



## Press release

26 May 2016

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# New Swiss commemorative coins: "Brass bands" and the gold "Gottardo 2016"

**On 26 May 2016, the Federal Mint Swissmint launches two new commemorative coins for coin enthusiasts and collectors. The silver coin titled "Brass Bands" celebrates the cultural creativity of the Swiss wind music scene. The gold coin "Gottardo 2016" is dedicated to the opening of the new Gotthard Base Tunnel. In contrast to the silver coin showing the tunnel's north portal in Erstfeld, which was released in January and has already sold out, the gold coin features the south portal in Bodio.**

All over the country, there is hardly a large festival where a wind band does not ensure a lively atmosphere. These bands enrich village and town life with their performances and contribute considerably to a sense of community among the local population. Switzerland has a well-deserved reputation as a country of wind music. Almost every village and town has at least one wind band. Unlike other countries, where civil wind bands copy the ensemble of military bands, what is most commonly found in Switzerland is *Harmoniemusik* (with woodwind and brass instruments) as well as pure brass ensembles, mixed brass ensembles (brass and saxophone instruments; *Metallharmonie*) and brass bands in the English style. The first civil wind societies were founded as early as the late 18th and early 19th centuries in the style of a military corps. Some of these organised a music festival in Zofingen in 1862, which led to the founding of the "Federal Wind Band Federation". Nowadays, the Swiss Wind Band Association, as the umbrella organisation, has over 2,000 societies of various sizes. The launch of the new 20-franc commemorative coin "Brass Bands", designed by Remo Mascherini from Belp, pays special tribute to the wind music scene and the Swiss Wind Band Association. Further information on Swiss Brass bands is available at [www.livingtradition.ch](http://www.livingtradition.ch) and [www.windband.ch](http://www.windband.ch).

Located in the centre of Europe, Switzerland has always been an important hub in European goods and passenger transport. When the Schöllenen Schlucht gorge was made crossable in the 13th century, so began the transformation of the Gotthard axis into one of the most important transport links over the Alps. What was initially a mule path of gravel and stone slabs had become the first reasonably navigable transport route over the Gotthard pass by the start of the 19th century. In those days, it took over 48 hours to travel from Zurich to Lugano in the stagecoach. The same journey had been reduced to just eight hours with the opening of the Gotthard summit tunnel in 1882. Thanks to technological developments and higher speeds, the journey along the same route has been further shortened over the years to 2¾ hours today. The opening of the Gotthard Base Tunnel will bring yet another improvement. As soon as the access roads are extended from 2020 and the Ceneri base tunnel is put into operation, the passenger's journey from Zurich to Lugano will take a mere two hours. Like the silver coin that was released in January and has already sold out, the 50-franc gold coin showing the tunnel's south portal in Bodio was also designed by graphic artist Fredy Trümpi from Binz. Further information on the new Gotthard Base Tunnel is available at [www.gottardo2016.ch](http://www.gottardo2016.ch) and [www.alptransit.ch](http://www.alptransit.ch).

The new commemorative coins are available from 26 May 2016 as limited editions from coin dealers, some banks and at [www.swissmintshop.ch](http://www.swissmintshop.ch).

#### **The Federal Mint Swissmint**

The Federal Mint Swissmint produces the country's coins for use in everyday payment transactions. The Federal Mint also regularly issues commemorative coins and coinage of a higher standard for the numismatic market. Coins in bimetal, silver and gold bear an official nominal value and are available in various minting qualities. Swissmint is also the official authority for public and private clients seeking authenticity checks and expert opinions.

#### **Note to the press:**

This press release and images can be downloaded at:

<http://www.swissmint.ch/e/aktuell/medien.php>

<http://www.swissmint.ch/e/aktuell/medien/index.php>

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## Fact sheet

### Silver coin "Brass bands"



Images shown enlarged

**Caption:** Almost every village and town in Switzerland has at least one wind band.

<i>Effigy</i>	Brass Bands
<i>Artist</i>	Remo Mascherini, Belp
<i>Technical specifications</i>	Alloy: silver 0.835 Weight: 20 g Diameter: 33 mm
<i>Legal face value</i>	20 Swiss francs
<i>Date of issue</i>	26 May 2016
<i>Mintage</i>	Uncirculated: 30,000 units, in a blister pack Proof in presentation case: 5,000 units with numbered certificate of authenticity
<i>Recommended prices</i>	Uncirculated, in a blister pack: CHF 25 Proof in presentation case: CHF 55
<i>Sold by</i>	Coin dealers and some banks as well as online at <a href="http://www.swissmintshop.ch">www.swissmintshop.ch</a> or phone +41 58 4 800 800
<i>Coined and issued by</i>	Federal Mint Swissmint CH-3003 Bern <a href="http://www.swissmint.ch">www.swissmint.ch</a>

## Fact sheet

### Gold coin "Gottardo 2016"



Images shown enlarged

**Caption:** The Gotthard Base Tunnel is the core of the new low-gradient route through the Alps.

<i>Effigy</i>	Gotthard Base Tunnel, south portal
<i>Artist</i>	Fredy Trümpi, Binz
<i>Technical specifications</i>	Alloy: gold 0.900 Weight: 11.29 g Diameter: 25 mm
<i>Legal face value</i>	50 Swiss francs
<i>Date of issue</i>	26 May 2016
<i>Mintage</i>	Proof in presentation case: 4,500 units with numbered certificate of authenticity
<i>Recommended price</i>	CHF 580
<i>Sold by</i>	Coin dealers and some banks as well as online at <a href="http://www.swissmintshop.ch">www.swissmintshop.ch</a> or phone +41 58 4 800 800
<i>Coined and issued by</i>	Federal Mint Swissmint CH-3003 Bern <a href="http://www.swissmint.ch">www.swissmint.ch</a>