



PLAN



TAKE A BREAK

IVANO ISEPPi AND STEFAN KURATH

REST STOP

THUSIS / SWITZERLAND



IVANO ISEPPi AND STEFAN KURATH DISTANCED THEMSELVES FROM THE SWISS AUTOBAHN'S USUAL 'HEIDLAND ARCHITECTURE' AND SET NEW STANDARDS FOR RESTING IN A MOBILE SOCIETY.

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PHOTOS THOMAS DREXEL

Coming from the national motorway near Thusis, Switzerland, the driver exits the roundabout and heads directly to the end of the convoluted of a building clad in corrugated steel. In the foreground is an inconspicuous car park; in the background a view to a sublime mountain backdrop and the entrance to the world-renowned Viamala Gorge. The service area's special location benefits not only fast traffic: a promenade for hikers,

bikers, coaches and horseback riders leads directly past the building, which certainly doesn't confine itself to the functions of stopping for snacks, taking a toilet break or filling up the petrol tank.

To gain some insight, architects Ivano Iseppi and Stefan Kurath thoroughly researched the most important rest areas in Switzerland's Graubünden region and the highway connections in nearby border areas. This gave the team a picture of the spectrum of the stereotypical imitations of Swiss culture, all the way to the purely functional petrol station. For the Viamala rest area in Thusis, the core concept was 'from the region, with the region'. The tent-like roof's zigzag form reaches to the ground, imitating the scenery of the mountain landscape. The openings on the ends of the cross-shaped floor plan

allow views in all four directions. The spatial segmentation clearly divides the functions of petrol station and restaurant into two areas. The last bend of the petrol-station roof ascends for higher trucks, then descends again against the building. A second entrance leads directly into the restaurant's entrance area. Uniform spruce-wood cladding connects shop, eating area and foyer into one flowing space. Spherical lighting over the bar emphasizes the centre of the seamlessly interlocking space, while linear neon lamps arrange the side wings and the overhead lighting over the entrance supports the space's height.

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