



## International Mountain Day - December 11, 2020

### Appeal by the EUMA (European-Mountaineers)

We love the mountains - AND we respect the mountains, especially in times of Covid 19 and climate change!

Winter mountaineering and ski touring are particularly popular right now because the risk of infection in the outdoors is low. However, the dangers in the mountains are not impressed by more or less danger of infection. They remain as they have always been! Not being infected does not mean that we are immune to accidents, injuries from falls or avalanches. On the contrary: an increasing number of inexperienced ski-mountaineers will increase this risk.

So let's be extra careful not to expose the people who will hopefully rescue us to additional dangers. Mountain rescuers have to face alpine risks because of the people who have been involved in an accident. In addition, they now have to wear protective masks during their strenuous work and are exposed to an increased risk of infection due to the physical proximity during the rescue operation. After that, let's hope the hospital will not be overrun...

We, the European Mountaineering Federation, are not the only ones who fear that popular mountain areas will be overrun, especially in the pandemic season. We therefore recommend switching to "less cool" destinations.

Let us remember that not every experience has to be posted in competition.

Let us enjoy the silence of a less spectacular environment.

Let us allow both game and forest to relax a little.

Let us discover new things in our immediate surroundings, which saves CO<sub>2</sub> and nerves!

Let us dare to take public transport to our tour destination - a train or bus doesn't bite and saves us parking problems and fees.

If we carpool, then with mouth-and-nose protection. We turn on the radio and listen to music, keeping our mouths shut during the ride, because even when we talk smart we may be a virus-spreader.

And now we leave our worries behind in the valley and let our souls dangle in the mountains! That keeps us healthy.

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EUMA is an umbrella organisation for European mountaineering associations or alpine clubs from 25 countries representing nearly 3 Million members.

EUMA is aiming at including mountaineering in European Union's priorities as an important factor for a higher quality of life and at asserting itself as a dialogue partner with the EU institutions.

EUMA stands for free and responsible access to mountains, commitment to alpine environment protection, and a common European spirit: mountaineering overcomes borders and prejudices.