



A TALE OF SURVIVAL, RESILIENCE AND ADAPTION



find out more

CHRISTMAS IN THE ALPS

Written and directed by **Andrea Gastgeb**
Executive producers: **Sabine Holzer**
1 x 50 min., 4K, 5.1



Come with us on a magical journey into the heart of the Alps during the most enchanting season, Christmas. The vast winter skies, crisp air, and crunching snow underfoot create a scene of pure wonder. Amid whispering coniferous forests and silent peaks lies a place where tradition and tranquility shape an unforgettable Christmas spirit.

The advent season is not just a date on the calendar but a profound experience. It's a quiet reflection, a step back from the commercial bustle, and a deep dive into time-honored rituals against nature's serene backdrop.

Across five chapters—THE RETREAT, SILENCE, FROST DAYS, THE ANTICIPATION, CELEBRATIONS—we explore the fate of the charismatic Alpine wildlife during a special Christmas. As snowflakes begin to transform the landscape and frost seals the waterways, the high mountain animals, like marmots, retreat, while chamois and ibexes engage in their seasonal rituals.

Despite the beauty, the Alpine winter brings the harsh realities of biting cold and brutal storms. Yet, wildlife like snow voles, hares, and ptarmigans have adapted with extraordinary strategies to thrive.

Reindeer, always associated with Christmas, are not native to the Alps, but a unique herd has found a home in the Dolomites, creating a fairy tale scene. Conversely, the bearded vulture, once extinct in the region, once more soars overhead, thanks to determined efforts to reintroduce them.

The iconic Christmas tree, a symbol of the festive season, makes children's eyes shine when dressed with sparkling, colourful decorations. But it's at its most majestic in the wild forests, where the trees also provide a vital ecological haven for wildlife, from boar to deer to jaybirds, who are attracted to the young shoots of tree nurseries.

High above, where storms rage, a young golden eagle struggles to hunt in the fierce weather, while snow hares are at home in their element, camouflaged against the snow – a stark reminder of the enduring cycle of life and survival.

This Alpine Christmas is not just a celebration but a narrative of life and the resilience of nature, where each snowflake and frosty breath is a testament to the simple joys of existence. It's a unique Alpine Christmas experience that remains in the heart long after the season fades.

A co-production of Terra Mater Studios and The WNET Group in association with PBS and CPB



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