



Glacier Trail Run 2026 in Gurgl sets new standards

With 1,100 athletes, the 9th edition of this unrivaled running event at the Diamond of the Alps sold out faster than ever before. Famous names of the running scene, local stars and hundreds of trail running enthusiasts performed on spectacular trails between 2,000 and 3,000 meters above sea level. Benedikt Ritter and Edith Zell came out as winners in the supreme 62-kilometer race. In addition to top athletic performance, the event was characterized by sustainable partnerships, a cinema experience and a refreshing premiere at Hohe Mut Alm.

After the Stuiben Trail Run in Umhausen had already created a true running festival atmosphere in May, the season's second high alpine highlight took place in Ötztal. The 2026 Glacier Trail Run impressively demonstrated that the mountain running trend remains strong: all main distances (14K, 26K, 42K and 62K) on Saturday were completely sold out. Some **1,100 runners from a total of 34 nations**, including athletes who had traveled from as far away as Colombia, South Africa or Mexico, turned Gurgl into a great community meeting place.

Chasing altitude meters

This year, the 26K distance was particularly popular, being the first event to sell out completely. For those who decided at the last minute and for younger runners, there were still a few remaining starting places available for the WIDI Trail Run and the Top Mountain Run on Friday. In the supreme event, the extremely demanding 62K Glacier Trail covering 3,600 altitude meters, Benedikt Ritter took the men's title while Edith Zell from Längenfeld won the women's race. The exceptional female Ötztal trail running star had already won the Stuiben Trail Run in May, securing a starting place for next year's "Northland Yangshuo 100" in China. Also Lara Emmrich, the second-fastest woman in the 2026 Glacier Trail Run, will be traveling to China - made possible thanks to a prosperous partnership between Ötztal Tourismus and Northland China.





The scene's big names at the start

The **Glacier Trail Run's high level of competition** was evident from the top-class field of participants. Thanks to well-known names like **Andreas Schindler, Benedikt Ritter and Germany's ski mountaineer Finn Hösch**, top athletic performance on the trails was guaranteed. But it wasn't just international professionals who were drawn to Gurgl: around ten percent of all participants were "repeaters" who had already taken part in the Stuiben Trail Run in Umhausen in May by securing their double dose of Ötztal adventure.

Among them, **Ötztal's local heroine Edith Zell** (winner of the Stuiben Trail 42K), her husband **Stefan Zell** and **Matthias Klotz**, who once again demonstrated their brilliant stamina in the challenging 62K race. On the 14K trail run, South Tirol's **siblings Samuel and Sofia Demetz** (winner of the 2026 Stuiben Sprint) caused a sensation.

The weekend's oldest participant once again provided a truly special goosebump moment: sprightly Irina Spira (born in 1944) followed up her magnificent performance in Umhausen with another appearance at the Top Mountain Run in Gurgl, impressively demonstrating that a passion for sports knows no age limits.

Trail cinema and a refreshing premiere

The event has long since evolved beyond a mere competition, offering a holistic festival for the entire running community. The **"Trail Running Night"** on Friday attracted countless visitors. A valuable **presentation** on training, recovery and nutrition was given by BASEFIVE **experts**. It was followed by a screening of the **film "Running via Alpina"** by renowned athletes Susann Lehmann and Magdalena Kalus. Lehmann was personally in Gurgl to present her project and participated in the 42K Glacier Trail Run. This year, even more was offered to young runners: the **popular WIDI Trail Run** already took place on Friday, coinciding with the newly introduced Children's Sports Day. Perhaps the most refreshing innovation awaited weary runners on Sunday when the athletes were invited to enjoy an ultimate cold-water boost for regeneration on occasion of the **first official ice bath at Hohe Mut Alm**.





Regionality and a strong team behind the scenes

The unique finisher medals were produced by "Lebenshilfe" Counseling Project in Umhausen. A visible symbol of successful inclusion. Behind the scenes, a well-coordinated team of about 125 volunteers, mountain rescue experts and emergency personnel ensured absolute safety and great catering.

Dates for 2027 already set

Planning for next year is, of course, well underway. Already confirmed: there will be a 100K race to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Glacier Trail Run in 2027.

Dates for the two Ötztal Trail Running classics:

- **Stuiben Trail Run** 2027: 27 to 30 May 2027
- **Glacier Trail Run** 2027: 22 to 25 July 2027

More information and results: www.oetztal.com/trailrunning

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