New life for Barcelona’s classic ropeway

LEITNER ropeways to begin refurbishing the Tibidabo Funicular

A pioneering event took place in the Catalan capital nearly 120 years ago, when the Tibidabo Funicular opened at Barcelona’ local mountain in 1901, thereby establishing a modern transport link to the popular summit overlook of Tibidabo, where an amusement park is also located. Now, as part of an extensive revitalization project, this historic funicular, which is particularly popular with tourists, will undergo extensive modernization in 2019. By making the facility itself an attraction, LEITNER ropeways will lend the project an entirely new look.

The vision of amusement park founder Salvador Andreu would become the investment of the century. The popularity of this attraction still remains strong to this day. To usher in a new era, only a technological update is required. Originally, wooden cabins were employed to make the journey to the top of the Tibidabo at 512 m. Over the past decades, several upgrades were carried out, the latest of which took place in 2008. In the coming year, a completely new chapter will begin as part of a comprehensive revitalization program. Even the funicular itself will be renamed “Cuca de Llum” (Firefly) as part of a plan to integrate the ropeway into the existing amusement park as a modern attraction. In addition to upgrades in comfort and safety, the project will naturally also focus on improving the guest experience during journeys with the funicular.

Ultramodern technology creates a special experience

By switching to the very latest in ropeway technology, LEITNER ropeways has thus managed to create the first experience guests will enjoy on their way to the amusement park. LEITNER ropeways is responsible for the modernization of the funicular control system, the delivery of two carriages, and the installation of the sheaves, tracks, station equipment, and automatic platform doors. The introduction of a new safety system ensures compliance with current regulations governing ropeway and funicular transport. Additional safety features include the use of fireproof elements, improved door opening and closing systems, and the installation of video surveillance and emergency lighting. In terms of performance,

the new ropeway will also provide significantly more "action": The funicular’s traveling speed will increase from four to ten meters per second and its transport capacity will increase from 120 to 252 people per journey.

Panoramic views, interactive information, and futuristic lighting

Along with the installation of numerous new technical systems and equipment, the project is focusing on design aspects that will create more space in the carriages and offer more comfort and a better panoramic view. In addition to a noticeable reduction in noise and vibration, air conditioning systems, barrier-free access and ergonomically designed seats contribute to a relaxed funicular journey. The aforementioned seats are semi-transparent, and thus have the effect of making the cabin space appear even larger. In addition, the robust material and ease of care ensure an attractive impression sure to last for many years.

The funicular will continue to make an impression at night, especially after the installation of a distinctive futuristic exterior lighting system. The interior will also be particularly innovative, as the cabins will be outfitted with tablet computers that will offer passengers entertainment and information about the recreational park’s history and the development of the funicular ropeway.

The total cost of the renovation works is 18.3 million euros, and the cost of the ropeway works is ten million euros. LEITNER ropeways will implement the project via its Iberian subsidiary "Telèfericos y Nieve" and in cooperation with the Barcelona-based architectural firm "MIAS Architects" in springtime of 2020.

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