



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swissmint

Swiss Confederation

HEADS OR TAILS

Swissmint's coin magazine



EDITORIAL



Dear Reader

Some of our older readers may remember the days when a mountain pass trip was a favourite weekend pastime for the typical Swiss family. The pass roads made it possible to explore the Swiss Alpine region with ease, be it by postal bus, car or even motorbike. Nowadays, the Swiss are

usually attracted to more distant destinations. Alpine tunnels along the main transport routes mean that the mountain passes have been stripped of a lot of their previous importance. Swissmint recalls the glory days of the Swiss Alpine passes with a new three-part silver coin series. The first issue is dedicated to the Klausen Pass.

Improved access in the Alpine region meant that Alpine flowers became a key attraction for travellers. The silver thistle is one of the most popular Alpine plants. Its prickly beauty and longevity made it a sought-after souvenir, with the result that it had to be protected in many places. Today, the species has mostly recovered. The stemless carline thistle is the last issue in Swissmint's FLORA ALPINA three-part bimetal coin series.

Both commemorative coins, the "Klausen Pass" and the "Stemless carline thistle", will be issued on 25 January 2018. The different versions of this year's Swiss annual circulation coin sets will be released on the same day. Alongside the popular, classic "brilliant uncirculated" and "proof" versions, the birthday coin set (introduced last year) and the much sought-after baby coin set are also available. However, as usual, the Christmas coin set will not be issued until the autumn. The "FLORA ALPINA" coin set is an exceptional product with unbeatable value for money. You can find out more about this offer on page 11 of this issue of **Heads or Tails**.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and have fun collecting!

Marius G. Haldimann
Director

CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Klausen pass	3
Fascinating Alpine region and setting of historical mountain races	
Stemless carline thistle	6
An impressively beautiful eye-catcher with prickles	
2018 coin sets	8
Make someone happy with the perfect gift	
Special offer: FLORA ALPINA coin set series	11
Commemorative coins in proof quality: which variants are available?	11
How are very limited edition products allocated?	11
When can I receive a discount on my order?	11
Expert evaluations	11
Customer event in Barryland	12
Autograph session with Vito Noto at the Basel Coin Fair	12
Diary	12
Outlook on other issues	12
Visit us on Facebook	12
Imprint	12

KLAUSEN PASS

Fascinating Alpine region and setting of historical mountain races

The Klausen pass is not one of the transalpine mountain passes, which is why it was of little importance up until the end of the 19th century. It was not until the Gotthard railway line opened that it became an economically viable route on the west-east axis. The Klausen pass gained fame from the legendary Klausenrace, a historic mountain race for cars and motorcycles. Swissmint is honouring the Klausen pass with the first silver coin in the new "Swiss Alpine passes" series.

In geographical terms, a mountain pass refers to the crossing point between one valley and another, either over a mountain saddle or narrow gorge. The crossing point of a mountain pass is usually found at the lowest passable place. As far back as prehistoric and Roman times, simple bridle paths existed and pack animals were used to transport goods. Records of packhorses being used commercially in transalpine trade dates back to the 14th century and the practice continued into the 19th century. The development of bridle paths into engineered roads at the beginning of the 19th century allowed goods to be transported over the principal mountain passes by cart instead. The development of transversal railway routes meant that the importance of transalpine roads declined, for the transportation of both goods and people. The increasing use of motorised transport from the 1920s onwards gave rise to new demands on the transport network. This was particularly the case in the Alpine regions with increasing tourism and the introduction in 1919 of the "Car alpin", as the postal bus was first known. With the opening of various road tunnels, the mountain passes' importance for both the transportation of goods and tourism declined further. Nowadays, the Alpine passes' importance lies in their role as regional and intercantonal transport links, or as alternatives to the main transport routes.

The Klausen mountain pass

The 1,948 metre-high Klausen pass is 46km long and links the valley of Schächental in the canton of Uri with the rear of Linthal in the canton of Glarus. As a non-transalpine route, the Klausen pass was of no significance during either Roman times or the Middle Ages. However, no later than the High Middle Ages, a simple cattle track existed which was mostly used for moving cattle to the Alpine pastures on the Urnerboden. A cus-

toms post in Bürglen monitored the insignificant local trade. Following Alpine disputes concerning the border between Uri and Glarus on the Urnerboden (it runs through the side of the mountain pass away from Uri), an agreement was reached in the 12th century. Legend has it that on the date of the equinox, at first cock crow, one runner from Uri and one from Glarus had to run the disputed border. The place at which the runners would meet would become the border. It is easy to understand why choosing the cock became so important. While the people of Glarus pampered their cock, the people of Uri only gave their cock just enough food to save him from starvation. The day of the race arrived. While the half-starved cock started to crow at the crack of dawn, the Glarus runner waited in vain for the crowing to begin. This is how the lush pastures of the Urnerboden ended up belonging to the people of Uri.



Photo: Amilcar



the village of Linthal and ended at the Klausen pass. The 21.5km long and dangerous route covered 136 corners (including 57 horseshoe bends) and involved a total climb of 1237m. In those days, already tens of thousands of eager spectators would line the race track. According to contemporary accounts, the vehicles hurtled over the Urnerboden at over 200km/h. The record for the track, which at the time was a narrow, unsurfaced gravel road, was set in 1934 at 15 minutes and 22 seconds. This was the equivalent of an average speed of 83.9km/h. To commemorate the historic Klausen pass race, the Klausenrace Memorial was launched in 1993 and 400 historic vehicles took part. Further races with classic vehicles took place in 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2013. Source: Wikipedia

Commercial interest in a road over the Klausen pass grew with the opening of the Gotthard railway line in 1882 because the new north-south route was reliant on link-roads. After the project received the army's support, it was quickly built between 1893 and 1899. Even massive cost overruns were backed by the Confederation and the cantons. The big day came on 15 June 1900: the first stagecoach drove over the mountain pass and opened up the magnificent landscape between Linthal and Altdorf to tourism.

The Klausenrace

The "Great Mountain Prize of Switzerland" was awarded a total of ten times between 1922 and 1934. The route of what was then Europe's best-known and most difficult mountain race started in

Amilcar

Amilcar was a French car manufacturer known for the production of a light sports car of the cyclecar type. The company produced its vehicles from 1921 to 1939. The vehicle portrayed on the Klausen pass coin is an Amilcar CGSS manufactured in 1927. Switzerland has its own Amilcar club. Its aim is to preserve Amilcar vehicles, promote the exchange of views among cyclecar owners and organise meetings. Further information is available at www.amilcar.ch.

DESIGN: VITO NOTO



Vito Noto, the product designer born in Ragusa in 1955, came from a family of wainwrights and completed his studies at the "Scuola Politecnica di Design" in Milan in 1976. His teachers and lecturers included famous Italian and international design names. After his studies, he gained extensive experience with designers in Zurich, Hamburg and Paris. Swiss resident Vito Noto's wide-ranging project work means he is always in search of diversity and the meaning of the values of the things which surround us. He designs home and office objects for internationally renowned brands. He also designs machinery and equipment for a wide range of industrial purposes. Vito Noto has received many international awards, including the Compasso d'Oro and the 1995 Design Prize Switzerland. He is always open to innovation and is constantly in search of the "definitive" project. www.vitonotodesign.com.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

COMMEMORATIVE COIN "KLAUSEN PASS"



Face value: 20 Swiss francs
Alloy: silver 0.835
Weight: 20g
Diameter: 33mm



Uncirculated

Mintage
Uncirculated: 30,000 units, of which
– in a folder: 1,000 units
Proof: 5,000 units, of which
– signed: 250 units
(certificate from the artist)

Design: Vito Noto, Cadro

Issue date: 25 January 2018
Selling period: up to 24 January 2021
or while stocks last



Folder



Proof with certificate
of authenticity



Variation "signed" with
additional a certificate from
the artist



STEMLESS CARLINE THISTLE

An impressively beautiful eye-catcher with prickles

Protected in some areas, the stemless carline thistle is one of the best-known and most popular Alpine plants. Its prickly beauty, with its large silvery-white corona and disc florets, is a popular photo opportunity. The plant's poisonous taproot use to be used as a remedy for many illnesses. Nowadays, the beautiful flower is a decorative highlight for any rock garden. After the edelweiss and gentian issues, the stemless carline thistle is the last bimetallic coin in the three-part FLORA ALPINA series.

The stemless carline thistle (*carlina acaulis*) is a type of thistle belonging to the Asteraceae family. The hardy, herbaceous plant has virtually no stem. Depending on location, it can grow to 40cm in height. The spiny, pinnatilobate leaves grown in a basal rosette. The underside of the leaves is bald to cobweb-like. The stemless carline thistle is common in Europe but is treated and protected as an endangered species in many countries. It prefers chalky soils and sparse pastures or lightly wooded areas at altitudes between 800 and 2,600m. Its flowering time is between July and October.

The stemless carline thistle has a deep-reaching, poisonous taproot, which was previously used to cure many illnesses and was also endorsed in veterinary medicine. The root is even said to have magical powers. Hanging the carline thistle's root around your neck is supposed to help against lumbago. Believing this to be true is known to be half

the battle. In some regions, people would eat the young, fleshy receptacles, similar to artichokes. As early as in the Stone Age, the root was cooked and eaten as a winter vegetable.

The stemless carline thistle is also known as the weather thistle. In the past, they were nailed on doors where they acted as natural weather stations. If an area of high pressure was on its way, the flowers would open and when the weather was moist, they would close again.

Taking a beautiful walk during the flowering period and keeping your eyes out for carline thistles can be extremely rewarding. But be warned: many a hiker has suffered a painful encounter with the Alpine flower: opting to take a well-earned rest from marvelling at the spectacular mountain panorama, they decide to sit down on the flower's prickly beauty.

DESIGN: JENNY LEIBUNDGUT



Jenny Leibundgut was born in Gümligen in 1959. At the start of her occupational training, she took the preliminary course at the Bern School of Design and then completed a diploma with a four-year apprenticeship under the well-known Swiss graphic artist Kurt Wirth in Bern. She won her spurs initially at Gottschalk+Ash in Zurich and later with Stuart Ash in Toronto, Canada. After two years working successfully with the internationally renowned design agency Landor Associates in San Francisco, she returned to Switzerland. Here as a lecturer, she taught specialisation in graphic art for nine years at the Bern School of Design. She has been running her own graphic art workshop in Bern since 1990. Her main fields of work include corporate design, typography, photography, illustration, posters and book and brochure design. Further information is available at leibundgutdesign.ch.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

COMMEMORATIVE COIN "STEMLESS CARLINE THISTLE"



Uncirculated

Face value: 10 Swiss francs
Alloy: bimetal
(copper-nickel and aluminium-bronze)
Weight: 15g
Diameter: 33mm

Mintage
Uncirculated: 29,000 units, of which
– in coin set: 9,000 units
– in a folder: 1,000 units
Proof: 5,500 units, of which
– signed: 250 units
(certificate from the artist)
– in coin set: 2,500 units

Design: Jenny Leibundgut, Bern

Issue date: 25 January 2018
Selling period: up to 24 January 2021
or while stocks last



Folder



Proof with certificate
of authenticity



Variation "signed" with
additional a certificate from
the artist



2018 COIN SETS

Make someone happy with the perfect gift

For most us, coins can trigger conflicting feelings. On one hand, they are an inexplicable fascination which may stem from the treats we could buy with a coin when we were children. On the other hand, they can be a nuisance when you find yourself at a vending machine without any small change. But for most of us, coins are an accepted and loved method of payment and many of us have a five Swiss franc coin from our year of birth or even the complete set in our collections.

Swissmint offers stylish presents for every occasion. Our varied coin sets all have one thing in common: they all contain the full 2018 set of circulation coins, either with the special 10-franc stemless carline thistle commemorative coin or a shiny medal. Regardless of which coin set you choose, you will be one of the very first to own the Swiss francs and centimes from the current year of issue, long before you will find them in normal circulation. All coins and medals in the sets have been struck and packaged with care so that they will provide many years of pleasure.

The classic coin set

The traditional version contains the seven 2018 circulation coins as well as the new 10-franc bi-metallic stemless carline thistle coin. The coin set is available in two different minting qualities: traditional "brilliant uncirculated" in a colourful, illustrated case and exquisite, high-quality "proof" in an embossed silver foil case. This year's classic coin set is part of the Alpine flower coin sets and follows the 2016 edelweiss and 2017 gentian as the last in the three-part series.

You can order the complete FLORA ALPINA coin set series for a special price (see page 11).

Baby coin set

Grandparents, parents, godparents, friends and relatives all cherish the baby coin set which was first issued in 2002. A unique and personal gift for any new arrival which will welcome the child to the world and accompany him or her through

their life. In addition to the seven 2018 circulation coins, this coin set also includes an appealing bear medal. On the reverse side, all twelve signs of the zodiac revolve around a star. You can personalise the back of the toy-themed cardboard case with the new born's personal details, e.g. date of birth, height or weight. The baby coin set is available in "brilliant uncirculated" minting quality.

Birthday coin set

Year after year but different every time. It doesn't matter whether it's for an eagerly awaited 18th birthday, to celebrate a milestone or even the big 60 or 70. Receiving a timeless coin gift of lasting value is an honour for anyone, even if it's not a landmark birthday. The "brilliant uncirculated" birthday coin set includes the seven 2018 circulation coins as well as an attractive medal portraying a birthday cake on the obverse and a "happy birthday" motif on the reverse. A gift ribbon is already attached to the colourful case so there's no need for wrapping.

PRODUCT INFORMATION



Brilliant uncirculated

2018 CLASSIC COIN SET *Brilliant uncirculated with stemless carline thistle bimetal coin*

Face value: 18.85 Swiss francs
Alloy: copper-nickel and aluminium-bronze
Measurements: 171mm x 106mm x 8mm

Mintage: 9,000 units
Issue date: 25 January 2018
Selling period: up to 24 January 2021
or while stocks last



Proof

2018 CLASSIC COIN SET *Proof with stemless carline thistle bimetal coin*

Face value: 18.85 Swiss francs
Alloy: copper-nickel and aluminium-bronze
Measurements: 171mm x 106mm x 8mm

Mintage: 2,500 units
Issue date: 25 January 2018
Selling period: up to 24 January 2021
or while stocks last



PRODUCT INFORMATION

2018 BABY COIN SET *Brilliant uncirculated with bear medal*



Face value: 8.85 Swiss francs
Alloy: copper-nickel and aluminium-bronze
Measurements: 171mm x 106mm x 8mm



Brilliant uncirculated

Mintage: 10,000 units
Issue date: 1 January 2018
Selling period: up to 31 December 2020
or while stocks last



2018 BIRTHDAY COIN SET *Brilliant uncirculated with birthday medal*



Face value: 8.85 Swiss francs
Alloy: copper-nickel and aluminium-bronze
Measurements: 171mm x 106mm x 8mm



Brilliant uncirculated

Mintage: 3,000 units
Issue date: 1 January 2018
Selling period: up to 31 December 2020
or while stocks last



SWISSMINT NEWS

Special offer: FLORA ALPINA coin set series

You can now order the complete FLORA ALPINA coin set series for just CHF 100.00* instead of CHF 120.00 (brilliant uncirculated quality) and just CHF 235.00 instead of CHF 255.00 (proof quality). The beautiful bimetallic coins included in the coin sets are a delight for all nature lovers. Why Wait? *volume discounts are not available on sets



Brilliant uncirculated
FLORA ALPINA coin set series
2016–2018



Proof
FLORA ALPINA coin set series
2016–2018

Commemorative coins in proof quality: which variations are available? with numbered certificate of authenticity



The certificate number cannot be chosen. A subscription is available for this product.

with numbered certificate of authenticity and certificate of the artist



This edition is limited to just 250 units. A certificate of authenticity number between 1 and 250 is guaranteed (limited to at most two units per customer or delivery address). No subscription is available for this product.

How are very limited edition products allocated?

Certain products such as trial mintings and commemorative coins in proof quality with certificate of the artist are only available in very limited quantities. This means demand greatly exceeds supply. Sales per customer are therefore limited so that as many people can be served as possible.

What do I have to take into consideration when ordering?

Products go on sale on their date of issue at 8am. No reservations can be accepted or taken into account. Small quantities are made available online via swissmintshop and by telephone via our customer service team. The remaining stock is distributed by drawing lots.

When can I receive a discount on my order?

You can receive a volume discount when you order certain products. For all coin sets and coins in "proof" quality, you will receive a discount of up to CHF 30 per unit depending on the alloy and amount ordered.

Product/quality	Minimum purchase	Discount per unit
Proof bimetal	From 10 units	CHF 5
Proof silver	From 10 units	CHF 5
Proof gold	From 5 units	CHF 30
Coin sets	From 10 units	CHF 10

* no volume discount on proof with artist certificate or FLORA ALPINA coin sets series

Expert evaluations

According to Article 7 para. 3 of the Coinage Ordinance (SR 941.101), the Swissmint's statutory mandate only makes provision for expert activities in the case of counterfeit coins. There is no legal basis for more extensive assessments. As a certain public interest exists for official authenticity reports in the case of precious collector coins, the mint, as part of its administration duties, has been providing expert opinions for many years on coins and shooting thalers produced in-house. Reorganisation and streamlining of our administrative tasks means that we have to end this voluntary

service with immediate effect. For some time now, the fees charged have not been enough to cover the costs we incur. In future, Swissmint's expert activities will focus on checking suspicious circulation coins on behalf of the Swiss National Bank, police authorities, cash processing operators etc.

The Association of Swiss Professional Numismatists (VSNB) is currently working on creating an independent expert commission for expert evaluations and assessments. This commission may take over the task previously performed by the mint.

Customer event in Barryland

On the afternoon of 3 November 2017, Swissmint together with the Barry Foundation welcomed the eager winners of the Barry gold coin launch competition to Barryland in Martigny. The lucky winners were taken on an informative tour through the museum where they learnt more about the history of the famous rescue dog and the work of the Barry Foundation. The tour would not have been complete without a visit to the Saint Bernard dogs. The unforgettable experience in Barryland was rounded off with refreshments in "Le Collier d'Or" restaurant.



Autograph session with Vito Noto at the Basel Coin Fair

On **Saturday, 10 February 2018 from 11am to 12pm** at the **Swissmint stand** an autograph session will be held with the designer of the silver coin. We look forward to your visit.

Diary

This year, Swissmint will be present with a stand at the following coin fairs:

2 to 4 February 2018	World Money Fair, Estrel Convention Center, Berlin
10 February 2018	Basler Coin Fair, Congress Center, Basel
3 and 4 March 2018	Numismata Munich, MOC Veranstaltungszentrum, Munich
28 April 2018	Münzenbörse BERNA, BERNEXPO convention centre, Bern
22 and 23 September 2018	Stuttgarter Coin Fair, Hanns-Martin-Schleyer-Halle, Stuttgart
27 and 28 October 2018	Internationale Münzmesse Zürich, Swissôtel, Zürich-Oerlikon

Outlook on other issues

26 April 2018	"Steamboat La Suisse" silver coin "Wilhelm Tell" gold coin
20 September 2018	"Swiss Army Knife" silver coin Christmas coin set 2018 Trial minting of the "Steamboat La Suisse" commemorative coin

Visit us on Facebook

Do you want to be kept up to date on what Swissmint is up to? Then become a Swissmint fan: www.facebook.com/swissmint.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swissmint

Swiss Confederation



Published by

Federal Mint
Swissmint
Bernstrasse 28
CH-3003 Bern
Tel. +41 58 4 800 800
Fax +41 58 462 60 07
www.swissmint.ch
www.swissmintshop.ch
www.facebook.com/swissmint

Distribution:

FOBL, Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics, CH-3003 Bern
www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch
No 603.000.1/18Eng