flags, but I'm not loving the two together. I don't know if there is any good way of including both.

7: I quite like this. It reminds me of a New Zealand view during a hike to Shine Falls. Why would anyone leave the nice shady umbrellas where I just know there's cold beer to be had. The hill is probably much steeper than it looks.

8/9: I much prefer the B&W image. The textures work better, and I found the ventilation duct in the upper right corner distracting.

(insert browser-fu) It took me a while to figure out what you meant by black stroke images. I've never put borders on my photos. Maybe doing so is the mark of a classy blog.
Image count starts over.

1: I struggle with partly cloudy.

2: The path to the refuge of ouch is something I probably wouldn't do. I didn't have to get to the English to make that decision.

3: Maybe this is the exposed and vertiginous path that the two people are carefully negotiating. Looking at the clouds. Maybe it's just as well they can't see how far down it is.

4: I'm just sure there is beer under those umbrellas. I'd be happy to sit, drink, and admire those rock faces.

5: Clearly the flags.

6: Another lovely landscape. I'd sit and admire that for a while.

7: That looks like fun, if you aren't carrying a backpack. At least you aren't on oxygen, trudging up the yak track in a long single file line waiting for people to get off the peak.

8: I wonder if that tree is lonely. Maybe it's an outcast, sent there as punishment for an unspeakable anti-tree crime. Or maybe it's the lead explorer, looking to see if they can settle a new habitat. I'd love to scramble those rocks and see the view from the top.

9: Is this the view from the top? It looks like a bad place to twist an ankle.

10: That cow is giving you the suspicious eye.

11: I'm puzzled by this one. This guy looks like he has all kinds of experience, yet even I know with my limited experience with cows, not to walk there in relation to a cow. The words forceful effluvia are coming to mind. Cows like doing that in much the same way as cats like recreational vomiting.

12 I'm guessing the washroom line up? Worshipping the easter bunny? The bar doesn't open for a few more minutes? So many questions.

1. **spd_wp_admin** says: 2023-04-09 at 10:44 Edit

Thank you for such a detailed response, and I enjoyed seeing these photos through your eyes.

2. **Inge** says: 2023-04-06 at 13:52 Edit

Nice to read more about your GR5 walk. The photos show familiar sights and bring back lots of memories. Thanks for sharing.

1. **spd_wp_admin** says: 2023-04-06 at 13:59 Edit

You are welcome. Thank you for visiting and commenting.