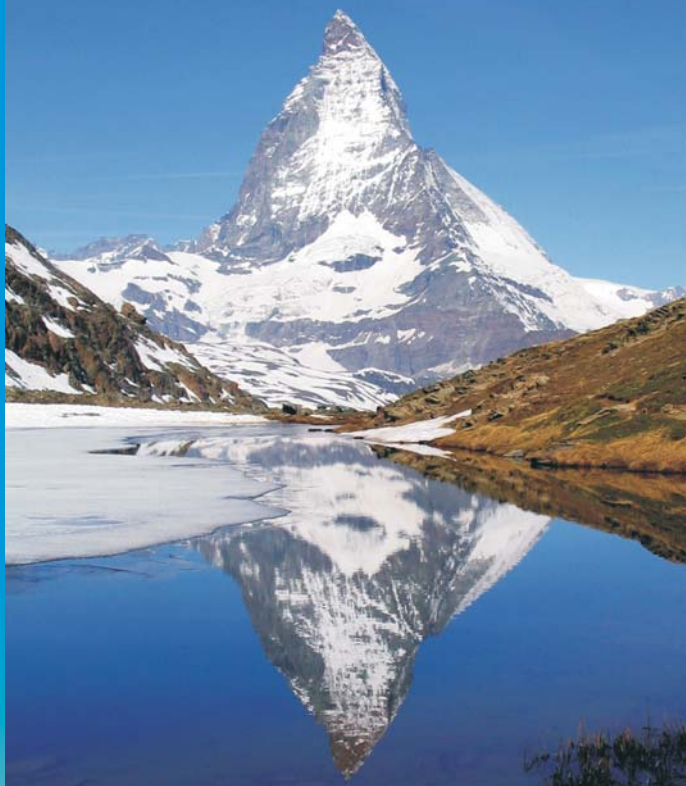


HUNTER TRAVEL GUIDES

POCKET *A* DVENTURES



**SWITZERLAND**

*Kimberly Rinker*



# SWITZERLAND

*Kimberly Rinker*



HUNTER



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Index by Nancy Wolff

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# Introduction

**M**ention Switzerland and people typically think of the Alps, Heidi, cheese, yodeling, chocolate and St. Bernards. Yet, this relatively small country – 15,941 square miles (41,290 square km) of land and inland water – offers much more than you might expect.

Nestled in the heart of Europe, the Swiss Confederation (the country's official title) is home to over 7.5 million people who speak four national languages, including their indigenous tongue, Romansh. The Latin name for Switzerland is "Confederatio Helvetica," from which the abbreviation "CH" comes. You'll notice the "CH" on many buildings, products, cars and on postal codes throughout Switzerland.

For the first-time traveler, Switzerland is a dream come true. The country – which celebrated its 700th anniversary in 1991 – is clean, the local people and those in the tourism industry are helpful and courteous, and the public transport systems are unmatched anywhere in the world. Local roads and highways (autobahns) are extremely easy for the neophyte visitor to navigate. The experienced explorer can return time and again to this small, mountainous country and always find a new peak to ascend, another pass to hike, an isolated lake to swim or fish in, and another small village to investigate.

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# Switzerland

## Principal Cities, Mountain Ranges & Lakes

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In addition to the striking beauty of its Alpine scenery, Switzerland is Europe's center for international banking and manufacture of quality goods.

As well, Switzerland is home to a variety of unique customs and traditions. Nearly 68% of the population speaks German, 20% speaks French and about 10% speaks Italian. The ancient, traditional Swiss language of Romansh is spoken by a very few.

Landlocked by Germany on the north, Austria and Liechtenstein on the east, Italy on the south and France on the West, Switzerland contains several glorious mountains that rise above 14,000 feet (4,300 m). In terms of land mass, it is slightly smaller than New Jersey. The three major regions of the country are divided by a series of mountainous belts that run northeast to southwest. This trio of regions – the Jura, the Swiss Plateau, and the Alps – all follow this directional pattern, and are altered only in certain spots by the rivers that run between mountains.

While the largest area of the country is in the Rhine Basin, a small area in the south is drained by the Ticino, and in the southwest by the Rhône.

Neutrality is another Swiss tradition, and one that is carried out through the country's 26 cantons, each of which contains a local governmental unit. As one of the most advanced industrialized nations in the world, Switzerland also has the distinction of being one of the oldest democracies.

The federal government, with its headquarters in the capital of Bern, has a somewhat restricted jurisdiction and limited powers. A Federal Council heads the executive branch of the government, and a president and vice-president are chosen from among the Council's seven members.

Both federal and cantonal court systems exist, and a Council of States is made up of 46 members – one or two members from each of the cantons. Election methods and office terms are decided by each canton individually.

Switzerland offers the traveler a wide array of climates and settings. One morning you might be on top of the Klein (small) Matterhorn, observing Alpine peaks in a snug down ski jacket in the mountainous canton of Valais. The next afternoon you could be sipping a glass of wine under a palm tree on the banks

of Lake Lugano in your swimsuit. The following night would find you strolling across the Chapel Bridge in the Old Town of Lucerne, wearing a T-shirt and jeans, while the picturesque Alps loom up in the background.

From the high-speed trains that can whisk you from Bern to Paris in only four hours to Zermatt's famous Gornergrat Railway, no trip would be complete without at least one ride on the indefatigable Swiss Federal Rail system.

A relaxing journey on one of Switzerland's many waterways gives a different perspective on the beautiful scenery, which seems never-ending.

So sit back, relax, and enjoy a trip that's sure to bring you lots of chocolate, cheese, stunning scenery and fresh, crisp mountain air – complemented by Swiss cuisine, efficiency, and a rich history.

## What This Book Will Tell You

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For 25 years I have been living in and visiting Switzerland on a yearly basis. My travels throughout this Alpine country have been as a writer, farm hand, and tour guide. I've gotten to experience Switzerland as the Swiss do, and have visited the little out-of-the-way places few tourists ever see. This book – now in a handy, pocket-guide edition – will help you to explore those places, as well as the traditional hot spots. For this pocket edition, we've added many new hikes and other outdoor sports for both the neophyte and the most seasoned of Swiss travelers.

## How This Book is Organized

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After this introduction – which gives you a broad overview of Swiss life and culture – we'll tell you how to get the most out of your visit. You'll learn about the seven regions of Switzerland, and the cantons (areas akin to our counties) within those regions, as well as their major attractions and cities.

Within each canton profile we'll highlight the history of the region and then give some basic information – accommodations, restaurants, best sights, and don't-miss spots. Of course, some

cantons, such as Zug or Appenzell-Innerrhoden, will have less to see and do than the cantons of Bern, Valais, or Graubünden. You'll get information on the best times of the year to visit certain areas, and insights into traditional festivals, such as Bern's Onion Festival and Basel's Faschnacht, as well as the annual national Schwingfest.

As many Swiss would say, "Viel spass und viel Glück!" – Have fun and much luck!

## The Seven Regions of Switzerland

For the purposes of this book, we have divided Switzerland into seven distinct regions in order to help you with your travels throughout this beautiful and unique country. Swiss geography was originally formed through the development of glaciers. Switzerland became a stunning mixture of valleys, gently rolling hills, ominous mountains, and streams, rivers and land-locked lakes – all the result of glaciers. Over time, and as more areas became part of the Swiss Confederation, the development of the cantons evolved. Starting with the original three cantons of Switzerland (Schwyz, Glarus, and Uri), another 23 eventually joined them, each with its own unique history, culture and traditions.

This guide begins by examining the northern region of Switzerland, and then moves to the southeast, before covering the middle of the country. We then make our way up to the northwestern and southwestern sides of Switzerland, before journeying farther south to the most mountainous portion of the country.

## History

Geography played a vital role in the history of the development of Switzerland. The brutal terrain provided a barrier of unity for the Swiss, and gave them independence from outside neighbors. Switzerland was once part of the mighty Roman Empire during the first century BC. A Celtic tribe known as the Helvetii was conquered by the Romans and continued to live under their protection, until the Germans invaded the area in the fifth century. The country eventually became part of the Holy Roman Empire again in the 11th century after a series of battles.



*William Tell*

In 1291 the three cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden banded together and formed the Swiss Confederation – celebrating their independence from all other factions on August 1st of that year, which is still celebrated as the national independence day throughout Switzerland.

During the centuries that followed, more cantons were added to the young country. Lucerne joined in 1332, Zürich in 1351, Glarus and Zug in 1352 and Bern in 1353 as territorial expansion accelerated.

However, at times small wars would break out between the cantons, as each one struggled for military control and power. Cantons Fribourg and Solothurn were admitted to Switzerland in 1481, Basel and Schaffhausen in 1501, and Appenzell in 1513.

As additional cantons were added, Switzerland's economy flourished. Silk goods, linens, wool and cottons experienced the greatest growth and, by the 18th century, Geneva had gained a reputation for clock production.

Zürich became the center for literature and new ideas. Napoleon had a short stint of supervision over Switzerland in the late 1790s, which gave France the ability to recruit 14-15,000 men for his national army. After his demise, Switzerland was forced to develop a new constitution, which was christened the Pact of 1815, giving Swiss citizens freedom of religion, of movement, and freedom from occupation. The cantons of Valais, Neuchâtel and Geneva were officially established at this time as well.

Since the mid-1800s, Switzerland's history has remained fairly quiet, and the Swiss have remained unyielding in their commitment to neutrality, even as the European Union evolved and developed all around them. During both world wars, Switzerland was faced with hostile neighbors, and was able to maintain neutrality and become a center for international organizations, such as the Red Cross.

Modern Switzerland has not been unscathed by 20th-century wars, however. In the mid-1990s the Swiss government was accused of selling weapons to the Nazis, and many people who had family members perish in the Holocaust filed lawsuits against Swiss banks, accusing them of illegally keeping money and other assets deposited by victims both before and during World War II. In 1998 several Swiss banks agreed to a \$1.25 billion settlement, but the government did not opt to participate in the settlement. To this day, the Swiss remain adamantly opposed to joining the European Union.

"Switzerland has had but one hero, William Tell, and he is a myth," wrote English author and humorist Max Beerbohm. Legend never really says if Tell was a man or a myth, but you can find a statue of him in nearly every town, village and city in Switzerland.

The Swiss see Tell as a symbol of independence and the love of liberty, which has characterized this tiny country for centuries.

## The Land

### Geography



Though Switzerland appears to be all mountains, the geography offers a wide variety of features. For instance, the Jura Mountains – which form part of the French/Swiss border – provide a setting of lush pastures and green meadows. Lying between the Jura and the Alps is the Central Plateau, where nearly two-thirds of the Swiss make their homes. Herein lie the majority of family farms and major cities as well. As one passes to the south and southeast,

the Alps rise up as rocky crags, snowy peaks, glaciers and gorges.

Peaking at 15,203 feet (4,635 m) is the highest point, Dufourspitze, in the Monte Rosa group near the Italian border. There are 50 peaks that tower higher than 12,000 feet – among them, the famous Matterhorn, the Eiger, and the Jungfrau. Still farther south, the Alps plummet into Ticino, home to palm trees, warm Mediterranean breezes, and heavy Italian influences.

## The Alps

There are many distinct regions of the Swiss Alps. These relatively compact (by North American standards) mountain ranges cover 60% of the country, and are home to glaciers that comprise about 772 square miles of land (2,000 square km).



*Aletsch Glacier*

Switzerland is also home to the most extensive glacier range in Europe, the Aletsch Glacier, which covers 65 square miles (169 square km). Dufourspitze, at 15,203 ft (4,635 m) is Switzerland's highest peak.

The Alps actually are formed of two parallel mountain ranges: the Bernese Oberland in the west-central

part of Switzerland move north into the Glarus Alps, while the southwestern Pennine Alps continue on into the Lepontine Alps and the Rhetian Alps. The Bernese Alps (Bernese Oberland) rise to 14,022 feet (4,300 m) at the Finsteraarhorn, and to 13,642 (4,146 m) at the Jungfrau, the highest peaks in that region.

This area can be crossed at only two places in the 110-mile range: either the difficult and steep Grimsel Pass, or the much easier valley of the Reuss – itself a narrow and deep crossing.

The towering Pennine Alps are separated from the Bernese Alps by the valleys of the upper Rhône and Rhine rivers, whose waters discharge in opposite directions. These two val-

leys are linked by passes at their heads, and contain most of the Alps' population. The southern range can be crossed by a number of passes, none of which are easy, and many of which are closed in the wintertime or made extremely dangerous due to massive amounts of snow and ice. The Simplon, the St. Gotthard and the St. Bernard passes are used the most.

## Avalanches

Avalanches often occur when the first snows follow unseasonably cold temperatures. A season with steady snowfalls is preferable to a season where heavy snowfalls are mixed with weeks of rain, snow-drought and severe temperature changes. They can also occur after a very heavy snowfall which is accompanied by wind, especially on a sunny afternoon during which some of the snow begins to thaw.

The Swiss are much more accustomed to avalanches than are visitors, and tend to be more careful than tourists. In fact, the Weissfluhjoch (Swiss Avalanche Institute) predicts that an average winter will claim the lives of over 100 skiers and mountaineers, compared to 10-15 avalanche fatalities in the US.

## Rivers, Lakes & Streams

Switzerland has often been called Europe's "mother of rivers," as the melted waters from snow and glaciers drain down into two of the continent's greatest rivers – the Rhine and the Rhône. The Ticino River joins the Po in Italy, while the Inn combines with the Danube on the Austrian-German border. Waterfalls abound through Switzerland, and can provide spectacular photo opportunities. Nearly all of these waterfalls and rivers eventually make their way to the European shores, hundreds of miles south.

## The Climate



Switzerland's climate is greatly influenced by the Alps, although in some parts of the country these giants offer protection from the often-fierce elements.

Though temperatures tend to vary with the altitude, one can expect warm summers and cold winters. The summers are shorter and winters longer in the Alps, with the first snows falling near the end of September. Peaks at 9,000 feet (2,740 m)



and higher usually stay snow-topped all year and rain falls throughout the country during all four seasons. Rainfall can be heavy in the summer months, especially in the valleys. In the winter, a dismal fog can hang over the valleys while, thousands of feet above, skiers bask in the warm rays of sunlight.

## Flora & Fauna



*Edelweiss*

While Switzerland has nearly every kind of flower that can be found anywhere else in the world, it is renowned for its famed edelweiss. The unofficial national flower (*Leontopodium alpinum*) is strictly protected throughout the entire country, and grows on dry meadows and rocky areas in strong sunlight up to 10,168 feet (3,100 m) above

sea level. It is characterized by its beautiful, delicate, tiny white flowers with six to seven thin petals, growing two to four inches tall.

## Wild & Domesticated Animals

A typical variety of animals can be found here: squirrels, snakes, moles, and other ground rodents, as well as a wide range of birds and bats. There are also bearded vultures, golden eagles, marmots, elk, chamois and deer. Several varieties of cattle, pigs, goats, sheep, horses, chickens and rabbits are all productive livestock. In addition, turkeys, ducks, geese, mules, llamas, ostriches, bees, and even bison are slowly gaining popularity. Switzerland is also home to seven official dog breeds, including the Swiss mountain dog and the St. Bernard.

## Government

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Switzerland is a republic, made up of 23 full cantons and three half-cantons – Appenzell, Basel, Unterwalden – for a total of 26. While the structure of government varies slightly from canton to canton, there are basic similarities. Each canton has an

administrative council and a type of legislative assembly, though election methods can differ widely. Referendum techniques and popular initiative are used by most cantons, while a few utilize the ancient custom of *Landesgemeinde* – an annual open-air assembly of all citizens that are at least 18 years old. This *Landesgemeinde* has power of legislation and must approve all laws and regulations drafted by the body of people within the canton.

Each canton is entrusted with powers in all matters that are not federal in nature, which means each canton has control over health, education and sanitation, for example. However, cantons must also conform to standards set by the federal legislative body in the capital of Bern. Cantons are also required to adhere to federal standards in regard to military training. Police and the court system are handled on a cantonal basis, with the exception of the Federal Court, Switzerland's highest tribunal.

## Political Parties

There are four major political parties in Switzerland and several minor parties. The Christian-Democratic People's Party defends the interests of Roman Catholics and cantonal rights. The Radical Democrats represent the liberal center, while the Social Democrats are moderates who tend to favor greater federal action in social reform. Founded in 1971, the Swiss People's Party has less support than the other three major parties, and tends toward more liberal views. Other smaller parties exist as well, such as the Green, Liberal, Independent, and Communist parties.

## The Court System

The Swiss court system is headed by the Federal Court in Lausanne. This court does not have the power of judicial review of federal legislation, but instead functions as a court of appeal for the cantonal court systems, which are responsible for trying cases at the lowest levels. The Federal Court also serves for trials concerning treason and for disputes between cantons, or between the confederation and a canton.

## The Military

The military in Switzerland is geared solely to defense. The Swiss have a system in place to destroy every tunnel, bridge and pass leading into or out of Switzerland in the event of a national emergency. All men between the ages of 20 and 42 must serve in the military. Those who cannot serve for various reasons are subject to a special tax.

## The Economy

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Switzerland has long been known as one of the most prosperous countries in the world. Since the Middle Ages, commerce has been at the heart of the Swiss economy and due to the country's neutral status, it also became an ideal place for banking and a safe haven for foreign investments.

Besides banking and commerce, tourism is a major industry, with the visitors sometimes outnumbering the locals. These foreigners help to support hotels, restaurants, bars, and all forms of transportation. Internationally known resorts such as St. Moritz, Gstaad, Interlaken and Zermatt help to promote tourism with their year-round accessibility. The excellent railway system and highways, bridges, cable cars, funiculars and ski lifts make mountainous areas accessible that were not so a hundred years ago. Also, you can easily access Switzerland from Italy, France, Austria, and Germany on the passenger ships that ply lakes Geneva, Lugano and Constance.

About 75% of Switzerland is used for various types of agriculture or forestry and, of this, only about 10% is used for crops, such as potatoes and grains. Vineyards encompass another small percentage, while about 40% of the land is used for grazing. Dairy farming is the most productive branch of agriculture, supporting the production of milk, cheese, butter, and chocolate. However, only about 4% of the Swiss labor force is involved in some type of agriculture.

Engineering, textiles and chemical production are the leading manufacturing industries, utilizing about 20% of the Swiss labor force. Switzerland has almost no mineral fuels, and thus has to import about 80% of its energy needs. This affected the

growth of many manufacturing plants, who had to wait for the country to develop its hydroelectric power. Engineering facilities are near Zürich and Basel primarily, while textile producers – second only to engineering plants – are found mostly in north-eastern Switzerland.

Switzerland was a founding member of the European Free Trade Association in 1960, but chose to stay out of the European Economic Community (EEC or Common Market) – later called the European Union (EU). The United States and Japan are Switzerland's chief non-European trading partners. Swiss foreign trade consists of the exportation of engineering, chemical and textile products, while the top imports are agricultural products, machinery, transportation and construction equipment.



*The Swiss currency is “Schweizerfranken” – Swiss Francs or Franken. CHF or SFr are often used to represent Swiss francs when written, as in 15SFr. One Swiss franc equals 100 “rappen.” When exchanging money it is best to go to a bank or currency exchange – hotel rates can be obscenely high. Exchange rates at the time of publication were 1SFr=US\$0.73 or £0.46.*

## The People

### Languages



“Unity through diversity” is the motto of the Swiss people, and loyalty to a specific canton, hometown or village tends to be strong. Diversity is accentuated by the four languages – German, French, Italian and Romansh, each of which has many regional dialects. Also, the German spoken by many Swiss is not “Hochdeutsch” or high German – the German taught in schools – but Swiss German or “Schweizerdeutsch.” Swiss German can sound completely different from canton to canton, and usually reflects the people and their society, changing as you travel from north to south or from east to west.

Switzerland is predominantly German (74%), while 20% are French and just 4% are of Italian descent. Romansh and other

nationalities account for the remaining 2%. In terms of religion, 48% are Roman Catholic and 44% Protestant.

## Education

The cantons are responsible for education of children, most of whom attend public schools from ages five, six or seven until age 16. Private schools are very expensive, and many Swiss believe that a child only attends a private school if he can't make it in a public school. The cantons vary on education levels and rules, which can prove difficult for parents who move to a new canton in the middle of a school year. For instance some cantons start to teach foreign languages in the fourth grade, while others start in the seventh.

Public schools begin with Kindergarten, followed by Volksschule (elementary school), then Gymnasium (secondary school), and finally Universitäten (universities). After elementary school, children may choose to go to a middle school or they can begin an apprenticeship in a variety of trades – everything from cooking and banking, to farming and horsemanship. After finishing their apprenticeship it is then possible to continue an academic career at a secondary school or at a “Fachhochschule” (FH) – technical college.

There are eight universities in Switzerland – six are run by cantons and two run by the federal government.

## Food

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Everyday traditions revolving around foods are widespread. Take raclette, for instance. This dish is made up of a three-month-old loaf of Bagnes cheese, which is cut in half and placed over an open fire to melt slowly. When melted, it is scraped onto a plate, spiced with pepper and added to pickled onions and sour gherkins, along with small,



*Raclette*

boiled potatoes. This popular Swiss dish hails from Canton Valais.

Another traditional Swiss dish is fondue, a mixture of Gruyère and Emmentaler cheeses, garlic, wine and kirsch (cherry brandy). Fondue is typically prepared in an earthenware pot over a tiny stove in the middle of the dinner table. Guests are given a long fork, on which they place small chunks of bread. They then dip the bread into the



*Fondue*

fondue, and try their best not to lose the bread in the cheese mixture. If a guest loses his bread in the fondue pot, he or she must then forfeit either a bottle of wine, or a kiss to the host/hostess and other members of the opposing gender seated at the table. Fondue is really a specialty of the western cantons of Switzerland, but has become a national and worldwide favorite. There are several varieties, but the best-known is the Neuchâtel fondue, which includes wine, Emmentaler (Gruyère) cheese, garlic, paprika, pepper and corn flour. You'll also find other fondues such as the fondue Waadtlander, where the only addition to the aforementioned recipe is butter. Fondue Genfer (Geneva) adds egg yolks, nutmeg and cream to the mixture for added flavor.

## The Adventures

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### Winter Sports



Switzerland is home to a wide variety of winter sports, and is known for having some of the best ski areas anywhere in the world. The winter season typically runs from December to April, although above 8,202 feet (2,500 m) it lasts from November to May because of the excellent snow coverage most years.

The Swiss Ski Federation is located at Haus des Skisports, Worbstrasse 52, Postfach 478, CH-3074 Muri bei Bern. ☎ 31-

950-6111. They can provide information and maps on ski resorts and difficulty levels of slopes. Beginning skiers should contact the Swiss Ski School Federation, at Oberalpstrasse, CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-1240, ☎/fax 41-887-1369.

InterSport ([www.intersport.ch/rent](http://www.intersport.ch/rent)), Rent-A-Sport ([www.rentasport.ch](http://www.rentasport.ch)) and SwissRent ([www.swissrent.ch](http://www.swissrent.ch)) offer rental equipment. You'll find 90 shops in 65 different locations throughout Switzerland, and you can reserve your equipment via the Internet prior to your trip and it will be waiting for you when you arrive.

Cross-country skiing (known as *Langlauf* in German) is very popular in Switzerland. Some of the best cross-country trekking regions are in the canton of Graubünden, which has 94 miles (150 km) of pistes near St. Moritz. At Laax-Flims near Chur and Davos, there are 47 miles (75 km) of trails and many in the Gstaad region as well.

Ski touring is a combination of cross-country and downhill skiing. Great itineraries abound between Chamonix, Zermatt and Engadine. This sport is for those who are experienced and in good shape, and it's usually undertaken with an experienced guide.



*Skijoring (Tibor Menyhért)*

Skijoring is an exhilarating sport where you are towed on skis behind a galloping horse. You must be in excellent physical condition to attempt this. Skijoring races on snow are held in St. Moritz on a regular basis.

Zorbing is the latest craze for those who just can't get enough excitement in their lives. For this sport, you are strapped inside a giant plastic ball – arms and legs spread out – and then hurled down the side of a mountain.



*“Zorbonauts,” as they’re known, can now either strap themselves in wet or dry. For those who prefer going dry, they’re strapped in standing upright. For those who want the washing machine experience, up to three “Zorbonauts” are allowed into a single orb unrestrained, accompanied by three gallons of water (cool in the summer and warm in the winter) before heading down the mountain at up to speeds of 50 mph.*

Snowshoeing is another sport for the physically fit, allowing you to explore off the beaten path. Most excursions are taken with an experienced guide.

Dogsledding abounds throughout most of the ski resorts in Switzerland. You can get information on local runs at the various tourist offices.

Other snow sports include snowboarding and mono-skiing (parabolic skiing), which is much like snowboarding (you use a single, wide ski and your feet are side-by-side). This sport is most popular in the areas of Les Diablerets, Saas-Fee and Laax. World Cup events are held in these three areas every year. Snow biking or snow-bobbing are also popular (basically cycling on snow). Ice sports include ice hockey, curling, and luge.

## Summer Sports



Cycling, hiking, swimming and skating are all popular in Switzerland. In the last five years Switzerland has initiated a number of in-line skating routes of 124 miles (200 km) each. The most popular are those from Geneva to Brig, from Zürich to Yverdon-les-Bains, and from Bad Ragaz to Schaffhausen.

You can rent bikes at nearly every major train station, and cycling shops are abundant throughout Switzerland. You can arrange for a bike prior to your trip at [www.rent-a-bike.ch](http://www.rent-a-bike.ch). Prices vary, but they average around 25Sfr daily, and all types of bikes are available, from simple models to 21-gear mountain bikes.

Hiking is the number-one recreational activity here. Trails are well marked and are color-coded to indicate levels of difficulty. For instance, bright gold signifies that a trail has suitable paths for all levels of hikers.



Bergweg (mountain way) path signs are white-red-white and are for experienced mountain walkers. The highest Alpine paths are coded blue-white-blue, and should never be attempted without the proper equipment and experienced mountain guide. Hikers will want to check out Eurotrek, at Freischützgasse 3, CH-8021 Zürich. They provide maps and excursion information for hiking trails (known in German as *Wanderweg*). ☎ 44-295-5555, fax 44-295-5640, [www.eurotrek.ch](http://www.eurotrek.ch).

If you want to golf in Switzerland, take along your handicap card and lots of cash – this is one of the most expensive pastimes in Switzerland, and is generally a sport of the wealthy.

There are some 90 riding stables throughout Switzerland, with the majority in Canton Jura.

You can bungee-jump at a number of spots throughout Switzerland, but some of the best places are found at Engleberg in Titlis for 150Sfr, at Brunnen in the Urmiberg Valley, and at the Gorge of the Inn in Scoul.

To experience Switzerland in a hot-air balloon is extraordinary. Located 43 miles (70 km) west of Zürich and 50 km east of Bern, in the town of Wolfwil, Funks Ballonfahrten offers flights from one to six hours, ranging in price from 280Sfr for a one-hour excursion to 1,950Sfr for a six-hour journey. A variety of trips are possible. ☎ 62-926-2277, or ☎/fax 62-926-1611 for information. Located at Vordere Gasse 27, Wolfwil 4628.

Hot springs are natural hot baths for which Switzerland is famous. The best are found in Leukerbad, Yverdon-les-Bains and Caunasee in Films.

Shooting is a very popular sport among men, and there are some 3,600 shooting clubs throughout Switzerland.

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## Travel on a Budget

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### Camping & RVing



Switzerland is home to over 450 camping sites. Only a handful are open in the winter months, and about a third have accommodations for handicapped travelers. Contact the Sc (Schweizer Camping) Office for their

*Campingführer* (guidebook) at CP176, CH-1217, Meyrin.  
☎ 22-785-1333, [www.camping.ch](http://www.camping.ch).

## Farm Stays

Those wishing to trek through Switzerland on a budget will find that the Swiss offer clean accommodations, even when sleeping in a barn! The latest trend for students and frugal travelers is called *Schlaf im Stroh*, literally "Sleeping in Straw." Farms throughout Switzerland allow travelers to sleep in their barns on a deep bed of straw. The cost is around 18Sfr and includes breakfast. A sleeping bag is required. Check out their website at [www.agri.ch/stroh](http://www.agri.ch/stroh), or contact the founder of this group, Christian Stahli-Fehr, at Boisdu Fey, CH-1430 Orges. ☎ 24-445-1631.

Along the same lines, you can stay with Swiss families in their farm houses. Swiss Holiday Farms can give you a list of welcoming farms. Contact Schweizer Reisekass (Reka), at Neuengasse 15, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-329-6633, ☎/fax 31-329-6601, [www.reka.ch](http://www.reka.ch).

## Swiss Mountain Huts

For those who are hiking, biking or just wandering, a stay in one of the many Swiss mountain huts is a game experience.

Many of these huts are owned by the Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) and others are privately owned. The paths and trails leading to them are



generally well-marked and not very demanding, but don't forget your hiking boots, a compass, and maps. These huts offer basic accommodations amid the Alps, so be ready to bunk down hard and enjoy the beautiful scenery. Rates are 43-65Sfr per night, but if you join the SAC, you'll get a discount. A reservation is strongly suggested. There is no age limit, but lights out are at 10 pm each night, with no exceptions. Most of the huts of-

fer a simple range of dishes, and vegetarian meals must be ordered in advance. Most offer mattresses with woolen blankets, but visitors are strongly advised to bring their own sleeping bag, along with toilet paper and a torch lamp. The Association of Swiss Hut Warders has a great website at [www.bergtourismus.ch/e/huetten.cfm](http://www.bergtourismus.ch/e/huetten.cfm), and you should give it a look before you go. Schweizer Hütten, Pius Fähndrich, Neudorfstrasse 2, CH-6312 Steinhausen. SAC (Schweizer Alpen Club), Monbijoustrasse 61, Postfach 23, CH-3000 Bern. ☎ 31-370-1818, fax 31-370-1890.

## Bed & Breakfasts

These abound throughout Switzerland. Contact Rolf Suter, Bernstrasse 6, CH-3067 Boll. ☎/fax 31-839-7484, [www.homestay.ch](http://www.homestay.ch).

## Hostels

For more traditional economy travel, you can hook up with the Swiss Youth Hostels for a \$25 annual fee. Schaffhausenstrasse 14, CH-8042, Zürich. ☎ 44-360-1414, fax 44-360-1460, [www.youthhostel.ch](http://www.youthhostel.ch). Members of the Swiss Backpackers pay no fee. Contact them at Postfach 530, CH-8027, Zürich. ☎ 44-201-7072, [www.backpacker.ch](http://www.backpacker.ch).

## Postal Bus Excursions



For older folks and for people who don't wish to drive themselves, these trips can be a real treat. Postal buses combine trips throughout Switzerland with overnight stays at Best Western hotels. The drivers are very friendly and usually able to converse in English as well as other languages.

On page 26 are just some of the most popular trips, where you'll see a lot of sights for your dollar. Reservations are mandatory, and you must have your passport to cross any borders.

Also, timetables and fares are subject to change at any time, and routes can be altered due to weather conditions. You can combine these routes, or travel on only part of these excursions.

For most single journeys, fares start at 62Sfr for adults, and 31Sfr for kids ages six to 16. Children up to six ride free with their parents. For reservations and information, contact Die Schweizerische Post (Swiss Post) at Post Auto Tourismus, Aareckstrasse 6, Postfach 449, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-828-8838, fax 33-828-8839, [www.postbus.ch](http://www.postbus.ch). You can also contact Switzerland Destination Management at Toedistrasse 51, Postfach CH-8027 Zürich. ☎ 800-100-200-30, fax 800-100-200-31, [www.sdm.ch](http://www.sdm.ch).

## Tips for a More Enjoyable Trip

### Supermarkets



Coop, Denner and Migros are all large supermarket chains with stores throughout Switzerland. Many of these grocery stores – besides providing fresh, canned and prepared foods for hikers, backpackers and budget travelers – also offer self-service restaurants. Generally, the food is quite tasty. The salads and vegetables are always fresh. But frugal travelers beware – you pay based on the weight of your plate. It's worth it, though, and the settings are usually clean, bright and efficient. Also, especially in the Denner stores, you can find exquisite Swiss chocolate at much lower prices than in conventional tourist haunts.

### Business Hours

Most offices and banks close for lunch in Switzerland, typically between noon and 2 pm. All business are closed Sunday, and some on Monday as well. Banks are usually open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm during the week.

Retail shops and outlets are usually open every day but Sunday, and most typically have a day or half-day during the week when they are closed as well. Some close during regular business lunch hours, but the train station shops usually stay open later, some until 9 pm.

## Mail

Rates for mail are either first-class airmail or second-class surface mail. Letters mailed to the US typically cost 1.80Sfr or more first class and 1.40Sfr second class.

## Gas Stations

Nearly all have automated pumps that are open 24/7. They will accept major credit cards and Swiss currency. In the larger cities those with food shops are open from 6:30 am-9 pm.

## Customs

Upon arrival in Switzerland from North America or a non-European nation, you may bring 400 cigarettes, 100 cigars, or 500 grams of tobacco. You can also bring up to two liters of alcohol (up to 15 proof) or one liter over 15 proof. If you are coming into Switzerland from another European country, you can bring 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco.

## Electricity

To use North American devices you need to bring a converter and adapter, as Switzerland's electrical current is 220 volts and 50 AC cycles. You can find these converters and adapters at most electronics stores.

## Embassies & Passports

Citizens of the US, Canada, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand need only a valid passport to enter and stay in Switzerland for 90 days or less.

The US Embassy is in Bern at the Jubilamstrasse 93, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-357-7011.

The Canadian Embassy is also in Bern at Kirchenfeldstrasse 88, CH-3005 Bern. ☎ 31-357-3200.

The United Kingdom Embassy is on Thunstrasse 50, CH-3015 Bern. ☎ 31-359-7700.

The Australian Consulate is in Geneva at Chemin de Fins 2, Cast Postale 172, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-799-9100.

## Emergency Services

Anglo-Phone is an English-language hotline that provides information to travelers. Calls cost 2.20Sfr per minute and lines

are available from 9 am-7 pm, Monday-Friday, and from 9 am-1 pm on Saturday. For all medical emergencies and ambulance service, call 144.

## Swiss Holidays

January 1, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and the following Monday, May 1-Labor Day, Ascension, Pentecost, August 1 (Swiss Independence Day), December 24, 25 and 26.

## Swiss Associations & Clubs

Swiss Automotive Club

Wasserwerksgasse 39

CH-3011 Bern

☎ 31-328-3111, fax 31-311-0310

Swiss Camping Association

Verband Schweizer Campings Seestrasse 119

CH-3800 Interlaken

☎ 36-23-3523

Swiss Hiking Federation

Im Hirshalm 49

CH-4125 Riehen

☎ 61-606-9340, fax 61-606-9345

Association of Swiss Hut Warders

Schweizer Hütten Neudorfstrasse 2

CH-6312 Steinhausen

SAC (Schweizer Alpen Club)

Monbijoustrasse 61 Postfach CH-3023 Bern

☎ 031-370-1818, fax 031-370-1890, info@sac-cas.ch

Swiss Spa Association

☎ 41-726-5216, fax 41-726-5217

Swiss Ski School Federation

CH-7526 Graubünden

☎ 81-854-0777, fax 81-854-0053

Touring Club of Switzerland

9 Rue Pierro-Fatio CH-1213 Geneva

☎ 22-737-1212

Swiss Youth Hostel Association

(Open to all age travelers)

Mutchellenstrasse 116

Postfach CH-8038 Zürich

☎ 44-482-4561, fax 44-482-4578

The Swiss Adviser

(Travel Services)

Postfach 103

CH-1000 Lausanne 19

Fax 2-184-4114

The Swiss National Tourist Office

Gare de Bern Case Postale 2700

CH-3011 Bern ☎ 31-22-7676

Red Cross International

Ave de la Gare 10

CH-1003 Lausanne

☎ 21-329-0029

Services for Disabled Travelers

Mobility International Switzerland Postfach 129,

Feldeggstrasse 77, CH-8032 Zürich

☎ 44-383-0497

Swiss Invalid Association

Froburgstrasse 4

CH-4600 Olten

☎ 62-207-8888, fax 62-8889

## Important Swiss Phone Numbers

Police 117

Fire 118

Ambulance 144

Swiss Rail Info 41-067-1050

Weather 162

Road Conditions 163

Crisis Line 143

Time 161

## Swiss Internet Sites

www.sbb.ch ..... Rail schedule

www.schweizferien.ch ..... Basic info

www.ethz.ch/swiss/Switzerland ..... Basic info

www.switzerland.isyours.com ..... Basic info

<a href="http://www.switzerland.com">www.switzerland.com</a> .....	Basic info
<a href="http://www.tele.ch">www.tele.ch</a> .....	Swiss television info
<a href="http://www.swissinfo.org/eng">www.swissinfo.org/eng</a> .....	Basic info
<a href="http://www.burgen.ch/">www.burgen.ch/</a> .....	Mountain info
<a href="http://www.backpacker.ch/">www.backpacker.ch/</a> .....	Backpacker hostels
<a href="http://www.bnb.ch/">www.bnb.ch/</a> .....	Bed & breakfasts
<a href="http://www.avis.ch">www.avis.ch</a> .....	Avis Rent A Car
<a href="http://www.crossair.ch">www.crossair.ch</a> .....	Crossair (Switzerland's domestic airline)
<a href="http://www.eurocar.ch">www.eurocar.ch</a> .....	Europcar Rent A Car
<a href="http://www.hertz.ch">www.hertz.ch</a> .....	Hertz Rent A Car
<a href="http://www.swissair.com">www.swissair.com</a> .....	Swissair
<a href="http://www.snowsports.ch">www.snowsports.ch</a> .....	Swiss ski & snowboard schools

## Swiss Associations & Clubs

<a href="http://www.swisshiking.ch/">www.swisshiking.ch/</a> .....	Swiss hiking
<a href="http://www.swissgolfnetwork.ch/">www.swissgolfnetwork.ch/</a> .....	Swiss Golf Association
<a href="http://www.barguide.ch/">www.barguide.ch/</a> .....	Bar guide
<a href="http://www.events.ch/">www.events.ch/</a> .....	General
info <a href="http://www.cinemachine.ch/">www.cinemachine.ch/</a> .....	Cinema
info <a href="http://www.kino.ch">www.kino.ch</a> .....	Cinema
info <a href="http://www.swissart.ch/">www.swissart.ch/</a> .....	Swiss art network

## Swiss Foods

Berner Platte (Bernesdish) – a mixture of bacon, sausages, ham, boiled beef, pickled cabbage (sauerkraut), potatoes and green beans.

Bündnerfleisch – dried meat from the Grisons region (raw beef smoked and served in thin slices).

Fondue – in the form of cheese or meat fondues, usually contains a center pot of melted cheese or hot juice into which meat or bread is dipped.

Geschnetzeltes kalbsfleisch – minced veal or calf's liver with cream.

Gnagi – knuckle of pork (a popular snack, traditionally eaten at 4 pm in Bern).

Kalbsbratwurst – veal sausage.

Lake Geneva perch – reported to be the finest fish in Switzerland.

Leberspiessli – calf's liver cooked on a spit with bacon.

Leckerli of Basel – spiced bread with honey and almonds.



Rösti – national dish of diced, boiled and fried potatoes with onions and bacon bits.

Schaffhauserzungen – baked biscuits with fresh cream.

Schnitzel – fillet of veal or pork chop.

Wurst – sausage.

Zug kirsch cake – a tasty honey-based cake from Zug.

## Swiss Hotel Terms

Café – tea room.

Garni – hotel without a restaurant.

Gasthaus – an inn, possibly without a restaurant.

Grotto – rustic bar with light snacks and drinks.

Kurhaus – spa.

Pension – a small, inexpensive inn.

Wirtschaft – local inn or pub.

## 20 Places You Must See

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**H**ere are the top 20 places you should visit in Switzerland. See the pages indicated for full details. Enjoy!

Nowhere is Switzerland more epitomized than in the wonderful, auto-less Alpine village of Zermatt, home to some of the world's most spectacular mountains, including the mighty Matterhorn. For this edition, I've added quite a few hikes you can take from Zermatt up to the small Matterhorn and vice versa. The Gornergrat-Bahn takes you up to a plateau at 10,171 feet (3,100 m) near the Matterhorn, where you will have fine views of the peak. Also, it is well worth your time to take the Klein Matterhorn cable car up to the top station at 12,533 feet (5,265 m). The views are spectacular.

This cable car is at the opposite end of the village from the Zermatt train station, and is usually loaded with skiers. This is one of the most unusual and most romantic cities on the planet (can you tell I like this place?). In Canton Valais. See page 509.

A day spent in Lucerne (Luzern in German) offers the spectacular scenery of mountains like Pilatus, the Old Town, and the famous Chapel Bridge. Take a relaxing afternoon sailing on the Vierwaldstättersee. In Canton Lucerne. See page 206.



*Zermatt & the Matterhorn (Arad Mojtahedi)*

The Alpine Grand Canyon in the Alpenarena of Flims-Laax-Falera features the Rhine Gorge and its bizarre rock formations, which can be experienced on foot, by car or train. However, one of the best ways to see this natural wonder is on a river raft. See page 122.

Chillon Castle near Montreux on Lake Geneva is an ancient fortress at the foothills of the Valais Alps. It is one of the best-preserved medieval castles found anywhere. In Canton Vaud. See pages 438-40.

The Schilthorn, atop Piz Gloria, enables you to marvel at the breathtaking 360-degree panorama of over 200 mountain peaks dominated by the Eiger, Mönch and the Jungfrau. Portions of the James Bond film *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* were filmed here. In Canton Bern. See page 391.



*View from Niederemmenen above Mürren (Andrew Bossi)*

Mürren is a friendly and car-free summer and winter holiday resort situated on a sun-drenched mountain terrace. It provides hikers with one of the best bases for exploring the Alps along well-marked trails. You want to spend a day riding the 23,000 feet of aerial cables that connect Mürren with the top of Piz Gloria at 6,900 feet (2,100m). See pages 390ff.



### *St. Moritz*

St. Moritz is the winter resort playground of the rich and famous. Known for its unending miles and miles of ski pistes, snowboarding runs and spectacular upper-crust shopping, St. Moritz is also a hiker's paradise during the summer months. It is also home to the "White Turf," featuring the best of Switzerland's equine athletes racing on snow. In Canton Graubünden. See pages 153ff.

Zürich's Hauptbahnhofstrasse is one of the finest shopping areas anywhere in Europe. During Christmastime, the streets are lined with tiny lights, while people window-shop to their hearts' delight. Vendors line the streets offering toasted al-

monds and hot cider; fresh-baked goods and Christmas cookies are everywhere.

Harder Kulm is Interlaken's mountain and offers great views of the famous holiday resort between the lakes of Thun and Brienz and the entire Jungfrau region. This area is especially good if you're traveling with children, who will undoubtedly love the Wildlife Park at the valley station, and the trip to the top by funicular. In Canton Bern. See page 381.



*Engelberg (Roland Zumbühl)*

Engelberg is in central Switzerland, and is a great destination for families or for sports enthusiasts. The area boasts a top ski school and Switzerland's biggest paragliding school, as well as other snow sports. There are over 50 miles (80 km) of ski and snowboard trails, and 9,900-foot (3,018 m) Mt. Titlis provides a wide array of downhill runs. There are also 25 miles (40 km) of cross-country ski trails and 20 miles (32 km) of winter hiking trails available to wanderers of all levels. See pages 295ff.

Bern, the capital of Switzerland, is in the canton of the same name, and is a versatile city that has combined the wonderful cobblestone streets of the past with all the modern conve-

niences any traveler could want. The historic clock tower, once the western entrance to the city, is always a treat for the first-time visitor, as is the Bear Pit – housing Bern’s bears – the long-time symbol of this glorious city, which has remained unchanged for centuries. See pages 336ff.



*Brienz (Andrew Bossi)*

Brienz, on the shores of Lake Brienz, overlooks the picturesque Giessbach Falls and surrounding Alpine peaks. The Brienz Rothorn Bahn gives you a breathtaking panoramic view of the Bernese Alps on a wonderful old steam locomotive. The three-hour ascent peaks at the summit of Rothorn – 7,700 feet (2,350 m). In Canton Bern. See pages 387ff.

Gruyères is a beautiful medieval village overlooking the crest of a small mountain just south of Bern and north of Lake Geneva. Here you can sample the rich cheese, quiche and fondue, of course. In Canton Fribourg. See pages 486ff.

To get to the highest train station in Europe, you need to ride a series of trains and trams to the Jungfraujoch, which sits just 300 feet (92 m) below the summit of the Jungfrau. Up here one finds an ice palace carved into the glacier, dog-sled rides, shops and restaurants. In Canton Bern. See page 382.

Saas-Fee is at the end of the Saas Valley, on the west side. At the fork in the road if you went east, you’d be heading to Zermatt. Saas-Fee is in the middle of 12 mountains, sitting atop a terrace high above the valley. The village is closed to traffic, and all cars must be parked at the edge of town in a parking garage. This is *the* town for hikers. It is where the Swiss go when they want to hike or ski. In Canton Valais. See pages 525ff.

Lugano, with its heavy Italian influences, is another must-see part of your journey, along with Zermatt and Lucerne. The streets of the Old Town are closed to cars, making this a great walking city. You can also take one of the many steamers for a couple of hours or for an all-day journey on beautiful and relaxing Lake Lugano. This is a great romantic spot for couples. In Canton Ticino. See pages 533ff.



*Geneva's Jet d'Eau (Nikolai Schwerg)*

Geneva, though modernized, retains the charm of old Switzerland, particularly in the Old Town, where strolling along the maze of cobblestone walkways seems idyllic. Also, Geneva is a good spot if you're looking for fun day-trips. There are a handful of tiny artisan-splashed villages on the French side of Lake Geneva, which are worth exploring for an afternoon. Yvoire (pronounced EVE-wa) is one such spot that should not be missed. See pages 412ff.

Appenzell is very popular with tourists, and for good reason – in no other Swiss town does folklore ring out so strongly.

The buildings in this small village are painted with bright landscapes, flowers, people, animals and designs of all sizes and shapes. In addition, the town is known for its great cheeses and exquisite embroidery. In Canton Appenzeller Innerholden. See pages 98ff.

The Glacier Express is more of a must-do, rather than a must-see, although you will see quite a lot on this 7½-hour journey through some of the most treacherous mountain passes Switzerland has to offer. This train crosses 170 miles (274 km), passing from southeast Switzerland to the eastern part of the country – beginning in Zermatt and ending in St. Moritz – crossing some 291 bridges and moving through 91 tunnels. The

trains are very modern and come complete with dining cars and large windows to view the spectacular scenery. See pages 155-56.

The Engadine Region is enclosed by beautiful mountain ranges and highlighted by the winter-sports resort of St. Moritz. In lower Engadine is where you will find heavily forested valleys and the Swiss National Park – a 55-mile wildlife sanctuary that is a haven for hikers and wanderers. In Canton Graubünden. See pages 112, 156.



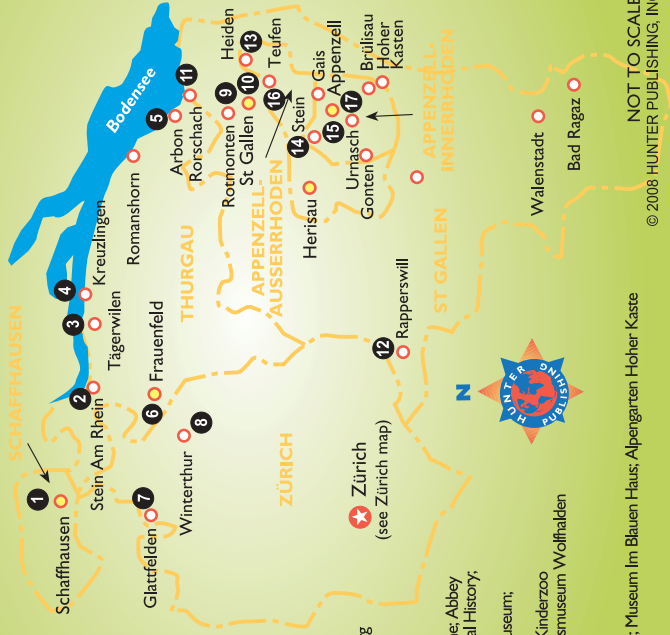
*The Glacier Express (Janter)*



# Zürich & the Northeast



1. Rhinefalls; Klettgau vineyards; Münster zu Allerheiligen; Kirche St. Johann; Zum Ochsen House; Museum zu Allerheiligen; Hallen für Neue Kunst
2. Castle of Hohenklingen; Kloster Museum St. Georgen; Historische Sammlung; Wohn Museum Lindworm
3. Hermann Müller birthplace; Cosmas Church; Damian Church; Schloss Castle; Constance Palace of Bishops
4. Doll Museum; Count Zeppelin Memorial; Fire Brigade Museum; Rosenegg Heimatmuseum; Lake Museum; Planetarium
5. Schloss Arbon
6. Thurgauische Kantonsbibliothek; Plätlä Zoo; Ittingen Monastery; Wallenberg Castle; Thurgau Canton Museum; Cantonal Nature Museum
7. Film Studios Glatfelden; Galerie Quattro Glatfelden
8. Lindberg Clinic; indoor sports hall
9. Peter & Paul Wildlife Par
10. Drei Weiieren (Three Ponds); Benedictine Monastery; Cathedral Domkirche; Abbey Library; Textilemuseum; Kirchhoferhaus Museum; Museum of Art & Natural History; Neues Museum; Botanical Garden
11. Badhütte Rorschach; Kornhaus Rorschach; St. Annaschloss; Alte Garage Museum; Flieger Museum Altenhien
12. Swiss National Circus; Rapperswil Castle; Polenmuseum; Heimatmuseum; Kinderzoo
13. Henry Dunant Museum; Historical Museum; Natural History Museum; Ortsmuseum Wolfhalden
14. Schaukäserie; Appenzeller Folklore Museum
15. Appenzeller Brauchtummuseum
16. Grubenmann Collection
17. Wildkirchl Caves; Berggasthaus Ascher; Museum Appenzell; Museum Liner; Museum Im Blauen Haus; Alpengarten Hoher Kaste





# Zürich & Northeastern Switzerland

**N**ortheastern Switzerland encompasses the cantons of Zürich, Schaffhausen, Thurgau, St. Gallen and the two Appenzeller (Ausser-rhoden and Innerrhoden) half-cantons. It is a region known both for its sophistication (in Zürich) and for its ultra-traditional side

(Appenzell). Since many visitors arrive in Zürich, at the main airport or train station, this can often be a good starting point from which to see the region, either via car or *bahn* (German for train).

Except for the cities of Zürich and Appenzell, the region is often overlooked by foreign tourists. For instance, Canton Thurgau lacks the industrial development that plagues a good part of Canton Zürich. Here you find fruit groves, meadows and pastures that are great for relaxing walks or long hikes. The houses are half-timbered and many feature red beams that enrich the glow of stone walls.

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■ Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden	91
■ Canton Appenzell Innerrhoden	97

Canton Schaffhausen, which sits to the north of Zürich, often seems more a part of Germany than of Switzerland. With its picturesque villages along the Rhine River, Schaffhausen boasts one of Europe's finest natural wonders – the spectacular Rhine Falls. It is also the home of some lovely vineyards.

Farther east lies the canton of St. Gallen, with the half-cantons of the Appenzells firmly entrenched within it. These cantons offer more of the refreshing Swiss countryside – gently rolling hills, the clanging of cow bells from afar, and small farms dotted throughout the land. Here, you find men and women sporting traditional Appenzeller costumes of red vests, black pants and ornate embroidery work. Along the far eastern and northeastern edges of the area is Lake Constance or the Bodensee as it is known in German. With its gentle mountain slopes and crystal blue waters, relaxing shipboard excursions and walks are popular here.



*Ship on the Bodensee (Bene16)*

For a pleasant five- to seven-day trip through this region, we recommend using the city of Zürich as your base. If you're driving or traveling by train, you're only a short distance from most destinations here. After several days exploring Zürich, you can travel north (on Highway 1) and spend an afternoon in the artsy city of Winterthur, before heading north (along Highway 4) to Schaffhausen, where we suggest an overnight stay.

# Zürich



- |                                                            |                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Fraumunster church                                      | 6. Zurich Toy Museum                                    |
| 2. Grossmunster church;<br>The Bellerive Museum            | 7. Rietberg Museum                                      |
| 3. St. Peterskirch                                         | 8. Schweizerisches Landessmuseum<br>(Swiss Land Museum) |
| 4. Rathau; Stussihofstatt Fountain;<br>Johann Jacob Museum | 9. Belvoir Park                                         |
| 5. Zoologisches Museum;<br>Zürich Zoo                      | 10. Chinagarten                                         |
|                                                            | 11. Old Botanical Garden                                |
|                                                            | 12. Quayside Park                                       |

You can then travel via secondary road or rail to Kreuzlingen, along the shores of Lake Constance for half a day, continuing onward to the lakeside village of Arbon. Better yet, take one of the many ship excursions available from Kreuzlingen. You can cross the lake and spend the rest of your day in Germany or simply sail on the lake, enjoying the tranquil waters and lovely scenery. From Kreuzlingen or Arbon you can head south to St. Gallen for another overnight stay and spend a day exploring this city and its surrounding villages. From here, it's a short hop to Appenzeller land and Mt. Santis, where we suggest another overnight stay. Then travel west along Road 8 to Jona, a village on Lake Zürich. From there, you can take a ship back to Zürich.

## Canton Zürich (ZH)

### At a Glance

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**I**n the far north of Switzerland, Canton Zürich has been a member of the Swiss Federation since 1351 and is home to 1.4 million people. With German as the primary language, this canton is dominated by the capital, "Stadt Zürich," which is also the largest town in Switzerland, with approximately 366,809 residents.

### Stadt Zürich

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**Z**ürich is Switzerland's most populous city and is famous as the intellectual and cultural capital of the nation. In 1916, the Dada movement emerged from Cabaret Voltaire, at nearly the same time when Lenin and Trotsky were running around in the city.

Set 1,200 feet (400 m) above sea level, Zürich straddles the Limmat River at the south end of the city, which is home to 1,030 fountains. The old town contains most of the major sights, including 16th- and 17th-century houses, guildhalls, courtyards and innumerable winding alleyways.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Zürich Tourist Office is in the Hauptbahnhof on Bahnhofstrasse 15, CH-8023 Zürich, and is open November-March, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-7:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday, 8:30 am-6:30 pm; April-October, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-9:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday, 8:30 am-8:30 pm.

There is also an office at the airport, in Terminal B, open daily from 10 am-7 pm. Hauptbahnhof on Bahnhofstrasse 15, CH-8023 Zürich. ☎ 1-215-4000, [www.zurichtourism.ch](http://www.zurichtourism.ch).

The Zürich Tourism Convention Bureau offers all types of services for business travelers. Open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am-6:30 pm, the office is Bahnhofbrücke 1, CH-8023 Zürich. ☎ 1-215-4030, fax 1-215-4099, [congress@zurichtourism.ch](mailto:congress@zurichtourism.ch).

### Post Offices

The main post office, the Sihlpost, is open Monday-Friday, 6:30 am-10:30 pm, Saturday, 6:30 am-8 pm, and Sunday, 11 am-10:30 pm, at Kasernenstrasse 95-99 CH-8023 Zürich. ☎ 44-296-2111. There is also a post office in the Hauptbahnhof open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-6:30 pm and on Saturdays from 7:30-11 am.

### Codes

The postal codes for Zürich are CH-8000 to CH-8099 and the area code is 44. This replaces the former code of 01 for existing numbers. All new numbers will be given the area code of 43 after March 2007.

### Disabled Travelers

The *Wheelchair Guide for the City of Zürich* is an accessibility guide to Zürich's attractions, theaters and restaurants. You can find it in the Tourist Office at the Hauptbahnhof and in bookstores throughout the city.

## Health Care

Most doctors in Switzerland speak English, and English is understood at these emergency numbers:

Ambulance, ☎ 144

First Aid, ☎ 47-4700

Poisonings, ☎ 251-5151

A number of hospitals offer 24-hour emergency care, and both doctors and dentists can be reached at the Zürich Universitätsspital, Schmelzbergstrasse 8, 100, CH-8008 Zürich. ☎ 44-269-6969.

For eyeglass troubles, contact Götte Optics, Bahnhofstrasse 100, CH-8023 Zürich. ☎ 44-211-3780.

There is also a 24-hour drugstore service at Bellevue Apotheke, Theatrestrasse 4, ☎ 44-252-5600.

## Internet Access

Most hotels provide some type of Internet access or will assist you with an occasional e-mail addressed to the hotel. You can also check out the Internet Café, at Uraniastrasse 3, in the Urania Parkhaus. This café is open most days from 9 am until midnight. ☎ 44-210-3311. A few banks have Internet terminals in their lobbies as well.

## Money Exchange

Banks abound in Zürich. ATMs are abundant as well, and most accept major bankcards and credit cards. They dispense Swiss francs at the going rate of exchange. Most hotels will also exchange money, but at much higher rates. Train stations outside of the city will usually exchange money as well. The Union Bank of Switzerland at Shop Ville, ☎ 44-234-1111, or the Swiss Bank Corporation, at Bahnhofstrasse 70, ☎ 44-224-2142, are both open Monday-Friday from 8 am-6:30 pm and on Saturdays from 9 am-4 pm.

There is also a currency exchange office at Minervastrasse 117 in the Hauptbahnhof (near Track 16) that is open daily from 6:30 am-10:45 pm, ☎ 44-383-6560. There is an automated machine just outside the office for use during and after office hours. An American Express office is at Bahnhofstrasse 20,

☎ 44-211-8370, open Monday through Friday, from 8:30-6 pm, and on Saturday from 9 am-1 pm.

## Newspapers, Magazines & Radio

*Die Neue Züricher Zeitung* (NZZ), *Der Tages-Anzeiger* and *Der Blick* are the main daily Zürich papers. *Der Züricher Wocheplan* is a weekly paper that details local happenings, and other local papers include: *Tagblatt der Stadt Zurich*, *Zürichsee-Zeitung* and *Heute*. International papers such as *The International Herald Tribune*, *USA Today*, and *The Daily Telegraph*, are available at most kiosks and in bus and train stations. English-language Sunday papers are available at the Hauptbahnhof and at the airport. The local radio station is Radio 24.

## Telephones

Most public phone booths accept major credit cards and pre-paid calling cards. For local operator assistance, dial 111; for international operator assistance, dial 1159. The Zürich Hauptbahnhof offers phone, telex, and fax services from 7 am-7 pm, Monday-Friday and on Saturday and Sunday from 9 am-9 pm.

## Translators & Interpreters

Dolmetscher und Übersetzung Vereinigung provides translation services in all European languages. Located at the Lindenbachstrasse, CH-8008 Zürich, the office is open Monday through Friday from 8 am-noon, and from 1-5 pm. ☎ 44-360-3030, fax 44-360-3033.

## Getting Around



The best way to see Zürich is on foot or by tram. Public transportation is excellent in Zürich and provides convenient and frequent stops to every niche of the city. Fares can be expensive, but deals are always available. Check out fares at three places: the airport train station (Kloten Bahnhof), the main railway station (Hauptbahnhof), and the tourist information office inside the Hauptbahnhof. ☎ 44-215-4000.

## Tours

The Zürich Tourist Office in the Hauptbahnhof can arrange private tours based on your preferences. Prices begin at about 250Sfr for half a day and can go up to 340Sfr for a full day.



☎ 44-215-4088. These are great for folks traveling with elderly parents, or for those who want to get a full historical education on Zürich; otherwise, this option is a bit pricey for the economical traveler.

You can sign up for more traditional city tours at the Zürich Excursions desk in the Tourist Office. Walking tours, bus tours and tours that combine boat rides with cable cars are included here. Prices for these are more reasonable at 20-40Sfr per person. Zürich Excursions can also arrange for side-trips to other Swiss cities and towns. ☎ 44-215-4000.

## Taxis

Taxi stands are throughout the city, and are available 24 hours a day. They're found at major hotels, restaurants, bars and by the train stations, but cannot be hailed from the street. These are terribly expensive; the rates are calculated by a meter at 3.2Sfr for each kilometer traveled, with a base fare of 8Sfr.

## Rail

The rail system is superb, and trains are marked and referred to by their initials, which vary according to the local language of the region – in Zürich's case, SBB (Schweizerische Bundesbahnen). Intercity (IC) trains provide express service between Zürich and other main cities of Switzerland, while Eurotrains (EC) run between Zürich and over 200 European cities. For all train reservations, schedules and information, go to Zürich's main train station or call ☎ 44-030-0300.

## Buses & Trams

Zürich's VBZ Zuri-Lines (local city trams and buses) work in tandem with the greater Zürich transport system (ZVV).

These intricate networks operate daily from 5:30 am until midnight. ☎ 44-212-3737. It is advised to purchase your tickets before boarding the trains from either the ticket counter or through various vending machines at most stops. If caught without a ticket, you pay a fine of 60Sfr. A single ticket – costing 3.60Sfr – is good for one hour, and is valid for both buses and trams. Tickets are available for Kurzstrecken (short trip) for 2.10Sfr if you are only traveling one or two stops; for Tageskarte (day passes); and for Mehrfahrtenkarte (multi-ride). For information, ☎ 44-821-3850.



Zürich trams ([www.bigphoto.com](http://www.bigphoto.com))

## Funiculars

There are three funiculars in Zürich. One goes to Dolder, where there are sports facilities, hiking paths and a luxury hotel with a panoramic view of the region. Another, the Forch narrow-gauge railway, departs from Stadelhofen railroad station (the S-18 line), which you would use if you plan to hike and wander outside the city limits. The UBS Poly (near the Rutli Hotel) is an ancient railway that takes you to the Polyterrasse for a marvelous view of the city – in just three minutes. These trams typically cost 6-10Sfr, depending on your destination, and are operated on a daily basis.

## Driving

If you prefer to drive around Zürich, you'll have no problems, unless you like to speed. Speed limits are strictly enforced, and fines are very high. Parking in downtown Zürich can be difficult on the street, but parking garages abound – just look for the bright blue parking signs. Rates are 6-10Sfr per hour in public garages. You can rent a car at the airport or at locations within the city limits.



*If you want to get a true taste of what living in Zürich is like, the Zürich Tourist Office (☎ 44-215-4000) will arrange for you to meet a family or person(s) close to your own age and occupation.*

## Adventures

### On Foot



Zürich abounds with “Vitaparcours” – woodland hiking, jogging and exercise routes. Any hotel can direct you to the nearest trail, and the Sportamt der Stadt in Zürich, at Station Letzigrund, Herdenstrasse 47, will provide you with maps. Their phone is ☎ 44-496-9393. The closest trail to the city is in the Fluntern district on the Allmend. To get there, take Tram 5 from Bellevueplatz, or Tram 6 from the Bahnhofplatz.

#### TOURS

If you want to take a guided tour through Zürich itself, the city offers a very good two-hour tour through Old Town. Tours are operated from May through October, Monday through Friday at 2:30 pm in English and German, and on Saturday and Sunday at 10 am in English and German, and at 2:30 pm in English and Spanish.

From November to February, these tours are offered only on Wednesday and Saturday at 10 am in English and German only.

Tours begin in the main hall of Zürich’s main train station (Hauptbahnhof). Prices are 18Sfr for adults and 9Sfr for children ages six to 16, and free to youngsters under age six. ☎ 44-215-4000 for information.

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For those who enjoy running and jogging, the Dolder Grand Hotel offers a running path that winds through nearby forests for guests and non-guests alike. At the north end of the city is the Allmend Fluntern, a large public park complete with numerous jogging paths and trails very near the Zoo. To get there, take Tram 6. The Allmend Sportplatz, near the city center, offers a conditioned track. To get there, take Tram 13 and get off at the last stop.



*The inner city, with the four main churches (Ikiwaner)*

Uetliberg and Zürichberg are the closest hills just outside of the city and are excellent for hiking and mountain biking. Numerous other mountain areas abound nearby for winter sports. If you like to picnic, then take the Uetlibergbahn from the Selnau station in Zürich to Uetliberg. Cost is about 15Sfr for a round-trip ticket and this popular ride takes about a half-hour each way. Uetliberg is situated on a 2,800-foot (840 m) hill near the Sihl River, with abundant scenic views. From the drop-off station, you can hike another 15 minutes to the summit, where you'll find a restaurant, café and small observation tower. The view from the top of the tower on a clear day is spectacular. ☎ 44-206-4511 for train information and schedules.

## On Water

Visitors will find that Zürich is a dream for outdoor sports and recreation. In addition to mountains, there are several beaches along the shores of Lake Zürich. These – the Strandbad Mythenquai and the Strandbad Tiefenbrunnen – are generally open from May through August. Besides sunbathing, you can also rent boats to take on the lake from the numerous ven-

dors lined up along Limmatquai, Stadthausquai and Seequai. Prices vary and are negotiable.

A public pool is at Sihlstrasse 71, and includes a sauna as well as outside pools.

You can also take a boat trip from Zürich and visit some local lakeside villages. One such tiny town deserving of a day-trip is Rapperswil, which is across the lake from Zürich. Boats leave from the main port at Burkliplatz and General Guisan Quai. Rapperswil is a quaint little village with cobblestone streets and a small castle. You can eat in one of the tiny family-owned restaurants there and walk along the tree-lined path that edges Lake Zürich.

There is also a boat ride that gives insight into the city's history, architecture and bridges, cruising along the Limmat River. Boats depart from in front of the Landesmuseum, near the main train station.

Contact the Zürichsee Schifffahrtgesellschaft (ZSG), Mythenquai 333, CH-8038 Zürich. ☎ 44-48-713-33.

## On Wheels

Cyclists in Switzerland are subject to the same rules that apply to cars, but many roads throughout the country and in Zürich have special bicycle lanes, and in many places the bike lanes have their own traffic lights. Signs for cyclists are in red with black figures, and in Zürich many of the bike routes are away from areas of heavy traffic. Bikes for tourists can be rented for one day at no charge, though there is a refundable deposit of 20Sfr (and you must leave your passport as well). Reservations are recommended and should be made no later than 6 pm of the previous day. To rent a bike, go to Zürich's main train station, Platform 18.

## On Snow

The small range of mountains just outside of Zürich, which includes Uetliberg, provides skiers with a limited amount of options.

For those who enjoy cross-country skiing, the Albis Pass has a 7½-mile (12-km) trail that stretches to Uetliberg.

There is another trail that belongs to the Albis cross-country ski school.

For downhill skiing, the nearest location is at Hoch-Ybrig, an hour from Zürich. To get to Hoch-Ybrig, take the train to Einsiedeln and transfer to the bus for Weglosen; that brings you to a cablecar, which then lifts you up to Hoch-Ybrig. There are five ski lifts and two chairlifts at Hoch-Ybrig and rental equipment is available. ☎ 55-414-6060 for information.

## Ballooning

To experience Switzerland in a hot air balloon is extraordinary. Located just 42 miles (68 km) west of Zürich and 31 miles (50 km) east of Bern, in the town of Wolfwil, Funks Ballonfahrten offers flights from one to six hours, ranging in price from 280Sfr for a one-hour excursion to 1,950Sfr for a six-hour journey.

A variety of trips are possible. ☎ 62-926-2277, or fax 62-926-1611 for information. Vordere Gasse 27, CH-4628 Wolfwil.

## Golf

If you enjoy golf, there are several courses close to Zürich, but take along your handicap card and lots of cash – this is one of the most expensive pastimes in Switzerland, and generally reserved for the elite. Check out the Dolder Golf Club at Kurhausstrasse 66, ☎ 44-261-5045, or the Golf and Country Club Zürich, slightly southeast of Zurich in the suburb of Zumikon, ☎ 44-918-0051.

## Sightseeing

Although Zürich is highly industrialized, the skies remain clear since the factories are powered by electricity. Zürich is situated between the wooded slopes of the Uetliberg and the Zürichberg; the southern portion of the city is divided by the River Limmat. It's here, where the Limmat meets Lake Zürich, that visitors can take a sailboat excursion on the lake. This city is ideal for exploring in an unhurried fashion and the Old Town is a great place to people-watch and window shop.

## Churches

Besides the fountains, churches are Zürich's main landmarks. Most significant and impressive are the Fraumünster, Grossmünster, and St. Peterskirche – each with its own contrasting styles.



*Fraumünster (sidonius)*

6 pm in the summer. Fraumunsterplatz, CH-8001 Zürich. ☎ 44-211-211-4100, fax 44-221-2078.

The Fraumünster was built in the 13th century to replace a convent for noblewomen, which had been there since 853. It has been greatly modernized since then. Among other things, the artist Marc Chagall designed the stained-glass windows in 1970. Admission is free and guided tours are available. The church is at Fraumunsterplatz, ☎ 44-211-4100, and is open Monday-Saturday from 9 am-12:30 pm and 2-6 pm; Sunday after mass until 4 pm in the winter and until



*View from Quay Bridge, with the two towers of Grossmünster in the middle (Hirzel)*

The Grossmünster was built between 1100 and 1250 on the site of a ninth-century church, and is dedicated to the patron saints of Zürich. Artist Augusto Giacometti designed its stained-glass windows. It's found at Zwingliplatz and Münsterplatz, ☎ 44-252-5949. The church is free but to climb the towers costs 3Sfr. The climb is well worth the 3Sfr and provides excellent views of the

city. Open Monday-Saturday from 10 am-4 pm and after Sunday services until 4 pm.



*Zürich, with the tower of St. Peterskirche in the distance*

St. Peterskirche is one of the oldest in Europe and has the largest clock face of any church in Europe. Built in the 13th century, the church was altered and the clock added in 1705. The clock is 28.6 feet in diameter and the minute hand alone is 12 feet long. St. Peterhofstrasse, ☎ 44-211-2588. Open Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm, Saturday from 8 am-4 pm; Sunday service is from 10-11 am. Concerts are held occasionally on Saturdays. Admission is free.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Rathaus is Zürich's Renaissance town hall that dates back to the 1600s. The richly ornamented building is still the seat of city and cantonal parliaments. There are no tours of the interior, so you have to be content with the outside view. Limmatquai (at Rathausbrücke).



*Rathaus (ikiwaner)*



Stussihofstatt Fountain dates back to 1574, and has been re-stored many times, but still retains its charm, and is typical of the more than 1,000 fountains found in this city. On Niederdorfstrasse in Old Town.

## Museums

The Bellerive showcases displays of modern art, including those by William Morris, Emile Galle, Diego Giacometti and Sonia Delaunay, to name a few. A rich commercial art collection is on permanent display. Guided tours every Thursday at 5:30 pm. Closed Mondays. Open Tuesday-Thursday from 10 am to 8 pm; Friday from 10 am-5 pm; and Saturday from 11 am-5 pm. Located on Hoeschgasse. ☎ 44-383-4376. Adults 6SFr.

Johann Jacobs began a coffee, tea, cocoa, chocolate and biscuit business in 1895 in Bremen, Germany, and the name Jacobs soon became synonymous with coffee throughout most of Europe. This museum was founded in his honor in 1984 by his great-grandson. The Johann Jacobs Museum has displays on the cultural history of coffee, along with porcelain, silver and graphic arts. Guided tours are offered on the second and fourth Friday of every month at 5 pm; Friday and Saturday 2-5 pm; Sunday 10 am-5 pm. Free. Seefeldstrasse 17 (at the corner of Feldeggstrasse). ☎ 44-388-6151.

Kunsthaus Zürich is a museum of fine arts displaying paintings, sculptures and graphic arts, mostly from the 19th and 20th centuries, many by Swiss artists. Highlights are the Dada collection, works by Munch, Giacometti, Chagall and Mondrian. Since 1976 it also housed the Swiss Foundation for Photography (SSP) and exhibitions by the world's leading photographers are held on a regular basis. Tuesday-Thursday 10 am-9 pm, Friday-Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. 10Sfr for adults. Audio guides available in English, French and German for 6Sfr. Heimplatz 1. ☎ 44-253-8484; [www.kunsthau.ch/e/ssp/stiftung.html](http://www.kunsthau.ch/e/ssp/stiftung.html).

The Rietberg Museum is housed in Villa Wesendonck, a beautiful mansion in Rieter Park with a view of the lake. The permanent collection features non-European art, including famous works from India, China, Africa and Japan. Museum hours, Tuesday-Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. Villa hours, Tuesday-Saturday, 1-5 pm, Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. 3 Sfr-12 Sfr.

Gablerstrasse 15 (take Tram 7). ☎ 44-202-4528, [www.rietberg.ch](http://www.rietberg.ch). The Rietberg is actually made up of a pair of villas set in a tranquil park just southwest of Zürich city center. Villa Wesendonck – which was built in 1857 by German industrialist Otto Wesendonck – is on the right and was modeled after Villa Albani in Rome. Villa Rieter – the smaller of the two museums – is on the left. Villa Wesendonck houses the main collection of non-European artwork and was home to composer Richard Wagner in 1857. Villa Rieter houses several ever-changing collections of Asian, Indian, Chinese and Japanese art on two floors. The grounds and buildings themselves are stunning and a stroll around the area is well worth it.

Schweizerisches Landesmuseum – The Swiss National Museum – is housed in a 19th-century castle, and details the history of Switzerland from prehistoric and Roman times through the Confederation. One particularly interesting exhibit is a display of arms and armor with Swiss-made weapons from medieval times, including impressive cross-bows and swords.



*Schweizerisches Landesmuseum*

Another exhibit features book-inscription from the Middle Ages. Tuesday-Sunday, 10:30 am-5 pm (Thursday to 7:30 pm). Free admission, though special exhibitions run 8-10Sfr. Museumstrasse 2 (behind the Hauptbahnhof). ☎ 44-218-6565.

The Zoologisches Museum is part of the University of Zürich and has displays relating to all aspects of the animal kingdom. Popular attractions include hands-on exhibits with sophisticated microscopes and various forms of insect life. The exhibits of a giant crab and a giraffe are also well done. Tuesday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday, 10 am-4 pm. Free. Karl Schmidstrasse 4. ☎ 44-634-3838.

The Zürich Toy Museum provides an impressive display of toys from centuries past. This museum (Zürcher Spielzeugmuseum) appeals to kids of all ages, as it houses over 1,200 antique toys from all over Europe. Monday-Friday, 2-5 pm, Saturday, 1-4 pm. Free. Fortunagasse 15 (at the corner of Rennweg). ☎ 44-211-9305.

## Parks & Gardens



*Chinagarten (Dr. Meierhofer)*

Belvoir Park is the city's largest park, and it offers spectacular floral displays and pleasant walks. Take Tram 7 to Billoweg or walk from Bellevueplatz along the west side of the lake.

Chinagarten is one of the most significant Chinese gardens outside China. Beautiful plush gardens are

highlighted by Chinese pavilions of various shapes and sizes and white zigzag bridges, complemented by a wonderful tea house, where visitors can sample over 30 different types of teas. All the materials used to construct the buildings – including wood, stones and bricks – were imported from China. March-October daily, 11 am-7 pm. 4Sfr. On the west bank of the lake, just past the Bellerive Museum. ☎ 44-435-2111.

The Old Botanical Garden, belonging to Zürich University, contains more than a million and a half plants. Take a pleasant walk either through the gardens or in the wooded area nearby.

Monday-Friday, 9:30 am-6 pm. Free. Zollikerstrasse 107 (take Tram 2 or 4 to Hoschgasse). ☎ 44-634-8461.

Quayside Park runs alongside the promenade, ending at the rhododendron garden at Zürichhorn, home to a sculpture by Swiss artist Jean Tinguely. It's a great place for walking. In summer, you can swim in designated areas. A small marina, a restaurant and numerous kiosks are in the park. Take any of the trams passing through Bellevueplatz (Nos. 2, 4, 6, 8, 11 or 15).

The Zürich Zoo is superb, featuring more than 350 species from around the world, and including an aquarium and open-air aviary, along with special enclosures for red pandas, snow leopards, clouded leopards, tigers and Indian lions. March-October daily, 8 am-6 pm, November-February daily, 8 am-5 pm. Zürichbergstrasse 221 (on the Dolder Hill – take Tram 5 from Bellevueplatz or Tram 6 from the Hauptbahnhof). ☎ 44-254-2500. Admission is 16SF for adults, 8SF for children, 5SF for students, and children under five are admitted free.

## Where to Stay



**Hotel Baur au Lac** – this family-owned hotel (since 1844) is discreet and exclusive, with a reputation as one of the world's leading luxury hotels. It is next to the Schanzengraben Canal – just three minutes from the Bahnhofstrasse – in a private lakeside park. The hotel is also home to La Terrasse, a French restaurant popular for its Sunday brunch. There are 107 rooms and 18 suites. Expensive (\$\$\$\$), but worth it. Everyone should stay here at least once! Talstrasse 1, CH-8022 Zürich.

### HOTEL PRICES

\$ . . . . .	30-75Sfr	(\$29-\$73)
\$\$ . . . .	76-205Sfr	(\$74-\$200)
\$\$\$ . . .	206-299Sfr	(\$201-\$293)
\$\$\$\$ . . . . .	300Sfr+	(\$294+)



*Hotel Baur au Lac*

☎ 44-220-5020, or toll free in the US at ☎ 44-800-223-6800, fax 44-220-5044.



*Storchen Zum Hotel*

Another unique hotel in Zürich is the Storchen Zum Hotel, the only one that is on the Limmat River. This beautiful building looks more like someone's private mansion than a hotel, and is great for romantics and writers, with 73 rooms. One of the oldest hotels in Europe – having been built in 1357 – it provides great views of the river. Also pricey (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$), but also worth it, at least once. Weinplatz 2, CH-8001 Zürich. ☎ 44-227-2727, or toll-free in the US at ☎ 44-800-457-4000, fax 44-312-4468.

X-Tra Limmathaus Hotel Limmat is a good, average-priced hotel (\$\$) with all the basics – clean rooms, close to the train station, and only 25 minutes from the airport. It is well known to many famous artists and musicians, who like to hang out here.

Though it doesn't offer parking, it is close to two public parking garages on the Limmatstrasse 118, CH-8005 Zürich. ☎ 44-448-1595, fax 44-448-1596.

If you like to party, than the Zic Zac Rock Hotel is for you. Just seven minutes from the main train station in the heart of Zürich's party district, this hotel offers 32 budget rooms (\$) for the frugal traveler. Each room is dedicated to a rock star or group, and American cuisine is served in



*Zic Zac Rock Hotel*

the hotel's Rock Garden restaurant. Marktgasse 7, CH-8001 Zürich, ☎ 44-261-2181, fax 44-261-2175.

The Zürich Youth Hostel is just 100 yards (90 m) west of the Wollishofer railway station and five miles (eight km) from the Zürich airport. The hostel has 292 beds, with rooms of all sizes and prices, starting at 32.50Sfr per person. \$. Mutschellenstrasse 114, CH-8038 Zürich. ☎ 44-482-3544, fax 44-4820-1727; [www.youthhostel.ch/zuerich](http://www.youthhostel.ch/zuerich).

## Where to Eat



For traditional Swiss and international dishes, check out the Kronenhalle – one of the best restaurants in Switzerland. Over the years, it's been frequented

### RESTAURANT COSTS

\$	.....	15-25Sfr	(\$15-\$25)
\$\$	.....	26-45Sfr	(\$26-\$44)
\$\$\$	....	46-70Sfr	(\$45-\$68)
\$\$\$\$	.....	71Sfr+	(\$69+)



*Kronenhalle*

by a who's who list of the rich and famous. Plácido Domingo, Joan Miro, Igor Stravinsky, and Pablo Picasso are just a few of the celebrities who have dined here. The Kronenhalle is a five-story building with two elegant dining areas, adorned with original art works by Chagall, Matisse, Picasso, Miro, and Klee. Reservations are required for lunch and dinner. (\$\$\$\$). Ramistrasse 4 at Bellevueplatz, Zürich, ☎ 44-251-6669.

Originally built as a mill 300 years ago, the Blaue Ente (The Blue Goose) was converted to a modern restaurant in 1985 and is one of the most popular in the city. Located on the eastern shore of Lake Zürich, this restaurant features duck in every form and is very popular with artists, musicians and theater buffs. Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. (\$\$\$). Seefeldstrasse 223, CH- Zürich. ☎ 44-388-6840.

The Reithalle (Riding Hall) is a must for any horse enthusiast. Originally a horse stable that housed military horses, it still con-

tains hay racks and feed bins along its stone walls. Swiss and traditional fare at mid-range (\$\$-\$\$\$) prices. Gessnerallee 8, Zürich. ☎ 44-212-0766.

Crazy Cow Leoneck is a fun place for lunch or dinner at medium prices (\$\$). The specialty is the "Crazy Picnic," with grilled pork sausage, cheese and Swiss cider served on a patch of grass. Leonhardstrasse 1. Zürich, ☎ 44-261-4055.

Raclette Stube is a cozy and charming little restaurant, perfect for sampling fondue and raclette. Open Tuesday through Sunday for lunch and dinner, reservations required. (\$\$). MasterCard only is accepted. Zähringerstrasse 16, Zürich. ☎ 44-251-4130.



*The Reithalle*



*Zeughauskeller*

Zeughauskeller is a popular hangout in a former arsenal built in 1487, which is known for its rowdy atmosphere and good food at average (\$\$) prices. Traditional dishes such as sauerkraut, Wiener schnitzel, and potato salad are served, along with a great variety of beers. The Swiss favorite – Hurlimann Beer – is dis-

persed from 1,000-liter barrels, and the owners (Kurt and Willy) are usually around to talk with guests. Reservations are recommended. Bahnhofstrasse 28a, at the corner of In Gassen, Zürich. ☎ 44-211-2690.

Café Schober is a nice little tearoom that offers a break from walking through the Old Town. It serves homemade Swiss chocolates and desserts, and a light lunch menu is also offered. Open Monday-Friday, 8 am to 6:30 pm, Saturday, 8 am-4:30 pm, and Sunday from 10 am-5:30 pm. (\$-\$\$). Napfgasse 4, with the entrance on a dead-end street nearly hidden by greenery. ☎ 44-251-8060.

Movenpicks are a chain of restaurants suiting travelers on a budget or with children. The food is surprisingly good, the menus lengthy, and the prices good (\$-\$\$). They have some of the best ice cream in Switzerland. You can find them throughout the city. One central Zürich location is at Beethovenstrasse 32. ☎ 44-288-5464.

## Canton Schaffhausen (SH)

### At a Glance

**S**chaffhausen is the northernmost canton in Switzerland, encompassing just 115 square miles (299 square km), with 73,352 German-speaking citizens who are predominantly Protestant. The south side of this canton backs up against Canton Zürich along the Rhine river, while the rest shares the outer border of Switzerland with Germany. Schaffhausen joined Switzerland in 1501, and retains a great deal of its medieval charm even today.

Over the years Schaffhausen has become known as a center of high trade and industry, brought about by 19th-century hydroelectric expansion within the city. However, 45% of this canton is still used for agricultural purposes, despite the high level of industry here, which remains fairly concentrated. This canton also has one of the highest rates of foreigners living within its borders, as a large number of asylum seekers – primarily Sri Lankan immigrants – have migrated here.

Schaffhausen is also the only canton in Switzerland to have experienced bombing during the Second World War. On April 1, 1944 nearly 100 citizens of the town of Schaffhausen were accidentally killed by Allied bombers who mistook the area as a German target. Less than one year later, on February 22, 1945,



16 people in Schaffhausen and nine in Stein-am-Rein were also killed in a similar bombing expedition. Some historians have theorized that the bombings were not mistakes, and were in response to Schaffhausen munitions factories supplying arms to the nearby Nazis. This theory, however, has yet to be proven, and records are still sealed regarding these events.

## Schaffhausen

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**S**chaffhausen is the capital of the canton of the same name, and is a busy modern town outside of its medieval city center. For years it has acted as a bridge between Switzerland and Germany, exporting and importing products. Goethe was a frequent visitor to Schaffhausen in the late 1700s, and he reportedly remarked that the inhabitants must be “very curious folk,” due to the great number of peep-holes that can be found throughout the city. As a result, Schaffhausen was nicknamed Erkerstadt or the “City of Dormer Windows.” The city is 32 miles north of Zurich and just 17 miles north of Winterthur.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



This is directly underneath the city's big clock tower, on Fronwagplatz 4, just one block east of the train station. Here, you can find excellent walking maps of the Old City, along with other information. Open Monday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm, Saturday, 10 am-4 pm, Sunday from 10 am-1 pm – July through September. From October through June it is open Monday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm, Saturday, 10 am-noon. ☎ 52-625-5141, fax 52-625-5143, [www.sh.ch](http://www.sh.ch).

#### Train Station

This is at the northwestern corner of the Altstadt. Here you can find a currency exchange (Monday-Saturday, 7 am-7 pm, Sunday, 9 am-7 pm). You can also rent bikes, store luggage or rent lockers here.



*Schaffhausen (Eberhard von Nellenburg)*

## Post Office

The Schaffhausen Post Office is directly across from the train station, at Bahnhofstrasse 34. Open Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday, 8 am-12:30 pm. CH-8200, Schaffhausen 1. ☎ 52-632-6222, fax 52-624-0295.

## Codes

The postal codes for Schaffhausen are CH-8200 to 8202, and the area code is 52.

## Getting Around



One of the most fascinating ways to experience Schaffhausen is by boat. You can take trips up or down the Rhine from May through September, leaving from Freier Platz, at the southeast edge of the Schaffhausen Altstadt. This is also a great area for extended hikes along the river or through the nearby hills. The Schaffhausen Tourist Office can provide you with free maps of hiking and biking trails, and boat excursion information.

## Adventures

### On Foot



No visit to Schaffhausen would be complete without a hike to the Rhinefalls. As Europe's largest and most powerful waterfall, it falls from a height of 70 feet (21 m) and reaches its highest flow during the month of July. The scenery around the falls is spectacular, with green forests and mist that arises from the grassy river banks below. To get there, walk 1.8 miles (2.9 km) from Schaffhausen to Neuhausen city center, where signs will guide you to the falls, just a quick five-minute walk away. There are walking trails all



*Rhinefalls (Reinhard Kraasch)*

around the falls, but in summer this area is overrun with tourists and souvenir vendors, so late fall or early spring are great alternatives.

You can also take a boat ride (in June, July and August from 10 am-6 pm, and in May and September from 11 am-5 pm) to the rock in the middle of

the stream near the falls. You can climb up the rock to gain an even more impressive view of the Rhinefalls. Contact Verkehrsverein at Industriestrasse 39, CH-8212 Neuhausen am Rheinflall. ☎ 52-672-7455.

Be sure to take in the nearby Schloss Laufen, which sits on a cliff directly above the falls on the south side. There are also paragliding and passenger flight tours over the Rhinefalls available from local vendors.

If you're into river rafting, then contact Rhein Travel, Schlauchbootfahrten, CH-8455 Rudlingen. ☎ 01-867-0638.

## An Excursion to the Vineyards of Klettgau

Only a few minutes away by car lies the famous wine-growing region of Klettgau. Its green rolling hills make this area ideal for bike tours and hiking. What about a carriage ride through the heart-warming vineyards, followed by a wine-tasting party?

### On Water

For a lovely boat trip, board one of the many ferries in Schaffhausen for a trip to Stein am Rhein. Contact the Schweizerische Schifartsgesellschaft Untersee und Rhein from April through October. CH-8202 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-4282. If you are a bit more of a daredevil, than catch up with Rhyfall-Mändli, a local operator of speedboat rides that take you right up to the Rhinefalls. These are very popular and reservations are highly recommended.

Open June to August from 10 am-6 pm, and in May and September from 11 am-5 pm. Cost is 65Sfr. ☎ 52-672-4811.

### On Wheels

There are also numerous bike paths in Schaffhausen that will bring you to the Rhinefalls and beyond to such villages as Rheinau (home to a Baroque monastery) or to Rüdlingen, where you can sample some of the locally grown wines.

## Sightseeing

Walking through Schaffhausen's Altstadt – which is at the foot of the Munot battlements – you find historical architecture dating back to the Middle Ages. The Munot fortress itself dates from 1564 (it was built after writer Albrecht Dürer published a book in 1527 in Nürnberg describing such a place) and has a covered foot-



*Munot battlements (Benjamin Isler & Simon Stelling)*

bridge across a moat, a tower, a spiral ramp inside (one of only three in Europe) and a circular viewing platform. Admission is free to the Munot, which is open daily from May to September, 9 am-8 pm, and from October to April, 10 am-5 pm.

Fronwagplatz is the city center's long square, and here sit two distinguished medieval fountains – the Metzgerbrunnen and the Mohrenbrunnen. The former was built in 1524 and the statue that sits atop it is of a Swiss mercenary, while the latter was built 11 years later in 1535 and features a Moorish king.

## Churches



*Münster zu Allerheiligen*

Münster zu Allerheiligen, or Cathedral of All Saints, is one of the highlights of the Altstadt, dating back to 1049 (the original building was later replaced with the current structure in 1103). The Romanesque church tower and the adjoining Gothic

cloister (the largest in Switzerland) are open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm. Outside of the cathedral wall is the circular path around the Junkernfriedhof (nobleman's cemetery). In the courtyard is the 1486 Schiller Bell. Legend has it that this gigantic ringer inspired German poet Friedrich Schiller to write his *Song of the Clock*. However, Schiller never was in or even near Schaffhausen, leaving one to ponder why his name was connected to the bell in the first place.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Zum Ochsen House (at Vorstadt 17) features a striking Renaissance fresco, along with a five-paneled dormer window. Formerly a Gothic inn, the building was remodeled in 1608. The panels pay tribute to the five senses and show a woman holding a cake, a flower, a glove, a mirror and a medieval stringed instrument. Walk north from the Zum Ochsen House, past the

Zum Grossen Kafig House (at Vorstadt 43) to the Schwabentor – the northern gate of the city. This tower was built in 1370, and during renovations in 1933 a plaque was added that shows a boy holding a pig under his arm while trying to avoid traffic, and the inscription: “Lappi tue d’Augen uf,” which means “Silly people keep your eyes open.” This was in reference to the traffic that had become heavy during those years as Schaffhausen grew into a more industrialized city. The Haus zum Ritter dates from 1485. The façade was painted by Tobias Stimmli in 1568-70, but was heavily damaged and was removed in 1935. The current façade is a replacement from 1943.



*Haus zum Ritter (S. Wenner)*

## Where to Stay



**Rheinhotel Fischerzunft** is an ultra-modern hotel with unique charm and an excellent restaurant known throughout Europe. Located on the river, this one-time fishermen's guild house features 10 distinct rooms. Open year-round, the restaurant is closed Tuesdays. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Rheinquai 8, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-632-0505, fax 52-632-0513.



*Rheinhotel Fischerzunft*

Park Villa is a historic mansion at the edge of Schaffhausen's old town, featuring chandeliers, Persian rugs, and other stunning décor. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Parkstrasse 18, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-2737, fax 52-624-1253.

Kronenhof is ideal for the business traveler, as well as the tourist. (\$\$-\$\$\$). It features a fine restaurant and bar. Kirchhofplatz 7, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-6631, fax 52-624-4589.

Hotel Bahnhof is a clean, comfortable and striking inn near the train station, for the ultimate in convenience. It contains a stylish restaurant and cozy bar. Breakfast included. (\$\$). Parking available. Bahnhofstrasse 46, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-624-1924, fax 52-624-7479.

Youth Hostel Belair is just half a mile west from the train station, and is open from March until the end of November. The hostel is a former manor house which dates back to the 16th century and is quite impressive. You can rent bikes here too in this 87-bed facility. (\$). Randenstrasse 65, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-8800, fax 52-625-5954, [www.youthhostel.ch/schaffhausen](http://www.youthhostel.ch/schaffhausen).

Schloss Laufen am Rheinfall is an old castle sitting atop the Rhinefalls just 1½ miles (2.4 km) west of Schaffhausen center. It's open to anyone, but is used primarily by backpackers. It is easily reached by trail or train (the second stop from Schaffhausen). Reservations are recommended. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are available in the castle's Bannerstube at very reasonable prices (\$-\$\$). Open mid-March to mid-November. (\$). ☎ 52-659-6152, fax 52-659-6039.



*See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Camping

Camping Rheinwisen is on the south bank of the Rhine at Langwiesen, 1.2 miles (1.9 km) southeast of the center of Schaffhausen. Open May-September. (\$). ☎ 52-659-3300.

## Where to Eat



Gasthaus Adler features regional and seasonal specialties. The cozy, wood-paneled dining room has seating for 70 people, while the beautiful outdoor garden terrace has room for 120 guests. Excellent fare and a large wine list at reasonable prices (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open Tuesday-Saturday from 8:30 am-11:30 pm, Sunday from 9 am-10 pm.

Closed Monday. Vorstadt 69, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-5515, 52-625-5819.

Restaurant Gerberstube is a former 17th-century guildhall that is run by the Guidi family, and considered to be the finest Italian restaurant in the region. Reservations are required for lunch and dinner. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 am-3 pm, and from 6-10:30 pm. Bachstrasse 8, CH-8200 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-2155.

Confiserie Reber is a great little shop where you can pick up all kinds of tasty goods – fresh-baked breads, cakes, tortes and the like. Lis and Laurent Perriraz are the owners of this shop, which has been a baking business since 1896. (\$). Open daily 8 am-6 pm. Vordergasse 21, CH-8202 Schaffhausen. ☎ 52-625-4171, fax 52-625-4195.

## Canton Thurgau (TG)

### At a Glance

**T**hurgau is 391 square miles (1,013 square km) of mostly rolling countryside and flatlands that stretch along the shores of the seemingly never-ending Lake Constance. The canton sits in the northeastern corner of Switzerland on the south side of Lake Constance (the Bodensee) and is bordered on the west by Canton Zürich and on the south side by the canton of St. Gallen. Lake Constance is the second-largest lake in Switzerland after Lake Geneva, stretching 162 miles (261 km) along the border of Switzerland, Germany and Austria. It is nine miles (14 km) across at its widest point, and in the summer is a popular spot for swimming, fishing, boating, sailing and windsurfing.

Thurgau first became part of the Swiss Confederation in 1803, and can trace its history back to Roman times (Roman settlements have been found in the Thurgau region of Arbon). With a population of 231,268 German-speaking, mainly Protestant citizens, Thurgau is often referred to as “Mostindien” or “Cider India” by the locals, in reference to the great number of apple orchards that abound in the area. Locals often say that there are more apples than people in Thurgau – hence Cider India is a reference to India’s high population. Here you can take long



hikes through the flowering orchards of Upper Thurgau in the far eastern edges of the canton. You see many half-timbered houses with red beams and white panels set magnificently on huge stone bases.

## Frauenfeld

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**T**his is the capital of Canton Thurgau – a small village west of Kreuzlingen that sits on the banks of the Murg River. Frauenfeld is also home to most of Thurgau's cantonal museums.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Offices



The Frauenfeld Tourist Service is located at Bahnhofplatz 75, CH-8500 Frauenfeld. 52-721-3128, fax 52-722-1064. [www.frauenfeld.ch](http://www.frauenfeld.ch). The Tourist Office of Canton Thurgau can help you with maps, hotels and excursions. Thurgau Tourismus, Gemeindehaus, CH-8580 Amriswil. ☎ 71-411-8181, fax 71-411-8182.

#### Post Office

Frauenfeld Post Office is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-6 pm, Saturday, 8-11:30 am. Rheinstrasse 1, CH-8500, Frauenfeld. ☎ 52-728-9540, fax 52-728-9545.

#### Codes

The area code is 52 and the postal code is CH-8500 for Frauenfeld.

### Getting Around



You might want to opt for the Thurgau Day Pass. At just 27.50Sfr, this covers all types of travel within the canton (rail, bus, boat) for one day. Available at the Tourist Office.

## Adventures

### On Wheels



You might want to take a drive east on Highway 7 to the town of Lipperswil if you have children, where you find the amusement park known as Conny Land. There is a good children's zoo here and lots of attractions for the little ones. Open daily from 9 am-6 pm.



*Conny Land*

### Sports

One of Switzerland's 11 racetracks is found in Frauenfeld, and includes a 1,500-meter turf course and a 1,500-meter steeple-chase course. Both tracks are slightly less than one mile. The Swiss Derby is held here annually in June. The track is also home to a pleasant restaurant and bar area. Rennenverein Frauenfeld. Bahnhofstrasse 61, CH-8500 Frauenfeld. ☎ 52-728-9225, fax 52-728-9226.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

Thurgauische Kantonsbibliothek is the main library for the canton of Frauenfeld, and is just five minutes from the main train station. Promenadenstrasse 12, CH-8501 Frauenfeld. ☎ 52-724-1888, fax 52-724-1899.

The Plättli Zoo Frauenfeld is in the southernmost part of the Frauenfeld, and is open daily year-round – in summer from 9 am-7 pm, and in winter from 9 am-5 pm. Admission is 10Sfr for adults and 5Sfr for kids ages four-15. The zoo features tigers, lions, leopards, camels, owls, monkeys and lamas, and includes a petting zoo for children, as well as a small kids' play area that has bumper cars. There is also a decent restaurant on

the grounds, offering seasonal specialties such as grilled dishes, salads, vegetarian fare, rösti, cheese fondue and wild pig. Open Monday-Friday, from 8:30 am-midnight, and on Saturday and Sunday from 9:30 am-11 pm. (\$-\$\$). You can find the zoo and restaurant at Hertenstrasse 41, CH-8500 Frauenfeld. ☎ 52-721-1648. The restaurant phone is ☎ 41-52-720-8191, fax 52-721-8845.

## Museums

The Thurgau Canton Museum is housed in an 18th-century castle in the upper part of the city, while the Cantonal Nature Museum is in the old village center, near the library. Both museums are OK, but if your time is limited, go to the Wellenberg Castle instead.

## Where to Stay



The Feldbach Hotel is one of the finest in the area, a few kilometers north of Frauenfeld in the seaside town of Steckborn. From Frauenfeld, travel east on Road 14 for about two miles (3.2 km), and then follow the signs north to Steckborn, a quick 15-minute trip. Here you see the



*Feldbach Hotel*

Feldbach Hotel on the Untersee shoreline. It's a beautiful, restored 13th-century convent with an ornate Baroque tower that you see as you enter. The hotel offers free bike rentals for guests and it caters to disabled travelers as well. Worth the trip. CH-8266 Steckborn.

☎ 52-762-2121, fax 52-762-2191.

The Youth Hostel Rüegerholz has 38 beds and is open from January 1-16, February 16-October 31, and December 1-31. (\$) Feshüttenstrasse 22, CH-8500 Frauenfeld. ☎/fax 52-721-3680, [www.youthhostel.ch/frauenfeld](http://www.youthhostel.ch/frauenfeld).



See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



Roter Ochsen (The Red Ox) serves up excellent Swiss food in a clean, white-walled dining room.

This is worth a visit. (\$\$). Open daily. Zurcherstrasse 224, CH-8500 Frauenfeld. ☎ 52-721-1257.

Stahli Bakery features fine cakes and tasty treats sure to enliven any palate. (\$-\$\$). Thundorferstrasse 10, CH-8500 Frauenfeld. 52-721-1349, fax 52-721-4844.

## Kreuzlingen

This is a unique town in that it connects with a similar city (Constance) set neatly on the border of Switzerland and Germany. The town of Constance was, in fact, part of Switzerland until 1805. Kreuzlingen is best-known for its St. Ulrich Kloster Church, which is home to a Holy Cross that was brought to this area in the 10th



*St. Ulrich (Peter Berger)*

century, and is housed in the Church Tower. The current structure was built in the 17th century and the Baroque interior was completed in the 18th century. After several fires throughout the ages, the building was renovated in 1967. This church chapel has ornate woodwork and figurines representing biblical characters and scenes from the 18th century.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Tourist Office is in the TCS travel office at Hauptstrasse 39, CH-8280 Kreuzlingen. Hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30-noon, 1:45-6 pm, Saturday,

8:30 am-noon. ☎ 71-672-3840, fax 71-672-1736. For information regarding Lake Constance and the region, contact Tourismusverband Ostschweiz (The Tourist Association of Eastern Switzerland) at Postfach, CH-9001 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-227-3777.

## Post Office

Located on Nationalstrasse 3, the Kreuzlingen Post Office is open from Monday to Friday, 7:30 am-6 pm, and on Saturday from 8 am-noon. ☎ 71-677-9911, fax 71-677-9915.

## Codes

The area code for Kreuzlingen is 71 and the postal code is CH-8280.

## Getting Around



This canton is a cyclist's paradise, with lovely bike paths throughout the region. There are also countless hiking paths. The Tourist Office can provide you with maps and routes for both types of exercise.

## Adventures

### On Water



There are countless swimming pools and free public beaches in Kreuzlingen, as well as the Sailing School of Kreuzlingen, ☎ 71-688-8020. You should also check out the beaches here, which are some of the few with sand in the country. Sunbathing is done on the grassy areas just west of the shoreline. Public beach information is at ☎ 71-688-1858.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

Just west of Kreuzlingen on Road 13 lies the town of Tägerwilen, which will be a point of interest for wine enthusiasts.

This is the birthplace of Hermann Müller (1850-1927), who produced the Müller-Thurgau grape, which is a cross between Riesling and Sylvaner. In Tägerwilen you also find the churches of Cosmas and Damian, and looming boldly above the village is the Schloss Castle, built in 1661. Near the castle

is the Constance Palace of Bishops, which was rebuilt in 1876 and 1894 after its destruction in 1499.

## Museums

The Puppenmuseum Jeannine, or Doll Museum, is in the Tenant's house of Schloss Girsberg and contains 500+ rare dolls from throughout history. Attached to the Doll Museum is the Graf-Zeppelin Erinnerungszimmer (Count Zeppelin Memorial), which pays homage to the count who lived here from 1890 to 1900 while working on his air balloons/dirigibles at Girsberg. Open March 1-January 6 on Wednesday and Sunday, from 2-5 pm, or by appointment.

The Lake Museum is on the north end of the town in Seeburg Park (a refuge for fallow deer and fowl). This museum tells the story of Lake Constance, complete with ship models and fishing history. Open November-March on Sunday from 2-5 pm, and in April-October on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, 2-5 pm.



*The Lake Museum (Peter Berger)*

The Planetarium was built in June 2002. Open daily from 9 am-5 pm. Admission is 12Sfr for adults, 10Sfr for youngsters.

☎ 71-677-3800, fax 71-677-3801.

## Where to Stay



Romantikhotel Krone is a 300-year-old inn that offers a quiet romantic spot in a beautiful tiny village just outside of the northern edges of Kreuzlingen. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Seestrasse ,11 CH-8274 Gottlieben. ☎ 71-666-8060, fax 71-666-8069.

Schlössli Bottighofen is a castle that was built in 1640. It sits on the shores of Lake Constance. Simple-looking on the out-

*Romantikhotel Krone*

hotel is handicapped-accessible and has two dining rooms that serve up excellent locally caught fish and provide a good list of local wines. (\$\$-

\$\$\$). Closed February. CH-8268 Mannenbach am Untersee. ☎ 71-663-4141, fax 71-663-4150.

Zum Blauen Haus is a restaurant and piano bar in the historic Gebuden area of Kreuzlingen. (\$-\$). Hauptstrasse 138, CH-8280 Kreuzlingen. ☎ 71-688-2498, fax 71-699-1406.

The Youth Hostel Villa Hörnliberg is in the park behind the train station and offers 96 beds. Open March 1-November 31. (\$) Breakfast is usually included. Promenadenstrasse 7, CH-8280 Kreuzlingen. ☎ 71-688-2663, fax 71-688-4761, [www.youthhostel.ch/kreuzlingen](http://www.youthhostel.ch/kreuzlingen).



See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

side, it is anything but that on the inside – being meticulously and tastefully decorated. Open year-round, with two in-house dining areas. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-8598 Bottighofen. ☎ 71-688-1275, fax 71-688-1540.

Hotel Schiff is slightly farther north of Kreuzlingen on Road 13 and is a relatively new hotel that appears to be more Italian than Swiss. The stucco design contrasts nicely with the blue waters of the Untersee. This

*Hotel Schiff*

## Camping



Fischerhause is the local campground, just one mile from the tourist office, near the lake, and with many activities and services for families. (\$) Open April-October. ☎ 71-688-4903, fax 71-688-1776.

## Where to Eat



Park Kafi is one of the best spots we could find here, serving pasta, vegetarian dishes and great salads at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open daily until midnight year-round. Hauptstrasse 82, CH-8280 Kreuzlingen.

# Canton St. Gallen (SG)

## At a Glance

**T**he canton of St. Gallen is comprised of 1,256 square miles (3,265 square km) with 48% of the land being used for agriculture.

This eastern canton, which surrounds the two half-cantons of Appenzeller, contains 90 municipalities. Slightly over 20% of the 466,554 citizens are foreigners in St. Gallen, which is probably due to the fact that textile factories here employ a large number of workers, who are always in demand. St. Gallen is the sixth-largest canton in Switzerland in terms of area and the fifth-largest in population – mostly made up of German-speaking Roman Catholics.

## Stadt Sankt Gallen

**T**his is the capital city of the canton and is home to just over 75,000 citizens. It is approximately nine miles (14.4 km) southwest of Lake Constance and contains one of the largest shopping areas in Eastern Switzerland – being home to many textile and embroidery factories. As the largest city in Eastern Switzerland, it is known historically as the “Finger of God” – referring to the Irish Monk Gallus, who in 612 wandered through a valley and fell onto a thorn-bush. Gallus took this as a sign that



had placed his finger at the spot where he should erect the village of St. Gallen.

Legend has it that he then befriended a wild bear who helped him to build a monastery. The city sits between the Appenzeller Alps and the Rosenberg foothills, exactly 53 miles (85 km) east of Zürich, and is a great town to explore on foot. The town center is a shopper's paradise, with countless boutiques, cafés, restaurants and shops. The old part of the city was first established in 1454 and contains a remarkable Abbey Library.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office/Train Station



St. Gallen's Tourist Office is at Bahnhofplatz 1A, near the train station. If you're a hiker, be sure to ask for copies of the *St. Gallische Wanderweg* map of walking paths. Open Monday-Friday, from 9 am-noon, 1-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am-noon. CH-9001, St. Gallen. ☎ 71-227-3737, fax 71-227-3767.

### Post Office

The St. Gallen Post Office is at Bahnhofplatz 5 and is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday from 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Thursday from 7:30 am-8 pm, and Saturday from 7:30-4 pm. ☎ 71-499-7304, fax 71-499-7320.

### Codes

The phone code is 71, and the postal code is CH-9000.

### Internet Access

This can be found at The Media Lounge. Open 9 am-9 pm Monday-Friday, and on Saturday from 10 am-5 pm. Cost is 1Sfr for five minutes. Located at the Katerinengasse 10, CH-9000 St. Gallen.

## Getting Around



The best way to see the city of St. Gallen is on foot. The Altstadt has a wide array of oriel windows, fancy murals, wood-carved balconies and half-timbered houses. Walk down the Gallusplatz, Spisergasse, Kugelgasse and Schmiedgasse to view some of the fanciest buildings in the

old village. A lively market takes place each week at the Marktplatz on Wednesday and Sunday.

The terrain here is mostly flat and allows walks through forests, meadows and over low hills. There is also a self-service funicular – the Mühleggbahn – that takes you to a lovely spot on a hill-



*The Altstadt (Filzstift)*

side, allowing great views of the area. Wooden stairs at the top lead you to a small park. It's at the far end of the Altstadt (Old Town) near the Abbey. Open daily from 6 am-11:30 pm. Cost is 1.7Sfr. ☎ 71-243-9595.

## Adventures

### On Foot



The St. Gallen Tourist Office offers both private and public walking tours of the city. Individual walking tours are arranged privately, while the public city walks have set schedules.

For some great walking paths and fun for the kids, check out the Peter & Paul Wildlife Park in Rotmonten, a quick ride from St. Gallen. Here you find numerous trails that make for a relaxing walk while viewing various types of wildlife, including marmots, lynx, wild pigs, wild cats, Alpine ibex, and herds of red and fallow deer. The park is open year-round and has a good restaurant on the grounds. To get there, take Bus No. 5 from the St. Gallen train station to Rotmonten, then follow the signs on foot (about 15 minutes) to the park. Park, ☎ 71-244-5113; park restaurant, ☎ 71-245-5625.

### On The Rails

The Appenzell Railways connect the main towns of this charming area, such as St. Gallen with its Abbey Library, Appenzell

with its Tudor-style houses, and the more than thousand-year-old Herisau and Gossau, dominated by its 13th-century castle Oberberg.

You can also take a round-trip with the Appenzell Railways whose routes begin in St. Gallen and travel through Gais, Appenzell, Gossau, Herisau, Urnasch, Wasserauen, Allstätten Stadt. Route trip and one way fares and passes are available, with discounts on all aerial cable cars with Swiss Pass, Swiss Flexi Pass, Swiss Youth Pass and Swiss Card: 50%.

Trains run on at least an hourly basis, and some, such as the St. Gallen-Appenzell connection even run every half-hour. Technical train buffs will love the St.Gallen-Gais and the Gais-Altstätten Stadt routes since they are connected by cogwheel train with an impressive gradient.

## On Water

The Drei Weieren (Three Ponds) near St. Gallen are a great spot for relaxing, sunning, swimming and walking. The trio of small ponds includes the Mannerweier, a free swimming pond, the Chrüweier, a family pond, and the Fraurenbad, or ladies' pond. To get there, take Bus. No. 2 from the St. Gallen train station to the Muhlegg funicular for St. Georgen. There are several restaurants and kiosks near the ponds as well.

## Golf

The Säntis Park Golfplatz is a family-friendly sports park that includes an 18-hole golf course (cost is 60-70Sfr per person), sauna, massage, playgrounds, bowling and miniature golf. Open daily from 9 am-11 pm. To get there from St. Gallen, walk or drive 2½ miles (four km) east on Highway 1, exit at Gosau. Golfpark Waldkirch, CH-9000 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-434-6767.

## Museums

St. Gallen is famous for its textiles, so don't miss the Textilemuseum if you're into embroidery and lace. It contains examples from the 14th century to the present. Open Monday-Saturday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm. Vadianstrasse 2, CH-9000. ☎ 71-222-1744.

If you stroll along the Museumstrasse, you will find the Kirchhoferhaus Museum, which includes prehistoric relics

and silver collections, as well as the Museum of Art and Natural History, where you can find Impressionist art and precious stone collections. The Neues Museum spotlights prehistoric collections and domestic ware throughout the centuries.



*Botanical Garden (www.bigphoto.com)*

## Parks & Gardens

St. Gallen has a lovely Botanical Garden on the northeastern outskirts of the city, featuring over 7,000 species of plants from all around the world. It is open daily from 8 am-6 pm, while the greenhouse is open from 9:30 am-noon, and from 2-5 pm.

## Where to Stay



Einstein Hotel was built in the 1850s and was previously an embroidery factory that was renovated into a hotel in 1983. The marble lobby is impressive and so are the prices here (\$\$\$\$+). In the historic district, it also



*Einstein Hotel*

includes a fine restaurant and piano bar with all modern amenities. Berneggstrasse 2, CH-9001 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-227-5555, fax 71-227-5577, [www.einstein.ch](http://www.einstein.ch).



*Hotel Walhalla*

Hotel Walhalla is in the shopping district across from the train station and is just a few minutes walk from the Old Town. Swiss and Mediterranean cuisine are served in the fine in-house restaurant. Breakfast is included. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Bahnhofplatz, CH-9001 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-222-2922, fax 71-222-2966. In the US/Canada, the toll free number is ☎ 1-800-528-1234, [www.hotelwalhalla.ch](http://www.hotelwalhalla.ch).

The St. Gallen Youth Hostel has 88 beds and many amenities, including nearby hiking trails, tennis and swimming opportunities. Open from early February to December 1. (\$-\$). Juchstrasse 25, CH-9000 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-245-4777, fax 71-245-4983, [www.youthhostel.ch/st.gallen](http://www.youthhostel.ch/st.gallen).

## Where to Eat



The Weinstube Zum Bäumli is one of the oldest restaurants around – having been in business in St. Gallen since the 1600s. The food is local and cheap, but the wine list is one of the best in this area of Switzerland. Closed Monday and Sunday. (\$-\$). Schmiedgasse 18, CH-9001 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-222-1174.

Restaurant Neubad is in a 300-year-old building in the historic district that includes two restaurants – a bistro on the first floor and an expensive dining room on the second floor. Menus are seasonal, wild game is the specialty, and the salads are always spectacular – some of the best around. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Reservations are recommended. Open Monday-Friday from 10 am-2 pm, 6-10:30 pm. Closed in July for two weeks. Bankgasse 6, CH-9001 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-222-8683.



*See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

Restaurant Einstein is in the hotel of the same name and offers great views of the area on the fifth floor. Hearty portions in a sublime and relaxed atmosphere. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily from noon-2 pm, 6-10 pm. Berneggstrasse 2, CH-9000 St. Gallen. ☎ 71-227-5555.

## Rorschach

**T**his is St. Gallen's main port city, set along the southern shores of Lake Constance (Bodensee). With 10,800 citizens, this lakeside city sits at the foot of the Rorschacher Berg (3,154 feet/961 m), and is a popular site for piano and metal working industries. Since 947, when Rorschach was awarded the "marktrecht" (literally the market right or permission to become a trading and marketing center), it has grown into one of the most important trading centers on the southern side of the Bodensee.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The Rorschach Tourist Office is at Hauptstrasse 63, Postfach, CH-9401 Rorschach. ☎ 71-841-7034, fax 71-841-7036. Open from the end of March to the end of October, Monday from 2-5:30 pm, Tuesday-Friday, from 9:30 am-noon, 2-5:30 pm; November to mid-March from 2-5:30 pm daily; mid-June to the end of September on Saturdays from 9:30-noon.

#### Train Station

The nearby train station rents bikes for 26Sfr per day.

### Adventures

#### On Foot



Hikes are numerous throughout the area. Here are a few easy ones, suitable for almost anybody. All are well-marked, and all are round-trip walks.

**Hike One:** From Rorschach grab one of the many boats along the docks to Rheineck. Here you follow the signs along the well-marked path to the Alten Rhein. This lovely, easy path will

give you a relaxing walk through a beautiful setting for about an hour. The ship will return you to Rorschach, and these usually leave every hour on the hour.

Hike Two: Grab one of the many postal buses from Rorschach to Goldach and walk to Untereggen, Büel, Alteburg, Egg, Eschlen, Iltenried, Schloss Sulzberg, Goldach, and then return to Rorschach via postal bus.

Hike Three: For a bit longer excursion (2½ hours), take the rack-railway Zahnradbahn (RHB) from Rorschach to Wienacht and once here follow the trail from Unterbilchen, the Rossbüchel, Koblen, Hasenhus, St. Annaschloss and back to Rorschach.



*The abbreviation RHB stands for the Rorschach-Heiden-Bergbahn (Rorschach-Heiden-Mountain train), a rack-railway mountain train that runs between the villages of Rorschach and Heiden in the canton of St. Gallen. For the Bergbahn Rheineck-Walzenhausen, designating mountain train service between the villages of Rheineck and Walzenhausen, the abbreviation is RhW.*

Hike Four: Known as the Drei Schlosser Hike (the Three Castles), this 2½-hour excursion has you leaving Rorschach via the main train station toward Strandbad. From here, follow the signs to Schloss Wiggen, Linkonsberg, Schloss Wartensee, Vogelberg, Hof, St. Annaschloss, Loch, and back to Rorschach.

Hike Five: For a lovely three-hour walk, take the rack-railway Zahnradbahn (RHB) to Heiden, then walk to Frauenrüti, through Grub, Rossbüchel, Fünfländerblick, Fonberg, Hüttenmoos, Chürzweb and back to Rorschach.

## On Water



Most of the sporting activities in Rorschach revolve around the water. The tiny public beach is very popular; call ☎ 71-841-1684 for times and information.

If it's sailing you want, then check out the Segelschule Rorschach Stadler Ag at Hauptstrasse 93, CH-9401 Rorschach. ☎ 71-844-8989, fax 71-844-8988. The Delfino Segelschule at ☎ 71-845-4020, fax 71-845-4022, three miles (4.8 km) east in the city of Staad at Hauptstrasse 8, is also a sailing school.

At the Tourist Office you can also find information (maps) on in-line skating and roller blading treks throughout the area. Paragliding, or "Gleitschirm" as it is known in German, features tandem flights from the local Flugschule (or flying school). Contact the Tourist Office for information or go to [www.swipt.ch](http://www.swipt.ch). You can rent pedal boats at various spots along the shoreline. These "pedalos" are available from May 1-August 11, 10 am-9 pm, and from August 12-April 30, 1:30-6 pm. The Tourist Office can also help you arrange combination trips with bicycling and ships, or go to [www.tourenguide.ch](http://www.tourenguide.ch).

Strandbad Rorschach has a sandy beach and funpark with a water slide and swimming pool, as well as miniature golf and beach volleyball. Open in May from 9 am-8 pm, June through August from 8 am-9 pm, and September from 9 am-8 am daily. Jugendherberge am See. CH-9400 Rorschach. ☎ 71-844-9710, fax 71-844-9716. Reservations for miniature golf (open daily from 10 am-closing) at ☎ 71-844-9716.

It is also fun to discover the Rorschach area via ship. At the Schifffahrtbetriebe, you'll find three ships that offer different cruises and amenities. The *Rhyspitz* caters to large groups and features a pleasant ambiance, buffets and banquets. The *Rhynegg* is a double-decked boat with upper and lower viewing areas, and a good on-board kitchen. The *Alte Rhy* is a cozy smaller version of the aforementioned two. Schifffahrtbetriebe Rorschach, Kornhause Postfach, CH-9401 Rorschach. ☎ 71-846-6060, fax 71-846-6061.

You can also take a nostalgic trip with either a Rosa (red) or a Schwartz (black) Dampflokomotive (steam locomotive). This mountain train (Bergbahn) comes in two colors and gives you a round-trip tour of the area, along with a postal bus and ship excursion. First you take the rack railway RHB to Heiden, then you travel 23 miles (37 km) by postal bus (or you can walk for 2½ hours via the Witzwanderweg) to Walzenhausen. From there, you pick up the RhW (Bergbahn Rheineck-Walzenhausen) to Rheineck, and then travel by ship back to the port of Rorschach. Postfach 247, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-1852, fax 71-891-1459, [www.ar-bergbahnen.ch](http://www.ar-bergbahnen.ch).



## Landmarks & Historic Sites



*Badhütte Rorschach (Klammer)*

The Badhütte Rorschach first opened in 1924, and is comprised of three ramshackle huts that sit over the water on the shores of Lake Constance. Designed by the Swiss architect Koeplin, they are open May 15-June 16 from 9 am-7 pm; June 17-August 15 from 8 am-8 pm; and August 16-September 20 from 8 am-7 pm.

## Museums

Alte Garage Museum is a must for any car or motorcycle enthusiast, as it features historic and classic vehicles. Open April, May, June, September and October on Wednesday and Saturday from 1:30-5:30 pm and Sunday from 10 am-5:30 pm. Open July and August daily from 10 am-6 pm. Cost is 7Sfr for adults and, for kids over seven, 4sfr. ☎ 71-841-6611.

Flieger Museum Altenheim features historic airplanes in this flying and flight museum. Open Saturday from 1:30-5:30 pm. Cost is 8Sfr for adults, kids 4Sfr, and kids under seven free. ☎ 71-737-8104.

## Where to Stay



**Parkhotel Waldau** is a former private boys school that has since been renovated into one of Rorschach's finest inns. This hotel has many amenities for sports enthusiasts, including tennis courts, two swimming pools, a fitness center, sauna, etc., as well as one of the best restaurants in town. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Seebleichstrasse 42, CH-9400 Rorschach. ☎ 71-855-0180, fax 71-855-1002.



*Parkhotel Waldau*

**Hotel Mozart** is one of the best in the village, between the lake and the center of town. There are half a dozen rooms with views of the lake in this granite building, and its Café Mozart is well-known for its great variety of teas and pastries. (\$-\$-\$). Breakfast is included in the rates. Hafenzentrum, CH-9400 Rorschach. ☎ 71-841-0632, fax 71-841-9938.

**Rorschach See** has 60 beds and is near all of the biking trails. Open early January to late October. (\$) Churnerstrasse 4, CH-9400 Rorschach. ☎ 71-844-9712, fax 71-844-9713, [www.youthhostel.ch/rorschach.see](http://www.youthhostel.ch/rorschach.see).

**Rorschach Berg** has 20 beds and is open from early January to the end of October. Near the mountain lift. (\$) Im Ebnet, CH-9404 Rorschacherberg. ☎ 71-841-5411, [www.youthhostel/rorschach](http://www.youthhostel/rorschach).



See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



**Ristorante-Pizzeria Mama Mia** has some of the finest pizza in the area and includes a nice garden terrace. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Mariabergstrasse 7, CH-9400 Rorschach. ☎ 71-841-1278, fax 71-841-1389.

Restaurant Rosengarten offers up what most people want in Rorschach – good fish – and that's the specialty here. The terrace overlooking the lake has seating for 50 people. (\$-\$\$\$). Thurgauerstrasse 22, CH-9400 Rorschach. ☎ 71-841-1582, fax 71-841-1590.

Schloss Wartegg features creative cooking with vegetarian dishes. CH-9404 Rorschacherberg. ☎ 71-858-6262, fax 71-858-6260.

AUTHOR'S  
CHOICE



*For a very nice treat on a sunny day, take a quick trip from Rorschach with your bike or car to the little village of Staad. You travel east from Rorschach on Churerstrasse and, when you come to the center of the village, pick up Buechenstrasse. Stay on this only a few minutes and you'll come to the village of Buechenbeistaad. From the center of this small town take Thalenstrasse and you pass over Highway A1. Stay on this road another five minutes and you come to the small intersection with the road Felsenstrasse. You can park your car here in the small parking lot and follow the winding road up for a nice 20-minute walk to Restaurant Steinige Tisch. Owners Christine and Patrik Iseli serve outstanding entrées and local wines at very reasonable prices. The fish in season is excellent, as are the desserts. The view from here is outstanding and you get an excellent opportunity to observe the Swiss wine regions at their finest during the summer months. (\$-\$\$\$). The restaurant is open May-October, Wednesday-Sunday from 7 am-6 pm. Closed Monday-Tuesday. Felsenstrasse 4, CH-9422 Staad. ☎ 71-888-1205.*

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## Bad Ragaz

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The home of Johanna Spyri's Heidi is in this tiny village, also known as "Heidiland," in the far southeastern edge of Canton St. Gallen. You can get there via Highway 13 from the north, where it is only a few miles south of Met, or from the south, via Chur (in Canton Graubünden), which is only a 15-minute train ride away. One of the main attractions here is the extensive

range of wellness activities, including hot baths, such as the Tamina Therme spa, hiking, skiing and wandering through the car-free Bahnhofplatz. At Tamina, you can purchase a two-hour pass allowing you to sample spas, pools, and lounges at your leisure. Open daily from 7:30 am-9 pm. ☎ 81-303-2741, fax 81-303-2733, [www.resortragaz.ch](http://www.resortragaz.ch).

Or you can take a cable car from Bad Ragaz to Paradiel at a cost of 33Sfr (for adults, 21Sfr for kids), and from there you hike 90 minutes to

Heidi's house. Here you learn about the Heidi story and have lunch on the Schwarzbüel Alp. Open March-November, 10 am-5 pm. ☎ 81-330-1912.

Or contact Ferienregion Heidiland, Postfach 90, CH-7320 Sargans. ☎ 81-720-0820, fax 81-720-0828, [www.heidiland.com](http://www.heidiland.com).

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Bad Ragaz Tourist Office at Maienfelderstrasse 5 (☎ 81-302-1061, fax 81-302-6290) can help you plan a number of small excursions but, if you head up to the Tamina Spa, make sure to take plenty of money with you because this place isn't cheap! Great facilities overall, however. [www.badragaz-tourismus.ch](http://www.badragaz-tourismus.ch).



## Trains

Bad Ragaz and the Pizol region are served by regular trains, as well as by a mountain railway, and a narrow-gauge train. Information on both is available at ☎ 81-720-4820.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Besides the spas and thermal baths, there are plenty of hikes – 37.2 miles (60 km) of trails – and 25 miles (40 km) of easy walking paths, suitable for handicapped and wheelchairbound persons.

### On Wheels



*Bad Ragaz*

You'll find 86 miles (138 km) of mountain bike trails and 31 miles (50 km) of marked roller blading and skating paths.

### On Snow

In the winter this area is a sports enthusiast's paradise, with 14 superior ski runs totaling 25 miles (40 km) on Pizol, winter hikes, sledding,

tobogganing and cross-country skiing. A one-day adult pass costs only 45Sfr, and a kid's pass is just 30Sfr.

For local information on snow sports, ☎ 81-302-1190. The Pizol area includes four gondolas, three chairlifts and six ski lifts. For Alpine ski and tobogganing information, ☎ 81-720-4825.

## Where to Stay



Termalbader & Grand Hotel Hof Ragaz are the only health and spa resorts in Switzerland with an 18-hole golf course. Comes complete with thermal baths, which have been in use since 1242, saunas, massages,

two luxury hotels and five restaurants. (\$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$+). Both hotels offer packages, but none are cheap. For example, a three-night stay with various amenities, including facial treatments, parafin hand baths, massages, etc., starts at 1,020Sfr or \$680. A similar six-night package starts at



*Grand Hotel Hof Ragaz*

2,490Sfr (\$1,660). This resort spares no expense, and includes an 8,200-square-foot (738-square-m) fitness oasis. Be prepared to pay dearly, though you won't be disappointed by the treatment you receive here. It is all first-class. CH-7310, Bad Ragaz. ☎ 81-303-3030, fax 81-303-3033.

If you want to bunk down in Bad Ragaz at reasonable rates, then check out Hotel Bergadler at Bahnhofstrass 29. (\$-\$\$). A comfortable homestyle setting with great breakfasts. Closed February. ☎ 81-302-1813, fax 81-302-4445.

Another unique place to rest your weary bones is at the Mountain Lodge Gaffia, in the Pizol Region. This unique hotel is made of large boulders and blends in well with the surroundings. It is ideal for families, large groups or the lone hiker and offers a great vantage point for those wishing to hike into the Weisstannen Valley, the Heidalp, the Calfeisen Valley or the Pizol. Comfortable and rustic accommodations at reasonable prices. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Maienfelderstrasse 5, CH-7310 Bad Ragaz. ☎ 81-302-1061, [www.gaffia.ch](http://www.gaffia.ch).



*See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## The Toggenburg Valley

This is seven miles (11 km) south of Mt. Santis on Highway 16, and is north of the Churfirsten range on the Thur River. The idyllic setting is seldom visited by foreigners and offers a quiet respite from the hustle and bustle of such resorts as St. Moritz or

Davos. Here, you find three ski resorts – Wildhaus, Unterwasser, Alt-St. Johann – that have joined together to form a snow sport area popular with the local inhabitants. There are three mountains – Gamserrugg (at 6,809 feet/2,075 m), Chäserrug (at 7,419 feet/2,262 m), and Wildhaus (at 3,280 feet/1,000 m) – all of which can be reached by railways, cable cars and lifts. Wildhaus offers 31 miles (50 km) of downhill ski runs, 27 miles (43 km) of cross-country ski runs and 17 miles (27 km) of ski-hiking trails. Similarly, Unterwasser has 31 miles (50 km) of downhill runs, 28 miles (45 km) of cross-country trails and 17 miles (27 km) of ski-hiking paths. A one-day ski pass for all three sites is just 45Sfr; a five-day pass is 178Sfr, and a seven-day pass is 222Sfr. Each resort offers a ski school. ☎ 71-999-9911 for information and lessons.



*The Churfirsten, seen from Alpstein  
with Toggenburg below (Bababoef)*

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## Walenstadt & the Churfirsten

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**W**alenstadt is at the foot of the Churfirsten mountain range, where the Seez river meets the Walensee. The Churfirsten Alpine range lies just north of the Walensee, and is a great area for a variety of hikes. Most of these are best attempted in the spring or summer, when the southern slopes of the Churfirsten

are free of snow. The Walenstadt Tourist Office can provide you with maps of the area, and assist you with other travel needs. Bahnhofstrasse 19. ☎/fax 81-735-2222.



*Walenstadt (Ramessos)*

## An Adventure on Foot



For an easy five-hour hike that offers great views of the slopes between the Walensee and the Churfirsten, grab one of the postal buses that run many times daily from the Walenstadt train station up to Knoblisbühl Höhenklinik. Once here, you follow the winding road uphill through a forest that eventually comes to an open area littered with small farmhouses. Continue on and you soon come to the Bergrestaurant Schrina at Hochrugg. Open only in July and August, this hotel/restaurant offers clean, plain rooms at very cheap rates (\$). Call ahead if you plan on staying overnight. ☎ 81-735-1630. You can continue on past Paxmal westward, where there's a peace monument that was created by artist Karl Bickel; it took him 25 years to complete. Half a mile later, the path splits, and you want to go to the right, over



the grassy hilltop of the Rutz. From here, the path veers more to the right again (back east), at times steeply. Continue eastward, eventually reaching the Schrina ridge. Here, you find the Obersässstone house and barn, and there are spectacular views of the Walensee and the Churfirsten along the way. After over an hour, you come to the Tschingla Restaurant, past the Palis ridge at 5,382 feet. This restaurant is open from June to late September and offers similar rates to the Bergrestaurant Schrina (\$). Continuing past the restaurant, the trail winds a bit, passing a few solo farmhouses and steadily declining until you reach Brunnen after another hour. The trail descends through small meadows, tiny vineyards, and lightly wooded areas. It is easy to follow, however, being marked with small yellow diamonds. This will lead you back to Walenstadt. You'll want to bring a small backpack, with water, soda, munchies or a lunch. This hike can be done in less time if you are a serious hiker, however.

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## Rapperswil

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*Rapperswil Castle (Ikiwaner)*

This town is found on the north shore of Lake Zürich, on a tiny peninsula that is still part of Canton St. Gallen, even though it seems as though it should be part of Canton Zürich. The main attraction of this small village is the Swiss National Circus and family Knie – who have

operated this circus for four generations. With its headquarters firmly established here since 1919, the Circus also has a museum that provides insight into the history of this famed circus. Rapperswil is also home to a three-towered Castle that looks as though it came right out of *The Wizard of Oz*. Built in the 13th century, the castle sits above Rapperswil and gives good views of the city, Lake Zürich, and the Glarus Alps.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Rapperswil Tourist Office can answer a wide array of questions about hotel reservations, and offers tours, maps and boat tickets. They are open from April to October, 10 am-5 pm and from November to March, 1-5 pm. Fischmarktplatz 1, Postfach 1006, CH-8640 Rapperswil. ☎ 55-220-5757, fax 55-220-5750.

### Zoo

The Kinderzoo provides a chance for adults and children to pet and feed rhinos, elephants, camels, zebras and many other animals. A playground, pony and camel rides and animal shows complete the experience. The Kinderzoo was founded in 1962 through the efforts of Fredy and Rolf Knie of the Swiss National Circus (Zirkus Knie). Open from the middle of March to October, daily from 9 am-6 pm, Sunday and holidays from 9 am-7 pm. Adults 10Sfr, children four-16, 4.5Sfr. Oberseestrasse, CH-8640 Rapperswil. ☎ 55-220-6760.

### Museums

The Circus Museum of family Knie. Open April-October, 10 am-5 pm, November-March, 1-5 pm. Admission is 4Sfr for adults and 2Sfr for kids three-12. Fischmarktplatz 1, CH-8640 Rapperswil. ☎ 55-220-5757.

The Polenmuseum is inside Schloss Rapperswil at Postfach 1251, CH-8640 Rapperswil. Open April-October, 1-5 pm, November, December, March from 2-5 pm, January-February, by appointment. ☎ 55-210-1862, fax 55-210-0662.

# Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden (AR)

## At a Glance

**T**his is the larger of the two half-cantons of Appenzeller Land. Located entirely within the canton of St. Gallen, it encom-

passes 94 square miles (243 square km), and is home to 51,184 German-speaking natives, who are predominately Protestant. Forty percent of these Appenzeller inhabitants (from 20 municipalities) work in the manufacturing, construction and energy supply fields. Another 18% work in the tourist industry. Locals are often quoted as saying that the entire Appenzell canton, embedded as it is in the canton of St. Gallen, is like a "five-franc piece in a cow patty." Just over one-half of this area is used for agriculture.

Founded in 1513 as the 13th member of the Swiss Confederation, this canton is one of the most unusual in terms of shape, reaching from the Austrian border and the Bodensee to the North, while wrapping around sister half-canton Appenzell Innerrhoden to Mt. Santis at the far south.

The Alpstein chain of three mountains contains one of the best-known areas for walking in Eastern Switzerland, and in this canton trekking and hiking up hillsides is a great pastime. Following along with the Appenzell sense of humor, a visitor will find trails and walking paths clearly marked with themes – ranging from the "health path," to the "joke path," to the "metro path," etc. It makes for added fun along the way.

## Heiden

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**T**his is one of the main towns of Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden and for many years was considered one of the premiere health centers in Switzerland. During the second half of the 19th century, a health resort focusing on fresh air and whey-therapy was centered here. During the late 1990s, there was a revival of that tradition, and visitors will find numerous health spas and treatment centers here.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Appenzellerland Tourismus AR is at Bahnhofstrasse 2, Heiden CH-9410. ☎ 71-898-3300 or 71-898-3301, fax 71-898-3309. This is also the tourist office for the city of Heiden. This office provides maps and information, and will also be able to arrange a

wellness/spa package in conjunction with the local Health Hotels – a definite must for any weary hiker or traveler.

## Post Office

The Heiden Post Office is at Kirchplatz 5, and is open from 7:30 am to noon and 1:30 to 5 pm Monday through Friday, Saturdays from 8 am to noon. ☎ 71-891-1124, fax 71-891-1323.

## Codes

The abbreviation for Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden is AR. The area code is 71, and the postal code is CH-9410.

## Health Care

You couldn't be in a better spot in Switzerland for the latest in health care services, alternative medicines, natural therapies and health spas than in the Appenzell Ausserrhoden canton. Located here are the Health Office for Appenzell Ausserrhoden and the Institute for Integrative Medicine in Heiden, a not-for-profit organization specializing in promoting integration between conventional and homeopathic medicines.

## Getting Around

As in its sister half-canton, the best way to see Appenzell Ausserrhoden is by foot, cable car or railway.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are many hikes you can take throughout the region. The best place to start is at the Tourist Office in Heiden, where you can ask for a "Wandervorschläge," or walking map, which offers detailed path information. Options for hikes range from easy strolls through grassy meadows to strenuous overnight treks. Trails often wind up and down mountains and around hills. The upper regions can stay snow-covered for a good portion of the year. It is recommended that tourists hike in small groups, but definitely never alone and, for the tougher treks, it is often wise to hire an experienced guide who is familiar with the area. If you decide to go it alone, however, always inform someone of your destination and when you plan to return.

## By Rail

The Rorschach-Heiden Bergbahn was established in 1875, and allows a nostalgic trip from Heiden to the edge of the



Bodensee in Rorschach, offering a panoramic view of this great lake at a very slow pace. The driver of the steam-operated contraption encourages passengers to pick flowers along the way. Established in

1872, the Bergbahn Rheineck-Walzenhausen is another way to grab a scenic view of this region. Fares are 9-15Sfr and the train departs from Heiden daily at 11:20 am and 2:30 pm. You can find information on both of these lines at Postfach 247, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-1852, fax 71-891-6921.

## Therapeutic & Health Spas

These are very popular in this region, and range from medium-priced resorts, to the very expensive. In all cases, phone and



inquire about rates.

The Heilbad Spa Unterrechstein, offering warm waters with a high mineral content and various types of therapies, is one of the best on the planet. ☎ 71-

891-2191. Bad Gonten, Gontenbad, ☎ 71-794-1124.

Hotel Heiden offers water temperatures of 91° F (33° C). ☎ 71-891-9111.

Hotel Walzenhausen has temperatures of 82° F (28° C). ☎ 71-886-2121.

Kurhotel Seeblick in Wienacht offers temperatures of 90°F (32° C). ☎ 71-891-3141.

## Museums

Henry Dunant is memorialized in a museum of the same name. This founder of the Red Cross lived in Heiden from 1887 to 1910. The museum is open April through October, Tuesday through Saturday from 1:30-4:30 pm and on Sundays year-round from 10 am to noon and from 1:30 to 4:30 pm. There is also a free guided tour on Sundays at 10:30 am. From November through March, the museum is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1:30 to 4:30 pm, and a free guided

tour is provided the first Sunday of each month during this time at 10:30 am. Asylstrasse 2, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-4404, fax 71-891-4813.

## Where to Stay



Heilbad Unterrechstein is one of the top hotels and health spas in Canton Appenzell Asserrhoden, and one of the most expensive (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). It offers every therapy known to man, including massages, hot baths, saunas, and vegetarian meals. Postfach 131, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-2191, fax 71-891-2181.

Hotel Heiden is another top-rated hotel/health spa that overlooks the Bodensee, providing all of the pleasures to rejuvenate the soul and spirit, including alternative and traditional medicine. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Seeallee 8, CH-9410, Heiden. ☎/fax 71-898-1515.

Hotel Kurhaus Sunnematt is a family-run hotel/health spa whose motto is "Begin



*Hotel Heiden*



*Hotel Kurhaus Sunnematt*

the day with a smile." It offers short, individually styled stays with a healthy focus at mid-range prices. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 19, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-898-8888, fax 71-898-8889. Hotel Linde provides traditional bath therapies, complemented by exceptional cuisine. Suitable for large groups and seminars of up to 120 people. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Poststrasse 11, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-1414, fax 71-891-5365.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Badhof, Pizzeria has a stunning ambience and excellent fare at reasonable prices. A great place for romantics. (\$-\$\$\$). Open daily from 11 am to 2 pm, and 5-11 pm. Closed Wednesdays. Im Bad 6, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-2730.

Restaurant Häädlerstube is a great place for groups, serving regional fare at inexpensive prices. Open daily, year-round from 9 am to 10 pm. Inside the Hotel Kurhaus Sunnematt at Bahnhofstrasse 19, CH-9410 Heiden. (\$\$). ☎ 71-898-8877.

Restaurant Löwen Apéro Bar features charming, upbeat and modern surroundings for a good meal and drinks. Open Monday through Thursday from 3 pm to midnight, Friday and Saturday from 3 pm to 2 am. Closed Sundays. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Poststrasse 12, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-1439.

Restaurant Park Pizzeria is beautifully-decorated with a great ambience that is exceeded only by the fine food. Italian and vegetarian specialties, plus great pizza. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Seeallee 5, CH-9410 Heiden. ☎ 71-891-1121.



*See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Herisau

This is the capital of Appenzell Ausserrhoden and the largest city of this canton, with nearly 16,000 people residing here. Named "Alpine City of the Year for 2003," Herisau is a great example of agriculture and industry meeting in a prosperous union. The city has a well-developed infrastructure complete with culture, good schools and industries, teamed with a high respect for the surrounding Appenzeller hinterland.



Hotel Bären/Speiserestaurant-Bistro is a charming, beautiful hotel and restaurant all rolled into one package. Operated by the Knechtle family, with a homey atmosphere and real Swiss charm. Find them at Alpsteinstrasse 1, CH-9100 Herisau. ☎ 71-351-1716.

Hotel Herisau is clean, comfortable and affordable (\$\$). Near the train station at Bahnhofstrasse 14, CH-9102 Herisau. ☎ 71-354-8383, fax 71-354-8380, [www.hotelherisau.ch](http://www.hotelherisau.ch).

# Canton Appenzell Innerrhoden (AI)

## At a Glance

**T**he smaller half of the Appenzell canton, Appenzell Innerrhoden (Inner Rhodes) is home to just 15,616 German-speaking citizens, most of whom are Roman Catholic. Appenzell Innerrhoden is 66 square miles (172 square km), of which 58% is agricultural, and, like Appenzell Ausserrhoden, was founded in 1513. The people are known for their distinct sense of humor, called a “gifteln.” It is the smallest Swiss canton within the Federation, and has only six municipalities. Over one-third of the population works in tourism, while another third works in the construction and energy industries.

Life was recorded in this area as early as the Ice Age, or 30,000 BC. The Wildkirchli Caves of the area show signs of life from this era, which was later settled by the abbots of St. Gallen in the valley basin where this city originated. These abbots formed the economic and religious center; together with the Mauritius Church, they helped to found the city in 1071.

Appenzell joined Switzerland in 1513 as the 13th canton, before splitting into two half-cantons in 1597. Geographically, this three-chained mountain area is probably the best-known in Eastern Switzerland, and offers a wide array of walking and hiking paths and adventures.

Both half-cantons are also known for their dedication to folklore, though this smaller canton tends to preserve its traditions a bit more than her larger, sister canton. While many of the Swiss consider the residents to be the “hillbillies” of their country, this unique spirit and holding on to old traditions is what draws visitors to explore this area. In fact, it is not unusual to see the locals dressed in traditional Swiss apparel, which for the men means rakish earrings and no shoes (in the summertime). The women wear dresses adorned with intricate lace and embroidery.



The Appenzeller cantons are also famous for their cheeses, their exquisite embroidery, and the artwork on their buildings. The annual assembly of citizens for open-air elections – the “Landsgemeinde” – is held in alternating years in the Appenzell cantons. The people of the two cantons vote on political issues and elect representatives for their cantonal government. The voting starts at noon and lasts for about two hours, with many different festivals being held in conjunction with the Landsgemeinde, both before and after the actual voting takes place. The strutting, bipedal black bear – which appears on the canton’s coat of arms – represents the Abbey of St. Gallen. The name Appenzell is derived from the Latin “abbatis cella,” or “abbey cell,” because the region was once home to colonies of the St. Gallen Abbey.



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## Appenzell

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**T**his is the main town of Appenzell Innerrhoden, just 12 miles (20 km) south of St. Gallen and 785 feet (239 m) above sea level. This picturesque village has everything you’d expect from a Swiss town rich in tradition: cobblestone streets, rustic painted motifs on the buildings, local vendors, and an overwhelming sense of history. The main street, Hauptgasse, is car-free and thus allows ample strolling and is a great spot to people-watch. The local bus ride from St. Gallen to Appenzell is particularly fun, because it gives you a relaxing tour of tiny villages along the route. For schedules, call ☎ 71-227-3737. If you’re driving, go toward St. Gallen, then south to Teufen, then south again to Appenzell. There are signs everywhere, so it is easy to find this quaint town. There is a train that leaves Zürich for Appenzell, but it is slow and takes nearly two hours to get here. Up until the 1920s, hand embroidery was the major industry in this region. Very little industry settled here due to the fact that there were few railroads or major roadways. Craftsmen thus

abound in this area – carpenters, painters, harness makers and goldsmiths. The town of Appenzell was burned to the ground on March 18, 1560, with only the parish church and Gothic choir and its crypt surviving. People often say that Appenzell is where “life is still true.”



*Lake near Appenzell*

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Appenzell Tourist Office is at Hauptgasse 4, and is open Monday-Friday from 9 am to noon, and from 2 to 6 pm. On Saturdays and Sundays the office is open from 10 am to noon and from 2 to 5 pm. ☎ 71-788-9641, fax 71-788-9650, [www.ai@appenzell.ch](http://www.ai@appenzell.ch). For cantonal information, go to Marktgassee 2, 9050 Appenzell. ☎ 71-788-9311, fax 71-788-9339.

## Post Office

Poststrasse 9. Open Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-noon, and from 1:30-6 pm; Saturday from 8 am-noon. ☎ 71-787-1360, fax 71-787-3963, [www.post.ch](http://www.post.ch).

## Codes

The abbreviation for Canton Appenzell Innerrhoden is AR. The area code is 71, and the postal code is CH-9050.

## Train Station

This is right across from the post office and offers bike rentals and money changing.

## Getting Around



The best way to see this half-canton is on foot, by cable car or railway. The Appenzell Railway will take you on a leisurely ride from Gossau or St. Gallen through much of Appenzeller land. For train information, ☎ 71-354-5060; [www.appenzellerbahnen.ch](http://www.appenzellerbahnen.ch). Walking or hiking throughout the countryside and through the cobblestone streets of many of the little towns and villages that dot the landscape are also great ways to experience Appenzellerland.

Still another unique way to visit this area is to take the postal bus from St. Gallen to Appenzell. Some of these bright yellow buses are doubled-decked, seating 90 people, and offer a different kind of trip throughout every nook and cranny of this canton. ☎ 71-228-4444 for information, [www.post.ch](http://www.post.ch).

## Adventures

### On Foot



One of the most spectacular walks is to visit Mount Säntis via Wasserrauen and Schwägalp. Trains leave hourly from Appenzell to Wasserrauen. The walk from Wasserrauen to Schwägalp can take you up to six hours or slightly less, so wear comfortable shoes or hiking boots. This is a great walk and is also a good excuse for a picnic.

“Barfuss durchs Appenzellerland” is an easy, two-hour walking trip through grassy meadows from Appenzell to Gonten. You can get a map for this stroll from the Appenzell Tourist Office or take the 10-minute train ride from Appenzell to Gonten for a one-way walking trip back to Appenzell. If you do the round-trip walk, you can stop at the Gonten Hotel, which provides services for resting and washing your feet (for 2Sfr only), and you can also take in a light lunch at the hotel's restaurant (\$-\$\$) before heading back.



### *The Kapellenweg*

The Kapellenweg Hike is a five-hour trip of medium difficulty. From the Appenzell train station you cross underneath the tracks and then veer to your left, before taking a right at the next major intersection. Here begins the trail, and you see brown “Kapellenweg” signs indicating that.

From Wasserrauen, just south of Appenzell, take the cable car up to Ebernalp. Here you can walk the crest of the ridge to the Säntis. You can also venture from Wasserrauen into the narrow valley of Seealpsee, the location for the annual yodeling of Mass on August 15. Here you can rest your feet at the Berggasthaus Forelle, on the shores of the Seealpsee (\$).

☎ 71-799-1188, fax 71-799-1596 (open April-October).



### *Meglisalp*

From behind Seealpsee you can take a more demanding two-hour hike up to Meglisalp, which also has a Berggasthaus (\$) that is open from May-October. ☎ 71-799-1128. This tiny village features a lively folklore festival in late July.

## On Snow

Bobsledding is offered at Luftseilbahn in Jakobsbad-Kronberg. It is open daily from 8:30 am to 5 pm and lifts take you to the top every 30 minutes. The Kronberg is a family-oriented mountain in the high valley of Gonten. The resort also offers summer bobsledding for the whole family on a 1,000-meter-long course, which traverses the mountainside. The Berggasthaus offers an outdoor eating plateau, overlooking the area, while the hotel has clean, modest accommodations at reasonable prices (\$-\$\$).

## Tennis, Squash & Billiards

Tennis is a popular sport in Appenzell and the surrounding areas. For information in Appenzell, call ☎ 71-787-3922. If you prefer billiards, ☎ 71-787-3922 in Appenzell. If you're looking

for a place to work out, then check Appenzell's Fitness-Center, ☎ 71-787-1828.

## Sauna

If you want to heat up tired muscles after a long hiking trek, there are an abundance of saunas in Appenzell. The following offer sauna facilities: Hallenschwimmbad Appenzell at ☎ 71-787-3535, the Hotel Kaubad at ☎ 71-787-4844, the Hotel Lowen at ☎ 71-788-8787, or the Romantikhotel Santis, at ☎ 71-788-1111.

## Swimming

If it's swimming you prefer, then take a dip in one of these two indoor pools: the Hallenbad Appenzell at ☎ 71-787-3535 or the Hotel Kaubad at ☎ 71-787-4844. If you prefer an outdoor pool, then call ☎ 71-787-1474 for Appenzell's open-air pool.

## Sightseeing



There is much to see in this tiny area, with the nearby towns of Jakobsbad, Weissbad and Brülisau only minutes away.

However, the sights are more in the way of natural beauty and geographic features, as opposed to rousing nightlife. This is definitely more of a place for nature lovers.

No visit to Appenzell Inner-rhoden would be complete without a trip to Mount Säntis, the highest peak in the Alpstein massif, at 8,209 feet (2,463 m). On a clear day Säntis offers you a superb panoramic view of the mountains of eastern Switzerland, including the Grisons, the Bernese Alps, Lake Constance and Lake Zürich. To get there, drive nine miles (14



*The Ebenalp trail*

km) west from Appenzell, following the signs for Schwägalp via Urnäsch, and take the Santis Schwebbahn to the peak. The cable car costs 33Sfr round-trip and departs at 30-minute intervals for a 10-minute ride, on a year-round basis. For information, ☎ 71-365-6565; [www.saentisbahn.ch](http://www.saentisbahn.ch).

Once here, you can hike over to Ebenalp, which has hourly connections back to Appenzell. Be sure to wear proper hiking shoes or boots for this trip, which takes three to four hours. However, if you like to ski or want to spend more than a day here, you can stay at the Schwägalp-Säntis, a charming chalet that is a short walk from the Säntis ski resort (\$\$). ☎ 71-365-6600, fax 71-365-6601.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites



*Wildkirchli (Markus Bernet)*

For a fun hike, venture to Ebenalp (the top station), only four miles (six km) from Appenzell, where you can stroll at an elevation of 5,400 feet (1,620 m). Here you can visit the Wildkirchli – a chapel grotto that was home to hermits from the 17th to the 19th centuries, and where the earliest archeological signs of human life in Switzerland can be found. Drive or hike to Wasserrauen, where the road ends, and then take a cable car (which departs every 45 minutes) for a 12-minute ride to the summit of Ebenalp. From here, the walk is only 30 minutes down to the caves of Wildkirchli. The

round-trip cost is 22Sfr. For information ☎ 71-799-1212.

You can also visit the oldest Inn or Gasthaus in the region while at Wildkirchli. Berggasthaus Ascher is 150 years old and one interior wall of this inn is part of the mountain slope wall. No showers, just dorm rooms, open May through October, but

cheap at 25Sfr a night, breakfast included. ☎ 71-799-1142, fax 71-799-1856.

## Museums

The Museum Appenzell features the history and culture of this half-canton, including traditional costumes, embroidery, other handiwork and folklore. Many exhibitions on-site. Special arrangements can be made for adult or children's groups. This museum is open daily from April 1-November 1, 10 am to noon and 2-5 pm. From November 2 to March, the Appenzell North-eastern Switzerland museum is open Tuesday through Sunday, from 2-5 pm. Located at Hauptgasse 4, Appenzell (this is in the same spot as the Tourist Office). ☎ 71-88-9631, fax 71-788-9649.

## Parks & Gardens

This small excursion is well worth your time if you like to hike or just laze in the sun, and is a bit cheaper and less crowded than more traditional spots. For flower enthusiasts, check out the Alpengarten Hoher Kasten from the middle of June to the middle of August. For information, contact Edi Moser at Schutzwiesstrasse 2, in Appenzell, or ☎/fax 71-787-2011. This Alpine garden displays flora common to the Alps up to 16,000 feet (5,000 m).

## Shopping

The Appenzell region is well known for its cheeses and embroidery work. Be careful, however, as the growth in tourism has led to many fakes among the handmade souvenirs, so be sure to check that the tags don't say "made in China." There are two highly-regarded spots to find regional and authentic pieces, however. Trachtenstube, at Hauptgasse 23, specializes in traditional Appenzeller clothing and hand-embroidered handkerchiefs. When you go in the building, walk up to the second floor. This is where the locals shop for their necessities. ☎ 71-787-1606. Margreiter Landhouse Mode is just down the block at Hauptgasse 29 & 31 and carries a wide variety of embroidery products from local artisans. ☎ 71-787-3313. Klarer AG, at Hauptgasse 8 & 10, features all types of shoes, jackets,



scarves, mittens and assorted gifts. ☎ 71-787-1136 for #8 and phone 71-787-1123. The fax for both is 71-787-5126.

If you love cheese, then check out Mösler at Hauptgasse 25, which offers a great variety of Appenzeller cheeses that visitors may sample. ☎ 71-787-1317. Also, Sutter, at Marktstrasse 8, is another good source of regional and local cheeses. ☎ 71-787-1227.

## Where to Stay



Romantik Hotel Säntis was originally built in 1835 and is right in the town center. This is a favorite with tourists. The rooms are filled with local antiques and

the small restaurant provides regional fare. Ask for a room in the original part of the house for a real treat. Stefan and Catriona Heeb are fourth-generation owners of this beautiful inn, and are gra-



*Romantik Hotel Säntis*

cious hosts. (\$\$\$). Open February to December, it accepts all major credit cards. Located at Landsgemeindeplatz 3, just over 400 yards (400 m) from the train station. ☎ 71-788-1111, fax 71-788-1110, [www.romantikhoteles.com/appenzell](http://www.romantikhoteles.com/appenzell).

Hotel Appenzell. This modern hotel was built in 1983 and fea-



*Hotel Appenzell*

tures a café and restaurant on the town's main square, just across from the Hotel Säntis. Owners Margrit and Leo Sutter are on hand to greet visitors and prepare meals in the fine restaurant, which is surprisingly inexpensive. An adjacent bakery is a constant temptation as the aroma filters over into the hotel. Open every month

except November; all major credit cards. (\$\$). Am Landsghemenideplatz. ☎ 71-788-1515, fax 71-788-1551, [www.hotel-appenzell.ch](http://www.hotel-appenzell.ch).

Hotel Hecht was built over 300 years ago and has been operated by the Knechtle family for over half a century. This is the largest hotel in Appenzell and offers small and comfortable rooms, situated just across the street from the Catholic Church in the center of town. The restaurant offers local fare at reasonable prices. (\$\$). Hauptgasse 9. ☎ 71-787-1025, fax 71-787-4783, [www.hechtappenzell.com](http://www.hechtappenzell.com).

Hotel Löwen was built in 1780. This mid-priced hotel features embroidered linens, canopy beds and armoires in a cozy atmosphere. (\$\$). Hauptgasse 25. ☎ 71-787-2187, fax 71-787-2579.



*Hotel Löwen*

Freudenberg, though cheap (\$), offers one of the best views of the town anywhere in the area.

Built in 1969, it's just behind the train station on the hillside. This lovely little chalet has just seven rooms, a café and restaurant. ☎/fax 71-787-1240.

Hotel Hof, which also has a popular restaurant, offers 58 beds and 10 rooms in a dormitory-like setting for groups. Engeltasse 4. ☎ 71-787-2210, fax 71/787-5883.

## Camping



Campingplatz Jakobsbad. The family Huber has owned and operated this peaceful campground in the high valley of Gonten, at the foot of the Kronbergs, in Jakobsbad, right between Appenzell and Urnäsch, since 1970. The campsite is just five minutes from the train station (Kronbergbahn). Paragliding, mountain biking, swimming, golf and miniature golf in the summer and ski driving and bobsled-ding in the winter can be found here. This is the place for serious and novice hikers alike.

Prices per night are 4Sfr for adults, 2.5Sfr for children six-16 years, kids under six are free. Dogs are allowed at 2Sfr each.

Tents and campers are 6Sfr each, cars, 2Sfr. Large RVs, 10Sfr, small RVs, 8Sfr. Motorcycles 2Sfr. Located at 9108 Gonton. ☎ 71-794-1131 or fax 71-794-1833, [www.camping-platzjakobsbad.ch](http://www.camping-platzjakobsbad.ch).

Landgasthof & Camping Eischen. In the nearby town of Kau, just two miles (four km) west of Appenzell, you'll find a nice little inn with campsites and inexpensive dorms (\$). Dogs are allowed on leashes, and there are facilities suitable for handicapped persons. Owner Alfred Inauen-Menzi takes reservations. CH-9050 Appenzell-Kau. ☎ 71-787-5030, fax 71-787-5660.

Hundsteinhütte, founded in 1959, is one of a number of rustic huts available to backpackers, hikers or budget tourists who opt for a different kind of night in the Alps. Sponsored by the Swiss Alpine Club and the Association of Swiss Hut Warders, each has a unique name. The name literally means "Dog stone hut," and is at the far southern tip of the canton, offering 52 beds. The phone number is ☎ 71-799-1581, and it is open in May on weekends, and from June until the end of October annually. To reserve a spot, phone Maria and Thomas Reiser, Sunnehügelweg 4, CH-9535 Wilen b. Will at ☎ 71-920-0737.

## Where to Eat



Hof is a very popular hangout for locals and visitors alike, featuring cheese specialties such as käseschnitte and käsespatzli, as well as regional meats. Crowded, loud and lively, but tons of fun. All major credit cards accepted. Engulgasse 4. ☎ 71-787-2210. (\$-\$).

Traube is a nice restaurant that is best visited in the summer when you can sit out on the terrace. This is a real meat-and-potatoes joint (mainly pork), but also features fondue and Appenzeller chäshörnli – a local version of macaroni and cheese. Most items here are under 20Sfr. Closed on Mondays. Marktgassee 7. ☎ 71-787-1407. (\$-\$).

Appenzell is a brightly lit favorite that offers vegetarian and healthier dishes (rare in the area), along with traditional regional fare. Try the Appenzeller hauptgassee, a mixture of pork, prosciutto and tomato au gratin. It's delicious. All major credit cards accepted. Landsgemeindeplatz. ☎ 71-787-4211, fax 71-788-1551. (\$-\$-\$).

Hotel Hecht Restaurant, established in 1650, is well-known for its excellent cuisine and wine. Fish, such as trout and pike, are the specialties, as is the cheese fondue. Located inside the hotel at Hauptgasse 9. All major credit cards accepted and reservations are recommended. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 71-787-1025. Open daily from noon-2 pm and from 6:30-11:30 pm.

Offering a view of the main square is Restaurant Santis, on the first floor at the hotel of the same name. An ever-changing menu always includes delicious homemade noodles, and specialties include lamb and pork. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Reservations are recommended, and all major credit cards are accepted. Landsgemeindeplatz. ☎ 71-788-111, fax 71-788-1110. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily from 11 am-2 pm and from 6:30-11 pm. Closed January 15 to February 1.

Rössli is an inexpensive hangout frequented by the locals. Card games and gossip abound here. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 71-787-1256. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays from the end of February to mid-March.



*See pages 53-55 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Traditions

Old traditions die hard in Appenzell Innerrhoden. Farmers have moved their cattle from the lower pastures to the upper Alpine pastures for centuries in this tiny canton. The ascent usually begins from the end of May to the first week of June during the wee morning hours, and the descent runs from the end of August to the end of September in the late morning and afternoon. It is still treated as an occasion, with farmers, their families and helpers participating.

Farmers usually dress in traditional Appenzeller costumes – bright red vests with gold or black pants – while their cows are adorned with flowered headwear and, in many cases, huge cowbells. Young boys often drive herds of Appenzeller goats in front of them, while at the end of the procession horsedrawn wagons carry pigs and equipment. Another tradition of the Appenzeller farming community is the Herdsmen's Ball or "Alpstobete." These lively summer dances focus on folk music and yodeling. They usually begin at noon and carry on until evening. They are typically held outside of an inn or restaurant.

# Canton Graubünden



1. Kirche St. Marten; Rätisches Museum; Bündler Kunstmuseum; Cathedral of St. Maria Himmelfahrt
2. Church of St. John the Baptist; Davos Kirchner Museum; Heimatmuseum; ski area: Parsenn-Weisfluh
3. Ski areas: Gotschna-Parsenn-Schatzalp-Strela; Madrisa
4. Swiss National Park
5. Ski areas: Corviglia; Diavolezza
6. Castillo di Misoix
7. Klosterkirche



# Canton Graubünden (GR)

## At a Glance

**G**raubünden – or The Grisons, as it has come to be known in English – is the largest canton in Switzerland, the wildest, the most mountainous and the least populated. As such, for the purposes of this book, it is designated as one of Switzerland's seven regions. Covering 2,744 square miles (7,106 square km), Graubünden has 178,891 German-speaking, mostly Protestant inhabitants, who reside in 212 towns and villages in this rural canton. Over 32% of the native Swiss here work in the tourist industry, while 26% work at industrial, energy or construction jobs.

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The canton – of which 30% is used for agriculture – became part of the Swiss Federation in 1803. It lies at the far eastern edge of the country, flanked by the cantons of St. Gallen and Glarus to the northwest, and by cantons Uri and Ticino to the west and south. It is this land that inspired the book *Heidi* and is home to the Swiss Grand Canyon, as well as to such outstanding winter resorts as St. Moritz, Davos and Arosa.

Graubünden is made up of 39 districts that represent century-old traditions. In some areas you'll find the traditional Landsgemeinde every two years, where citizens gather in an open-air setting to debate and cast votes for district judges and heads of cantonal parliaments.

The canton of Graubünden first gained notoriety in 1864, when crafty St. Moritz Hotel owner Johannes Badrutt concocted a wild publicity scheme to lure British tourists. When they arrived, Badrutt told them that, if they enjoyed their stay in his region, he'd cover their travel expenses, and that they could stay as long as they liked – at his expense. He also promised to pay their travel expenses if they were not happy with his hotel and the area. The response was tremendous, and that is how St. Moritz became the elite resort it is today.



*The people of Graubünden, in contrast with their wild surroundings, are highly conservative. In fact, they were the last people in the civilized world to ban cars on their roads, not allowing them in until 1925.*

Graubünden is home to the Swiss National Park, which can be found in the region known as the Lower Engadine. This canton is a hiker's paradise with over 6,500 miles (10,500 km) of walking paths – quiet, unspoiled and beautiful – epitomizing Alpine splendor at its finest. The “wanderwegs” are simple footpaths, while the “bergwegs” are mountain paths. Wanderwegs can be attempted by anyone of any age, while the bergwegs are for intermediate to experienced hikers who use proper gear and appropriate hiking shoes. Mountain huts abound throughout this area and provide a unique overnight stay.

Graubünden has over 615 lakes and rivers – including the Inn and the Rhine – and water sports such as sailing and windsurfing are quite popular, although no motorboats are allowed. In

addition, 930 miles (1,500 km) of downhill ski slopes and 539 miles (868 km) of cross-country ski paths criss-cross the 937 peaks and 150 valleys. Piz Buin at 10,867 feet (3,133 m) is the tallest peak in the northern region, while Piz Bernina, at 13,307 feet (4,057 m), is the highest mountain in the entire canton.

There are 38 camping grounds in Graubünden. This is truly Switzerland's "great outdoors," and is the starting point for many train trips, including the Bernina Express, the Heidi Express and the Palm Express.

There are over 14 mountain passes in Graubünden, including the Julier Pass, which has been used by the general public as an open pass since the 15th century. Prior to that it had been used by the ancient Romans and others.

The whole canton shuts down during May and June when the locals take a break and enjoy their own vacations. To stay

overnight at any of the hotspots like St. Moritz or Davos, you must make a reservation well in advance.

You can also expect outrageous prices for everything from ski rental to simple meals in most of these areas. However, this is also the best region for families traveling with children, as there are many child-friendly accommodations in Graubünden that offer kids' meals, playgrounds and sitting services.



*Wiesner Viaduct, near Wiesen*



## ROMANSH

This ancient language is still taught in the Graubünden schools, even though only 25% of the people of the canton speak it. Romansh developed through influences from all of the Romance languages, but came primarily from Latin. In Graubünden, there are five dialects – due to the fact that there were isolated valleys whose inhabitants at one time never ventured far from home.

This makes the language especially difficult, even for those who can speak it. The name of Graubünden, for instance, is “Grischun” in Romansh – a reminder of the Grey League, one of the three leagues, or popular associations, that united in 1471 to resist and eventually throw off the feudal oppression of the bishops and lords who nominally ruled the area.

The Tourist Office of Canton Graubünden is in Chur at Alexanderstrasse 24, on the second floor, and is a short, two-minute walk from the train station. ☎ 81-254-2424, fax 81-254-2400.

## Chur

**C**hur is the capital of the canton of Graubünden and home to 32,000 citizens.

The highlight of the town is the 12th-century Cathedral in the Altstadt (Old Town) district, believed to be Switzerland's oldest recorded settlement – at 5,000 years old. Chur is also well known for its spas and health centers, with 26 in or around the city. You'll also find Roman ruins, lots of cobblestone streets, narrow buildings, and a few good museums.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Chur Tourist Office is at Grabenstrasse 5, CH-7000 Chur. ☎ 81-252-1818, fax 81-252-9076, [www.chur.ch](http://www.chur.ch).

Budget travelers can go to SSR Travel Services at Unteregasse, Chur, to find cheap accommodations and seasonal or weekly specials offered in the region. ☎ 81-252-9776.

## Train Station

Chur is the main hub for most of the transportation in and out of Canton Graubünden. Besides travel services, you'll also find a currency exchange (open from 7 am to 8 pm daily), a bike rental service (26Sfr daily), luggage storage (5Sfr per day) and regular storage lockers (for 2Sfr per day).

This is also the meeting point for railways like the Bernina Express, which takes you from Chur to St. Moritz and then on to Tirano, Italy via the highest railway in the Alps. With its 70° grade, it is one of the steepest railway tracks in the world without cogwheels. The trip leaves Chur at 8:48 in the morning and arrives in Italy just in time for lunch at 12:40 pm.

This is part of the Rhätische Bahn AG (The Little Red One) line, at Bahnhofstrasse 25, CH-7002 Chur. ☎ 812-88-6100, fax 812-88-6101. This line also includes the Glacier Express, which whisks you from Chur to Zermatt in half a day, and the Engadine Star, which has a day-trip from Chur to St. Moritz via the eastern region of Graubünden. You can also take the Heidi Express, which takes you from Chur to Tirano, Italy, and then buses you over to Lugano.

## Post Office

Postpost, right next to the train station. Open Monday-Friday, 7:30-noon, 1:30-6:30, Saturday from 8 am-noon. ☎ 81-256-3233, fax 81-256-3239.

## Codes

The area code for Chur is 81, the postal code is CH-7000.

## Internet Access

Rampa, at Tittwiesenstrasse 60, Chur, is open from 8 am-6:30 pm, daily, 12Sf per hour. ☎ 81-284-8928. Or you can head to The Street Café, which is a great little place to hang

out at night. Open 9 am-midnight, 15Sfr per hour. Grabenstrasse 47, Chur. ☎ 81-253-7914.

## Medical Services

A 24-hour emergency room can be found in Kantonsspital, Loestrasse 170. ☎ 81-256-6111. Otherwise, dial 117.

## Getting Around



The best way to see Chur and the surrounding areas is either on foot, by rail or cable car, or on skis. The old part of Chur is mostly pedestrian only and, if you're driving, you'll find ample parking lots and garages. Chur is also a good starting point or base from which to explore the region. Rooms and eateries are a bit cheaper here than in the more frequented tourist areas.



Via Mala

*Do as the Romans do... from Chur, drive toward the San Bernardino Pass and exit at Thusis, following the signs for the Via Mala, which in Italian means Bad Road. This is one of the oldest footpaths in Europe, used by the Romans and various traders, merchants and travelers for centuries. The trail itself is 3½ miles (six km) and runs alongside the Hinterrhein Gorge. Near the beginning of the gorge you can walk down the 300 steps (for 3Sfr) to view the old road and take in the spectacular scenery.*

## Adventures

### On Foot



If you're interested in hiking, you can take a cable car up to Parpaner Rothorn and choose from several of the walking paths that wind around the 9,397-foot (2,865-m) summit. The Lenzerheide Tourist Office can be very helpful. ☎ 81-385-1120, fax 81-385-1121.

### On Snow

Chur is not far from several ski areas. One of the least visited by foreigners are two linked resorts that are on opposite sides of the Heidsee – Lenzerheide and Valbella. Many Swiss from other regions of the country come here to learn how to ski.

Don't expect the nightlife of Davos or St. Moritz, but do expect to find easy to moderate ski trails. Ski passes are slightly cheaper here: a one-day pass is 52Sfr for adults and 42Sfr for youths and seniors, while kids are 31Sfr. To get to either location is a 40-minute bus ride from Chur, or if you're driving you can take Highway 3 over the Julier Pass from Chur in the direction of St. Moritz.

### Swimming/Tennis/Ice Skating

These can all be done at Obere Au Sportszentrum in Chur. ☎ 81-254-4288.

### Golf

From Chur, the 27-hole Domat-Ems golf course is only a 15-minute ride and is best accessed by train or bus. You must make reservations. ☎ 81-633-3212.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

Kirche St. Martin (St. Martin's Church) was destroyed by a fire in the eighth century and then rebuilt in the late 15th century. It is famous for its beautiful, stained-glass windows created by Graubünden artist Augusto Giacometti. Open daily from 8:30-11:30 am, and from 2-5 pm. Kirchgasse 12, Chur. ☎ 81-252-2292.



Chur



*Speak Romansh? If you'd like to learn Romansh, you've come to the right village. Chur is home to The Lia Rumantscha, an organization dedicated to keeping this ancient language afloat. You can visit them at Obere Plessurstrasse 47, CH-7001 Chur. ☎ 81-252-4422, fax 81-252-8426.*

## Shopping

Chur's main street is auto-free, and a wide array of shops can be found here. It is worth a few hours browsing through this area and sampling the various culinary delights of the region.

## Where to Stay



Romantik Hotel Stern is a historic, 300-year-old inn with wood-beamed ceilings and a comfortable atmosphere.

It's home to one of the best restaurants in



Romantik Hotel Stern

town, in the heart of the Old Town. (\$\$). Reichgasse 11, CH-000 Chur. ☎ 81-252-555, fax 81-252-1915.

Hotel Drei Könige (Three Kings Hotel) is an

old, comfortable and cozy hotel/bar/café just a few strides from the Tourist Office at Reichgasse 18, CH-7000 Chur. (\$\$). ☎ 81-252-1725, fax 81-252-1726.

Hotel Zunfthaus zu Rebleuten is a 500-year-old structure with elegant, comfortable rooms. It has lovely and elaborate woodworking on its façade. The restaurant isn't bad either. (\$-\$\$). Kupfergasse 1, CH-7000 Chur. ☎ 81-252-1357, fax 81-257-1358.

Hotel Franziskaner, in the Old Town, offers simple rooms at reasonable prices. Great for those traveling on a budget, hikers and students. (\$-\$\$). Kupfergasse 18, CH-7000 Chur. ☎ 81-252-1261.

The local Youth Hostel is just eight miles (12 km) south in Valbella, offering dorm rooms for 24Sfr per night. Open June-October and December-April. (\$). Via Sartons 41, Valbella. ☎ 81-384-1208, fax 81-384-4558.

## Camping

Camp Au is next to the Chur Sportszentrum and is open year-round. 7Sfr per person, per night, and 6.2Sfr per tent. ☎ 81-284-2283.

## Where to Eat



Hotel Stern offers a wide variety of regional fare in rustic surroundings and is open for both lunch and dinner. Try the excellent vegetarian menu or, for a treat, you and a companion can order from the Bündler Menu – a seven-course meal for two – at 152Sfr. A fun treat and the food is delicious. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Reichgasse 11, CH-7000 Chur. ☎ 81-252-3555, fax 81-252-1915.

Speiserestaurant Zollhaus features a lower bar room known as the Bierschwemme, where meals are inexpensive. (\$). The

HOTEL PRICE CHART	
\$	30-75Sfr (\$20-\$49)
\$\$	76-205Sfr (\$50-\$109)
\$\$\$	206-299Sfr (\$110-\$200)
\$\$\$\$	over 300Sfr (\$200)

upper level – known as the Bündnerstube – is a bit more sophisticated, offering regional dishes and Chinese food. (\$\$). Malixesstrasse 1, CH-7000 Chur.

The Giger Bar is owned by the Swiss artist HR Giger, who designed the

### DINING PRICE CHART

Prices based on a typical entrée, per person, not including beverage.

\$	15-25Sfr (\$10-\$16)
\$\$	26-45Sfr (\$17-\$29)
\$\$\$	46-70Sfr (\$30-\$47)
\$\$\$\$	over 71Sfr (\$47)



*The Giger Bar*

fiendish-looking creatures in the *Alien* movies. If you're a science fiction buff, then don't overlook this place. The atmosphere is low-key, but the design inside the bar is unique, even if the local clients are not. You'll find it behind the Migros Hobby Lobby at Comercialstrasse 23, CH-7000 Chur. (\$-\$\$).

Open 8 am-midnight, closed Sundays.

Valentino's Grill offers up tasty, cheap food and drinks. Great if you're on a budget, and great if you're not. (\$). Untergasse 5, CH-7000 Chur. Open Mon-Friday from 11:30 am-1:45 pm, 5-10 pm, Saturdays from noon to midnight. ☎ 81-252-7322.

The Migros Supermarket at Gauggelistrasse 28 offers self-service dining in a clean and comfy setting for those on a budget.

## Flims

**F**lims is another resort town that's more of a favorite among the Swiss than it is with foreigners. Situated in the heart of Graubünden, Flims is on the road between Chur and Andermatt. This well-known ski resort at 9,774 feet (2,890 m) is divided into two sectors – Flims Dorf and Flims Waldhaus.



*Flims Waldhaus (Adrian Michael)*

Flims Dorf is the larger and more urban of the two, and closer to the ski lifts. Flims Waldhaus is host to most of the hotels, but is closer to the surrounding woods and forests and a longer walk to the ski lifts. The slopes here are easy to intermediate, while more experienced skiers will opt for the difficult runs from Crap Sogn Gion to Laax Murschteg.

The Flims Tourist Office is in Flims Waldhaus. ☎ 81-920-9200, fax 81-920-9201. The Post Office is in Flims Dorf.

Known as the Alpen Arena, Flims connects with the nearby villages of Laax and Falera to make up the largest connected ski area in Graubünden. This Alpen Arena connects 137 miles (225 km) of easy to intermediate downhill ski runs, with 30 ski lifts and 25 miles (60 km) of cross-country tracks. Altitudes range up to 9,843 feet (3,608 m), and hikers in Flims will find a spider-web of 90+ miles (200 km) of trails that lead all the way to the Rhine Gorge.

Just two miles (3.2 km) away is the other third of the Alpen Arena known as Falera. There is an odd site in the middle of this tiny village known as the "26 menhirs." This is a bizarre arrangement of huge stones fixed in a geometric pattern that dates back to the time of Falera's settlement in 1500 BC.





*Flims Dorf (Adrian Michael)*

## Adventures

### On Foot



A path at the top of the Alpen Arena is known as Naturlehpfad and takes only two to three hours to complete. This circular route can be accessed via a chairlift and then a cable car from Flims to Cassonsgrat, for 32Sfr.

#### THE ALPINE GRAND CANYON

Nearly 14,000 years ago the Rhine Glacier retreated and the northern side of the mountain, where Flims is today, fell. Thousands of tons of rocks, boulders and mud crashed to the valley floor, damming the Rhine. This phenomenon eventually led to the creation of the Vorderrhein Gorge, which many in Switzerland call the "Grand Canyon." Now a heavily forested area, the landscape has parted to allow the Rhine to meander and wind its way through these valleys, creating a hiker's and rafter's paradise found nowhere else in Switzerland. One of the best hiking trails in Switzerland pierces directly through the Gorge from Trin, which is easily accessed via public transportation from Chur. For information: [www.alpinearena.com](http://www.alpinearena.com), CH-7017 Flims, ☎ 81-920-9200.

## On Snow

For downhill ski lessons in Flims, contact the Swiss Ski School at ☎ 81-927-7181; for cross country instruction, contact the Langlauf Center at ☎ 81-635-1688. The Snowboard Fahrschule of Flims teaches both snowboarding and skiing.

Only three miles (4.8 km) south of Flims is the tiny village of Laax, a popular snowboarding base that makes up one-third of the Alpine Arena. The

World Cup of Snowboarding is held in Laax each April and, in addition, you'll find a mountain-bike free-style park here. Contact the Tacho School for lessons and excursions at ☎ 81-927-7171.



*Laax in winter*

## On Water

You can experience easy to moderate river-rafting at its finest here in Flims. The Swissraft in Flims Waldhaus offers full- and half-day trips, ranging in cost from 100-145Sfr. This company also offers mountain biking excursions, hot-air balloon trips (Flims is home to the Flims Ballon Festival, held annually during the first week of October), paragliding and fishing expeditions. Contact Swissraft in Flims Waldhaus. ☎ 81-911-5250, fax 81-911-3090.

## Where to Stay



Park Hotels Waldhaus is great for families and those with kids. It is also a health and spa center surrounded by wooded grounds. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). ☎ 81-928-4848, fax 81-928-4858, [www.parkhotels-waldhaus.ch](http://www.parkhotels-waldhaus.ch).



*Park Hotels Waldhaus*

Hotel Vorab is convenient and modern, just across from the Dorf Post Office. (\$\$\$). It also has two restaurants, serving vegetarian and Italian cuisine. ☎ 81-911-1861, fax 81-911-4229.

Backpacker Hotel Gutveina is a cheap (\$) place for hikers to bunk down. Located on Via Gutveina in Waldhaus. ☎/fax 81-911-2903.

## Camping



Camping in Flims can be found in Prau, as you head toward Laax, which is only five minutes from the Flim Tourist Office. It is open year-round. ☎ 81-911-1575.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant LeBarga is a high-class gourmet French restaurant. Great ambiance, with a piano bar and log fireplace. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily; reservations are suggested. CH-7018 Flims Waldhaus. ☎ 81-928-2828.

Hotel Laaxerhof specializes in vegetarian and international dishes. Open daily. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-7032 Laax Murschetg. ☎ 81-920-8200.

Muhbarak is the hot spot for great fondue. Open daily. (\$-\$\$). CH-7032 Laax Murschetg. ☎ 81-927-9941.

Pizzeria Veneziana serves homemade pizza and pastas at reasonable prices. Closed Wednesday. (\$-\$\$). CH-7017 Flims Dorf. ☎ 81-911-0103.

The Crap Bar is a local hangout for snowboarders, and is right next to the mountain railway and the trendy Granite Bar. (\$-\$\$). Open daily. CH-7032 Laax-Murschetg. ☎ 81-927-9945.

WWW.Keller is an Internet bar/restaurant and another hot spot for "Alpine surfers." Open daily. CH-7032 Laax-Murschetg. ☎ 81-927-9945.

Grischuna is a good little spot for food, right between Flims Dorf and Flims Waldhaus. Reasonably priced and hearty dishes – check out the meat fondues. Open daily. (\$-\$\$). CH-7018 Flims Waldhaus. ☎ 81-911-1139.

**GOOD  
VALUE**



*During the high season on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for 42Sfr you'll get a lift ticket, toboggan, fondue or raclette and an aperitif at Foppa, an old wooden chalet with a lovely sun terrace, where you can sit and enjoy your goodies after a fun toboggan run. Try the tobogganing at night when the trail is lit up – it is great fun! Contact the Flims Tourist Office for reservations. ☎ 81-920-9200, fax 81-920-9201.*



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Arosa

**A**rosa is considered to be trendy and yet traditional, and has been a popular Alpine health resort village since 1883, after Dr. Otto Herwig-Hold decided to set up a tuberculosis sanitarium there. Located at the end of the Upper Schanfigg Basin, it is sheltered from the wind and is one of the sunniest places in Switzerland, with the sun shining an average of eight to 12 hours daily. Here you'll find over 25 miles (40 km) of winter hiking trails and six varying sled runs, as well as 15 ski lifts. You can even sled-ride at night, under a full moon, if you like. So that hikers and skiers don't interfere with one another, the village has placed the ski slopes on one side of the valley and the hiking trails on the other. Arosa itself is centered around the long main street of Poststrasse, which is lined with shops and hotels. The village is basically car-free, but the village bus offers free services daily from all major points, including ski lifts, cable cars and the train station.



Arosa

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Arosa Tourist Office is at Poststrasse, CH-7050 Arosa. ☎ 81-378-7020, fax 81-378-7021. They can provide you with great free hiking maps for both winter and summer months, and also have sleds available for rent; they can help to arrange ski lessons as well. Also, they will help you with hotel accommodations; it's wise to make reservations ahead of time if you plan to plant your skis here.

### Train Station

The Arosa train station has a currency exchange (open Monday-Saturday, 6 am-9 pm, Sunday 6:30 am-9 pm), lockers for just 2Sfr, and bike rental for 21-27Sfr per day.



*For a nice day-trip (if you're not a skier), visit Arosa via train from Chur. The train – with spectacular scenery along the way – leaves every hour and costs 12Sfr.*

### Post Office

Arosa's Post Office is in the village center, just to the right of the train station, and, besides mail services, also offers Internet access.

## Codes

Arosa's postal code is CH-7050, and the area code is 81.

## Adventures

### On Foot

#### Hiking



Hiking in Arosa is some of the best in Switzerland. The Arosa Tourist Office can arrange a guide for you from June through October for only 12Sfr for a seven- to nine-hour hike at various levels of experience. One easy and popular hike is called the "squirrel path" or Eichhörnlweg; it takes you from Arosa to the nearby quiet suburb of Maran via a gently sloping path through the connecting pastures between the two villages.

#### HIKING THE ALTEINBACH TRAIL

If you want a fun trip made for the average hiker, then this one is for you. Be sure to bring a backpack with water, rain gear and lots of munchies or, better yet, have your significant other carry a well-stocked picnic basket. This trip is about five miles long (eight km) and can take several hours (or longer, with a picnic). At the entrance to the town of Arosa, follow the signs to the water treatment plant or simply ask how to find it. You'll follow the service road and it will eventually expand into a fairly wide walking path. Soon you'll be walking parallel and south to the Wälschtobelbach River (on your left-hand side). Follow the path and you'll then come to a spot where you can either go left or right. You want to walk to the left over the Altein River via a wooden bridge and then, minutes later, you cross the river again on the same trail. Stay on this path and the Altein Waterfall will soon be in sight – a spectacular one indeed. From here you continue your jaunt upward, eventually arriving at an open field. Continue on and you cross the Altein River once more and eventually reach the Alteinsee, a small lake, which is the perfect spot for your picnic. Here, there are great views of the Valbellahorn at 7,654 feet (2,764 m). It's another 1½ miles (2.4 km) from here to the Alteiner Furggli Pass at 7,400 feet (2,500 m).

## Tennis/Squash/Fitness

These are available year-round. The Sunstar Park Hotel has one tennis and one squash court. The Robinson Club has two indoor tennis courts and two indoor squash courts, while the Sporthotel Valsana has two indoor tennis courts. You can get information from the Arosa Tourist Office on swimming pools, saunas and whirlpools to fit your needs.

## On the Water

Sunbathing is popular in the summer months, and tan seekers will find the Untersee's free public beach to their liking. Here you can also rent a pedal boat for only 12Sfr per hour. It's a fun way to relax, catch some rays, and get a tiny bit of exercise.

## On Horseback

The Fuhrhaltereier stables offer horseback riding for 30Sfr per hour on local trails. You must make a reservation at least one day in advance. The stables are just outside the village near the campground. Phone the Messner family at ☎ 81-377-4196.

## In the Air

### *Ballooning*

This is great here in the wintertime as well as in the summer. Contact balloon pilot Walter Vollenweider at ☎ 81-391-3714 for information regarding trips.

### *Hangliding*

This sport is done all year as well, but only in good weather. Prices range from 180-200Sfr. You take off from the Weisshorn lift-off site and land in either Obersee or Molinis. Contact the Gliding-Taxi Arosa Jogi, Tandempilot at ☎ 70-499-8813.

## On Snow & Ice

### *Downhill Skiing*

In Arosa this covers the three peaks of the Hörnli, the Weisshorn and the Brüggerhorn – all above the tree line – and features easy and intermediate runs over mostly hilly terrain.



*Monte Cervino & Weisshorn (Franco56)*

Ski passes abound in Arosa – here you can buy morning, afternoon, day, multi-day and weekly passes at prices ranging from 50 to 400Sfr for adults, while children under 15 ski for half-price and seniors at a 15% discount. The eastern edge of Arosa tends to be the most popular for skiers, who take a cable car up to the Weisshorn at 8,704 feet (2,611 m), where they enjoy one of the most spectacular views in all of Switzerland.

There are over 40 miles (64 km) of ski runs, and the Swiss Ski School is based here, with 100 instructors for all levels of experience. Contact them at ☎ 81-377-1150 or call the Grison Association of Private Ski Instructors Arosa at ☎ 81-377-1556 for private lessons.

### *Cross-Country Skiing*

This is done on Maran, Pratschalp/Ochsenalp, in the Isel and on the Obersee, where there are 15½ miles (25 km) of cross-country runs. It is now mandatory for all visitors to purchase a Cross-Country Ski Pass, in order to help support and maintain the long-distance ski runs found here; it includes free use of all long distance runs in Arosa and, in some cases, free bus rides in the area. Runs vary in difficulty and from one to five miles in length. Passes range in price from 5 to 90Sfr and can be purchased at any ski school or equipment store, or at the Tourist Office and on the Isla-Bus. The Geeser Cross-Country



Ski School can help to advise you and provide rental equipment. ☎ 81-377-2215.

### *Sledding*

Most of the sled runs are free in Arosa and the majority are three miles (4.8 km) long. Try the Tschuggenhütte for starters. To reach the starting point you must take a chairlift from Innerarosa-Tschuggen or with the Arosa-Weisshorn cable car to the Mittelstation. Next, you can try the Prättschli-Scheiterböden-Obersee. Although this run is also used by walkers and horse-drawn sleighs, it is worth trying, especially because it is floodlit throughout the season. Rent sleds from Stivetta Sled Rental at CH-7050 Arosa, ☎ 81-377-2181. You can pick up the train in Arosa to get to the tops of these runs; call the Arosa Bergbahnen AG at ☎ 81-378-8484.

### *Snowshoe Hiking*

Hunters and travelers traversed this land for centuries on snowshoes. Hiking trips are easy to organize and moonlight hikes have become very popular in the last few years. This is an easy sport to get into, because there is really nothing you need to know other than how to strap on your snowshoes! Weekly guided hikes are available: The Easy Trapper is held every Monday from 1:45 to 3:45 pm and is a light walk, requiring little exertion.

The Prättsch Trail hike takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:45 to 4:45 and is a bit more taxing, but anyone in decent shape should be able to handle this walk. For information, contact Geeser Snowshoe & Cross-Country Center at ☎ 81-377-2215.

### *Curling*

This is one of Arosa's traditional winter sports. If you'd like to try it, there are weekly introductory courses on the open-air ice-rink. For information, ☎ 81-377-1745. You can also try Bavarian curling, which is played on a natural ice-rink in Innerarosa until March. ☎ 81-377-2930.

### *Ice Skating & Hockey*

You can do either one from the middle of December until the middle of April at the ice-rink in Obersee. Natural rinks are also

available in Innerarose and at Hof Maran. ☎ 81-377-1745 for information.

### *Horse Racing*

If you like watching horse racing in the snow, then check out Arosa's local "snow track." This half-mile oval on the frozen Obersee is host to flat racing (thoroughbreds), harness racing (Standardbreds) and steeplechase (racing over fences), as well as Skikjoring – which was first done here in 1917. Harness racing was introduced in 1922, and the races are usually held in either January or February. Pferdesport-Verein Arosa (Arosa Horse Sport Association), CH-7050 Arosa. Contact president Peter Luscher at ☎ 81-377-3141, fax 81-377-2310, or vice-president Marth Hebeisen at ☎ 81-377-1539, for information.

## Where to Stay

### Hotels



Arosa Kulm Hotel & Alpine Spa, a five-star luxury hotel, offers the best of everything for winter and summer sports enthusiasts, as well as a beauty and

health spa. One of the oldest (1882) and highest-altitude hotels in Arosa, it is situated at the edge of the village, surrounded by a sunlit southern slope. Activities for families with children abound – such as the Lollipop Children's Holiday Program. There are six great restaurants and three bars. Babysitting services, sauna, massage as well. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Free outside parking and a parking garage (15Sfr daily). Innere Poststrasse, CH-7050 Arosa. ☎ 81-378-8888, fax 81-378-8889.



*Spa at the Arosa Kulm Hotel*



*Pool at the Tschuggen Grand*

Tschuggen Grand Hotel is one of the most prestigious hotels in Switzerland. Spacious modern rooms accommodate many of the world's rich and famous, with prices to match their pocketbooks. Four restaurants, bars, kindergarten, fitness room. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed April 3-December 2. Parking avail-

able (30Sfr daily). CH-7050 Arosa. ☎ 81-378-9999, fax 81-378-9990, [www.tschuggen.ch](http://www.tschuggen.ch).

Arosa Bergbahnen is the local ski lift company. They operate two inns for skiers – the Haus Florentium and Haus Bellaval – and a ski-lift ticket is included when you rent a room from them. Prices per night (including the two-day pass) start at 108Sfr for children 12 and under; 159Sfr for teens; and 194Sfr for adults. Breakfast is included and dinner is cheap (\$). Backpackers Mountain Lodge is the larger of the two inns and is a former convent with 150 beds, lounges and a disco. Rooms are offered for two, four, six and larger groups. Ski passes range from 150 to 480Sfr. During July and August, no ski packages are available and room prices drop to 30-39Sfr per night. This hotel is a bit off the beaten trail: to get here, walk down the cobblestone road from the tourist office and at the top of the road turn right, then left at the gravel path, then right again at the next path nearby. It sounds complicated but it's hard to miss, as a great number of skiers are heading either to or from this inn.

Backpackers Downtown is small and simple, with just basic rooms, but is above the train station, in the center of the village, for convenience. Rooms are offered for two to 12 persons. Prices range from 139 to 423Sfr; during the summer they fall to 40-53Sfr per night and include a day lift pass for two hiking trails. (\$-\$\$\$\$). ☎ 81-378-8423, fax 81-378-8443.

Waldhotel-National Hotel is off the beaten path, tranquil and secluded. The Waldhotel was originally a sanitorium, then a military hospital, and finally a hotel. Prices are determined by



*Waldhotel-National*

the view each room provides – with those facing south offering a view of Arosa and those facing north a view of the forest. Restaurant, swimming pool, fitness room, massage. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Closed April 20-June 26, and from September 14-December 5.

Hotel Alpina looks like a traditional Swiss mountain chalet, complete with wood-carved hand railings, Swiss flags, and lots of wood beams. Comfy chairs, Alpine clocks and other furniture that you'd find in a Swiss country house decorate the rooms. Moderately priced (\$\$-\$\$\$), with a relaxed atmosphere. Restaurant and bar. Closed April to mid-June, and from November to December 6. CH-7050 Arosa. ☎ 81-377-1658, fax 81-377-3752.



*Hotel Alpina*

## Pensions, Hostels, Huts & Camping

Pension Suveran is a great bargain in the typical style of a Swiss chalet – wooden, homey and quaint. No frills, but comfy and relaxing. Breakfast is included and dinner is a mere 15Sfr. Open year-round except for November. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 81-377-1969, fax 81-377-1975.

Naturfreundehaus Medergen is a Swiss mountain hut that is open from June-October, and from December-April. Reservations are required. Mattresses are provided, but bring a sleeping bag anyway. This hut is tricky to find, but the Arosa Tourist Office can help direct you. (\$). ☎ 81-377-5215.

The Arosa Youth Hostel has 160 beds and is open January 1-April 21, June 16-October 20, and from December 14-31. (\$). Parking available. Hubelstrasse, CH-7050 Arosa. ☎ 81-377-1397, fax 81-377-1621.

Camping Arosa is open year-round. It's in a small valley and offers basic services such as showers. Adults 8Sfr, children ages 6-12 5Sfr, tents 5Sfr. ☎ 81-377-1745, fax 81-377-3005.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Zum Wohl Sein is one of the most famous restaurants in Arosa and literally means "to your health." It has room for only 20 diners at a time, and owner/chef Beat Carduff prepares a seven-course meal that changes every night (Wednesday-Saturday). The décor is lovely, the wine list exhaustive, and the food outstanding. You've got to come here at least once in your lifetime. Reservations required. (\$\$\$\$). Closed April 15-December 5. Located in Hotel Anita, Hohepromenade, CH-7050 Arosa. ☎ 81-377-1199, fax 81-377-3618.

The Weissshorn Gipfel provides light, exquisite fare cooked by owners Agi and Hans Tobler at the top of the Weissshorn. A beautiful outdoor seating terrace gives the visitor a great view of the area. Open November 30-April 22. ☎ 81-378-8402.

The Brüggerstuba is between the base and the top terminal of the cable railway to the Weissshorn. Delicious pastas and spirits by Urs Amstad and Christina Tschudi. Open November 30-April 22. ☎ 81-378-84-25.

Tschuggernhütte is a cozy place with a huge outdoor terrace, where many families with children hang out. The restaurant includes a "cow's bar" and "Mountain Mac" café for smaller appetites. Run by Alain Balbinot and his team. Open from November 30-April 22. ☎ 81-378-8445.

Orelli's is a family restaurant with a great panoramic view of the area, serving up vegetarian and hearty regional fare. (\$). Open daily, 7:30 am-9 pm. Closed May and November. Poststrasse. ☎ 81-377-1208.

Café Kaiser is a great pasta and dessert joint just south of Orelli's on Poststrasse. (\$). ☎ 81-377-3454.

## Davos

**D**avos is often referred to as the Global Village. Europe's highest-altitude city, it has been a location well-known throughout history.

The village originally obtained its freedom from Austria in 1649, then became famous as a place where people came for the treatment of tuberculosis in the 1860s. Robert Louis Stevenson completed his book *Treasure Island* here, and Thomas



*Davos in summer*

Mann used the Zaubenberg as the setting for his novel *The Magic Mountain*. Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, skied and stayed in Davos as well. It has been one of Switzerland's hot spots for skiing for over a century. Davos is also well-known for ice skating, hosting the first world figure-skating championships in 1899, as well as European speed skating competitions.

There are two sectors in Davos – Davos-Platz and Davos-Dorf – which are connected by the Promenade Boulevard. Containing hotels, shops, restaurants and cafés, it stretches for 2½ miles (four km). Originally these were two separate villages, but during the 1970s they were connected and now together form one of the largest ski resort areas in Switzerland. The location of Davos within a high valley protects it from strong winds, which makes it ideal for summer and winter sports alike.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Davos Tourist Office is at Promenade 67, CH-7270 Davos-Platz. There is also another smaller Tourist Office in Davos-Dorf, across from the train station. Both are open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturdays from 8 am-5 pm. ☎ 81-415-2121, fax 81-415-2100.

### Train Station

The Davos train station has a currency exchange facility and luggage storage. Davos-Platz station is open Monday-Saturday from 4:50 am-9 pm, Sunday from 5:50 am-9 pm. Davos-Dorf station is open daily from 6:50 am-8 pm, and you can rent bikes here for 28Sfr daily.

### Post Office

The main Post Office is in Davos-Platz at Promenade 43, open Monday-Friday from 7:45 am-6 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon.

### Codes

Davos-Platz postal code is CH-7270, Davos-Dorf's postal code is CH-7260, and the area code (in most cases) is 81.

### Internet Access

Get connected at Expert Roro in Davos-Dorf for 12Sfr per hour. Open Monday 2-6 pm, Tuesday-Friday from 8:30 am-noon, 2-6:30 pm and Saturday from 8:30 am-noon and 2-5 pm. Promenade 123. ☎ 81-420-1111.

### Medical Services

Dial 111 for emergencies.

## Getting Around



Throughout Davos you'll see yellow and white buses traveling about, making stops at all the major hotels and eateries between Davos-Dorf and Davos-Platz. Buses stop every 10 minutes in the winter time from 7 am-11:20 pm; in summer they run every 20 minutes. The fare is 5Sfr.

There are lots of lifts, cable cars and gondolas to take you to various ski areas as well. If you're driving, you'll find parking lots everywhere near Promenade, costing 1-2Sfr per hour. You can also park for free at the Kongresszentrum (Meeting Center).

## Adventures

### On Foot



Over 280 miles (450 km) of paths and trails surround Davos, allowing you to explore woods, mountains, streams, and outright gorgeous scenery. Each mountain maintains an open ski lift during the summer, so you can whisk away to a desirable starting point.



*The Davos Tourist Office can provide you with free maps and sites to visit during your hikes.*

#### HIKING WITHOUT LUGGAGE

Davos, along with Arosa and Lenzerheide-Valbella, have combined to create a "Hiking without Luggage" tour – allowing hikers to wander from point to point without having to drag their luggage along. Four- and seven-day programs allow hikers to have their luggage taken to their next destination, with Davos being the most popular home base. Prices range from 270 to 525Sfr, and children ages 12-16 get a 30% discount, while those aged six-12 get a 50% discount. Kids under six are free. Hiking maps, breakfast, luggage transfers, and railway transfers are all included in the packages. For beginners, we suggest taking the route from Arosa to Davos, via Sapün. If you're an experienced hiker, you could opt for the more difficult route via Tritt. Both paths eventually lead to the Strela Pass, where you can either keep walking to Davos or take the railway down. Contact the Davos Tourist Office at ☎ 81-415-2121 for information.



The Dürnboden-Fuorclas da Grialetsch Pass is also a popular hike for tourists and the Swiss often come here with their families as well. At just five miles (eight km), it is a fairly easy hike and can take five hours or more, depending on how much you like to stop and take in the scenery, which at times is breathtaking. Buses leave four times a day for the nine-mile ride from Davos to the popular base parking lot/restaurant at Dürnboden. This trail is easy to follow and actually gets easier the higher you climb. You pass the Schwarhorn and the Radüner Rothorn early on in your jaunt before the trail veers to the left. Next, you come to the Furkasee, a small lake before the Fuorcla da Grialetsch Pass at 8,321 feet (2,537 m). Here you'll also find the Grialetsch Hütte and see the Vadret da Grialetsch glacier, on your right in the distance. The trail then splits into three sub-trails, which will eventually lead to a road where you can easily hail a bus back to Davos. However, it is much easier to just retrace your steps.

Another popular five-mile hike takes you from Davos-Platz to Monstein. From Davos-Platz, take bus #8 to the Sertig-Dörfli stop and follow the signs to the Fenezfurgga. This hike will also lead you past a waterfall and into a valley dividing the Hoch Duncan and the Alpihorn, before reaching Monstein. Here you can take a bus back to Davos or simply follow the trail back.

The Panoramaweg is a very easy level trail for almost any



*The Panoramaweg*

hiker and provides great views of the southern Alps. To begin, you can take the Panoramaweg stop on the Parsenbahn, which departs from near the Davos-Dorf station. The Parsenbahn is the highest funicular railway (8,731 feet, 2,662 m) in Switzerland. This

walk will take about two hours.

The Davos Tennis & Squash Center has both indoor and outdoor courts and is open daily from 8 am-10 pm. Court rental is 26Sfr. In Davos-Platz at Clavadelerstrasse. ☎ 81-413-3131.

Golf Club Davos provides golfing at its finest, with full rental options. Green fees with a golf cart are 80-100Sfr, and clubs can be rented for 30Sfr. ☎ 81-416-5634.

## On Water

### *Swimming*

This is available in both the summer and winter at Hawlbäd. Sauna facilities are also available and prices range from 6.5-13Sfr. Promenade. ☎ 81-413-6463.

## On Snow & Ice

### *Skiing*

Skiing is the main sport in Davos, which includes five large ski areas. Parsenn-Weissflüh is considered one of the best ski areas in Europe. The Parsennbahn railway will take you from Davos-Dorf to the Weissflühjoch at 8,740 feet (2,622 m), which is the entrance to the main ski area.



*Parsenn*

Here you'll find all types of slopes and runs for any level of skier. You can take a cable car up to Weissflühgipfel at 9,260 feet (2,778 m), where more advanced skiers will try the northern Kublis run. Parsenn has long runs and scary vertical drops for intermediate and advanced skiers, while the Jacobshorn is more for beginners and for those who enjoy snowboarding.

Ski passes are available with many options. The Davos/Klosters R.E.G.A. Ski Pass includes access to five different

ski regions within both Davos and Klosters. They share 200 miles (322 km) of snow and ski runs, with varied types of cable cars, railways, ski lifts and chairs, and gondolas.

Prices range from 125Sfr for a two-day pass to 320Sfr for a seven-day pass. Children from six to 16 usually get a 35-40% reduced rate, while kids under five ride for free. Cross-country skiers will find 47 miles (76 km) of trails throughout Davos, including a night-lit trail.

The Swiss Ski School of Davos offers lessons for individuals and groups starting at 35Sfr. Promenade 157. ☎ 81-416-2454.

### *Skating*

Ice skating takes place in Davos-Platz, on the largest natural ice rink in Europe, the Natureisbahn. The Davos Tourist Office manages the ice rink, which is usually open from December to February. There is also a huge man-made ice rink, and a few other smaller rinks throughout Davos-Platz. These are generally open daily from 10 am-4 pm, with admission prices of 5-10Sfr.

The Davos Curling Club provides two hours of instruction for 40Sfr. Promenade 46, Davos-Platz. ☎ 79-610-2454.

### *In the Air*



The Delta Flying School, run by Hans Guler, offers instruction in hangliding for 100-150Sfr. CH-7270 Davos-Platz. ☎ 81-413-6043 or 79-357-2050, [www.davos-sport.ch](http://www.davos-sport.ch).

### *Shopping*

In Davos, shopping revolves around sports clothing and equipment, rather than Swiss souvenirs, although there are plenty of those to be found as well. All you have to do is stroll up and down the Promenade, and you'll find everything from chocolate to skis to oil paintings and watches. Ettinger Sport at Promenade 1053 is one of Davos-Dorf's best sports

shop, ☎ 81-410-1212, while Angerer Sport on Promenade 49 in Davos-Platz is also good. ☎ 81-413-6672.

## Where to Stay



Steigenberger Belvédère was built in 1875 and is one of the most famous resort hotels in the world. The inside is breathtakingly beautiful, with wood-carvings, fireplaces, beamed ceilings and gorgeous furniture. Closed from April 10-August 27 and from October 15-November 24. There are two restaurants, bar, sauna, swimming pool, tennis courts, babysitting services. Breakfast is included. (\$\$\$\$). Promenade 89, CH-7270 Davos-Platz.

☎ 800-223-5652 in the USA & Canada,

☎ 81-415-6000, fax 81-415-6001, [www.steigenberger.ch](http://www.steigenberger.ch).

Flüela Hotel has been operated by the Gredig family for over 100 years, and is elegant, stately and very comfortable. It's quiet and a great place for relaxation, with two restaurants, bar, sauna, Turkish bath and babysitting services. Closed April and May and October 7-November 24. (\$\$\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 5, CH-7260 Davos-Dorf. ☎ 81-410-1717, 81-410-1718, [www.fluela.ch](http://www.fluela.ch).



*Steigenberger Belvédère*



*Hotel Europe*

adorned with hunting trophies inside, and has spectacular

Hotel Europe is right in the center of Davos-Platz, near the tourist office, the ice rink, a golf course and the Schatzalp-Strela funicular. Built in 1868, it is one of the oldest hotels in Davos,

views from the south-facing balconies. Three restaurants, three bars, tennis courts, swimming pool, fitness room, sauna, babysitting services. Breakfast included. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Promenade 63, CH-7270 Davos-Platz. ☎ 81-413-5921, 81-413-1393.

Parsenn Sporthotel sits across the street from the Parsennbahn, near several ski lifts. Built in 1907, and renovated since then, it is the epitome of a Graubünden chalet on the exterior. Comfortable and cozy rooms with an in-house restaurant and bar. Closed Easter to early December. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Promenade 152, CH-7260 Davos-Dorf. ☎ 81-416-3232, fax 81-416-3867.

Zur Alte Post is pretty in pink and once served as the town's post office in the late 1600s. All of the 20 rooms are small but lovely and cozy, especially those that overlook the mountains. The hotel bar is a hangout favored by the locals, and the oldest of the inn's three antique dining rooms – Tavaasar Schtuba, featuring 16th-century woodwork – is open only during the winter months. Closed May, June, November. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Berlistutz 4, CH-7270 Davos-Platz. ☎ 81-413-5402, fax 81-413-5403.

Jacobshorn Ski Mountain Lodges. Three lodges catering to the young on this mountain offer rooms with ski lift packages (good only for this mountain). (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open November-May. Breakfast included. Prices for ski packages range from 110Sfr for a one-day, two-night stay to 600Sfr for a six-night, seven-day package. ☎ 81-414-9020, fax 81-414-9102 for reservations at all three lodges; [www.fun-mountain.ch](http://www.fun-mountain.ch).

- Bolgenschanze is for those who want to ski all day and party all night. Located over a bar, with breakfast and dinner included. You must be at least 18 to stay here. Skistrasse 1.
- Guest House Bolgenhof is for those who want to relax, not party, after a day on the slopes. Breakfast and dinner included. Above the Davos-Platz train station on Brämabüelstrasse.
- Snowboarder's Palace looks like a ski-lodge should look, and is right above the Davos-Platz Tourist Office on Oberestrasse 45-47.

## GREAT VALUE

GOOD  
VALUE

Just three miles (4.8 km) from Davos center is Davos-Laret, on the highway between Davos and Klosters. Here you'll find a terrific little hotel and restaurant with great rates and free transportation service to the Davos ski lifts in wintertime. Hübli's Landhaus provides 20 rooms, 14 with bathrooms, some of which are connected to the excellent restaurant via a tunnel. The restaurant has one of the finest reputations in Switzerland. It was originally built over 100 years ago as a post office relay station.



*Hübli's Landhaus*

Owners Felix and Anne-Marie Hübli offer diners regional fare, which varies in accordance with the season. Very cozy, unique and relatively inexpensive. (\$-\$\$\$). Reservations for rooms or dinner strongly recommended. To get there, drive two miles (3.2 km) north on Route 28, toward Klosters. Located on Kantonsstrasse, CH-7265 Davos-Laret. ☎ 81-417-1010, fax 81-417-1011.

The Davos Youth Hostel Albula has 146 beds and is open year-round. Horlaubenstrasse 27, CH-7270, Davos Dorf. (\$-\$\$. ☎ 81-360-1441, fax 81-360-1438, [www.youthhostel.ch/davos](http://www.youthhostel.ch/davos)).

## Camping



There are two nice campgrounds in the Davos area. TCS Camping and Caravan Färich is near and divided by the Flüelabach creek in the midst of a thick

forest of conifers. It offers 100 campsites, with all the modern conveniences, including washers and dryers, a kiosk and a restaurant. Open May-September and on request. Cost is 25-35Sfr per person. Sandstrasse 1, CH-7260 Davos Dorf. ☎ 81-416-1043, fax 81-420-1044.

Caravan and Mobilhome Rinerlodge has 30 sites for 26-32Sfr per person and is near the Rinerhorn Valley train station. There is also a bed and breakfast. Open June-October, and December-April. Operated by Ruedi Buhlmann. Bergbahnen Rinerhorn AG, CH-7277 Davos Glaris. ☎ 81-401-1252, fax 81-401-1314, [www.rinerhorn.ch](http://www.rinerhorn.ch).

## Where to Eat



Hübli's Landhaus (see previous page).

Dining at Bünderstübli is kind of like sitting down for lunch at a Swiss farmer's home. Large portions of hearty food in a rustic setting allow a visitor to feel right at home. Local fare is the specialty, including lots of different potato dishes. Just a really good casual place to dine. You can order off the menu or request a four-course fixed dinner for 85Sfr. Reservations required. (\$-\$\$\$). Open Tuesday-Sunday from 11:30 am-2 pm, 5-11 pm. Closed May, June and November. Dischmastrasse 8, Davos-Dorf. ☎ 81-416-3393.



*The Vinikus*

The Vinikus is a very formal restaurant run by the cook David and wife/host Jutte Kempf. The food is excellent, and while dining you are able to view the main street of Davos and the mountains surrounding it. Specialties include homemade pastas, vegetarian dishes and rösti, as well as traditional Swiss meat dishes containing venison, steak, and veal. A very clean and proper atmosphere. Reservations required (\$-\$\$\$\$). Open

Wednesday-Sunday from 11 am-2 pm and from 6-11 pm.

Closed May, June. Promenade 119, Davos-Platz. ☎ 81-416-5979.

Bistro Gentiana et Café des Artistes is known for its 10 different types of fondue and for an unusual assortment of escargot dishes. Daily specials abound, including rich desserts and traditional Swiss fare such as dried beef. Reservations required (\$-\$\$\$). Open daily 11 am-11 pm. Closed Wednesday in the summer. Promenade 53, Davos-Platz. ☎ 81-413-4921.



*The Vinikus*

At the Röstizzeria the décor is Japanese, but the food is definitely Swiss, specializing in Rösti and pizzas. (\$-\$\$). Open daily 6-11 pm. Promenade 128 in Davos-Dorf. ☎ 81-416-3323. Café Carlos serves hamburgers, sandwiches and American dishes at inexpensive prices. (\$). Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-3 am. Promenade 58, Davos-Platz. ☎ 81-413-1722.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Klosters

**F**ounded in 1222, this Prattigau Valley village offers a quiet respite to Davos and St. Moritz. Where those two towns are sophisticated and cosmopolitan, Klosters is rural and down-to-earth.

Only eight miles (13 km) north of Davos, Klosters has retained its Swiss charm by keeping its chalets intact. You'll see very few of the highrise hotels here that have become commonplace in St. Moritz and Davos.

The late Princess Diana visited here often, as do many Hollywood celebrities. Many of the streets aren't well-marked, but it is fairly easy to get around on foot.



## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Klosters Tourist Board is in the center of town. It's open Monday-Saturday from 8:30 am-6 pm and on Sundays from 9:30-6:30 pm. Alte Bahnhofstrasse 6, CH-7250 Klosters, ☎ 81-410-2020, fax 81-410-2010, [www.klosters.ch](http://www.klosters.ch). They can provide you with maps, current weather conditions, and brochures on all of the snowboarding, skiing, and hiking areas nearby, and they can also give you a list of hotels.



*Klosters*

### Train Station

There are two stations in Klosters – in Klosters-Platz, where most of the city action takes place, and in Klosters-Dorf, which is also home to the ski school and to a small neighborhood of locals, many of whom work at one of the resorts in the area. Klosters-Platz station has a currency exchange (open 6 am-8:30 pm daily), lockers (2Sfr), luggage storage (5Sfr daily) and scooter rental (19Sfr daily). For bike rentals, go to Andrist Sport at Gotschnastrasse. They rent bikes for 38Sfr daily, or

130Sfr per week. Open Monday-Friday, 8 am-noon, 2-6:30 pm, Saturdays 2-4 pm.

## Post Office

Klosters-Platz Post Office is at Bahnhofstrasse, CH-7250 Klosters. Open Monday-Friday, from 7:30 am-noon, 1:45-6:15 pm, Saturday from 8:30-noon. ☎ 81-422-1410, fax 81-422-3880. Klosters-Dorf Post Office is at Landstrasse, CH-7250 Klosters. Open Monday-Friday, 8 am-11 am, and 3-6 pm, Saturday from 8:30-11 am. ☎ 81-422-1430, fax 81-422-4095. Both are closed Sundays.

## Codes

The postal code for Klosters-Platz is CH-7250, and 7252 for Klosters-Dorf. The area code for both is 81.

## Internet Access

Internet services can be had at Silyretta Parkhotel, ☎ 81-423-3435, or at Wunderlin Sport, ☎ 81-422-1770.

## Getting Around



The bus service in Klosters is excellent. It runs from the train station at Klosters-Dorf, to the ski lifts, and back again through town. Klosters is 27 miles (43 km) east of Chur and, if you're driving, take Highway #3 to Landquart, then head south on Route 28.

## Adventures

### On Foot

#### *Winter Hiking Treks*



Klosters offers 16 miles (26 km) of winter walking trails for visitors. Here are some of the most popular: Klosters-Monbiel-Alp Garfiun is an easy, 4.2-mile walk (7.2 km) that starts at the Sports Center parking lot. Follow the footpath along the Landquart River to the village of Monbiel. You can either retrace your steps, catch a bus back to Klosters, or you can continue on for another two miles (3.5 km) to Alp Garfiun. Walk to Monbieler Schwendi or alongside the road to Alp Garfiun, where you'll find the tiny Garfiun Alpine cabin for a soda or light meal.



From the top of the Madrisa area you have a choice of two fine winter walks. The easiest is to follow a well-marked trail which will take you 1½ miles (2.4 km) round-trip to the Mässplatte, where you get a great panoramic view of the Prättigau Valley. The other trail will lead you over a high-altitude path to the Saaser Alp and on to the Zügenhüttli. This 3.1-mile (5-km) trail has you climbing 1,344 feet (410 m) during a walk which should take two hours or less to complete. To get to Madrisa, take the

Madrisabahn from Klosters-Dorf.

Klosters Tourism also offers a Klosters Adventure Program where visitors can experience a wide variety of adventure tours, such as mountain biking, glacier walks and canoe trips. Weekdays from mid-June to mid-October. ☎ 81-325-2444.

Snowshoeing treks are available in Klosters with an experienced guide from the Swiss Ski & Snowboard School Klosters (above) at ☎ 81-410-2828. Treks range from daily to weekly, or the popular full-moon treks. There's a four-person minimum; rates start at 50Sfr for the night treks, and include snowshoe rental. Full-day, half-day and weekly trek rates available upon request.

## On Snow & Ice

### *Skiing*

Skiing is the main reason folks flock here: Klosters shares six ski areas with Davos for a total of 190 miles (300 km) of runs for skiers of all levels. The Gotschna-Parsenn-Schatzalp-Strela area has 26 ski lifts. Here you can also rent a toboggan at the Gotschna station to try the 2.1-mile toboggan run halfway up the mountain. One of the best runs begins at Parsenn and follows a well-groomed trail through snowfields, then dips into the

forest, through vast pastures and into the town of Kublis. Here, after their seven-mile run, skiers stop for a hot drink at the train station while waiting to take the train back to Klosters.

The Madrisa skiing area has eight lifts with 29 miles (47 km) of runs, and is also a great site for families with kids. For night-time skiers, the Selfranga lift is open every Friday night from 8-10 pm for 8Sfr.



There are many public and private ski schools in Klosters. The Swiss Ski & Snowboard School Klosters offers individual and private lessons for first-timers. Bahnhofstrasse 4, CH-7250 Klosters. ☎ 81-410-2828, fax 81-410-2829. The Swiss Ski & Snowboard School Saas offers instruction in both disciplines at Landstrasse 15, CH-7252 Klosters-Dorf. ☎ 818-420-2233, fax 81-420-2230. Boardriding Freeridecamps/Guiding offers instruction and guided tours in snowboarding at Lehenweg 24, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-420-2662, fax 81-420-2660.

If it's cross-country skiing you're interested in, then check out the folks at the Nordic Skischool Klosters, in Bardill Sport AG, at Landstrasse 185, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-422-1040, fax 81-422-5587. For trail condition updates, ☎ 81-415-2133 or 81-410-2020.

### *Ice Sports*

Ice hockey, skating and curling are available at the Klosters Sports Center. You can rent ice skates here. The Center is open late from October through mid-March, with weekly free classes in curling and ice hockey. It is open Friday evenings for a night skate. Rink time costs 2-4Sfr for skating, and 20Sfr per hour for hockey practice. Call ☎ 81-410-2131 for information regarding skating and curling, or for hockey practice rink availability. Skate rental costs 5Sfr, slider rental 5Sfr, and hockey stick rental 7Sfr.

## In the Air

Hangliding is quite popular here, and in Klosters you can learn to glide safely at the Grischia Flying School, with rates starting at 90Sfr for a trial day, and up to 150Sfr for a passenger flight. Contact Stefan Holenstein, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-422-2070 or 79-336-1919.

## On Horseback



Horseback riding and sleigh rides are available in Klosters. Packages include riding and skiing holidays for youngsters and adults alike.

There are also daily guided treks to Alp Garfiun and the Schifer mountain resort. Reservations required. Contact Jörg Marugg-Waldburger, CH-7252 Klosters-Dorf. ☎ 81-422-14634 or 79-409-7493. Horse-drawn sleigh rides are provided by local farmers – family Flutsch at ☎ 81-422-1873 or 79-405-9029; Johannes Marugg at ☎ 81-422-2429 or 79-611-4287; Rudolph Roffler at ☎ 81-422-1566.

## Shopping

You'll find lots of sport shops here, catering to skiers and hikers mostly. In Klosters-Platz try Gotschna-Sport at Alte Bahnhofstrasse, ☎ 81-422-1197 – they carry nearly everything you'll need to wander or hike. So does Bardill Sport at Landstrasse 185, ☎ 81-422-1040. Also check out Wunderlin Sport at Landstrasse 201, ☎ 81-422-1270, for hiking gear, and H. Obrist at Doggilochstrasse 31 for biking needs, ☎ 81-422-1212.

In Klosters-Dorf there's Albeina Sport, at Landstrasse 26, ☎ 81-422-3959, for skiing and hiking equipment, and the Laser Bike Shop at Bahnhofplatz, ☎ 81-422-3942.

## Where to Stay

### Hotels



**Romantik Hotel Chesa Grischuna** and its Chalet Grischuna is just as well known for its excellent restaurant as it is for the hotel itself. Located in the center of Klosters-Platz, it has antique furniture, wooden ceiling beams and sloping floors. It's owned by the Guler family and run with caring attention to the needs of its clients. Closed mid-October to mid-December, and from the end of May to mid-July. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 12, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-422-2222, fax 81-422-2225.



*Hotel Chesa Grischuna*



*Piz Buin Hotel*

**Piz Buin Hotel** is a chalet of the highest order and one of the most elegant in Klosters. Smack in the middle of the village, this hotel is close to the skiing and hiking areas of Parsenn. Rooms are rented by the week in the winter. With restaurant, bar, swimming pool, fitness room, sauna, massage. (\$\$\$\$). Closed mid-April to late June, mid-October to early December. Alte Bahnhofstrasse 1, CH-7250 Klosters. ☎ 81-423-3333, fax 81-423-3334.

Bad Serneus Kur and Sporthotel is 3½ miles (5.6 km) north and downhill from Klosters in the suburb of Bad Serneus. It offers a cozy, clean setting at inexpensive prices. You can ski

here from Klosters if you like, and in summer there are plenty of places to hike nearby. A good value for your buck. Restaurant, sauna, swimming pool and massage. Closed early April to mid-May, and from late October to late December. (\$\$\$). CH-7250 Klosters. ☎ 81-422-1444, fax 81-42-2251.

Hotel Rustico is over 100 years old and right in the center of Klosters-Platz. The staff is personable and helpful, complementing the homey atmosphere. The cozy rooms have all modern conveniences. Weekly reservations are required from early to mid-December, early to late January, and mid-March to early April. The hotel also offers ski packages that include lift passes, ski rental and instruction. The restaurant is excellent, and breakfast is included. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Closed June, November. CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-422-1212, fax 81-422-5355.

## Mountain Huts

The mountain hut Silverttahütte has 85 spots to bunk down, and is open March to April and from July to October. From Klosters, take the bus to Monbiel and walk to Alop Sardasca up to Galtürtälli, about a five-hour trek. For reservations contact Philip Werlen and Gerlinde Haas, Bova CH-7432 Zillis, ☎ 81-630-7007, 79-628-4841 or 81-422-1306, [www.sac-stgallen.ch](http://www.sac-stgallen.ch).

Fergenhütte is another smaller mountain hut offering 24 beds. It is high above Praettigau in the Kloster Alps, on the south slope of the Fergenhorn. Start at Monbiel and from here walk to Saljan or Obergarfiun and the hut. A good two- to three-hour walk, popular with families. Contact Seraina and Norbert Gruber-Streicher for reservations. Aeujerstrasse 15, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-422-5488, fax 81-413-4962.

## Where to Eat



Chesa Gris-chuna is probably the finest restaurant in Klosters, with a gourmet menu sure to delight any diner. Reservations required. Closed mid-October to mid-December, and from the



*Chesa Grischna dining room*

end of May to mid-July. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 12, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-422-2222, fax 81-422-2225.

Walserstube is an old farmhouse, in traditional Graubünden style, and right in the middle of Klosters-Platz. Over the years it has played host to a long list of who's-who guests, including Prince Andrew and the Hollywood A-list. Fish, Scottish lamb, lobster, duck and



*Walserstube*

fresh greens are generously prepared and presented in this gourmet setting. It's *the* place to be in town for food and people watching. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations required in the high season. Open daily from 11:30 am-2 pm, 6-11 pm. Closed late April to mid-June, late October to early December. Located in the Walserhof Hotel, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-410-2929, fax 81-710-2939.

Hotel Sport Klosters offers three unique dining areas sure to please any taste. The Bünderstübli provides a romantic, cozy setting featuring local specialties, including fish and meat fondues, complemented by an extensive fine wine list. Reasonable prices (\$\$) and hearty fare. The Panorama room offers seating for small and large groups in a more formal setting and buffets are served here in the winter, allowing a great view of the surrounding landscape. (\$-\$\$\$). The Panorama Terrace has great views for lunch, overlooking a children's zoo and playground, with the Alps in the background. (\$-\$). Landstrasse, CH-7250 Klosters-Platz. ☎ 81-423-3030, fax 81-423-3040.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## St. Moritz

This is perhaps the best-known resort in the world, catering to the "50 and over" crowd, and globe-trotting jet setters. That's



not to say that younger people can't or don't visit St. Moritz – they do – but just not to the extent that older tourists do. Fashion, nightlife, restaurants, bars, fine boutiques, sports, health spas and more are all to be found in St. Moritz. The list of things to do is endless and could fill an entire guidebook.

The village is actually made up of two separate sections connected by a single thoroughfare – Via dal Bagn – St. Moritz Dorf (containing all the hotels, restaurants, shops, etc.) and St. Moritz Bad (the less hectic area on the southwest side of the lakeshore). St. Moritz is at the upper end of the valley known as Engadina. Meaning “The valley of the river Inn,” Engadina is a region in Graubünden whose river has its sources beginning in the north-south mountain passes of Maloja. The sun shines an average of 322 days per year in St. Moritz, which sits at 5,823 feet elevation (1,775 m). The weather here is very dry, but never hot, due to the high elevation.

In addition to snow sports and summer hiking, St. Moritz is also a cultural haven, with many artistic venues sponsoring gallery exhibitions in the summertime. The orchestra performs free concerts throughout the summer at the Bädersall or in the park.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The St. Moritz Tourist Office is at Via Maistra 12, and is open Monday-Saturday from 8 am-6 pm, Sunday from 4-6 pm during the high season, and Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am-1 pm in the off-season. ☎ 81-837-3333, fax 81-837-3366, [www.stmoritz.ch](http://www.stmoritz.ch). The Tourist Office also offers taxi service from their location.

### Train Station

St. Moritz is 46 miles (74 km) southeast of Chur, and 50 miles (80 km) south of Davos, easily reached by trains via Chur, which takes about two hours. For rail information, ☎ 900-300-300.

## Post Offices

The St. Moritz Post Office is at Via Serlas 23 and is open from 7:45 am-noon, from 1:45-6:15 pm Monday-Friday, and on Saturdays from 8:30-noon. ☎ 81-833-0388, fax 81-837-6790.

The St. Moritz Bad Post Office is at via Rosatsch 12 and is open from 8:30-11 am, 1:45-6 pm Monday-Friday, Saturdays from 8:30 am to noon. ☎ 81-833-3093, fax 81-833-9218.

## Codes

The postal code for St. Moritz and St. Moritz Bad is CH-7500; the area code is 81.

## Internet Access

Check out Bobby's American Pub (20Sfr per hour). You can also access the Internet for free at the post office, but there is usually a very long wait.

## Medical Services

Phone 911 for emergencies. The Galerie Apotheke is the local pharmacy, at Via de Bagn. Open Monday-Friday, from 8 am-noon, 2-6:30 pm and on Saturdays from 8 am-noon, 2-5 pm. ☎ 81-833-7292.

## Getting Around



In St. Moritz you can get around by car, bus, taxi, horse-drawn carriages or on foot. However, for a real treat, be sure to take one of Switzerland's best rail tours – The Glacier Express. This 7½-hour train ride takes guests past the highest peaks and glaciers of both the



*The Glacier Express (Man Ho Lam)*

southwest and southeast Alpine regions – from St. Moritz in Graubünden to Zermatt in the canton of Valais. First opened in

1928, the Glacier Express tunnels through the eight-mile-long Furka mountain at one point, and also traverses 291 bridges and 91 viaducts on its journey.

The new first- and second-class panorama cars are air-cushioned, air-conditioned, wheelchair-accessible and are considerably quieter than the previous generation of rolling stock. The new interiors are elegant and pleasant; the improved information system is available in six languages. Reservations are strongly suggested and required for the restaurant cars. Drinks and snacks are available at all times and lunch is served at your seat in the new Glacier Express Premium trains.

Fares start at 150Sfr for second class and 240Sfr for first class; however, those holding a Swiss Rail Pass will have their fare covered in full. Eurailpass holders will be responsible for half-price fares in both classes. ☎ 81-833-5912 or contact the Swiss National Tourist Office at ☎ 212-757-5944.

The Engadine Star is another rail tour that starts in St. Moritz and ends in Landquart, travelling through Zernez and Klosters for a two-hour-train ride. If you opt to begin in Landquart, the train climbs the steep ascent to Klosters, passing through the Vereina tunnel, the world's longest meter-gauge tunnel, to Zernez and St. Moritz. Another option is to disembark at Zernez, where you can alternatively take a Postbus over the Ofen Pass to the Val Müstair (Engadine-Meran Route Express) and on to Mals (Italy). Here, take the new Vinschgauer railway to Mediterranean Meran ([www.sad.it](http://www.sad.it); Swiss Travel System tickets are not valid). For information, ☎ 800-100-200-30 or fax 800-100-200-31, Monday-Friday, 8 am to 7 pm.

## Adventures

### On Foot

#### Hiking



Piz Nair offers great views of the Upper Engadina valley and lakes. Take the funicular to Corviglia and then a cable car to the top. From here, you can walk to the summit. You can also take a 3½-hour walk that will bring you back to St. Moritz-Dorf. From Piz Nair, follow the path downward to Suvretta Pass (8,578 feet, 2,625 m). Here, the trail will veer to the left and you'll come to the Lac Suvretta, a

good spot for a rest and a picnic. Continue down, walking parallel to a stream through pastures and lovely Alpine fields. The stream soon turns into a waterfall, and just past this spot the trail will veer left again, and then



*Cable car at Corviglia (Roland Zumbühl)*

proceed sharply upward. Soon the trail widens out, allowing great views of the Surlej village, Piz Corvatsch and Lake Silvaplana. The path will lead you back to St. Moritz-Dorf.

From Murtel to Fuorcia Surlej: You can also take a rather easy walk (3½ hours) from the intermediate station of Murtel on the way up to Piz Corvatsh. Take the cable car from the base at Fuorcia Surlej to Murtel, and walk to the pass, where you'll get a lovely view of Bernina Massif. From here, you can walk back to Fuorcia Surlej by following a rocky path. You'll be able to see the lakes of St. Mortiz, Silvaplana, Champfer and Sils on your hike.

For a strenuous and popular hike, try walking to the Chamanna Coaz Refuge from Fuorcia Surlej; allow yourself at least five hours. The trail is well-marked as it winds around the mountain slope, giving you plenty of great views to take in, including waterfalls, streams and the Piz Roseg.

About two hours into your walk you come to the Chamanna Coaz Refuge, looking out upon the Roseg and Sella Glaciers. From here, you retrace your steps for approximately 15 minutes before you encounter a turn to the right, toward Puntraschigna (Pontresina). This part of the trail is the most difficult, steep and stoney. You soon come to Lake Vadret. Follow the stream on down to a small hotel where the trail ends. From here you can take a carriage ride back to Pontresina and then catch the bus back to Fuorcia Surlej or St. Moritz.



*Roseg River Valley*

Also worth a try is the hike up the Roseg River Valley to the Tschierva Hütte and the Coaz Hütte. Be prepared – this is an all-day hike or an overnight excursion if you like. You can take a bus to begin the trail at the village of Pontresina. You walk from town, following the signs for Hotel Roseg; you can walk on either the right or left side of the river – both offer easy paths. Just prior to reaching Hotel Roseg, the path veers off to the left toward the Tschierva Hütte. The path remains relatively flat for nearly half a mile, then begins to climb steeply. You will see the Roseg Glacier, the Tschierva Glacier and Piz Roseg and the Hütte, eventually reached by walking between the lateral moraine and the hillside. At 8,439 feet (2,573 m), the Tschierva Hütte offers hikers a great spot to rest. Meals and dorm rooms are provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

You can also climb above the Hütte for even more spectacular views of the area, and here you are sure to see chamois – especially in the evening and early morning hours. From the Tschierva Hütte, you can then walk back down to the Hotel Roseg junction, where you have several options. Here, the trail on the left will take you up to the Coaz Hütte, where you get great views of the Roseg Glacier. From there, retrace your steps down until you come to a fork in the road. Walk to the left (the right takes you back to Hotel Roseg) and you will soon be at Fuorcia Surlej. From here, you can go through the pass and walk the remaining five miles (eight km) back to St. Moritz.

## THE IBEX PATH



### *From Muottas Muragl to Piz Languard*

For another fun way to see Swiss wildlife in action, try the path from Muottas Muragl to Piz Languard, a five-mile hike that takes around eight hours to complete. This is a great way to catch a glimpse of an ibex or two (somewhat similar to a mountain goat). From St. Moritz you can take the bus to Pontresina and then hike up or take a chairlift to Punt Muragl. From there, you can hike up to the Muottas Muragl, where you pick up the Ibex Path, toward Piz Languard.

From the Languard chairlift station follow the path signs saying Piz Languard. The trail climbs a bit before crossing the stream and then entering a nature preserve. A little farther on you encounter a fork in the road. Veer left, and you finally reach the Berghaus Piz Languard, a 10,699-foot-high hut and restaurant (3,262 m). You can then walk past the hut and up to the summit, which is 204 feet (62 m) higher. On your way down, instead of backtracking, try the path to Via da Fain, which eventually leads you to the road south of Pontresina. You can walk back to the village on parallel trails near the road, or catch one of the buses along the way. The best times to view the ibex are August and September. They are protected in Switzerland and are unafraid of humans for the most part.

The Morteratsch to Boval Hütte trail is another fun excursion that begins from Pontresina. Expect to be walking for five hours or so. From Pontresina you can walk or drive five miles (eight km) south to the Morteratsch railroad station. From here, there is parking available for your car since you begin your trek in front of the station, at the gated service road. Stay on this path until the glacier trail veers to the left and walk until you come to the base of the glacier, for some commanding views. From here, retrace your steps until you come back to the original fork in the road, and continue up the main trail. You climb steeply for about half a mile before the path levels out again. The trail continues to climb until it reaches the Boval Hütte at 8,184 feet (2,495 m). Here you can relax with a picnic or get lunch from the hut-keeper, while enjoying views of the Pers and Morteratsch Glacier, among others. You also see the Piz Boval (behind the hut), the Piz Bernina, the Piz Bellavista, the Piz Cambrena and Piz Palü.

### *Other Sports*

Tennis and squash can be played at the Corviglia Tennis Center in St. Moritz-Bad. Here you'll find indoor and outdoor courts. You can rent rackets and balls here, and tennis court costs start at 25Sfr per hour (summer) up to 46Sfr (winter). Squash courts range from 20 to 26Sfr for 45 minutes, depending on the season. ☎ 81-833-1500.

Golf is available at Samedan, 4½ miles (7.2 km) south of St. Moritz in the valley, from late May to early October, 7 am-7 pm, later hours in July and August. Green fees are 95Sfr per day and you can rent clubs for 35Sfr daily. For information, contact the Samedan/St. Moritz Golfplatz at ☎ 81-852-5226.

### *On Water*

Windsurfing has become one of St. Moritz's most popular summer sports. You can rent equipment for 35Sfr for two hours. If you need lessons, 10 sessions can be had for 265Sfr. Call the Windsurfschule St. Moritz at ☎ 81-828-9229 or 81-833-4449.

The fishing season in St. Moritz runs from mid-May to mid-September. You must be 16 or older to purchase the mandatory

fishing license, which costs 84Sfr for one day, or 245Sfr for a week on one of the 25 lakes in the region. ☎ 81-833-6752.

## On Wheels

St. Moritz is also a great spot for the serious mountain biker, with 75 miles (120 km) of bike trails in and around town, plus another 200 miles (354 km) in the surrounding areas. Check out the Van D'Vina Trail. Information and maps are available at the Tourist Office.

## On Snow

### *Skiing*

In addition to glitter and glamour, skiing is what St. Moritz is all about. As the host of the 2003 Alpine Ski World Championships and the location of the world's oldest ski school (1927), St. Moritz continues to attract the world's best downhill skiers.



The St. Moritz and Suvretta Ski Schools are both arms of the Swiss Ski School and have more than 300 instructors in the area. ☎ 81-833-8090 in St. Moritz or 81-833-3332 in Suvretta.

There are three basic sectors of the St. Moritz skiing area – Corviglia, Corvatsch and Diavolezza. St. Moritz is host to the base mountain of Corviglia – to get there you take a funicular from the town center or from Suvretta up to the Piz Nair Massif (10,029 feet, 2,087 m). The ski area over Piz Nair Massif is a good beginner's mountain – it contains 50 miles (80 km) of pistes and 23 chairlifts. It is often crowded with beginners, however, and those electing to stay at the Suvretta Hotel have their own beginner lift. Corvatsch is on the other side of the valley and can be accessed from Sils Maria and Surlej. Piz Corvatsch (10,837 feet, 3,303 m) has 40 miles (64 km) of inter-



mediate runs over slightly rougher terrain than Piz Nair. Diavolezza (9,755 feet, 2,978 m) has 30 miles (48 km) of runs for the experienced skier and is accessed by either train or bus. Up here Piz Lagalb (9,708 feet, 2,959 m) offers 18 miles (29 km) of pistes with the best intermediate skiing to be found in the area. Muottas Muragli (8,048 feet, 2,453 m), reached by funicular, has five miles (eight km) of intermediate pistes. All of these slopes provide the charm, atmosphere and sun that you'd expect to find in this Alpine winter paradise. All mountains can be skied via a single lift pass, and prices begin at 58Sfr for a one-day pass. ☎ 81-830-0000, [www.skiengadin.ch](http://www.skiengadin.ch). The two most popular areas for cross-country skiing around St. Moritz are Silvaplana and Pontresina, offering 100 miles (161 km) of trails. Group instruction is available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 am-1 pm, costing 35Sfr for a half-day lesson. You can also take a group trek for 45Sfr. Contact the Schweizer Langlaufschule St. Moritz at ☎ 81-833-6233.

### *Other Winter Sports*

Snowboarding is done at Piz Nair at Corviglia. Here you'll find four half-pipes and a trail through a border crossing into Italy.

Try curling at the Al Parc Rink on Via Maistra. If you want to take lessons, your first 40 minutes are free; after that it will cost 45Sfr for another 45 minutes. ☎ 81-833-4588 for information.

Bobsledding is available at the Olympic Bobsled Run. It's pricey at 200Sfr, but you get a certificate stating you accomplished the task, plus a drink and photo of your excursion. Via Maistra. ☎ 81-830-0200.

St. Moritz's most famous toboggan run begins at Muottas Muragli – this 2.6-mile (4.2 km) run is accessed by a funicular from Punt Muragl, 2.2 miles (3.5 km) north of St. Moritz. If you're a hard-core tobogganer, you can stay at Muottas Muragli's Berghotel, at the start of the run, which has modest rooms with shared baths. (\$\$-\$\$\$). ☎ 81-842-8232, fax 81-842-8290. Preda-Bergün is another famous 3.1-mile (5 km) toboggan run.

This one takes you from the Preda station through the Albula Pass to Bergün. From here, you can take the RHB train back to

the start. This run is open day and night, with lighted runs, [www.berguen.ch](http://www.berguen.ch). St. Moritz's Cresta Run is meant for pros. You can find information about this scary toboggan run at the Tourist Office.



*The abbreviation RHB stands for the Rorschach-Heiden-Bergbahn (Rorschach-Heiden-Mountain train), a rack-railway between the villages of Rorschach and Heiden in the canton of St. Gallen. For the Bergbahn Rheineck-Walzenhausen, with mountain train service between the villages of Rheineck and Walzenhausen, the abbreviation is RhW.*

## On Horseback

Horseback riding can be done at the Reithalle year-round, only a 10-minute walk from the center of St. Moritz. Rides vary from 55Sfr (one-half hour in an arena) to 140Sfr for a three-hour, half-day tour of the nearby countryside, forest and mountains. Via Ludains 3, St. Moritz.

### WHITE TURF

One of St. Moritz's top attractions takes place in February on the St. Moritzersee, when up to 30,000 of the elite, rich and famous congregate to experience horse racing on the "White Turf."

Trotters from throughout Europe come together to compete on three consecutive afternoons. Sleigh runners are substituted for the standard bike

wheels on the sulkies, allowing these diagonally gaited specialists and their snow-suit-clad drivers to glide over the snow with grace. Thoroughbred races are also held, and the jockeys don ski masks and goggles beneath their helmets, as their mounts kick up clouds of snow. One of the highlights of these competitions is the traditional Skikjoring race, where upwards of a dozen horses tow skiers 1.625 miles (2.6 km) for a sought-after trophy. Horse racing was first organized in Switzerland in 1872, and the first races were held on the St. Moritzersee in 1906.



Besides racing amid the spectacular surroundings, fine art and excellent cuisine can be enjoyed on these White Turf days. You can also take a ride in a horse-drawn sleigh, and witness various horse exhibitions in between races. In 2003, for instance, a four-horse Roman battle chariot was galloped past the crowd, and a Hungarian stage-coach pulled by five horses had the driver standing on the backs of the horses, as he guided them in front of the stands at a dead-run.

There are countless gourmet food stands throughout the area during this time. Local hotels also offer their specialties. Badrutt's Palace Hotel offers champagne and pasta truffles; Hotel Schweizerhof has tartar and salmon sandwiches;

Hotel Steffani serves Chinese dishes; Hotel Monopol puts forth great-tasting risotto; and Hotel Margna serves traditional Swiss raclette. The Hotel Hauser offers the best-tasting coffee and cakes in town, and the local butcher shop, Heuberger, sizzles with its grilled sausages. Prices range from inexpensive to outrageous, and there is something for everyone here. Swing, jazz, Caribbean rhythms, pop, and gospel and local groups all perform at various times, on two separate stages.



Temperatures are far below freezing during this time, so the frozen lake is hardy enough to accommodate both the horses and the cars that are parked there. The 100th Anniversary of the White Turf took place in 2006.

Seats in the stands range from 15-48Sfr. For reservations, ☎ 848-800-800, or you can reserve online at [www.ticketcorner.ch](http://www.ticketcorner.ch). For further information contact the White Turf Racing Association, Via Mulin 4, CH-7500, St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-8460, fax 81-833-1062, [www.whiteturf.com](http://www.whiteturf.com).

## Spas

St. Moritz is also known as a “spa” town – in fact one section is known as St. Moritz-Bad (bath). Here you’ll find physical therapies, mineral baths, and various other Alpine therapies. The



*St. Moritz (Enslin)*

Health Spa Center, opened in 1976, features carbonic baths, among other hot water treatments, beginning at 35Sfr. If you present proof of payment for one of St. Moritz's hotels, you'll get a substantial discount. ☎ 81-833-3062.

## Museums

The Engadine Museum provides visitors with a history of St. Moritz and the Engadina Valley. Architecture, antiques and regional furniture are featured. (5Sfr). Open June to October, Monday-Friday 9 am-noon, 2-5 pm, Sunday 10 am-noon. From December to April, Monday-Friday, 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm, Sunday from 10 am-noon. Closed May, November. Via dal Bagn 39. CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-4333.

Segantini Museum features the works of artist Giovanni Segantini, who lived in Maloja of Engadina during the latter part of the 19th century until his death in 1899. (3-10Sfr). Open Tuesday to Sunday 10 am noon, 3-6 pm. Closed late October, November, May.

## Shopping

You're sure to be overwhelmed by the number of designer boutiques and shops in St. Moritz. International and elegant, there is something for all tastes here, catering to the wealthy and ultra-wealthy. Versace, Prada, Bucherer and the like are found both on the street and in the fancier hotels, along with a wide array of sports shops.

## Where to Stay



Badrutt's Palace is on a hilltop overlooking St. Moritz in the Rosatch Mountain Range. This is a very elegant and traditional winter and summer re-

sort, opened by the Badrutt family in 1896. It's a good resort for families with children, and there are a wide variety of activities, including fishing, horseback riding, sauna, carriage rides, an 18-hole golf course nearby, ice skating, an indoor squash court and 40 miles (64 km) of ski runs. There is also a 2½-mile running



*Badrutt's Palace*

path around Lake St. Moritz. There are designer boutiques, gourmet restaurants and a disco. (\$\$\$\$). Located at via Chasellas 1, St. Moritz. ☎ 81-837-1000, fax 81-837-2999. Toll-free in the US at 800-223-6800, [www.badruttspalace.com](http://www.badruttspalace.com).

Kulm Hotel is made up of three buildings constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries. The oldest, built in 1760, was the first



*Kulm Hotel*

building in Switzerland to have electricity (in 1878) and was the site of the 1928 and 1948 Olympics.

This is an amazing venue that has huge rooms with marble bathrooms and all amenities, including three restaurants. It is also here that you'll find St. Moritz's curling rinks. (\$\$\$\$). Closed mid-April to June and mid-September to mid-December. Via Veglia 18 Dorf, CH-7500 St. Moritz. In the USA & Canada, ☎ 800-223-5695; in Switzerland, ☎ 81-836-8000, fax 81-836-8001, [www.kulmhotel-stmoritz.ch](http://www.kulmhotel-stmoritz.ch).

Meierei Landgasthof is across the lake from St. Moritz, and provides a great view of the city. This inn was built in the 17th century for a bishop who owned a farm on the property. Now it has become a popular stop for hikers looking for a hearty meal on the outdoor terrace. Offering just seven rooms, the inn is as well known for its homey atmosphere as for its restaurant, and is only a 20-minute walk from downtown St. Moritz and St. Moritz-Bad. You can get to either one via paths that wind around the lake. A great out-of-the-way spot. (\$\$\$\$). Open December-April and June-October. Via Dimie 52, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-8838 or 81-833-2060.



*Carlton Hotel*

Carlton Hotel was originally built in 1913 for the last czar of Russia, Nicholas II. Includes every amenity you can think of. It has marble bathrooms and luxurious bedrooms. Need we say more?

(\$\$\$\$). Closed early April-mid June, mid-September to early December. ☎ 81-836-7000, fax 81-836-7001, [www.carlton-stmoritz.ch](http://www.carlton-stmoritz.ch).

Hotel Eden, an elegant and friendly inn, is in the center of St. Moritz, and is family-owned and -operated. Antiques and wood fixtures are found throughout. Be sure to sample the exquisite breakfast, where the buffet is presented on an antique sleigh. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open December to mid-April and from mid-June to mid-October. Via Veglia 12, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-6161, fax 81-833-9191.

Suvretta House was built in 1912 on a plateau about a mile from the center of St. Moritz. It has a pair of medieval towers that make it hard to miss, and spacious rooms set in classic Alpine style. It offers guests a private ski lift and has a feel of isolation that you can't find in the city center. A good value by St.

Moritz standards. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed from early April to late June and early September to mid-December. Two restaurants, two bars, swimming pool, golf, tennis courts, sauna, ice rink, playground, massage, babysitting. Via Chasellas 1, CH-7500, St. Moritz. ☎ 81-836-3636, fax 81-836-3737, [www.suvretta-house.ch](http://www.suvretta-house.ch).

Hotel Languard has the kind of atmosphere you'd expect to find in the Appenzeller countryside. Owned and operated by the Giovanni Trivella family, it has only 22 rooms,

but provides a quiet alternative to the hustle-bustle of the city. The rooms are large and contain lots of wood and antiques, with great views of the lake and surrounding mountains. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open June-October and December-April. Via Veglia 14, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-3137, fax 81-833-4546.

Minotel Soldanella is a few minutes walk from the city center and features an 18-hole golf course nearby and tennis courts next to the wooded mountainside. Comfortable rooms and a good restaurant, just slightly off the beaten path. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed late March-late May, mid-October to mid-December. Via Somplaz 17, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-830-8500, fax 81-833-2337, [www.minotel.com/hotel/ch170](http://www.minotel.com/hotel/ch170).

Posthotel was built in 1908 and is in the heart of the city. With its huge fireplace, it offers a cozy and comfortable retreat from the big crowds of the city, and is a good value. There are two separate sections to the hotel, but they are connected by a covered walkway. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed mid-April to mid-May, and from mid-October to mid-December. Via dal Vout 3 Dorf, CH-



*Suvretta House*



7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-832-2121, fax 81-833-8973, [www.posthotel-stmoritz.ch](http://www.posthotel-stmoritz.ch).

Hotel Waldhaus am See is run by hosts Helen and Claudio



Bernasconi-Mettier and offers guests a castle-like setting with fantastic views of the lake. Comfortable rooms and three tasty restaurants. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Via

*Hotel Waldhaus am See (Tom Brosnahan)*

Dimiej 6 CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-7676, fax 81-833-8877, [www.waldhausam-see.ch](http://www.waldhausam-see.ch).

Hotel National was built over 100 years ago and retains much of the charm of that time. Small, clean rooms with a classy little restaurant that serves good Italian, Swiss and French fair. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Closed mid-April to May, mid-October to November. Via de l'Ova Cotschna 1, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-3274, 81-833-3275.

St. Moritz Bad Youth Hostel Stille is just one mile from the city center on the east side of the St. Moritz Sports Arena, and on the south side of St. Moritzersee. This hostel is open year-round. There are 192 beds and prices start at 43Sfr. (\$-\$-\$). Via Surpunt 60, CH-7500. St. Moritz Bad. ☎ 81-833-3969, fax 81-833-8046, [www.youthhostel.ch/st.moritz](http://www.youthhostel.ch/st.moritz).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Camping



You can camp at Olympiaschanze, just a half-mile southwest of St. Moritz Bad. Open June to September. Contact Roberto Christen at ☎ 81-833-4090, fax 81-834-4069, [www.campingtcs.ch](http://www.campingtcs.ch).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Chesa Veglia is a swanky restaurant owned by the Palace Hotel that features three separate dining levels, and caters to the gourmet crowd. The Chadafo Grill, which is open only in the winter, is known for cooking dishes over a wood fire while you watch. The Patrizier-Stube focuses on regional fare year-round, and the Hayhoft offers excellent pizzas in a less-than-formal setting. The structure was built in 1658 and is one of the few Engadina homes still left in town. Excellent eats at high prices, with a wide variety of international dishes. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations required; open daily from 11:30 am-3 pm, 6:30 pm-midnight. Via Veglia 2, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-837-2800.



*Chesa Veglia (Tom Brosnahan)*

Restaurant Le Relais has served meals to the rich and famous, including Hollywood types, kings, queens and shahs. Luxurious at every step, it requires men to wear suits for dinner, in a setting that specializes in caviar, oysters, and gourmet meals. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Located in Badrutt's Palace Hotel on Via Serlas 27. Reservations required; open daily from 12:15-3 pm, 7:30-11 pm. Closed early April-late June, mid-September to mid-December. ☎ 81-837-1010.

Across the lake from St. Moritz is Meierei Landgasthof. This popular restaurant once fed Picasso and the Shah of Iran, among others. The homey atmosphere and local fare have made it popular among locals and visitors alike. It also offers seven guest rooms. (\$-\$\$\$). Open December-April and June to October. Via Dimiej 52, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-8838 or 81-833-2060.



*La Marmite*

A pricey little hangout at the top of Corviglia, La Marmite is reached by riding the funicular. The place for caviar, wine, spirits and other delights, it also has a cafeteria that caters to skiers. Reservations recommended. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily 8:30 am-5:30 pm. Closed mid-April to mid-December. ☎ 81-833-6355.

With excellent pasta, fish and grilled meats from throughout the region, Veltlinerkeller is a

great place for a very good meal at reasonable prices. Reservations required. Open daily from noon-3 pm, 6-11:30 pm. (\$-\$\$). Via dal Bagn 11, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-4009.

Restaurant Engadinia is best-known for its excellent pizza and fondue. (\$-\$\$). Open Monday to Saturday from 8:30 am-11 pm. Closed Sunday. Piazza da Scoula 10, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-3265.

Restaurant Hauser has many different dishes for all tastes at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open daily from 7:30 am-11 pm. Sonneplatz, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-833-4402.

Try Boccalino for great wood-oven pizzas. (\$-\$\$). Via dal Bagn 6, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-832-1111.



*After Hours is a 24-hour grocery store at Via Maistra 2, CH-7500 St. Moritz. ☎ 81-834-9900.*

## Pontresina

**F**our miles (6.4 km) southeast of St. Moritz on Highway 29, this is the base for some of the best hiking trails and mountaineering found in the area. It also offers access to all of the major ski sites as it is halfway between Diavolezza and Corviglia. Because of the close proximity to St. Moritz, sports buses run back and forth between the two villages every half-hour from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Pontresina Tourist Office can offer free maps and information, and is open daily Monday-Friday from 8:30 am noon, 2-6 pm. ☎ 81-842-6488, fax 81-842-7996, [www.pontresina.com](http://www.pontresina.com).



*The Pontresina Bergsteigerschule (Mountaineering School) can be contacted here at ☎ 81-838-8333 for a four-hour hike onto the Morteratsch Glacier.*

## Where to Stay

### Hotels



There are a number of very nice hotels to stay at in Pontresina, but the best by far is the Grand Hotel Kronenhof, which has been owned and operated by the same family since the mid-1800s. Cozy and hospitable, this hotel has two restaurants (including the excellent Kronenstübli, \$\$-\$\$\$), two bars, tennis courts, bowling and an ice-skating rink, among other amenities. (\$\$\$\$). Closed late March to late June, October to mid-December. CH-7540 Pontresina. ☎ 81-842-0111, fax 81-842-6066.



*Grand Hotel Kronenhof*



*Hotel Schweizerhof*

The Hotel Schweizerhof is a huge hotel with one of the best restaurants in town (the Hof Restaurant, \$\$-\$\$\$), which serves up generous regional dishes). Built in 1910, it has

been renovated several times but still retains a lot of Swiss charm and atmosphere. Good-sized rooms and a friendly staff. (\$\$\$\$). Closed mid-April to mid-June, mid-October to early December. CH-7540 Pontresina. ☎ 81-842-0131, fax 81-842-7988.

The Hotel Garni Chesa Mulin in Pontresina stretches your dollar a little further than the Kronenhof or the Schweizerhof. A rustic interior complemented by a gracious staff makes you feel right at home in this centrally located inn. (\$\$\$). Closed May and November. CH-7504 Pontresina. ☎ 81-838-8200, fax 81-838-8230.

## Hostel

The Pontresina Youth Hostel "Tolais" is at the Langlaufzentrum and is open from mid-December to April 1, and from late June to late October. CH-7504 Pontresina. ☎ 81-842-7223, fax 81-842-7031, [www.youthhostel.ch/pontresina](http://www.youthhostel.ch/pontresina).

## Camping



Try the Plauns Campground, open summer and winter in a beautiful setting that allows gorgeous views of the valley and surrounding mountains. A great little retreat with all of life's modern conveniences. (\$). Reservations recommended. Contact Albert Brulisauer at ☎ 81-842-6285, fax 81-834-5136.

## Where to Eat



In addition to the excellent restaurants in the Hotels Schweizerhof and Kronenhof (see above), Restaurant Locanda specializes in traditional Swiss fondue and raclettes at reasonable prices (\$-\$\$), as well as other hearty dishes featuring meat, fish and sausages. Located inside the Hotel Bernia. Reservations recommended. Open daily, 9 am-midnight. Closed mid-April to June 1, early October to mid-December. ☎ 81-838-8686.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## The Berninastrasse & Poschiavo Valley

**T**he Berninastrasse begins just slightly north of St. Moritz and descends through the Poschiavo Valley into Tirano, Italy, linking the Engadina Valley to the Valtellina in Italy. This can be a fun little road trip if you're driving, with plenty of interesting stops along the way. You can also take the Berninabahn, which runs year-round and is the highest railway in Europe that doesn't use racks. This is especially advisable in the winter, when the Bernina Pass tends to be blocked with snow.

South of Pontresina you'll find some great walks from Diavolezza via the west side of the Berninastrasse. For years the former refuge of Diavolezza, at 9,754 feet (2,973 m), has been the starting spot for one of Europe's most spectacular glacier runs. The cable car takes you up in about 10 minutes and from the Diavolezza restaurant you can view the surrounding peaks in all of their splendor, including the Piz Pallu, the Piz Bellavista, the Piz Zupas, Crast Aguzza, Piz Bernina, and Piz Morteratsch. From here, you can take an easy walk to Munt Pers, at 10,522 feet (3,207 m). Just follow the signs right outside the Diavolezza restaurant – this walk should take you about 1½ hours and will allow for an even more gorgeous view of the area. Starting at the same base point, on the eastern side of the Berninastrasse, you can take a cablecar up to Piz Lagalb, where you'll find equally outstanding views of the nearby mountain ranges.

When you reach the Bernina Pass at 7,638 feet (2,328 m), you have clear views of the Cambrena glacier and peak. If you continue to follow the Berninastrasse south, you'll come to the



*Hotel Miralago on Lake Poschiavo*

tiny village of Alp Grüm, then wind your way down through the valley, criss-crossing back and forth before reaching Poschiavo, a modest little village that has the early 16th-century church of San Vittore. Just south of here lies the Poschiavo Lake, a great spot for picnics and watersports. At the end of the lake is the village of Miralago, whose name means "look at the lake."



*From Miralago, you'll get one of the prettiest views in all of Switzerland. With the mountains reflected in the lake's crystal blue waters, it's a perfect romantic spot for couples.*

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## Silvaplana

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*Lakes Silvaplana, left,  
& Champfer, right (Julo)*

Silvaplana is just four miles (6.4 km) southwest of St. Moritz along highway 27, on the shore of Lake Silvaplana, at the base of Piz Corvatsch and the south end of the Julier Pass. As with some of the other villages in the area, there are no street names, but an abundance of signs pointing to hotels, restaurants and shops.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The Silvaplana Tourist Office, which is open from 8:30 am to noon, and from 1:30 to 6:30 pm on most days, can help provide you with directions, maps and information. ☎ 81-838-6000, 81-838-6009.

## Internet Access

You can access the Internet in Hotel Julier, at the left of the Tourist Office for 10Sfr per hour, 7:30 am-2 pm daily.

## Adventures

Most of the action in Silvaplana takes place on the lake, near the campground on the shores. It was in this tiny village that the sports of kitesurfing and kitesailing were invented. These involve changing the sail on your windsurfer to a kite. In the winter it is done on the frozen lake. The Sportzentrum Mulets or the Drachen Atelier in the city center can arrange kitesurfing for you at ☎ 81-828-9767, fax 81-828-9771, [www.kite-sailing.ch](http://www.kite-sailing.ch).

Windsurfing is extremely popular here as well. Each August, Silvaplana plays host to the nine-day Engadine Wind Festival, which includes a freestyle competition and the Swiss and European championships of windsurfing. For rental information, contact Windsurfers, at the campground, ☎/fax 81-828-9229.

For winter or summer sports and hikes, take the Corvatsch Bergbahn up to Piz Corvatsch. ☎ 81-838-7373 for departure times. For ski instruction in the winter months, The Corvatsch Skischule, at ☎ 81-828-8684, charges 89Sfr for a one-hour private lesson.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Albana, with its beamed ceilings and cozy atmosphere, is one of the best places to stay in the area. Rooms are very comfortable and those with balconies are especially romantic. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-7513 Silvaplana. ☎ 81-828-9292, fax 81-828-8181.



*Hotel Albana*

Hotel Chesa Grusaida is very popular among the ski crowd, and provides small but com-



fortable accommodations in a rustic Swiss setting. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Closed May to mid-June, late October to mid-December. CH-7513 Silvaplana. ☎ 81-828-8292, fax 81-828-9409.

## Camping



Camping in Silvaplana takes place along the shores of the lake, with Frau and Herr Wyss as your hosts. Open mid-May to mid-October. (\$). CH-7513 Silvaplana. ☎ 81-828-8492, fax 81-833-5413.

## Where to Eat



The two best places to eat in Silvaplana are in the Hotel Albana.

La Gourmet offers gourmet-type meals for the discriminating diner in a somewhat formal setting (\$\$-\$\$\$), while Spunta Grishun (\$\$) serves regional dishes in a modest, relaxed dining area. Reservations are recommended for both. ☎ 81-828-9292.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

# Sils

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**S**ils is a quiet little village, known for its relaxing hikes in the summer and its skiing in the winter. Actually, Sils is made up of two sister cities known as Sils-Baselgia and Sils-Maria, which are connected through a thin sliver of land between the two lakes of Silvaplana and Silser. Located on the Silsersee just a mile south of Silvaplana, the Furtschellas cable car connects you to Silvaplana's slopes in the winter. Here you can also visit Friedrich Nietzsche's house, halfway between the post office and tourist office on Sils' main road. The famous philosopher spent his summers here during the 1880s.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Sils Tourist Office can provide you with hiking and skiing maps, and has Internet access for only 6Sfr per hour. Open daily, Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am noon, 4-6 pm. ☎ 81-838-5050, fax 81-838-5059.

## Where to Stay



*Hikers near Sils (Engadine/St.Moritz Mountain Rail- & Cableways)*



Check out Hotel Margna in Sils-Baselgia. This was originally a private home, built in 1817 between the two lakes. This prime location is near countless hiking and cross-country ski trails. The hotel hosts a grill restaurant with a grand fireplace, a second dining area and a fondue restaurant in the basement. The hotel also has its own six-hole golf course. (\$\$\$\$). CH-7515 Sils-Baselgia. ☎ 81-838-4747, fax 81-838-4748.

In Sils-Maria you can stay at the charming Hotel Pensiuon Privata, on the same small piece of land between the two lakes as Hotel Margna. Here you'll find the prices a bit more reasonable. (\$\$\$). On the hotel grounds are trails leading up to the mountains and surrounding meadows. Fresh flowers are in every room, and the restaurant offers a four-course menu with excellent fare. Breakfast and dinner



*Hotel Pensiuon Privata*

are included in some rates. CH-7514 Sils-Maria. ☎ 81-826-5247, fax 81-826-6183.

The Sils Youth Hostel is open from April 1 to the end of October, with 40 beds. CH-7411 Sils im Domleschg. ☎ 81-651-1518, [www.youthhostel.ch/sils](http://www.youthhostel.ch/sils).

## Maloja



*Belvedere Castle*

**T**his is four miles (6.4 km) southwest of Silvaplana on Highway 27, at the edge of the Silsersee, and is home to only 310 people. However, in the summer-time this little village overflows with hikers, fishermen and nature lovers and the Maloja Pass provides a connection between the Inn and Mera valleys. When here, take a walk to Belvedere

Castle, where you'll get a great view of the Bergell Mountains on one side, and the Engadina mountains on the other.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Maloja Tourist Office, at ☎ 81-824-3188, fax 81-824-3637, can provide you with maps of the many hiking trails in the area.

## Adventures on Foot



For a nice relaxing five-hour hike, begin at Promontogno. This is the village directly on the main road, while the neighboring village of Bondo lies a little farther away, near the mouth of the valley downstream. From Promontogno you can either walk or take a bus to Soglio. At the right of the bus stop follow the signs to Casaccia and Panoramico.

The trail is well marked and will bring you near mountain streams and numerous impressive waterfalls. The path will then enter a dense forest and bring you to a beautiful meadow, before you reach the hamlet of Vicosoprano. From here, you continue on along the main road before you reach the path again. Ignore the power lines here as you'll soon return to peace and quiet, and stay on the path, which will eventually bring you to Casaccia, not far from the Maloja Pass.

For an easy day-long hike that takes you through nine towns from Maloja to Castasegna near the Italian border, grab a map at the Bregaglia Tourist Office. It will also show you the historic places of interest along the way.

## Where to Stay



There are only four hotels in Maloja. All offer free parking, a restaurant or small café, and, in most instances, breakfast is included with an overnight stay.

## Hotels

Schweizerhaus & Postli is a traditional and trendy inn that is home to a gourmet restaurant, fondue grill and pizzeria. The rooms are comfy, with all amenities. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). ☎ 81-838-2828, fax 81-838-2829, [www.malojaschweizerhaus.ch](http://www.malojaschweizerhaus.ch).

The Hotel Longhin offers a family atmosphere with all the modern comforts, and a very good restaurant that serves up a wide array of international fare. (\$\$-\$\$\$).

☎ 81-824-3131, fax 81-824-3677, [www.hotel-longhin.ch](http://www.hotel-longhin.ch).

Hotel Maloja Kulm offers traditional Graubünden hospitality in a quality setting at the south end of the village.

(\$\$-\$\$\$). The restaurant specializes in regional dishes. A good spot for families with children. ☎ 81-824-3105, fax 81-8248-3466.



*Hotel Longhin*

Sporthotel is centrally located, and has good rooms, catering to the ski and adventure sports crowd. The fine restaurant specializes in regional cooking and includes a large bar, with an outdoor terraces. (\$\$-\$\$\$). ☎ 81-824-3126, fax 81-824-3490.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Hostels & Mountain Huts

The Maloja Youth Hostel has 54 beds and is open from January 1 to mid-March, late June to mid-October, and mid- to late December. Hauptstrasse, CH-7516 Maloja. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 81-833-3239, fax 81-833-3575, [www.youthhostel.ch/malajoa](http://www.youthhostel.ch/malajoa).

The Forno Mountainhut, at 8,442 feet elevation (2,574 m), is open from mid-March to mid-May, and from the end of June to the end of September. It is a 3½-hour hike from Maloja, and is a great spot for relaxing and taking photos. Contact Roberto Costa for reservations at ☎ 81-842-6130, or call the hut directly during the season at 81-824-3182.

## Camping



Campground Curtinac is open from early June to late September, and offers 95 camping sites, with easy access to nearby amenities, on the shores of the lake. Contact Max Pittin at CH-7516 Maloja. ☎ 81-824-3181, [www.campingtcs.ch](http://www.campingtcs.ch).

Bregaglia Valley Hikes: from the Maloja Pass, along the region southwest on highway 27 between Switzerland and Italy is what is known as the Val Bregaglia. This is great hiking country. You can get information and maps at the Bregaglia Tourist Office, in the town of Stampa, between Gorgonovo and Promontogno on Highway 27. Phone ☎ 81-822-1555, fax 81-822-1644, [www.bregaglia.ch](http://www.bregaglia.ch).

# Samedan & Celerina

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**S**amedan and Celerina are just two miles (3.2 km) northeast of St. Moritz on Route 27 and are usually considered suburbs of the great resort.

These smaller villages are great for hiking excursions, and the Samedan Tourist Office will provide you with maps and free

information at ☎ 81-852-5404, [www.samedan.ch](http://www.samedan.ch). Celerina lies at the base of the ridge that separates the Samedan Basin from the upper levels of the Engadina lakes. It is on the Inn River and, with its old stone houses adorned by sgraffito designs, it



*Celerina*

offers a quiet respite from St. Moritz. For information, contact the Celerina Tourist Office at ☎ 81-830-0011, fax 81-830-0019, [www.celerina.ch](http://www.celerina.ch). Both villages have ski lifts and ice-skating rinks, as well as lots of trails for hiking.

## Where to Stay



Check out the Hotel Chesa Quadratsch a in Samedan. Built in the 19th century, it was once a private home that has been converted into a hotel. Beautiful rooms with generous views. (\$\$\$\$). Closed mid-April to mid-June and from mid-October to mid-December. CH-7503 Samedan. ☎ 81-852-4257. In Celerina, you'll find the expensive Cresta Palace Hotel, an inn with rustic furnishings that is over



*Chesa Quadratsch*



*Cresta Palace Hotel*

100 years old. (\$\$\$\$). Hauptstrasse, CH-7505 Celerina. ☎ 81-836-5656, fax 81-836-5657, [www.crestapalace.ch](http://www.crestapalace.ch).

For more modestly priced lodgings, go to the Hotel Misani down the street. Open all year, this inn has

one of the finest restaurants in the area. Nice, cozy rooms at reasonable prices. (\$\$\$). Hauptstasse, CH-7505 Celerina. ☎ 81-833-3314, fax 81-833-0797.

## Where to Eat



For dining out, look no further than the Arvenstübli/Stuvetta, in the Hotel Quadratscha in Samedan.

Fish, wild game and grilled meats are the specialties served in this quaint restaurant, which features two combined dining areas. Excellent meals daily from noon-2 pm and 6-11:30 pm. Closed late April to early June, mid-October to mid-December. Reservations are recommended. (\$\$-\$\$\$). ☎ 81-852-4257.

## Zuoz

**Z**uoz is 12 miles (19 km) north-east of St. Moritz on Route 27 and is easily accessed by train and auto. Located right on the Inn River, it was once the center of the Engadina world, and is today one of the best examples of Engadina lifestyles in the area. Nearly all of the 1,200 residents speak Romansh. On the main square is the famous, privately-owned Planta House – a combination of two structures in traditional Engadina style – with white stucco and tiny windows.



*Zuoz*

Because it's a mini-resort town, you'll find skiing, horseback riding, and a ski school. The Zuoz Tourist Office is on Via Maistra and is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 3-6 pm. ☎ 81-854-1510. For the local ski school, ☎ 81-850-1717.

## Where to Stay



In Zuoz you can stay at the Posthotel Engiadina, a hard-to-miss inn because of the color – an off-pink hue. Built over 125 years ago, the hotel was originally used as a postal stop, and is now home to two of the best restaurants in the area. It has cozier rooms than the outdoor façade would suggest, with all modern amenities. (\$\$). Closed April-May, mid-October to mid-December. CH-7524 Zuoz. ☎ 81-854-1021, fax 81-854-3303, [www.hotelengiadina.ch](http://www.hotelengiadina.ch).



*Posthotel Engiadina*



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## S-Chanf

S-Chanf is just slightly northeast of Zuoz, and is one of the entrances to the Swiss National Park, which in the winter doubles as a cross-country ski area. The S-Chanf Tourist Office is on Via Maistra. ☎ 81-854-2255, fax 81-850-1765.

## Where to Stay



Here you'll find the Hotel Scaletta, a real charmer and a bargain. Built in 1624, this structure was originally used as a midway point for people traveling on horseback through the Engadina passes. Set only a few steps from the village



*Hotel Scaletta*



church, Hotel Scaletta is hard to miss – beautiful, stately and open year-round. The restaurant serves up hearty regional fare at reasonable prices. (\$\$). Via Maistra 52, CH-7525 S-Chanf. ☎ 81-854-0304, fax 81-884-0506, [www.hotelscaletta.ch](http://www.hotelscaletta.ch).

## Guarda

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**T**his is another tiny village set in the lower part of the valley Engadina just off of Highway 27. Guarda is at 5,413 feet above sea level (1,650 m) and, despite its remote location, has seen a revival in recent years. Narrow roads and restored houses with traditional paintings help to make this little village a wanderer's delight. It's close to the Swiss National Park and a great hideaway from the crowds during the high season. It was here that a remake of the movie *Heidi* was filmed.

### Switzerland's National Park



The Swiss National Park was founded on Swiss Independence Day, August 1, 1914, and was one of the first national parks in Europe. This is the only national park in Switzerland.

One-third of the park is Alpine forests, another third is Alpine meadows, and the rest is mountains. Located in the very east end of Switzerland, the park is a protected sanctuary where nature is left to its own with very little interference. You'll find the visitor center and park headquarters at the entrance, near the village of Zernez – where you can also see the white houses of Engadina, found nowhere else in Switzerland.

The walls of these houses are nearly three feet thick, in order to protect the inhabitants from the brutally cold winters (when temperatures get down to -20°F). Likewise, the towns of Scuol and Guarda are just to the north of the park, with S-Chanf at the far northwest edge. The south edge of the park presses up against the Italian border.

You can get to the park by a number of routes. If you're coming from outside of the Graubünden canton, you can take the Ratische Bahn, which will bring you to Zernez. From other points you can pick up one of the Swiss postal buses that routinely skirt around the perimeter, traversing the three major border roads. All make stops at Zernez, and access to the park is free.

You travel through the park on the Ofenpass – the only road within the entire park – either in your own vehicle or via bus, which leaves from Zernez. Walking on the Ofenpass is highly discouraged by park rangers – the road is narrow and there is heavy traffic. The buses stop at the nine parking lots within the park, where you can begin and end treks of various lengths. Once in the park, you'll travel on foot throughout its 105 square miles (273 square km), with a host of treks awaiting hikers of all levels.

There is no camping here, and the park is closed from November-May. Also, picking flowers or plants is strictly forbidden, and rangers patrol the park religiously. June and July are the best times to observe the Alpine flowers and birds, while September is the best month to see the ibex, chamois and deer. There are no campfires, mini-stoves, pets or bikes allowed, and visitors are responsible



for their own waste disposal. Visitors are forbidden to walk anywhere except on marked trails, and hunting or disturbing the wildlife or plant life is punishable by a 500Sfr fine. For information, contact the Swiss National Park, CH-7530 Zernez.

☎ 81-856-1282, fax 81-856-1740, [www.nationalpark.ch](http://www.nationalpark.ch).

## Hikes



The park is more hilly than mountainous for the most part, with altitudes from 4,592 feet to 10,496 feet (1,400-3,200 m) above sea level. Many of the hikes send trekkers above the tree lines, so appropriate footwear, warm clothing, and rain gear should be carried in a backpack at all times. Also, it is a good idea to include a small first aid kit, sunglasses, maps, munchies and water, along with your other provisions. Below you'll find a few of the most popular hikes of varying difficulties.

It's a five-hour hike from Zernez to the Chamanna Cluoza (five miles/eight km) for a night's rest at 6,175 feet (1,882 m), and then another four hours (4½ miles/7.2 km) the following day from here to the Vallun Chafuol, the next parking lot (P3). This is a fairly strenuous hike, through a coniferous forest with Alpine grass at your feet, followed by long, steep, rocky sections on the trail, but it is a great way to see chamois, marmots and golden eagles.

Another fun route suitable for any hiker is from Stabelchod-Val dal Botsch-Val da Stabelchod-Stabelchod. This trail is a 4.4-mile circular hike, with some steep and rocky sections, and it takes about four hours to complete without stops. You begin at parking lot eight (P8) – Stabelchod – and follow the trail to P7. From here you hike upward to Val dal Botsch and onward to the rest area at Margunet – probably the toughest part of the journey due to the increase in elevation (+1,456 feet/444 m) from Stabelchod). From here you can then descend through Val da Stabelchod back to either Stabelchod (P8) or parking lot nine (P9) – though no bus stops here. Be on the lookout for chamois, stags, marmots and bearded vultures.

If you only have an afternoon to spend in the park, then try this short hike to Alp la Schera, where you can bring a picnic lunch. You'll get a fine view into Italy and may catch a glimmer of a golden eagle cruising on the Alpine wind. There are actually three trails to Alp la Schera. You can begin at parking lot four (P4) – Punt la Drossa, near the entrance to the Livigno, Italy tunnel. Or you can start at parking lot five (P5) or parking lot six (P6) – Il Fuorn, near the hotel Il Fuorn. Or start at parking lot nine (P9), known as Buffalora. If you use the bus system, you



can combine any of these trails to avoid retracing your steps. This four-mile trail is basically very easy, with a few steep sections,

and takes about three hours to complete up to a high point of 6,925 feet (2,111 m). At Alp la Schera, there is a small hut where you can hang out and enjoy a picnic lunch, or just enjoy the view over the waters of Lake Livigno, Italy.

Hiking to Alp Grimmels is another easy, popular hike for young and old, and features a nice, even 4½-mile (7.2-km) trail that takes about three hours to complete. Expect to see a lot of marmots throughout the grassy meadows and near the forests. Great scenery abounds and this is a fun hike for any sunny day. There are three trails that circle around en route to Alp Grimmels. You can start at parking lot P1-Champlönch, which takes you through the valley of Champlönch, or you can access the trail by P2, P3, P5, and P6. Again, using the bus you don't have to retrace your steps back to the original starting point.

For those who want a bit more of a challenge, try this excursion to Alp Trupchun via the town of S-Chanf in the Inn Valley. From the town, you head east for 1.2 miles (1.9 km) on the road marked Varusch/National Park until the road ends. Follow the trail across the Ova da Varusch stream and continue to the Varusch hut, where a number of trails come together. You can either stay at this elevation or climb upward, where you'll encounter great views as the trail winds into the park.

Here is where you will likely see marmots stuffing their cheeks with various plants. Once at the 6,669-foot (2,040 m) summit, you can either walk back the way you came or continue on the trail to Fuorcla Trupchun Pass into Italy.

For a really fun and challenging hike, take the route from S-Chanf to Zernez (a 15-mile trek) via the Fuorcla Val Sassa Pass. Head out from S-Chanf to the Varusch hut, over the Ova da Varusch stream. When the trails converge, take the trail to the left (if you went straight you'd be heading on to Alp

Trupchun). This trail then crosses the Muschauns stream over a hardy-looking wooden bridge once and then back again before it begins to climb steadily upward, before finally reaching the Fuorcla Val Sassa, a 9,731-foot (2,857-m) pass. This trail is hard to follow in winter, so beware. Follow the trail through a forest and three miles (4.8 km) past the Fuorcla Val Sassa you should find yourself at the Chamanna Cluoza, where you can spend the night, or continue on down through the fields and meadows. The trail will cross the Spol River and eventually reaches the Ofenpass just outside of Zernez.

## Staying Overnight in the Park



Hotel Meisser fits in perfectly with her surroundings in Guarda. This 17th-century renovated farmhouse provides the perfect picture of an Engadina structure – with its baskets of fresh flowers, antiques and ambiance. There are actually two parts to this hotel, a main house and a newly converted farmhouse just across the street. Owners Kathrine and Ralf Meisser are gracious and accommodating hosts. Open May to November and December to April. CH-7545, Guarda. (\$\$-\$\$\$). ☎ 81-862-2132, fax 81-862-2480.



*Hotel Meisser*

You can also stay in the Chamanna Cluoza – a mountain chalet with rooms of varying sizes accommodating up to 68 people. It's situated in the middle of the Cluoza Valley. Built in 1910, this log cabin was renovated completely in 1993, with dormitories holding 44 beds, and the rest in private rooms. Reservations are required from late June to mid-October (☎ 81-856-1235), and at other times through hut wardens Dumeng and Claudia Duschletta (☎ 81-856-1689, fax 81-856-1686).

The Hotel & Restaurant Il Fuorn is right on the Ofenpass with bus service to the door at parking lot six (P6). Built in the early

20th century, this hotel is near the start of several lovely hikes. Run by the Denoth-Grass family, this sprawling inn – decorated in traditional Engadina style – has 60 beds in private rooms and a dormitory to accommodate 20 people at mid-range prices. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). ☎ 81-856-1226.

Camping sites are available in the nearby towns of Zernez, Susch, Scuol, Tschier, Mustair, Sta. Maria in Münstertal and Cinoos-Chel. No camping or pitching of tents is allowed anywhere in the National Park.

## Schuls

**T**his is a small village in the lower part of the valley Engadina, at an elevation of 4,081 feet (1,244 m) on Highway 27. While the main street is a lively part of this modern town, closer to the river you'll find traditional houses and a quieter section of the village worth a stroll. Schuls is also the home station for the "Rätische Bahn" (RHB) and is close to the entrance of the Swiss National Park. The Schuls (Scuol) Tourist Office is in the center of town, ☎ 81-861-2222, fax 81-861-2223, and will provide you with free maps of local, easy hikes.

Schuls is home to many health spas, including the Engadin Bad Scuol, in the town center on the main street. ☎ 81-861-2000. Here there are the first Roman-Irish baths, where you can soak for several hours before you get a stimulating massage with soap and brushes, all the while gazing at the mountains in front of you. You should also check out whitewater rafting expeditions on the River Inn. You can pay 100Sfr for a half-day trek or 150SF for a whole day. Swissraft Engadine is in Schuls. ☎ 81-911-5250.

## Camping



Camping Gurlaina lies across from the village on the Inn River and is open year-round. This is one of the best campgrounds we found, in terms of conveniences. Contact Janett Flurin at Gurlaina, CH-7550 Scuol. (\$) ☎ 81-864-1501, fax 81-864-0760.

## The Val Müstair Region

**T**he Val Müstair region is at the end of the Ofenpass, in the far southeastern foot of Graubünden; its name means “cathedral valley.” The surrounding mountains reach as high as 9,840 feet (3,000 m). In this area of six villages, the road signs are almost all in German and Italian.

Traveling south on the Ofenpass (Highway 28), you first encounter Tschieriv, Fuldera, Lü, Valchava, Sta. Maria im Münstertal, and, finally, Müstair. From here, there are many gorgeous hikes at all levels. The countryside is especially beautiful. The Val Müstair Tourist Office is in Tschieriv, CH-7532. ☎ 81-850-3929, fax 81-850-3930.

### Tschieriv



*Tschieriv*

Tschieriv, at 5,435 feet (2,284 m) above sea level, is the first village along highway 28 in the Val Müstair region, and its Romansh name literally means “a place to view.” It is from here that you’ll first catch a glimpse of Italy’s famous Ortler, just across the border at 12,808 feet (3,905 m).

Tschieriv is the center for all winter sports and an ideal place to

begin any hikes.

### Where to Stay & Eat



Hotel Staila-Sternen is beautiful, charming, quaint and extremely reasonable. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Home to three distinct restaurants, this is a great place to settle in for a night or two.

Definitely worth a visit! Restaurants Arvenstube, Speiserestaurant, and Bankettsall are all delightful, and each specializes in various types of dishes. 7532 Tschier. ☎ 81-858-5551, fax 81-858-5142.

Hotel Garni Turettas is another extremely charming and reasonable place to plop your head in Tschier. The rooms are spotless and quaint, and the restaurant and café both serve up hearty dishes. (\$\$). CH-7532 Tschier. ☎/fax 81-858-5852.

Gasthaus “La Vopa” was originally built in 1678 and is beautiful and typical of the Val Müstair region design – very pretty white stucco-like exterior, with red designs and accents. Inside, you’ll find simple, plain rooms with rustic charm. (\$\$). CH-7532 Tschier. ☎ 81-858-6248, fax 81-858-3650.

Hotel Süsom-Givè sits at just over 7,000 feet (2,100 m), facing the Ortler, providing clean rooms and a panoramic restaurant. There is access to the local ski area, Minschuns, and it’s a hiker’s paradise. They host many of the rowdier travelers. (\$-\$-\$). CH-7532 Pass dal Fuorn-Tschier. ☎ 81-858-5182, fax 81-858-6171.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Camping



Campground Staila is in the middle of Tschier and is close to hotels, restaurants, and shopping. There is also a heated pool, tennis courts and a children’s playground next to the campground, which campers may use free of charge. (\$). CH-7535 Tschier. ☎ 81-858-5628.

The TCS Campground (\$) offers year-round places to stake your tent. Contact Mario Gross for camping information and reservations. CH-7532 Tschier. ☎ 81-858-5628.

## Fuldera

At 5,379 feet (1,640 m), this is just beyond Tschier, and is a simple little farming village west of the main road, encased in the valley by a shroud of dark green conifers. The houses here are distinguished by the sgraffito decorations native to this valley, and the carpentry work is noted throughout Switzerland. Here you can escape with easy walks through the forest. The



Tourist Office in the town center will help you with maps and information.

## Where to Stay & Eat



The village hotel, Landgasthof Staila, offers clean rooms, and their restaurant serves regional specialties such as steinpilzrisotto. Staila is run by the Wymann family – mother and daughter attend the hotel guests, while son and father handle the restaurant duties. The restaurant serves up tasty regional fare and the wine cellar is an added treat. A great value for your money in a beautiful setting, both inside and out. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Available for singles, families and groups. CH-7533 Fuldera. ☎ 81-858-5160, fax 81-858-5021.

## Sta. Maria im Münstertal



This is a small village at the far-eastern edge of Val Müstair on Highway 28. Located at 4,454 feet (1,358 m) in a rural valley, it is the last stop before the tiny town of Müstair on the road which then crosses the border into the Italian valley town of Taufers. It is also the meeting point of two important roads in this region. The north/

south road branches in the middle of the village and, heading south, leads to the Umbrailpass into Italy, while the east/west route is the Ofenpass. The north/south road is usually closed in the winter.

The Engadina houses are typically stone, white-washed homes with ornate sgraffito decorations that include various religious or historic mottos and scenes. The town church, which was built in 1513, has an external wall with an impressive medieval mural. The town is also known for its exceptional handwoven products dating back to that same time. Hotels in this town are noted for their excellent cuisine, and glacier skiing can be undertaken year-round at Italy's Stilsfer, just a 45-minute ride south on the Umbrail Pass. If you're camping, con-

tact Clara Hoffmann at Camping Sta. Maria for reservations at ☎ 81-858-7133, fax 81-858-5079.

## Where to Stay & Eat



Hotel Alpina has been run by the same family for four generations, and appears more Italian in color and structure than Swiss on the outside. On the inside, however, you'll find a beautiful inn with classic Swiss comforts in a spotless setting. Very reasonable and the restaurant food is outstanding. (\$-\$\$). 7536 St. Maria. ☎ 81-858-5117, fax 81-858-5697.

Crusch Alba has been operated by seven generations of the same family and was erected in the 15th century. The beautiful white façade is highlighted with blooming flower boxes in every window, and the rooms come with all of the modern amenities. The adjoining Buendnerstube provides guests with regional specialties, and the former kitchen, now used as a lounge, contains antique baking devices. (\$-\$\$). 7536 St. Maria. ☎ 81-858-5106, fax 81-858-6149.

The local youth hostel has 62 beds. Open from January 1 to mid-March, mid-May to late October, and mid- to late December. (\$-\$\$). Chasa Plaz, CH-7536, Sta. Maria im Münstertal. ☎ 81-858-5052, fax 81-858-5496, [www.youthhostel.ch/sta.maria](http://www.youthhostel.ch/sta.maria).

If you're camping, contact Clara Hoffmann at Camping Sta. Maria for reservations at ☎ 81-858-7133, fax 81-858-5079.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Müstair

Müstair is situated at 4,090 feet (1,247 m) and is the last village before the Italian border. The village, home to 830 inhabitants, got its name from the Latin word for monastery (monasterium) and is the largest village in the area. The huge St. Johannes monastery in town dates



from the eighth century, and contains medieval frescos not to be missed if you're a church buff. It is still inhabited by Benedictine nuns today. Wintertime here is great for cross-country skiers, who can enjoy four miles (6.5 km) of well-groomed trails.

## Where to Stay & Eat



Hotel Liun provides guests with spa and "wellness holiday" packages that include hay baths, massages and guided walking tours – for 770Sfr. A huge, handsome building that is hard



*Hotel Liun*

to miss, run by the Caratsch-Oswald family. (\$-\$\$\$). CH-7537 Müstair. ☎ 81-858-5154, fax 81-858-6293.

Hotel Chavalatsch is beautiful and in the town center on the Hauptstrasse. Quaint, with clean and modern rooms. The restaurant offers regional specialties in an attractive pine-paneled setting; breakfasts here are hearty and filling. They offer very good value here for the money. (\$-\$\$). CH-7537 Müstair. ☎ 81-858-5732, fax 81-858-5350.



*Hotel Chasa Chalavaina*

Sibylla and Hans Rolli, at the far village. The grounds are open from May 1 through the end of October. Reservations can be requested at ☎ 81-858-5422.

Hotel Chasa Chalavaina was built in 1499 and retains all of the rustic charm of this tiny Swiss village. Jon Fasser is your attentive host in this simple and clean inn. (\$-\$\$). CH-7537 Müstair. ☎ 81-858-5468.

## Camping



This is available at Clenga, run by west edge of the

grounds are open from May 1 through the end of October. Reservations can be requested at ☎ 81-858-5410, fax 81-858-5422.

## Southwestern Graubünden

The San Bernardino Pass is the route from the southwesternmost area of Graubünden canton leading north to Chur. If you're traveling south on Highway 13, known as the San Bernardino Pass, then Roveredo is one of the last villages in the canton before you enter the sunny lower valley of the canton of Ticino, and the large city of Bellinzona. Though it's only 120 miles (193 km) by car from Roveredo to Chur, you can take a whole day to make the journey or several days, depending upon whether you want to stop for some overnight hiking trips or just enjoy the scenery. You can travel either via the main highway or on the older route, which runs parallel to the highway. Be careful in the wintertime, however, as the San Bernardino Pass can be covered with snow.

### THE SAN BERNARDINO PASS



*The San Bernardino Pass (Roland Zumbühl)*

At 6,773 feet (2,065 m), the pass was used by the Romans, who no doubt took advantage of its location between the Mesolcina Valley and the Rhine Valley. The Romans christened the pass *Mons Avium*, which means "bird mountain" in Latin. The symbol of San Bernardino today is called "Pizzo Uccello," which means the same thing in Italian.

The name of the village of San Bernardino was originally Gualdo de Gauareida, until 1400 when it was renamed for the Saint who lived there. During the early 1600s a chaplain's house was built to house two monks, who were to see that the pass remained open at all times, and to provide lodging for travelers. This house still exists today.

In 1823 the road was constructed and in 1860 excavations discovered the remains of Roman wooden baths. Both the new road and these excavations helped to stimulate the area economically. Wealthy people began to come to San Bernardino to seek out therapeutic remedies from the waters here. However, the two world wars put this area in a standstill for many years, and it wasn't until 1967 that San Bernardino began to experience a rise in tourism once again. This was mainly due to the construction of the San Bernardino tunnel-highway, which allows cars and trains to pass quickly from one side of the mountain range to the other.

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On main Highway 13, you'll travel north from the village of Roveredo up to Mesocco, leaving the Mediterranean fields along the way. There are a number of small villages along this route, which justify a stop or two, just for the scenery – especially at the Buffalora Waterfall, a double waterfall on the west side of the road between Lostallo and Soazza.

If you want to stay overnight, you can do so in Soazza, at the Al Cacciatore Inn – a pink hotel on the southern side of the village. Comfortable and cozy lodgings. (\$\$-\$\$\$). ☎ 91-831-1820, fax 91-831-1979.

At Mesocco, stop to visit the ruins of the Castello di Misox, before continuing on to the village of San Bernardino, which will take you through some fun twisting and turning if you're driving. Huge boulders, stones and rocks litter the area around San Bernardino. The Pass connects the Moesa River – a tributary of the Ticino – with the Po and Upper Inner Rhine Valley, known

as the Hinerrhein. You'll see glaciers here, including the Zapportgletscher and the Rheinquellhorn.

## Where to Stay & Eat



Brocco e Posta, in the center of town, is moderately priced and comfortable, with a swimming pool and sauna. (\$\$). ☎ 91-832-1105, fax 91-832-1342.

Hotel Bellevue looks like a typical Swiss chalet and is a good spot for families with kids. Located in the center of the village, with rustic charm and modern facilities. (\$\$). ☎ 91-832-1126, fax 91-832-1797.

Hotel Suisse is another family-oriented inn in the village center, and is home to a splendid restaurant that specializes in Italian and international dishes at very reasonable rates. (\$\$). ☎ 91-832-1662, fax 91-832-1197.

Youth Hostel San Bernardino is in a new building in town, with 148 beds in rooms for two, four, six, or eight persons. Adults 30Sfr, kids and teens 25Sfr per night. ☎ 91-827-1765, fax 91-827-3566.

When you are in San Bernardino, you might want to take a hike out to the Zapporthütte, at 7,465 feet (2,276 m), just northwest of the menacing Zapporthorn (10,338 feet, 3,152 m). This small mountain hut is great for skiers or photographers and hikers, and contains 35 beds. You can begin your trek at the parking lot on the north side of the San Bernardino Pass. For reservations, contact Anita Götte at CH-7414 Fürstenau. ☎ 81-651-1937 or on the hut phone at ☎ 81-664-1496.

## Excursions

When you leave San Bernardino, you travel east (Highway 13) up through the towns of Splügen and Sufers, from where you can hike to the Cufercalhütte, at 7,822 feet (2,385 m), which lies to the west, at the south of the Safiental mountain ridge, and offers 30 beds. To reserve a spot, contact Hans Ullius at ☎ 81-252-8717, fax 81-253-3055. At Avers-Roffla, the Rofflaschlucht will be on the western side of the road just before you reach Andeer, and is one of the most impressive waterfalls in Switzerland.

For a nice little side-trip, you can hike southward, following the signs to Innerferrera, via the Averserrhein Valley. The Averserrhein is a tributary of the Hinterrhein, and makes its way through this beautiful valley encompassed by imposing mas-sifs. This road will bring you all the way south to the tiny border village of Campsut, near the Italian boarder, and to the town of Cröt, where the road branches out in two directions. In Cröt you'll find the Avers-Cresta, a pretty little white church set on



*Avers-Cresta*

the hillside. The road eventually ends at Stettli, and you can simply re-trace your steps.

Once you return to Highway 13, you continue on to Andeer, where you travel through dense woods before the road bends north. Upon reaching the town of Zillis, you could stop to view the

Kirche St. Martin. The ceiling inside is considered to be one of the most valuable works of Romanesque art found anywhere in Switzerland, and is believed to have been finished in the 12th century. From here, you can walk or drive to the tiny village of Mathon, which sits on the slopes of Piz Beverin overlooking the Schons valley. Via Mala is farther north, just off the highway, and here you can take a nice hike down to the Rhine riverbed (via 345 steps).

The town of Thusis is farther north and in the valley, below the ruins of a castle and church – known as the Hohenrätien – that were destroyed in the 15th century. At Thusis you can also travel east, then slightly north and you'll come to Davos, or you can stay on Highway 13, which will bring you into Chur. If you opt for the eastern route, you have two more options, which will take you to St. Moritz – the Julier and Albula Passes.

The Julier Pass road begins at the north in the village of Tiefencastel, a little town in the Albula Valley, and then continues southward through the Oberhalbstein region, before finally ending in Silvaplana.

The Albula Pass road begins in Alvaneu-Bad at the north, and



*Thusis (Adrian Michael)*

runs parallel with the Albula River. If you stop in Bergün/Bravuogn along the way, you can take a railway up to Chants and hike to the surrounding glaciers or out to the Keschhütte, at 8,610 feet (2,625 m). This charming hut has 92 beds and is open year-round. The hut phone is ☎ 81-407-1134, or call Daniel Gianelli in Davos at ☎ 81-413-4647. The road will wind and twist through Preda and eventually end at La Punt, just north of St. Moritz, and south of Zuoz on Route 27. From here, you could also hike to the beautiful Chamanna d'Eschahütte, on the south slope of Piz Kesch. With 50 beds, it is open from mid-March to late April, and from late June to mid-October. ☎ 81-854-1755 or 81-833-4338 for reservations.

## Western Graubünden & the Oberalp Pass Road

**T**he western portion of this canton will find you traveling on Route 19 westbound from Chur through the Vorderrhein Valley on a road known as the Oberalp Pass, since it will eventually lead you over into the canton of Uri and the town of Andermatt. The village of Versam is a nice little place to visit, as it provides splendid views of the Vorab summits on the far side of the ravine. From here you can take a great trip south via car or bike on a winding, wild ride through mountain passes with splendid views, especially in the spring and summer months. Be pre-



pared if you're traveling by bike, however, as this could be strenuous for even the most fit bikers.

This region is known as The Safiental. The valley runs alongside the Rabiusa River and is seldom traveled by most tourists – it's the perfect spot for those who want a low-key hike or days away from the hustle and bustle of the bigger cities. The Swiss postal buses also run along this route. You'll pass through the village of Tenna, a great winter ski spot complete with ski and snowboarding school, great hiking trails, as well as a few shopping options and a couple of good restaurants. Check out Restaurant Alpenblick, open daily, except Mondays from 8 am-8 pm; the family of Fred and Zora Romer offer hearty and fresh fare. ☎ 81-645-1123. The local Raiffiese Imboden Bank is open Thursday from 8:15-10:45 am, and Friday from 2:30-4 pm only, and the local post office is open Monday-Friday from 9-10am, Tuesday and Thursday also from 3:30-5:15 pm and Saturdays 9-9:30 am.

From Tenna you'll continue traveling south along the two-lane road until you come to Safien Platz, a good spot to stay overnight or to get a bite to eat. At Safien Platz, you can also get money at the local Graubundner Kantonal Bank. Open Monday 3-5 pm, Wednesday and Friday, 9-noon. Closed Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. CH-7107 Safien Platz. ☎ 81-630-6000, fax 81-630-6003. The Safien Platz Tourist Office can help with hotels. ☎ 81-647-1209, fax 81-647-1322. There is a good Gasthaus in Safien Platz, operated by hosts Seraina Buchli-Bisatz and Rita Mathis-Brown. This bed and breakfast-style

abode is small, but clean and comfy, with dogs welcome. Prices range from 60Sfr per person, 30Sfr for kids (includes breakfast). CH-7107 Safien Platz. ☎ 81-647-1106, fax 81-647-1302.

From Safien Platz continue south to Thalkirch, where you can park your car or bike, with trails leading in all



*Church at Thalkirch (Dbachmann)*

directions. Rugged Swiss skiers stay here in the winter months too. If you are staying overnight, Family Zinski offers a 33-bed lodge and two restaurants, located only five minutes on foot from the parking lot. CH-7109 Thalkirch-Safiental. ☎/fax 41-816-47-1107.

Ilanz is a 14th-century village that also warrants a stop. This town is known as the former capital of the original “Grey League” of Graubünden. From here you can go to either Vals or Vrin for more breathtaking views of the surrounding Alps. The village of Trun is known as the home of the abbots of Disentis, whose massive Ligia Grischa was built in 1674 to house the abbots. The structure is open to visitors, and is a delight to those who enjoy Baroque architecture.



*Trun (Adrian Michael)*

# Central Switzerland

1. Africa Museum; Fishing Museum; Kunsthau Zug; Museum im Castlet; Prehistoric Museum Villette Park; Hirsgarten; Convent of Frauenthal; St. Jacobs Church
2. Reusspitz Nature Preserve; hamlet of St. Wolfgang
3. Schwandegg Castle; convents of Menzingen and Gubel
4. Höllochgrötte (Hölloch Cave); Rathaus; Bethlehemhaus; Ital-Redinghaus; St. Martin's Church; Schwytzerland Schaukaiserie; Bundesbriefmuseum
5. Arth-Goldau Train Station; Nature & Tierpark Goldau; Bergsturz-Museum Goldau
6. Weg der Schweiz (The Swiss Way); Detting Kirsch Distillery; Zraggen Lauerz Kirsch distillery
7. Klosterkirche monastery and Black Madonna Mt. Rigi; Arth-Goldau Bahn and Vitznau Bahn cog railways; Panorama Aerial Cableway
8. Protestant Church; Kunsthau William Tell statue; Tell Museum
9. St. Gotthard Pass
10. Kirche of St. Peter & Paul; Arnold von Winkelreid Fountain; Kulture & Brauchtum Museum
11. Archery Tower & Armory; Heimatmuseum; Museum Bruder Klaus
12. The Kloster



NOT TO SCALE

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# Central Switzerland

Central Switzerland is made up of cantons Lucerne, Zug, Schwyz, Glarus, Uri, and the half-cantons of Nidwalden and Obwalden. Known as the “Cradle of the Confederation,” the founding cantons of Schwyz,

Glarus and Uri offer an insight into the history of Switzerland from the beginning – dating back to 1291 when representatives of these three came together on the Rütli Meadow at the northern end of Lake Uri. This area is also referred to as “Inner Switzerland” and is a good starting point for many journeys – via rail, auto or ship. Both Lake Lucerne and Lake Uri offer abundant ship excursions, and you’ll find numerous cycling and hiking trails throughout the region. Likewise, cantons Zug, Nidwalden and Obwalden are interconnected by highways, secondary roads and rail service – making travel through the region a simple matter. The vast canton of Lucerne, excluding the city of Lucerne itself, contains many excellent spots for picnics and walking excursions.

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# Canton Lucerne (LU)

## At A Glance

**T**he canton of Lucerne (spelled Luzern in German) appears as the heart of Switzerland on the map – wedged firmly between the cantons of Bern, Aargau, Zug, Schwyz and Obwalden. It is the ninth-largest canton in terms of land mass (925 square miles/2,405 square km), and the seventh-largest in terms of population, with 366,668 residents, who are primarily German-speaking Roman Catholics. The northern end of the canton is relatively flat and home to many small farms. The southern end is more rolling and heavily forested, and is a great spot for scenic hikes and relaxing walks.

The coat of arms for Lucerne is a simple blue and white pattern similar to that of canton Zürich's shield. The shield is split down the middle vertically, with blue on the left and stark white on the right.



## Lucerne

**T**he capital city of the canton is home to 180,000 inhabitants, making it Switzerland's eighth-largest city by population. It is also one of the most popular tourist destinations in Switzerland, for good reason. Tourism began in this city as early as 1845, when the first major hotel opened.

More soon followed. There are a number of ports and a long promenade along the Vierwaldstättersee (Lake Lucerne) now allows visitors to take a peaceful stroll near one of Switzerland's loveliest lakes. The historic Old Town is split by the Reuss River and empties into Lake Lucerne just past the Chapel Bridge near the main train station.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



Lucerne Tourism Ltd. is in the main train station, at Zentralstrasse 5, CH-6002 Lucerne. ☎ 41-227-1717, fax 41-227-1718, [www.luzern.org](http://www.luzern.org). It is open

Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am-6 pm and Sunday from 9 am-1 pm. The tourist office for central Switzerland (Zentralschweiz Tourismus) is on Alpenstrasse 1, CH-6002 Lucerne. ☎ 41-418-4080, fax 41-418-4081.



*For hotel reservations in central Switzerland, call Zentralschweiz Tourismus at ☎ 41-318-4141, fax 41-318-4140. You can purchase a museum pass for 29Sfr at either of the above tourist offices that allows free entrance for one month into all of Lucerne's museums.*

## Train Station

If you're into train stations, then you'll love Lucerne's ultramodern one, with its huge overhead glass atrium and many shops. It's great fun to wander through the two levels of the station, offering everything from freshly cut flowers to fresh baked goods, chocolates and souvenirs, as well as toiletries. This is also the junction of Switzerland's four major train lines, and you can get to any destination in Europe from here. You can rent bikes for 27Sfr per day, from 7 am-7:45 pm daily. For rail service information, ☎ 90-03-0300.

## Post Office

The main post office in Lucerne is at Bahnhofplatz 4, CH-6001 Lucerne. Open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. ☎ 41-229-9523, fax 41-210-0301.

## Codes

The area code for Lucerne is 41 and the post codes range from 6000 to 6016.

## Internet Access

This can be found at Café-Bar Parterre, daily from 7 am-12:30 am, Sunday and holidays from 9-12:30 am. Mythenstrasse 7, CH-6002 Lucerne.

## Medical Services

Lucerne has an excellent reputation for medical services. The Lucerne Cantonal Hospital can be reached at ☎ 41-205-1111, and emergency service is available in the city at ☎ 41-211-1414 or via the national emergency service number of

☎ 144. For children's emergency service dial ☎ 41-205-3166 and for poison information call ☎ 41-251-5151. For police dial ☎ 117 and for fire ☎ 118.

## Getting Around



Lucerne's Old Town is car-free, so you can get around only on foot. The rest of the city can be explored on a bike or by car. But the main part of Lucerne that you'll want to visit is the Old Town, and it is easily seen in a few hours on foot.



*Old Town Lucerne (Simon Koopmann)*

The Lucerne Tourist Office sponsors daily city walks from May 1-October 31 at 9:45 am. The walk features an English-speaking guide for the two-hour journey and costs 16Sfr. From November 1 to

April 30 the walk is available on Wednesday and Saturday only. You may also want to purchase a Tell Pass from the tourist office if you plan on traveling via boat, mountain train or postal bus throughout the canton of Lucerne. The prices range from 135 to 184Sfr for two to five days of travel from April through October. You'll also want to grab a Junior Card that offers free travel for kids under the age of 16 if they are traveling with an adult.

## Adventures

### On Foot



The 7,000-foot (2,134-m) mountain of Pilatus can be reached via the world's steepest cogwheel railway on a four- to five-hour journey. You can purchase tickets for the trip through the Lucerne Tourist Office or

from the Pilatus Bahnen, Schlossweg 1, CH-6010 Lucerne. ☎ 41-329-1111, fax 41-329-1112. For information on weather atop Pilatus, ☎ 41-329-1129.

To visit the 10,000-foot (2,380-m) Titlis mountain, the highest point in central Switzer-



*Mt Pilatus (Robysan)*

land, you can take the first revolving aerial cable car in the world, which provides an exhilarating 360-degree panoramic view. From Lucerne you take the train for an hour to the village of Engelberg. Here you board a cable car for the 45-minute ride to one of the most breathtaking Alpine glacier crevasses in all of Europe. You can purchase tickets from the Lucerne Tourist Office or from Titlis Rotair, CH-6391 Engelberg. ☎ 41-639-5050, fax 41-639-5060. For the Titlis station and weather information, ☎ 41-639-5061.

Mount Rigi is known as the "Queen of the Mountains" and deservedly so. It is where Europe's first cogwheel mountain train was built and operated, and at the top there are 13 mountain lakes and spectacular views.

For a great five-hour journey, take the Rigi-Kulm excursion, which is a combination of cogwheel railway train, cable car and boat trip on Lake Lucerne. You can purchase tickets at the Lucerne Tourist Office or through Mt. Rigi Railways, CH-6356 Rigi Kaltbad. ☎ 41-397-1128, fax 41-397-1982.

## On Water

You can rent pedal, motor and sailboats through Marina Charter from April through October. Alpenquai 13, CH-6010 Lucerne. ☎ 41-360-7944. If you want to go swimming in Lake Lucerne, then check out Lido, on Lidostrasse, CH-6002 Lu-



cerne. ☎ 41-370-3806. Swimming times vary according to weather and lake conditions. You can rent windsurfing equipment or schedule lessons through Dobler & Ingold, on Alpenquai 13, CH-6010 Lucerne. ☎ 41-360-8244.



*Paddle steamers (Ivo Meier)*

One of the best ways to see the historic sites around Lake Lucerne is to ride one of their paddle steamers. One of the best is *The Wilhelm Tell Express*. It connects two of the prettiest parts of Switzerland – Central Switzerland and Ticino – via two daily connections from Lucerne to either Locarno or Lugano or vice-versa. You can enjoy a superb meal while cruising along the Lake Lucerne coastline on a first-class vintage paddle steamer. Once the boat has reached Flüelen, you'll disembark and step onto a first-class panorama train that will whisk you via the spectacular Gotthard route to the Ticino region. This package includes reserved seats on boat and train, a hot or cold dish on the boat, and travel documentation. *The Wilhelm Tell Express* runs twice a day from May 1 to the end of October. The obligatory surcharge to a valid ticket or pass in 1st class is CHF 38 and it includes seat reservations and lunch.

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# Lucerne

1. Kornmarkt (Corn Market);  
Altes Rathaus (Town Hall)
2. Kapellbrücke (Chapel Bridge) and  
Wasserturm (Water Tower)
3. Spreuerbrücke
4. Lucerne Naturmuseum
5. Train Station; Tourist Office
6. Jesuit Church
7. Culture & Congress Center;  
Neues Kunstmuseum (Fine Arts Museum)
8. Picasso Museum
9. Vehrkershaus (Swiss Transport Museum)
10. Richard Wagner Museum
11. Historisches Museum
12. Bourbaki-Panorama
13. Löwendenkmal (Lion Monument)
14. Gletschergarten
15. Musegg Wall

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## Golf

Lucerne has its own 18-hole public golf course. Call ahead to schedule a tee time at the Lucerne Golf Club. ☎ 41-420-9798.

## Sightseeing in Lucerne



There are a great number of historic squares and fountains in the Old Town of Lucerne. The main square is the Kornmarkt (Corn Market, the site of the old grain market) that today includes such tourist sites as the Town Hall.

### Landmarks & Historic Sites

Altes Rathaus (Town Hall) was first used in 1606 and today continues to be the home of the Lucerne city council. You'll find this historic building on the Rathausquai at the north end of the Rathaus-Steg (Town Hall Bridge).



*The Kapelbrücke (iWojstyl)*

The Kapelbrücke (Chapel Bridge) and its Wasserturm (Water Tower) is a landmark of Lucerne and was painstakingly restored after a tragic fire destroyed most of it in 1993. It was originally the oldest (built in 1333) roofed wooden bridge in Europe, and contains a series of paintings on each section of its ceiling beams.

Also, midway across the bridge you'll find a Wasserturm (water tower) and a small souvenir shop. The reconstruction of the bridge cost \$2.1 million and it was reopened for foot traffic in spring 1994. It is wheelchair-accessible.

The Spreuerbrücke (Mills Bridge) was built in 1407 and later restored in the late 1800s. It's narrower than its sister Chapel Bridge. It also includes a series of paintings on its interior walls that depict the 14th-century European plague.

The Musegg Wall is an 860-yard-long (786-m) fortress wall that was built from 1350 to 1408 and features nine distinct towers: the Nölili Tower (Guild Hall and Archive of the Safran Guild), the Männli Tower, the Luegisland Tower, the Wacht Tower, the Zyt Tower, with a clock dating from 1535, the Schirmer Tower with its gate, the Pulver Tower, the Allenwinden Tower and the Dächli Tower. The wall forms the northern half of the Old Town and was originally part of a wall that encompassed the city during the 14th and 15th centuries.



*The Musegg Wall*

The Bourbaki-Panorama is a series of wrap-around paintings created by 19th-century artist Edouard Castres. The paintings are of various battles fought in Switzerland. Admission is 6Sfr. Open daily from 9 am-6 pm. Lowenplatz 11, CH-6000 Lucerne. ☎ 41-412-3030, fax 41-412-3031.

The Jesuit Church (Jesuitenkirche) is a beautiful Baroque church that sits on the Ruess River, with a pair of lovely green onion domes set upon imposing towers. This church was built between 1666 and 1673 in dedication to St. Franz Xaver and the two towers were completed in 1893. Open daily from 6 am-6:30 pm. On the



*The Jesuit Church*

Bahnhofstrasse just west of the Rathaus-Steg. CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-210-0756.

## Museums

The Neues Kunstmuseum (Fine Arts Museum) is a collection of contemporary art and 19th-century Swiss landscapes. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-5 pm, on Wednesdays from 10 am-8 pm. You can find this museum inside Lucerne's Kultur and Kongress Zentrum (Culture & Congress Center), just east of the Bahnhofplatz. Admission is 10Sfr for adults, 8Sfr for kids or students. Europlatz 1, CH-6000 Lucerne. ☎ 41-226-7800.

The Picasso Museum is just west of Chapel Bridge at the Rathausquai on the north side of the Reuss River. This was home to the famous painter and contains a variety of his work, plus over 100 photographs of the artist. Admission is 6Sfr. Open from 10 am-6 pm. Am-Rhyn-Haus, Furrengasse 21, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-410-3533, fax 41-410-1773.

The Vehrkershaus (Swiss Transport Museum) is the largest museum dedicated to transportation in Europe, and is home to an IMAX theater. Admission is 21Sfr. Open daily, 9 am-6 pm from April-November, 10 am-5 pm November-March. Lidostrasse 5, CH-6006 Lucerne. ☎ 84-885-2020, fax 41-375-7500. ☎ 41-375-7575 for the IMAX theater.

The Richard Wagner Museum is at the site where the composer lived from 1866 to 1872. You'll see his musical instruments and personal items. It's on the lake, two miles from the city center, and can be reached by driving south on the frontage road parallel to the lake. In summer, motorboats leave every hour from in front of the railway station (rail passes are valid for the trip). Or you can take buses 6, 7 or 8. Admission is 5Sfr. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm, closed Monday. Richard Wagner Weg 27, CH-6016 Lucerne. ☎ 41-360-2370.

Historiches Museum is in a 1567 armory that displays weapons, flags, sculptures and scenes from Swiss life throughout the ages. Admission is 6Sfr. Open Tuesday-Friday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm, weekends from 10 am-5 pm. Closed Monday. Pfistergasse 24, CH-6000 Lucerne. ☎ 41-228-5424, fax 41-228-5418.

The Lucerne Naturmuseum displays scenes from local natural history. Admission is 6Sfr. Open Tuesday-Friday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm, weekends from 10 am-5 pm. Closed Mon-

day. Kasernenplatz, CH-6003 Lucerne. ☎ 41-228-5411, fax 41-228-5406.

## Parks & Gardens

Lucerne's main city garden is known as the Gletschergarten (Glacier Garden), also home to the Lion Monument, just east of Zürichstrasse on the north side of Old Town. The Löwendenkmal (Lion Monument) is a beautiful stone memorial – the oldest preserved figure monument in Switzerland – and was carved in memory of the 786 Swiss men who perished while defending Louis XIV and Marie Antoinette in the

Tuileries attack of 1792. The Glacier Garden was created by the run-off waters from nearby glaciers, and includes a mirror maze built for the 1896 Paris Exhibition. Admission is 9Sfr.

Open daily from 9 am-6 pm, April-October, and from 10 am-5 pm, November-March. Denkmalstrasse 4, CH-6006 Lucerne. ☎ 41-

410-4340, fax 41-410-4310. [www.gletschgarten.ch](http://www.gletschgarten.ch).



*The Löwendenkmal*

### TAKE A TRIP TO SURSEE

While in Lucerne, it is worth your time to visit the lakeside village of Sursee, at the northwest corner of the Sempachersee (Lake Sempach). Known as the “golden village,” Sursee has a delightful Old Town, with its historic buildings carefully restored over the past 25 years to their original dark golden colors.

You'll find many old buildings and churches from the Middle Ages, as well as a wide variety of cafés and shops run by local artisans.

The Sursee Tourist Office is at Parkweg 5, CH-6210 Sursee, ☎ 41-921-1977, fax 41-921-0108, and can provide you with maps of the city. There are also plenty of hiking and walking paths around the lake, and a number of opportunities for watersports such as windsurfing, sailing and boating.



*Rathaus in Sursee*

You can also take a wonderful one- to two-hour train ride on the Sursee-Triengen-Bahn, a historic steam locomotive that makes a wide circle around the village, with various stops for photo opportunities. There is a dining car, and a bar car available as well. You can get information on times through the tourist office or contact the office for the Sursee-Triengen-Bahn at Postfach 182, CH-6210 Sursee. ☎ 41-921-4030, fax 41-921-4284.

If you want to stay overnight and enjoy a meal, check out the following inns. The Hotel Bellevue at the Lake is a beautiful medieval hotel with gorgeous views of the lake and Alps. Near the sports center, it includes a bar and excellent in-house restaurant. The outside of the hotel is quite beautiful, with stucco walls and capped roofs. (\$-\$-\$-\$). The restaurant is open Tuesday-Sunday from 8 am-midnight, and closed Monday. Bellevueweg 7, CH-6210 Sursee. ☎ 41-925-8110, fax 41-925-8111. The Hotel Hirschen is a small, family-run inn that is beautiful and quaint on the outside and just as lovely inside.

Leonard Wust and his family have carefully maintained this historic building, which also has a gourmet restaurant serving wonderful meals in all price ranges (\$-\$-\$-\$-\$). With its warm atmosphere, this hotel feels more like a home. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Open year-round. CH-6210 Sursee. ☎ 41-921-1048, fax 41-921-2709.

## Shopping

There are lots of shops on the Kapellgasse in Old Town, and outside this area you'll find that the city is typical of a large European city with its shops, malls and outlets. Two Swisschain department stores (Globus, on Pilatusstrasse 4, ☎ 41-227-0707, and Manor, on Weggisgasse 5, ☎ 41-419-7699) both offer less-pricey souvenirs as well as clothes, home items and toiletries. For embroidered and lace goods, look to Neff, at Löwenstrasse 10, ☎ 41-410-1965, or Sturzenegger, on Schwanenplatz 7, ☎ 41-410-1958. For gifts, Lucernemade handicrafts and souvenirs, check out Ordning & Reda, on Hertensteinstrasse 3, ☎ 41-410-9506; Casa Grande, on Grendelgasse 6, ☎ 41-418-6071; or Schmid-Linder on Denkmalstrasse 9, ☎ 41-410-4346.

The finest watch and jewelry shop is Bucherer, on Schwanenplatz 5, ☎ 41-369-770, and for sporting equipment and clothing look to Bannwart Sport AG, at Weggisgasse 14, ☎ 41-410-4538.

## Where to Stay



Romantik Hotel Wilden Mann is one of

the most unusual and pleasant finds in the city. A Lucerne landmark since 1517, this charming inn was originally a group of small houses. Here, each room has been individually decorated with fine detail. Antiques and works of art



*Romantik Hotel Wilden Mann*

can be found throughout this splendid inn, which also features three dining areas. One is a fine French restaurant, the second is the relaxed Swiss-style Burgerstube, and the third is an outdoor garden terrace for summer dining. Open year-round and run by hosts Ursula and Charles Zimmermann. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$+).



Bahnhofstrasse 30, CH-6000 Lucerne. ☎ 41-210-1666, fax 41-210-1629.



*Lobby in Hotel Ambassador*

year-round, this hotel is a quick five- to 10-minute walk from the train station. Pets are allowed. Zürichstrasse 3, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-418-8100, fax 41-418-8190, [www.ambassador.ch](http://www.ambassador.ch).

Hotel Krone is in the heart of Lucerne's Old Town and features a beautiful outside façade in traditional Swiss style, while the interior has all modern amenities. Breakfast is included, and a warm family atmosphere is apparent in the small touches found throughout this inn. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$). Weinmarkt 12, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-419-4400, fax 41-419-4490.



*Hotel Krone*

Hotel des Balances has a stunning riverside location along the shores of the Reuss River that dates back to 1200; it's very near to the local fish and wine market (Weinmarkt Square). This four-star hotel offers all modern amenities in lovely, large rooms and provides wonderful views of the lake and mountains. Within walking distance of all the hotspots of



*Hotel des Balances*

Lucerne's Old Town. Features a splendid restaurant, Rotes Gatter, that serves gourmet dishes. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Weinmarkt, CH-6000 Lucerne. ☎ 41-418-2828, fax 41-418-2838.

Grand Hotel National was first built in 1870, and was the original base of Cesar Ritz, who eventually designed and built the world famous Ritz luxury hotels that are so well known today. This hotel has a massive façade that takes up a good portion of the promenade along

the lakeside and is hard to miss. There is a snappy piano bar, restaurant and all modern amenities. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Haldenstrasse 4, CH-6003 Lucerne. ☎ 41-419-0909, fax 41-419-0910.



*Grand Hotel National*

Des Alpes is in the heart of Old Town on the river, and has large, homey rooms in a splendid location with great views of Lucerne, the Alps and the lake. A good deal for the money. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Rathausquai 5, CH-6003 Lucerne. ☎ 41-410-5825, fax 41-410-7451.

The Löwengraben is a former jail that is now home to a funky hotel. The 51 rooms are situated atop restaurants and a bar, which adds to the uniqueness of this lively spot. (\$\$). Löwengraben 18, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-417-1212, fax 41-417-1211, [www.lowengraben.ch](http://www.lowengraben.ch).

Hotel Alpha is in a quiet yet central spot in Lucerne, a quick walk to the bus stop, and a 10-minute walk to the railway station and the lake. Contains a nice small library and two community

TV rooms. The rooms are small, but comfortable and very clean. Dogs are allowed and breakfast is included in the rates. Open year-round. (\$-\$\$). Zahringerstrasse 24, CH-6003 Lucerne. ☎ 41-240-4280, fax 41-240-9131.

The Youth Hostel in Lucerne is open year-round and has 194 beds. It's just north of Old Town, on the shores of the Rotsee (Red Lake). They have all types of rooms for singles, couples and groups. This is one of the best Youth Hostels in Switzerland. (\$-\$\$). Am Rotsee, Sedelstrasse 12, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-420-8800, fax 41-420-5616, [www.youthhostel.ch/luzern](http://www.youthhostel.ch/luzern).

## Camping



Camping is available at the Lido Campsite, open March-October. (\$). Lidostrasse, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-370-2146, fax 41-370-2145.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



The Old Swiss House has been tempting tourists since 1859 with its Swiss and French cuisine. The half-timbered house has stained-glass windows, huge oak doors and wooden stairways, and the walls are adorned with beautiful oil paintings. It is well known throughout the city for its fancy *Wienerschnitzel*, calf's liver and veal. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 11:30 am-midnight. Reservations recommended. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Löwenplatz 4, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-410-6171.

Scala Restaurant features a 1920s Art Deco design with beautiful views of the Alps and Lake. The menu ranges from à la carte to fresh pasta dishes, and the meals are carefully prepared. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Located in the Hotel Montana, open daily. Adligenwilerstrasse 22, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-410-6565, fax 41-410-6676.

Restaurant Spatz has a great winter garden terrace (enclosed in glass) so you can view the goings-on year-round. The menu offers meat, fish and vegetables, with the house special being the "Luzerner Kùgelipastetli." (\$\$-\$\$\$). Located in Hotel Spatz. Obergrundstrasse 103, CH-6005 Lucerne. ☎ 41-310-6348, fax 41-310-1084.

Mr. Pickwick Pub is in Hotel Pickwick and serves up an authentic English breakfast all day long, as well as all types of sandwiches, burgers and Irish stew. Only 600 yards from the train station on the banks of the Reuss River in Old Town, with a great view of the "Kapell-bridge." Open Monday-Sunday from 11:30 am-midnight. (\$-\$\$). The hotel has good, simple rooms at reasonable rates, and pets are welcome here. Rathausquai 6, CH-6004 Lucerne. ☎ 41-410-5927.

## Canton Zug (ZG)

### At a Glance

**T**he canton of Zug is set on the shores of Lake Zug, surrounded by the Alpine foothills and green, rolling pastures.

Lake Zug is the sixth-largest lake in Switzerland – running north and south for nine miles (14.5 km), and is divided by the Kiemen peninsula. The canton sits snugly in between four other cantons – with Lucerne and Aargau to the west and north-west, while Zürich is on the northern side and Schwyz meanders along the southern border. The cities of Zürich and Lucerne are each only 30 minutes away by car or train.

The population of this canton has more than doubled since 1960 and it is now home to some 108,580 German-speaking citizens who are mostly Roman Catholic. This increase in population has been in response to the growth of international trade and industries within Canton Zug. Electronic technology is one of the largest industrial sectors. The growth of both population and industry was initially spurred by low taxes here. However, 45% of the canton is still used for agricultural purposes.

Zug is thought to have first been established in 858 as a trading post for the Gotthard route. Then, in 1315, a fierce battle (the Battle of Morgarten) took place between the Confederates and the Habsburgs on the shores of the tiny Agerisee, which lies east of Lake Zug beyond the Zugerberg. Zug then joined the Swiss Confederation in 1352 – the seventh canton to do so – along with Glarus. Today there are 11 distinguishable communities within Canton Zug. Oberaegeri, Unteraegeri, Menzingen

and Neuheim make up the mountain regions of the canton, while Stadt Zug (city of Zug), Baar, Steinhausen, Cham, Huenenberg and Walchwil comprise the valley regions around the area of Lake Zug. Zug is the largest municipality in terms of population, followed by Baar and Cham.

The coat of arms shows a blue horizontal bar that cuts through the middle of the otherwise white shield.


## The City of Zug



Zug (Baikonur)

**F**ounded in 1803, Stadt Zug is the capital of the canton and home to 22,314 citizens. The main attraction is the *Altstadt*, where many of the buildings are 500 years old or more, and the streets are mostly auto-free. You'll want to take in the 1557 Zytturm (clocktower) in Kolinplatz, the medieval village center. The shields

just below the clockface represent the first eight cantons to join the Swiss confederation, while the blue and white tiles above it show the cantonal colors. The fountain here was dedicated to Wolfgang Kolin, who bore the flag when the Swiss army was defeated in the 1422 Battle of Arbedo.

 You will notice an abundance of cherry trees in Zug, and the *Zuger kirschtorte*, a delightfully sinful combination of fresh cherries, almonds, pastry and cherry brandy, is found in most Zug restaurants and cafés.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Tourist Office of Canton Zug is at Alpenstrasse 16 in Stadt Zug. They provide information, maps, tours and weekend excursions for the entire canton.

There are a variety of hikes and specialized walking tours that can be arranged through this office. CH-6304 Zug. ☎ 41-711-0078, fax 41-710-7920, [www.zugtourismus.ch](http://www.zugtourismus.ch).

## Train Station

Zug's train station is less than half a mile north from the village center and offers bike rental and a currency exchange. Bikes are available for rent at no charge from May to October in Zug, Baar and Cham. From this station, you can connect to virtually any spot in Switzerland via rail.

## Post Office

The Zug Post Office is at Postplatz 1 and is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am to noon. ☎ 41-729-5252, fax 41-729-5255.

## Codes

The area code for Zug is 41, and the postal codes are CH-6300 or CH-6301 (Zug), CH-6302 (Zug 2, Baarerstrasse), CH-6303 (Zug 3, Herti), CH-6304 (Zug 4, Bahnhof), and CH-6305d (Zug 5, Annahme).

## Media

The *Neue Zuger Zeitung* is published daily, Monday through Saturday, and provides cantonal and city news. The *Zuger Presse* is published three times a week while the *Zuger Woche* is published every Wednesday and is free. *Radio Sunshine* is the main radio station for the canton, at 94.2FM.

## Getting Around



There are 347 miles (559 km) of hiking trails throughout the canton, and most are suitable for families and older folks.

You'll find countless bike and mountain biking trails through the canton. Zug's *Altstadt* is best explored on foot, and boat trips abound at Lake Zug's Schiffsstaion.

## Adventures

### On Foot



For guided walking tours of Stadt Zug's old city, contact Pauline Hruza at ☎ 41-780-3105. Industrial educational tours, which give you a profile of Zug's history up to the present, can be arranged through the Verein Industriepfad Lorze, CH-6304 Zug. ☎ 41-729-4069.

Known as one of the "Seven Wonders of Switzerland," the Höllgrotten, or Hell Caves, are a great excursion for a rainy day. These unique dripstone caves are near the town of Baar. You'll see stalagmites, stalactites, ponds and unusual rock formations. The walk through the caves can be as long or as short as you want to make it, but on average it takes slightly less than an hour. You can either walk to the caves via a path from the Baar train station or hike, drive or ride a bike from Zug. Admission is 5-9Sfr. There is also a small restaurant (☎ 41-761-6605; closed Monday) at the caves. Höllgrotten, CH-6340 Baar. ☎ 41-761-8370, fax 41-760-3620.

The Zugerberg is a little mountain by Alpine standards, at just 3,241 feet (988 m), but offers impressive views of various mountain ranges in a panoramic setting. Take Bus #11 or drive to Schöneegg and grab the funicular to the top. There are a number of hikes you can take from here:

There's a two-hour hike from Zugerberg to Walchwil. From the summit, follow the signs along the trail as it twists and winds near the Lotenbach stream. The path will then turn and lead you through a forest, the Girwald, and into the Dietschwand (an old farm road) as you continue toward Lake Zug. You'll eventually be on the Vorderbergstrasse (literally, the Front Mountain Street) and pass the St. Ann chapel coming into Walchwil. From here, you can take a boat or bus back to Zugerberg.

For a more demanding hike (not recommended for seniors or kids), try the trail from Zugerberg to Sildspitz, which will take up to seven hours. Leaving from Zugerberg, you follow the trail south at a fairly even level, until you come to the start of a climb up Wildspitz, at 4,800 feet (1,580 m), the highest point in Zug. Here you'll enjoy impressive views of the Grien mountain

range. You can either retrace your steps or head back around the Agerisee (Lake Ageri) toward Unterägeri.

There are also three round-trip walks for families and seniors that are easy, and named after animals: the fox (2½ hours), the rabbit (two hours), and the deer (four hours). All of these begin at the Zugerberg mountain station.

## On Water

On both the Zugersee and the Agerisee you'll find many boating possibilities, including pedaloes, rowboats, and fishing boats for rent, as well as boat excursions on both lakes.

Surfing and sailing lessons are also available. For Lake Zug, contact the Immensee Surfing School at ☎ 41-780-8217 or the Zug Surfing School at the TCS Campingplatz in Zug at ☎ 41-780-2666. For the Agerisee, contact Sailing School Agerisee at Waldhofstrasse 6, CH-6314 Unter, ☎ 41-750-5735, fax 41-750-5733. Open Tuesday through Sunday, noon-8 pm.

## Winter Sports

Zug is home to tobogganing, ice-skating, cross-country skiing, snowshoe hiking, and winter hiking.

### *Tobogganning/Sledding*

The Zugerberg mountain railway offers sleds and toboggans for rent, and the night toboggan ride from the summit to the base is particularly exciting. Contact the Talstation Schonegg at ☎ 41-711-5376 for information and times.

Prices typically run from 5Sfr for two hours to 10Sfr for five hours of sledding time.

### *Skating*

There are two ice rinks in Zug: the Eishalle Herti at General-Guisanstrasse 4, CH-6300 Zug, ☎ 41-725-3131, and the Eissportverein Zug at General-Guisanstrasse 2, CH-6300 Zug, ☎ 41-725-3100.

### *Cross-Country & Downhill Skiing*

Cross-country tracks abound on the Zugerberg, and the paths in the nearby villages of Ägerital and in Menzingen are well prepared and available for nighttime ski runs. Downhill skiing is



available on the Zugerberg; it is low-key and great for families with children.

### *Snowshoe Hiking*

Check out Kaktus-Outdoor for rental, trekking sticks, and avalanche sensors at Baarerstrasse 49, CH-6300 Zug, ☎ 41-710-2261. They also specialize in organized snowshoe hiking trips for groups of all ages.

### *Curling*

The Zug Curling Club welcomes all visitors to learn this unique sport. Contact Alice Haslimann at ☎ 76-372-3999 for information. Curling is usually done in one of Zug's two indoor ice rinks.

## Museums

The Fishing Museum features an exhibition about fishing methods and examples of fishing gear from the past and present. Fischereiverein, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-769-0610.



*Kunsthhaus Zug (Baikonur)*

Kunsthhaus Zug was established in 1990 and has collections by contemporary and 20th-century artists. Admission is 8Sfr for adults, 6Sfr for students and kids. Open Tuesday through Friday from noon-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 10 am-5 pm. Dorfstrasse 27, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-725-3344, fax 41-725-3345.

The Prehistoric Museum shows archeological finds from Canton Zug. Admission is 5Sfr for adults, 2Sfr for kids. Open Tuesday through Sunday from 2-5 pm, closed Monday. Hofstrasse 15, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-728-2880, fax 41-728-2881.

## Shopping

At Zug's Landsgermeindeplatz you'll find a variety of restaurants, cafés and shops that cater to tourists.

## Where to Stay

### Hotels



**Hotel Löwen am See** sits right on the banks of Lake Zug and offers all modern amenities in a charming and comfortable atmosphere. (\$\$\$). Landsgemeindeplatz 1, CH-6301 Zug. ☎ 41-725-2222, fax 41-725-2200.

**Hotel Ochsen Zug** was once host to Goethe and



*Hotel Löwen am See*

French King Louis Philipp. This 16th-century inn has modern comforts combined with an old-world setting. The in-house restaurant offers Swiss, international and seasonal specialties, along with a fine wine list. (\$-\$-\$). Kolinplatz 11, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-729-3232, fax 41-729-3222.



*Hotel Ochsen Zug*

**Hotel Zugertor** was built in 1897 and is lovingly maintained by Heinz and Anita Rickenbach. Near the train station, it includes a good in-house restaurant that

serves up Swiss, seasonal, and vegetarian specialties. (\$\$). Baarstrasse 97, CH-6302 Zug. ☎ 41-729-3838, fax 41-711-3203.

*Yellow*, das Zuger Lagerschiff is a former cruise ship that has been converted into a floating dormitory with a sundeck and on-board restaurant. Reservations required. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Open April

to October. CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-727-6180, 41-727-6172, [www.msyellow.ch](http://www.msyellow.ch).

## Hostel

Jugendherberg Zug offers 92 beds near the city center on Allmendstrasse 8 at Sportstadion Herti. (\$). Open March to September. CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-5354, fax 41-710-5121.

## Campground & Mountain Hut



Campground Bruggli is open from April to October on the Chamer Fussweg 36, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-741-8422, fax 41-741-8430.

Mountain Hut Sustlihütte is open from the end of June to November and has room for 83 people. Contact Giorgio and Brigitte Ruele for reservations and information. Bellevueweg 38, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-5843.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Gasthaus Rathauskeller specializes in gourmet regional dishes, French, international and seasonal cuisine. In the village center near the boat docks. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Open Tuesday through Saturday from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 6:30-10:30 pm. Closed Sunday, Monday. Ober-Altstadt 1, CH-6301 Zug. ☎ 41-711-0058, fax 41-710-4977.

Hecht Am See is the pride of Zug's Altstadt, as this restaurant has been here since 1435. Fresh fish and game are the specialties and the desserts are delicious. Near the lake in the town center. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Open daily, 11:30 am-3 pm, 5:30-11 pm. Fischmarkt 2, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-0193, fax 41-729-8130.

Aklin Restaurant has been a Zug favorite for 216 years (since 1787). In the heart of the old city, it features seasonal dishes. Open daily except for Sundays. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Kolinplatz 10, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-1866, fax 41-711-0750.

Café Pizzeria Platzmühle serves fish, pizza, Italian and vegetarian fare at inexpensive prices. Open daily from 7-midnight (closed Wednesdays during the winter). (\$-\$-\$). Landsegemeindeplatz 2, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-6550, fax 41-711-6575.

Fischerstube (Fisherman's Lounge) features good hearty Swiss food at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Unter-Altstadt 12, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-2010, fax 41-711-2298.

Weinstube Zur Taube Tabeen La Paloma is a wine lounge housed in a 500-year-old structure, between the Casino and Fishmarket. This unique and reasonably priced restaurant specializes in Spanish cuisine. (\$-\$\$). Open Tuesday through Saturday 11 am-2 pm and 5-midnight. Closed Sunday and Monday. Unter-Altstadt 26, CH-6300 Zug. ☎ 41-711-3266.

## Baar

**B**aar is the second-largest town in Canton Zug, just two miles (3.2 km) north of Stadt Zug, with 19,024 citizens. The highlight of this area is the Höllgrotten (Hell Caves) and the Baarburg, a wooded hilltop in the nearby village of Baar that, according to local legend, contains the remains of the prehistoric village – although this has never been proven. There are many cycling and hiking paths around Baar as well, including the Baar-Kappel Cultural-Historical Path. This begins at the Baar train station, and brings you alongside the Lorze River and



*Heiligkreuzkapelle in Baar (Ikiwaner)*

passes many historic sights. This is a good hike for seniors and those with cultural interests.

The Baar Tourist Office is at Leihgasse 2, CH-6340 Baar. ☎ 41-761-1568, fax 41-760-3620, [www.baar.ch](http://www.baar.ch). Bikes are available for rent for free from May to October at the train station, and you can make reservations at ☎ 41-761-3335. For information and rental of in-line skates, as well as maps, contact the Baar Skating Hall at ☎ 41-760-8877.

## Where to Stay & Eat



The Hotel Ibis is in the city center and is open year-round. Their restaurant offers Swiss and international fare at reasonable prices. (\$\$). Clean, comfortable and quiet. Bahnhofstrasse 15, CH-6340 Baar. ☎ 41-766-7600, fax 41-766-7676.

Baarburg is a tiny, simple and clean inn with eight rooms. It only accepts cash as payment. Pets are permitted. (\$-\$\$). Marktgasse 14, CH-6340 Baar. ☎/fax 41-761-1733.

The Dörfli Restaurant offers meat specialties as well as regional fare in hearty portions. Open Monday through Saturday from 8:30 am to midnight, Sunday from 9 am-9 pm. (\$-\$\$). Dorfstrasse 7, CH-6319 Gemeinde Baar. ☎ 41-710-1535.

## Cham

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**C**ham is the third-largest town in Canton Zug and is home to 13,200 residents. Three miles (4.8 km) west of Zug, Cham is also the oldest settlement in the canton, set on the northwest edge of Lake Zug. Highlights of this city include the Villette Park, the Hirsgarten, the Convent of Frauenthal and St. Jacobs Church. Hiking and cycling trails can be found throughout this area. The Cham Tourist Office is in the Cham train station, where you can also rent bikes for free from May to October. CH-6330 Cham. ☎ 41-780-3222, fax 41-781-4386, [www.cham.ch](http://www.cham.ch).

## Where to Stay & Eat



The Hotel-Restaurant Lorze is in the village center and is a handicapped-accessible facility with 26 rooms, which are nicely decorated and clean, with all

modern amenities. The restaurant offers seasonal and international cuisine. Open daily except Sunday. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Dorfplatz 1, CH-6330 Cham. ☎ 41-780-4050, fax 41-780-4555.

Hotel Bahnhof is a beautiful Swiss chalet close to the Villettepark in the city center by the lake. Bike trails and miniature golf is nearby as well. This inn only has 10 rooms, but all are charmingly decorated. The in-house restaurant offers a wide range of dishes, including Swiss, international, vegetarian, organic and seasonal fare. (\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 2, CH-6330 Cham. ☎ 41-785-5050, fax 41-785-5055.



*Hotel Bahnhof*

A farm stay is available at Annemarie Gretener-Villiger's farm in Cham. A 10-person dormitory, kitchen, bathroom and shower can be had for 30Sfr per day per person. Bring your own sleeping bag. Families with two kids are 75Sfr, with three kids, 85Sfr. Breakfast is available on the premises, and horseback riding tours can be arranged here as well. Baregg, CH-6330 Cham. ☎ 41-780-0264, fax 41-783-2588.

The restaurant Vino e Cucina serves northern Italian dishes, pizza and international fare at reasonable prices (\$-\$\$). Closed Sunday. In the town center at Dorfplatz 1, CH-6330 Cham. ☎ 41-780-4050, fax 41-780-4555.

Wirtschaft Schiess offers good hearty food and seasonal specialties at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open Monday through Thursday 9 am-2 pm, 5 pm-midnight, Friday 9 am-midnight. Closed Saturday and Sunday. Schulhausstrasse 12, CH-6330 Cham. ☎ 41-780-1187, fax 41-780-1175.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Menzingen

**M**enzingen is known as the “pearl of the mountainside,” and is home to 4,109 people. This little village is made up of farmhouses and is a hiker’s paradise. Here, you’ll also find the Schwandegg Castle and the Menzingen and Gubel convents. Contact Verkehrsbüro Menzingen at Neudorfstrasse 6, CH-6313 Menzingen. ☎ 41-755-1301, fax 41-755-1814.

### Where to Stay & Eat



For a unique place to bunk, try the Gasthaus Gubel, which sits atop Menzingen’s highest moraine and offers terrific hikes throughout. Maintained by the family Ruckli-Rogenmoser. (\$-\$\$). Auf dem Gubel, CH-6313 Menzingen. ☎ 41-755-1142. You can also try the Hotel-Restaurant Ochsen, an inn in the town square that has a beautiful outdoor terrace and a fine restaurant. Excellent wine list as well. Ten rooms, all handicapped-accessible. Breakfast is included.

## Oberägeri



*Oberägeri*

**O**berägeri is known as the “sun terrace of Zugerland,” and sits along the shores of the Agerisee. Home to 4,551 residents, it provides visitors with great hiking paths, biking trails and boat excursions. The streets here are filled with more bikes than

cars. Contact the Verkehrsbüro Agerisee (Tourist Office), at Postfach, CH-6315 Oberägeri. ☎ 41-750-2414, fax 41-750-2443.

## Where to Stay & Eat



If you're looking to stay overnight, then check out the Morgarten Oberägeri, a beautiful inn on the shores of Agerisee. This is a great place for families with small children, and includes a kid's playground, two bowling alleys, and a surfing school. Make your reservations early, however, as there are only 10 rooms, all very modern and clean. The in-house restaurant offers Swiss, seasonal and vegetarian dishes. (\$-\$\$). Am Aegerisee, Sattelstrasse 1, CH-6315. Morgarten-Oberägeri. ☎ 41-750-1291, fax 41-750-5949.

## Risch-Rotkreuz

**R**isch-Rotkreuz is comprised of the villages of Risch, Rotkreuz, Buonas and Holzhäusern. This area has an extensive network of hiking and biking trails around Lake Zug, the Reuss River and the Steintobel up to the Michaelskreuz – a beautiful chapel that offers marvelous views of the area and is the starting point for various walking paths. Home to some 7,119 people, Risch-Rotkreuz is another great place to escape to if you're tired of the tourist scene. Verkehrsbüro Risch-Rotkreuz (Tourist Office), CH-6343 Rotkreuz. ☎ 41-790-1116, fax 41-790-2220.

# Canton Schwyz (SZ)

## At a Glance

**T**he canton of Schwyz became one of the founding members of the Swiss federation on August 1, 1291, along with cantons Uri and Unterwalden, when they united against surrounding aggressive factions atop the Rütli mountain. This initial union paved the way for the Switzerland we know today.

Schwyz is just to the east of Lake Lucerne and south of Lake Zürich and the Obersee, covering an area of 563 square miles (1,464 square km). Its boundaries touch the cantons of Zug, Zürich, and St. Gallen to the north, with Canton Glarus along its eastern side, and Canton Uri on the south. To the east, Canton



Schwyz lies north of Lake Lucerne at several points, and then caresses the edges of the Zugersee on that lake's southwestern shores. Within Schwyz you'll find the spectacular Etzel Waterfall, with a 330-foot (100-m) drop near the Hurden Peninsula that divides the Obersee from the upper portion of Lake Zürich. On the western edge, you'll find the ever-popular Rigi-Kulm, a great spot for photographing the region from its panoramic peak. In the middle of the canton sits Einsiedeln, just to the west of the Sihlsee, while farther east is the tiny, beautiful Wagitaler See, nestled in the Alps. With 137,009 German-speaking, mostly Roman Catholic residents, Schwyz is 17th in terms of population among the 26 cantons.

There are 30 main municipalities within Schwyz, and about 41% of the land is used for agriculture. Over one-third of the population labors in the energy, construction and manufacturing sectors, while about a quarter works in the service and tourism industries.

The coat of arms of Canton Schwyz was originally plain red, and was later changed to represent the national coat of arms for all of Switzerland seen today. The arms are based on the original arms and banner of the canton from 1481. The cross first appeared on the red background in 1729, and this shield was officially noted in 1815, but the official size of the white cross was not decided until 1963.



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## Schwyz

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**T**he city of Schwyz sits at the foot of the Mythen Peaks, slightly east of Lake Lucerne and Lake Lauerzer, along main Highway 4 and is the capital city of the canton. This city is home to 114,000 "Schwyzers." It was here, after the battle of Morgarten in 1315, that the name for Switzerland came into being, when it was changed from Helvetia to Schweiz (in German). The old part of the city has a rich history, and the town houses here are famous throughout the country. It is also in Schwyz that the historical archives of the founding of Switzerland are housed.



*Schwyz (Markus Bernet)*

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



For information on the town of Schwyz, go to Tourismbüro Schwyz (Tourist Office), Bahnhofstrasse 4 (beside the train station), CH-6430 Schwyz. Open Monday-Friday, 7:15 am-noon, 1-5 pm, Saturday from 8:30 am-noon. There is also a Tourist Office inside the post office, open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-noon, 1:30-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8-11 am. Postelle Schwyz at Oberer Steisteg 14. ☎ 41-810-1991, fax 41-819-3488.

### Train Station

The train station for Schwyz is 1.2 miles (1.9 km) west of the Schwyz village center in the suburb of Seewen. You can get there from Schwyz by taking any Schwyz Post bus.

## Post Office

The Schwyz Post Office is open 7:30 am-noon, 1:30-6:30 pm, Monday-Friday, and on Saturday from 8 am to noon. Postfach, CH-6340 Schwyz. ☎ 41-811-2710, fax 41-811-1406.

## Codes

The postal code for Schwyz is CH-6340, and the area code is 41.

## Getting Around



The best way to see Schwyz is on foot. The town itself can be a little difficult to get in and out of by car, and most of the natives use buses to get around locally. The closest train station is 1.2 miles (1.9 km) west in Seewen.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Hiking abounds in this area of Switzerland in the summertime, and you'll definitely want to hike to the Ibergeregg Pass. Beginning in Schwyz, you travel southeast to Rickenbachstrasse and continue on, over winding and twisting roads. The road will suddenly become very steep, and it will be a hard, heart-pumping climb until you reach the Ibergeregg Pass at 4,613 feet (1,406 m).

You'll also want to check out the Frontalpstock at 6,306 feet (1,922 m). To get there walk 10 minutes south on the secondary road from Schwyz to the town of Ibach. From here, continue south to Morschach where you can take a funicular up to Stoos, and from there another lift up to Fronalpstock.

For another hike, travel from Schwyz southeast two miles (3.2 km) through the Muota Valley to Schlatti. Once here, grab the funicular for the 10-minute climb up to Stoos at 4,200 feet (1,280 m). From here, you can follow a number of excellent footpaths in the summer, while in the winter skiing abounds throughout this area.

You can also walk to Rickenbach, a small village just a mile southeast of Schwyz. Here, take the cable car to the upper sta-

tion of the Rotenfluh at 5,135 feet (1,565 m) for some excellent panoramic views of the area.

You also might want to check out the Swiss Holiday Park (especially if you're traveling with children) just a few miles south on main Highway 4 from Schwyz in Morschach. This is a water-park, spa, and sun-bathing spot, with various activities such as thermal baths and a fitness center suitable for the whole family. CH-6443, Morschach. ☎ 41-825-5050, fax 41-825-5060.

In the winter, many of the hiking paths serve as cross-country ski routes, and downhill skiing can be found here as well. The local tourist boards provide information and maps of the areas.

## Sightseeing



You'll want to spend some time walking along the shores of Lake Lauerzer on the western side of Schwyz. This tiny lake is bordered by beautiful mountain flowers and is best visited on the west and south shores. An ugly rock quarry on the eastern edges takes away from the beauty of this otherwise glorious spot.

Another must-see is the Höllochgrotte (Hölloch Cave). This is the largest cave in Europe and was first discovered in 1949. While there are 91 miles (146 km) of galleries to be found here, only a half-mile can be explored by the public. The inside of the cave is like something out of a *Lord of the Rings* movie, with bizarre and eerie rock formations. To get there, take the Muotatal Road south to the Hintertal, then cross the river and go left (northeast) up a steep road to Stalden. You can park your car here (if you drove) at the Gasthaus zur Höllochgrotte.



Schwyz Rathaus (Wici)

## Landmarks & Historic Sites



The Rathaus (town hall) was built in the 17th century and was later (1891) decorated with murals on its outside depicting various aspects of Swiss history. Inside, the hall is adorned with stained-glass windows and ornate woodworking. It's in the village center square, at Hauptplatz 1. Tours are Monday-Friday, from 10 am to 3 pm. ☎ 41-81-4505.

On the northwestern edge of the Hauptplatz, you'll find the Bethlehemhaus, which is the oldest wooden house in Switzerland, dating back to 1287. It has very small rooms with low ceilings that make you wonder about the size of the people who occupied it at the time. It is

*Ital-Redinghaus (Roland Zumbühl)*

next to the equally impressive Ital-Redinghaus, which features antique objects, ornate wood paneling and stunning stained glass from the 17th and 18th centuries. They are both open May to October, Tuesday-Friday, from 2-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm. Closed on Mondays, and November through April. Located at Rickenbachstrasse 24 & 26.



*Bethlehemhaus (Jungpionier)*

## Museums

The Bundesbriefmuseum contains the original documents of the Swiss Federation. Erected in 1934, this building has a Daniöth fresco on its façade, and the inside contains a Clénin fresco entitled "the Oath." The pacts of alliance of the original eight cantons are contained here, as is the Bundesbrief from the pact of 1291, and the Morgartenbrief from the pact of 1315. Admission is 4Sfr. Open May to October, Tuesday-Friday



*Bundesbriefmuseum (Roland Zumbühl)*

from 9-11:30 am, 1:30-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 9 am-5 pm; November to April, Tuesday-Friday, from 9-11:30 am and 1:30-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 1:30-5 pm; closed Monday. Bahnhofstrasse 20. ☎ 41-819-2064, [www.sz.ch/kultur](http://www.sz.ch/kultur).

### THE SWISS ARMY KNIFE



The history of Swiss Army knives began in Canton Schwyz in 1884, when a poor young man, Carl Elsener,

founded the Swiss Cutlers' Association. Elsener – from the small town of Ibach, just 10 minutes south of Schwyz – had seen a need for reliable pocket knives and army blades, but was undercut by a German competitor in 1893 and nearly lost his entire investment. But he enlisted the help of family members, and in 1897 produced a light

pocketknife, which he had patented. These first knives grew in popularity, and soon Elsener began providing the Swiss army with knives.

The name Victorinox sprang from two ideas – Elsener had named his Ibach factory Victoria, in honor of his mother and, when stainless steel was introduced in 1921 as INOX, Elsener decided to combine the two names. The name Victorinox was later given official status by both the Swiss and American armies.

Today the same Ibach factory produces 34,000 Swiss Army knives a day, in all shapes and sizes. The factory has an on-site store that sells knives at discount factory prices. In Ibach at Schmiedgasse 57. Open Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-noon, 1:15-6 pm, Saturday from 8 am-3 pm.

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## Where to Stay



Hotel Restaurant Wysses Rössli offers

large, clean rooms in a charming atmosphere. (\$\$). The in-house restaurant is excellent, and serves regional fish and other Swiss specialties at reasonable (\$\$) prices. Both are open

seven days a week. Am Hauptplatz. CH-6430 Schwyz. ☎ 41-811-1922, fax 41-811-1046.

Gasthaus Schwyzer Stubli offers nice, quiet rooms (\$\$) and windows adorned with flowers. The in-house restaurant (\$) serves hearty Swissfare, but is closed Monday and Tuesday. Ridestrasse 3, CH-6430. ☎ 41-811-1066, fax 41-811-8067.



*Hotel Restaurant Wysses Rössli*

Hirschen Hotel is a cozy old inn full of Swiss charm and simplicity. (\$-\$). Hinterdorfstrasse 14. CH-6430 Schwyz. ☎ 41-811-1276.

Youth Hostel Rotschuo has 96 beds and is seven miles (11.3 km) west of Schwyz. Open March 1-November 30. (\$). CH-6442 Gersau. ☎ 41-828-1277, fax 41-828-1263.

## Where to Eat



Sternen, behind the Postplatz bus stop, has good pizzas and pastas at cheap prices. (\$). Closed Monday. Zeughausstrasse 6, CH-6430 Schwyz.

The Ratskeller serves good hearty food in generous portions. (\$-\$). Strehlgasse 3, CH-6430 Schwyz. Closed Sunday and Monday. ☎ 41-811-1087.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Goldau

This tiny village near Highway 4 just east of the Rigi offers a good base from which to begin many hikes.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Schwyz Tourist Office (cantonal) is found here at Postfach 525, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-5950, fax 41-855-5951, [www.schwyz-tourismus.ch](http://www.schwyz-tourismus.ch).

### Post Office

The Goldau Post Office is at Bahnhofstrasse 3, CH-6410, and is open from 7:30 am-noon, 2-6 pm Monday-Friday, and Saturdays from 8-11:30 am.

### Train Station

Arth-Goldau train station is one of the most famous in all of Switzerland. Work first began on the station in 1882 and it was finally completed in 1897, allowing connections throughout the country. This station prompted a boom of construction activity throughout the region, and brought many people to Goldau and surrounding towns and villages, seeking work at planned ho-



tels and multi-family buildings. One hundred years after work first began on the Arth-Goldau station, the entire facility was renovated and a signal tower was added.

The inside was modernized to allow operators to control the traffic of inbound and outbound trains electronically. Arth-Goldau thus became the most important north-south (Basel-Zürich to Ticino) traffic junction for not only Switzerland but for all of Europe. Inside the station today you'll find the Bahnhofbuffet restaurant, which is well worth a stop. The whole station combines modern conveniences with an aura of yesteryear that makes this train stop worth a walk-through, even if you're not traveling in or out of it. For information, contact the Verkehrs und Informationsbüro at Rathausplatz 3, CH-6415 Arth am See, ☎ 41-855-4242, or the Informationsbüro at the Schwyzer Kantonalbank at Parkstrasse 1 in Goldau, ☎ 41-855-3182.

## Adventures

### On Foot



A good hike is from Goldau to the Rigi-Scheidegg. You follow the narrow, winding road 2½ miles (four km) to Kräbel Station and then take the cable car up to Scheidegg, at 5,268 feet (1,665 m). From here, you can climb to the summit of Rigi-Scheidegg for great panoramic views of the area.



*Rigi-Scheidegg*

## Sightseeing



Nature & Tierpark Goldau was founded in 1925 and features many species of Swiss and European animals, including chamois, bears, wolves, marmots, foxes and wildcats. There is also a self-serve restaurant within the park (☎ 41-855-2786).

Admission is 14Sfr for adults, 12Sfr for seniors, and 9Sfr for kids six to 11 years old. Open November 1-March 31 from 9 am-5 pm, April 1-October 31, Monday-Friday from 9 am-6 pm, Saturday, Sunday and holidays from 9 am-7 pm. PO Box 161, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-1510, fax 41-855-1520.

Right next to the entrance of the Tierpark is the Bergsturz-Museum Goldau, worth a quick visit. Built in 1956, this tiny museum features information about landslides in the region. Admission is 2Sfr. Open April-October daily from 1:30-5 pm. Postfach 104, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 79-478-1105, fax 41-859-1601.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Restaurant Rössli features cheese fondue and other Swiss goodies at its restaurant, while the rooms are clean and comfortable with modern facilities. You can stay and eat here for a reasonable price. (\$-\$\$). Located just five minutes from the train station. Breakfast is normally included in the rates. Gotthardstrasse 29, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-1319, fax 41-855-4602.

## Camping



The Bernerhöhe campground is open year-round in Goldau and has 20 camping sites for tourists. Contact Bruno Gwerder for reservations. (\$). CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-1887, fax 41-855-5970.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Gotthard is an elegant dining room that features daily specials of the season. Open year-round except for Thursdays. Excellent fare. (\$\$). Parkstrasse 21, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-1462.

Gasthaus Bauernhof is a charming farmhouse that serves regional and Swiss food in hearty portions. (\$-\$\$). Gotthardstrasse 18, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-1213.

Restaurant Goldauerhof serves good, hearty meals, including burgers and local and regional fare such as lamb and pig roasts. Closed Thursday. (\$-\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 10, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-1177.

Bären Restaurant Pizzeria da Toni is a good little pizzeria in a cozy setting. (\$) Centralstrasse 3, CH-6410 Goldau. ☎ 41-855-5252.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Brunnen

**B**runnen is at the meeting point between the Vierwaldstättersee and the Urnersee and is one of the top resort areas in the region. It is also a high-traffic water port between the cantons of Schwyz and Uri. It was in Brunnen that the three cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden (Obwalden and Nidwalden) joined together on December 9, 1315 after the victory at Morgarten. Home to 7,200 residents, it is also the starting and ending point for the well known Swiss Trail around Lake Uri, which leads you to many historic sites and through beautiful scenery. This resort town has more visitors than any other city within Canton Schwyz, and is a popular place for nature lovers, with over 35 miles (56 km) of walking trails and hikes.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Brunnen Tourist Office is open Monday-Friday, from 8:30 am-noon, 1:30-6 pm at Bahnhofstrasse 32, CH-6440, Brunnen. ☎ 41-825-0040, fax 41-825-0049. The office offers guided walking tours of Brunnen, including visits to all of the chapels, and a guided tour of the convent. Costs vary according to the type of tours taken.

### Post Office

The Brunnen Post Office is open Monday-Friday, from 7:30 am-noon, 1:45-6 pm, Saturday 8-11:30 am. Parkstrasse 1, CH-6440, Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1010, fax 41-820-4077.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Weg der Schweiz (The Swiss Way) begins and ends in Brunnen. It was inaugurated in 1991, during

the 700th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. The walk takes you 21.7 miles (35 km) through the cantons of Schwyz and Uri around the Urnersee, passing through eight communities. The trail is divided into separate sections, according to the canton it travels through, and most parts are suitable for families, seniors and even wheelchair-bound travelers. You'll find numerous picnic spots and places for a campfire along the way. For maps and information, contact the Interessengruppe Pro Weg der Schweiz at Postfach 684, CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-825-0046, fax 41-825-0049. You can also call their Wandertelephone at ☎ 41-871-1033, or their Weatherphone at ☎ 41-820-1534.

The Urmiberg cable car in Brunnen is open from November 1 to March 31, Wednesdays-Sundays, leaving every half-hour from 9 am to 6 pm. From April 1-May 31, it begins at 8 am, following the same weekly schedule. From June 1-October 31, it operates seven days a week, 8 am to 6 pm, except on Monday and Sunday, when it goes from 8 am to 7 pm. Prices start at 11Sfr. To get there, travel west on the road leaving Brunnen on the north side of Lake Lucerne toward Gersau; it's about halfway between these two villages on Highway 2B. You can travel to the top to sit out on the panoramic deck of Restaurant Timpelweid, where you'll find hearty Swiss fare and great views of the Alps. CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎/fax 41-820-1405.

## On Water

Boat trips on Lake Lucerne are very popular and will take you from Brunnen to Schillerstein, Rütli, Telskapelle, and Füelen in round-trip fashion. You have many options once on-board, including full-day and half-day trips that may include a lunch, snacks or a drink. Some include stops at restaurants onshore.

One popular trip is the excursion to Rigi. You take the ship to Vitznau and then board the cog railway up to Rigi-Kulm, where you can stay, hike or enjoy the splendid views while sipping a hot drink. You can then retrace your steps or take another cog railway to Goldau, before coming back to Brunnen. This trip typically costs around 60Sfr. Prices for most of the boat trips start at 17Sfr, and you can make reservations at the Tourist Office.

Rowing excursions are available as well via the Brunnen Tourist Office. For instance, you can embark at Brunnen and

row to Rütli to visit the history museum there, then hike to Treib for lunch at the historic restaurant, finally returning to Brunnen via ship.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Detting Kirsch Distillery offers guided tours through its distillery and includes a tasting of their traditional Kirsch brandies. For groups up to 15 people, the total cost is 150Sfr, and 15Sfr for each individual thereafter. There is another distillery at Zgraggen Lauerz. This one also offers guided tours, at 10Sfr per person for groups of up to 15 people. Here, you can watch a slide show on the evolution of the Kirsch distillery process, entitled *From the Cherry to the Kirsch*. The Brunnen Tourist Office can help get you included in a scheduled tour of these facilities.

## Where to Stay



Seehotel Waldstätterhof Brunnen sits on the shores of Lake Lucerne, and is behind a large park, with great views of the Alps. Huge, traditional and stately, this hotel with 100 rooms has played host to the rich and famous over the years, including Queen Victoria of England, Winston Churchill, the first George Bush and Hermann Hesse. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Includes two restaurants (see *Where to Eat*), along with a bar and terrace café.



*Seehotel Waldstätterhof Brunnen*

Located on the Waldstätterquai, CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-825-0606, fax 41-825-0600.

Hotel Bellevue au Lac is a three-star, beautiful and stately hotel on Lake Lucerne with spectacular views of the Rutli, Schillerstein and Trieb. Modern facilities and many rooms come with balconies. (\$\$\$). Axenstrasse 2, CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1318, fax 41-820-3889.

Hotel Elite is the perfect hotel for hikes and other excursions since it's centrally located within the village. The in-house restaurant is famous throughout the country (see *Where to Eat*). (\$\$\$).

Axenstrasse 1, CH-6440

Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1024, fax 41-820-5565.



*Lawn at Hotel Bellevue au Lac*

Hotel Gotthard Garni is in the center of town, just a stone's throw from the lake, and near the train station and forest. (\$\$). Am Leewasser 1, CH-6446 Brunnen. ☎ 41-825-4060, fax 41-825-4061.

Weisses Rossli is a charming little inn that was once visited by Louis II of Bavaria and, as a result, contains five frescos created in his honor. (\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 8, CH-6446 Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1022, fax 41-825-1122.

Schmid und Alfa is on the lakeshore and is a clean, comfortable spot with great views of the lake and surrounding mountains. (\$\$). The restaurant is well known for its excellent cuisine. Open March to October. ☎ 41-820-1882, fax 41-820-1131.

## Camping



There are two campsites in Brunnen. The Hopfreben is open from the end of April to the end of September and offers 150 tourist plots. Contact George Stirnimann for reservations (strongly requested). (\$). CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1873, fax 41-820-1479. The Urmiberg campground is open April 1-October 31 with 80 plots for guests. Maurus Betschart takes reservations. (\$). CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-3327.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Elite is a definite must if you're staying overnight in Brunnen. The fish is always fresh from the Urnersee, and the preparations are wonderful. Also, the restaurant features a delicious and plentiful buffet

breakfast – served until 11:30 am. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Axenstrasse 1, CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1024, fax 41-820-5565.

Seehotel Waldstätterhof Brunnen is home to a pair of grand restaurants (the elegant Rôtisserie and the rustic Sust-Stube), along with a bar and terrace café. The Rôtisserie serves international cuisine, including seasonal specialties, with a generous wine list and numerous cheese offerings. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily, from 11:30 am-2 pm, 6:30 pm-midnight. The Sust-Stube offers simple, hearty meals, with monthly specials. (\$-\$\$\$). Open daily, 8 am-midnight. The lakeside terrace and boulevard café seats up to 270 people, and it provides one of the loveliest views of Lake Lucerne found anywhere. Open from early spring to late autumn daily, 9 am-9 pm. A hearty Sunday brunch is served each week from 9:30 am to 2 pm for 39.50Sfr per person. There is something for everyone here. Located on the Waldstätterquai, CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-825-0606, fax 41-825-0600.

Restaurant-Hotel Ochsen Brunnen has been in the same family for four generations and is the oldest house in Brunnen, having been built in 1740. Beautiful and charming, it also offers hotel rooms at reasonable prices (\$\$), with modern amenities. The restaurant is known for its historical rendition of regional specialties, preparing meals and dishes from medieval times. Bahnhofstrasse 18, Postfach 454, CH-6440 Brunnen. ☎ 41-820-1159, fax 41-820-5566.

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## Einsiedeln

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*Einsiedeln Monastery*

**E**insiedeln is in the north of the canton, just west of the Sihlsee, and is 18 miles (29 km) northeast of Schwyz. It is just 3.1 miles (five km) east of Highway 8. This town is well known for its 18th-century monastery, which was originally built in 934 by Otto I and Duchess Reglinde of Swabia. Einsiedeln's main

street runs along the huge façade of this Benedictine Abbey. The monastery's famous Black Madonna has been on display for over 1,000 years, and has miraculously escaped destruction on more than one occasion. During Napoleon's era, the French leader tried to steal the Black Madonna away when his armies took over the church, but the Swiss had already moved the sacred figure to Austria for hiding. Today you'll see the Black Madonna within its own black marble chapel at the western end of the church.



*The Black Madonna*



*There are 14 separate drinking fountains at the front of the monastery, and tradition calls for visitors to drink from each, for good luck.*

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Tourist Office of Region Einsiedeln is at Hauptstrasse 85, CH-8840 Einsiedeln. ☎ 55-418-4488, fax 55-418-4480.

### Post Office

The Einsiedeln Post Office is at Bahnhofplatz 3, Postfach 417. It is open Monday-Friday, from 7:30-noon, 1:30-6 pm, Saturday from 8-11:30 am. CH-8840, Einsiedeln. ☎ 55-418-4412, fax 55-418-4410.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Klosterkirche (Abbey Church) was built in 1719-1735 and is a popular example of the Vorarlberg Baroque style of architecture. The outside is flanked by two tall towers, while the in-



side is extremely spacious, with domes and ornately decorated panels, aisles and naves. Frescos and stucco designs are also found throughout. The Grosser Saal (Great Abbey Hall) is on the second floor of the monastery and was built in the 18th century. Art exhibitions are held here on a regular basis.

### MIRACULOUS DEDICATION

Einsiedeln is also home to the Miraculous Dedication, a religious celebration held every year on September 14. In addition, every five to 10 years nearly 700 citizens get together and are led by the local monks in a rendition of *Das Grosse Welttheater* (*The Great World Drama*) in front of the church. It was first celebrated in Spain in 1685.

## Where to Stay



Gasthaus Meinradsberg is a smoke-free inn, offering clean rooms at very reasonable rates, which include breakfast. (\$-\$\$). The restaurant specializes in fresh fish from Lake Zürich, lamb, and a tasty homemade apple and orange punch. Julgenweidstrasse 3, CH-8440 Einsiedeln. ☎ 55-418-8197, fax 55-418-8198.

Hotel Restaurant Sonne has nice, simple rooms and a good in-house pizza parlor and sun terrace. (\$-\$\$). Klosterplatz. CH-8440 Einsiedeln. ☎ 41-412-2821, fax 41-412-4145.

Hotel National has just six beds, but is clean and cheap (\$). Located near the train station at Hauptstrasse 18, CH-8440 Einsiedeln. ☎ 41-412-2616.

## Camping



This is available on the eastern side of the Sihlsee at Grüene Aff in Willerzell. Open year-round, with 20 tourist spots. (\$). Contact Alois Ochsner at CH-8846 Willerzell. ☎ 41-412-4131.

## Where to Eat



Zur Glocke Restaurant serves great burgers and fantastic desserts in a beautifully paneled dining

room. Open 11 am-midnight daily. (\$-\$\$). Hauptstrasse 73, CH-8440 Einsiedeln. ☎ 55-422-1216, fax 55-422-1217.

Landgasthof Heidenbühl has cheap, hearty meals. (\$). Located across the train station tracks. ☎ 41-412-4221.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Rigi

**R**igi is the stuff legends are made of, and many a traveler has spent the night atop this majestic mountain to watch the sun come up over the Alps on the summit of Rigi-Kulm – its highest point at 5,896 feet (1,799 m). The mountain is surrounded on virtually



*Rigi & Lake Lauerz (Tschubby)*

all sides by water – the lakes of Lucerne, Zug and Lauerz have it nearly embedded on an island of sorts, pinched in between cantons Schwyz, Lucerne, Zug and Unterwalden.

## Information Sources



The Mt. Rigi Tourist Board is at Rigi-Kaltbad and can assist you with hiking maps, railway times and hotel information. CH-6356 Rigi Kaltbad. ☎ 41-397-1128, fax 41-397-1982.

## Getting Here



You can access Rigi by a number of different routes. If you're driving, you can either take the A1 Highway from Bern or the A2 highway from Basel from the west or, if you're traveling from the east, take A1 (Highway 4) from Schwyz-stadt and Gotthard or A14 from Zürich & Chur. By train, there are many direct and fast train connections to Arth-Goldau and, via boat, you can access Rigi from Lucerne to Weggis or Vitznau.

There are two cog railways that operate year-round up to Rigi, either the Arth-Goldau Bahn or the Vitznau Bahn. The Vitznau Bahn was built in 1871 and was the world's first mountain railway, stretching from Lake Lucerne to the top of Rigi. The Arth-Goldau Bahn reaches the Rigi summit from the opposite side of the mountain. The Panorama Aerial Cableway travels from Weggis to Rigi-Kaltbad on a daily basis at half-hour intervals. Check local timetables for specific times. Mt. Rigi Railways, CH-6354 Vitznau. ☎ 41-399-8787, fax 41-399-8700. For weather information, ☎ 41-399-8770. If you're in Weggis, then contact the Mt. Rigi Railways there at CH-6353 Weggis. ☎ 41-390-1844, fax 41-390-2610.

## Adventures

### On Foot



You'll find hikes, hikes and more hikes in Rigi! Rigi offers some 62 miles (100 km) of hiking and footpaths that are auto-free in some of the most gorgeous areas of Switzerland. Here you'll find walkers, strollers, serious hikers, and picnickers enjoying the beautiful scenery. Unless otherwise noted, these hiking paths and trails can all be accessed via cog railways from Vitznau to Rigi Kaltbad, by cable car from Weggis to Rigi Kaltbad or via Arth-Goldau to Rigi First. The Rigi Höhenweg is an easy 6.2-mile hike that is suitable for almost anyone, and will take anywhere from three to four hours. The hike begins at the Rigi-Kulm station, where you'll



*The Felsenweg*

follow the well-marked footpath on Rigi's north side, crossing the train tracks at the Rigi-Staffel station at 5,257 feet (1,603 m). From here, follow the signs of the "Gratweg" until you reach Chänzeli at 4,801 feet (1,464 m). Continue downward to Lake Lucerne and the train station of Rigi

Kaltbad, then past this tiny town until you pass a light wooded area. Continue on to the Felsenweg and the path will veer right as you walk across the mountainside to the Schild at 4,769 feet (1,454 m). The path will wind around a bit through the crests of these mountains, which is actually the old Scheidegg-Bahn railway route that is no longer in service. You then come to the Berggasthus, a cheap (\$) spot for overnight lodging (☎ 41-85500127) and, once past this, the trail continues through a small tunnel before reaching a tiny valley. Here you'll see a sign at Hinter Dosser; continue on, turning left into a pasture. The trail then meanders to the right before you reach the plateau of Rigi-Scheidegg at 5,438 feet (1,658 m). From here, walk on along the footpath until you come to the station of Kräbel-Scheidegg. You can either take the cable car back down or walk down (another hour) to the Geshwänd-Burgeois chairlift station.

The Kulmhütte Path takes you from Rigi Kaltbad to the Kulmhütte at 5,497 feet (1,676 m) and is a 4½- to five-hour hike. From Rigi Kaltbad, follow the signs to Felsenkapelle (the chapel within the rocks), and continue on this idyllic nature path to Rigi Känzeli, which provides fantastic views of Lake Lucerne and the Bürgenstock. The path will climb slightly up to Rigi Staffelhöhe at 5,804 feet (1,550 m), level out a bit and then climb some more through pastures and woods before you come to the Kulmhütte. From here you can continue on to the Schochenhütte, the Tribhütte, and finally to Ständli. After these points the path will bring you to Rigi First, and then on back to Rigi Kaltbad.

The Staffelhöhe Path leads from Rigi Kaltbad, traveling along the Kaltbad Path to Rigi First and typically takes from one to two hours. It is suitable for almost anyone. Look behind the hotel at Rigi First to find the rest of the path as it climbs slowly upward through an Alpine meadow at the base of the Rostock, facing the Rigi Railway tracks. Continue on up to the Staffelhöhe at 5,084 feet (1,550 m) and on to Rigi Kaltbad.

The walk from Rigi Kaltbad to Küssnacht will take two to three hours, depending upon how long you stop to enjoy the scenery. From Rigi Kaltbad, walk on the footpath to the famous lookout point of Känzeli and then continue north, all the while

descending slightly before coming to Alp Rab at 3,686 feet (1,124 m). From here, continue on downward through the forest, passing Chürzboden and the Altruedisegg before the trail becomes somewhat flat. Continue on to Seebodenalp, where you can take a cable car to Küssnacht. From here you can either retrace your steps or catch a bus back to Weggis, Vitznau or Arth-Goldau.

The Lake Path (Seeweg) offers great views of the snow-topped mountains of Uri, Unterwalden and the Bernese Oberland, as well as Lake Lucerne.

It should take two to three hours. Again, just follow the well-marked path from Rigi Kaltbad to Rigi First along the defunct Rigi Scheidegg tracks. Continue on to the Felsenweg until you reach the Rigi Scheidegg tracks again, and then veer right toward Unterstetten. You'll cross a bridge and ascend to the Rotbalmegg at 4,778 feet (1,457 m). From here, the path will descend over the Glettialp to Hinterbergen, where you can catch a cable car back to Vitznau.

Walking from Rigi Kulm to Rotstock takes about two hours and is mostly a downhill hike. From Rigi Kulm, follow the path downward to Rigi Staffel, and then ascend to the Rotstock at 5,441 feet (1,659 m). Continue down through a lovely Alpine meadow to Rigi First, before the now-level path returns you to Rigi Kaltbad.

To get to Rigi Klösterli from Rigi Kulm will take about 1½ hours, and it's a fairly easy hike for almost anyone. From Rigi Kulm, walk past the old rail depot through lovely Alpine meadows, down to the Kulmhütte. Continue on along the "Kulmgrat" or mountain ridge pathway to the Schochenhütte, and turn right. The path will then lead to the Alp Trib before continuing over a small bridge to the Hotel Des Alpes, before leading to a wide open path as you approach the Rigi Klösterli at 4,270 feet (1,302 m).

# Canton Glarus (GL)

## At a Glance

**C**anton Glarus – in the east central portion of Switzerland – is approximately 424 square miles (1,102 square km) sandwiched in between the cantons of St. Gallen to the north and east, Schwyz to the west, and Uri and Graubünden to the south. Also known as “Glärnerland,” this canton is home to two beautiful lakes, the Walensee and the Klöntalersee, perfect for hiking, water sports and camping excursions. One of the oldest cantons in Switzerland (founded in 1352), it is home to some 36,932 German-speaking, primarily Protestant citizens in 29 municipalities, who still participate in the *Landsgemeinde*, or open-air democracy forums for governmental elections and laws. It is the 10th-smallest canton in terms of landmass, and the fifth-smallest in terms of population in Switzerland.

However, it is the eighth-largest (21%) in terms of foreign citizens, probably due to the fact that there are many small factories here. Some 34% of the citizens of Canton Glarus are employed in manufacturing or industry.

You'll also find the river Linth here, which has helped to produce hydroelectric power for over 200 years. There are many factories, such as dyeworks and weaving operations, that continue to use this form of energy.



*Glarus is also home to Schabzieger cheese – a cone-shaped herbal and skim milk cheese made only here and which can be preserved for lengthy periods of time. Also of note are the famous Glarus fruit tarts, known better as “Glärner Pasteten.”*

Glarus contains over 186 miles (299 km) of well-marked hiking paths, ranging from easy walking trails to intermediate and difficult mountain excursions. There are also a variety of mountain bike routes here. The mountain ranges of this canton provide breathtaking treks up to the Glärnisch (at 7,651 feet/2,333 m) or Tödi (at 11,847 feet/3,612 feet, the tallest in the canton), and

there are also gondolas and chairlifts that will take you up to beautiful Alpine pastures.

The coat of arms for Canton Glarus is represented by St. Fridolin, who is the patron saint of this district. St. Fridolin stands erect, holding a golden staff in his right hand, with a red Bible in his left hand, against a red background.



## Glarus



*Glarus (Ikiwaner)*

The capital city of this canton is the village of the same name. Glarus, home to some 6,000 citizens, is in a deep ravine at the foot of the Vorder Glärnisch Cliffs. The city was rebuilt in 1861 after a fire rampaged through and destroyed most of it. Since that time the Landsgemeinde (an open-air public election and meeting to decide on the laws) has met on the first Sunday in May each year in the Zaunplatz.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Glarnerland Tourist Office is in the town of Niederurnen at Raststatte A3, CH-8867 Niederurnen. ☎ 55-610-2125, fax 55-610-2826. However, the Tourist Office for Glarus Stadt is in the Glarus train station at CH-8750 Glarus. Open July-October, Monday-

Friday 9 am-noon, 2-6 pm; Saturday 9 am-noon, 2-4:30 pm and Sunday 9 am-1 pm. From November-July, Monday-Friday 9 am-noon, 2-5 pm. ☎ 55-650-2090, fax 55-650-2091.

## Post Office

The post office is open year-round, Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-6 pm, Saturday 7:30 am-noon. Schweizerhofstrasse 10, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-646-5205, fax 55-640-4093.

## Codes

The postal code for Glarus is CH-8750 and the area code is 55.

## Sightseeing



You'll want to visit the double-towered Protestant Church that was erected in 1866, and the Kunsthaus, which contains works from 19th- and 20th-century Swiss artists. The church was previously a religious center for both Protestants and Catholics, and features renditions from both the Gothic and Roman periods. It was the first to represent the neo-Romanesque style in Switzerland. Beginning in the sixth century, many churches throughout Europe were designed in the shape of a Latin cross. There are other churches in Switzerland with Latin cross basilicas, but none with double towers. This one has two symmetrical towers on either side of the entrance, while behind them is a stunning, long off-white basilica. Open daily from 10 am-4 pm.

## Shopping

The center of Glarus offers up small shops and traditional wares, including some handwoven linens and handkerchiefs from the local textile factories. The area is definitely worth a stroll.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Restaurant Roessli is a medium-sized hotel with lots of family charm featuring very nice rooms with basic amenities at reasonable rates. (\$\$). Glarnischstrasse 12, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-1646, fax 55-640-8060.



Berggasthaus Schwammhöhe is a beautiful, rustic, cabin-like hotel/restaurant in the rural area of Glarus, just a 15-minute walk from the train station, with stunning views of the Klöntalersee. Open daily from April through November. Small functional rooms, some of which are handicap-accessible, with a sun terrace and restaurant. (\$-\$\$\$). Im Klöntal, CH-



*Berggasthaus Schwammhöhe*

8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-2817, fax 55-640-4117.

## Camping



This is available on the shores of the Klöntalersee at Im Vorauen, which is open from May 1- September 30 in a very quiet area. The campsite is handicapped-friendly and offers over 100 sites for visitors. (\$). Im Vorauen, CH-8750 Klöntal. ☎ 55-640-4859. Güntlenau is open from May 1-September 30 with 60 tourist sites. (\$). CH-8750 Klöntal. ☎ 55-640-4408.

## Where to Eat



Wirtschaft Sonnegg features classical fine dining in a romantic, stylish atmosphere. It has one of the finest wine cellars in all of Glarnerland. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily, parking available. Beim Sonnenhügel, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-1192.

CITY Café-Restaurant & Bar is the place if you're young and single or even if you're older and pretty hip. Lots of color and ambiance, in the heart of the city on the Rathausplatz. Here you can drink coffee, or eat hearty meals, while listening to various bands. Open daily from 7 am until, on the weekends, around 2 am. (\$-\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 18, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-1365, fax 55-640-7650.

Brauerei Glarus features a charming, wood-paneled room that can accommodate up to 80 people. Specialties include

burgers on the grill and other meats. (\$-\$\$). Open 5 am-midnight, Tuesday-Sunday. Closed Monday. Wirtschaft zur alten Brauerei, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-6891, fax 55-640-6991.

Pizzeria Restaurant Gartenwirtschaft serves pizzas, salads and traditional Italian desserts at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open daily 10 am-2 pm, 5-11 pm; Sunday 5-11 pm. Closed Wednesday. Abläschstrasse 15, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-2307, fax 55-650-1661.

Restaurant Erlengarten offers vegetarian dishes at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Closed Monday and Tuesday. Auf Erlen 24, CH-8750 Glarus. ☎ 55-640-2291, fax 55-640-4560.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Braunwald

**B**raunwald (Brown Forest) is considered to be the home of mountaineering in Switzerland, as the Swiss Alpine Club built the first shelter in 1863 on the Tödi Massif, at 11,858 feet (3,615 m). It is also an auto-free resort village with only 500 residents, which makes it particularly attractive to hikers and bikers. Deemed the "Sun terrace of Glarnerland," Braunwald is only 70 minutes south of Zürich in the southernmost region of Glarnerland, sitting high above the Linth Valley at 4,264 feet (1,300 m) in what is considered to be the sunniest spot in Canton Glarus. From here you can easily view the Glarner Alps: Ortstock, Tödi, Biferten and Hausstock. To get here you have to take the Braunwaldbahn, which leaves every half-hour from Linthal, a 90-minute ride on the funicular.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Tourist Office is great for offering ideas and specials on where to sleep or eat. They can also provide you with a computer list of vacant apartment rentals. Braunwald Tourismus, CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-653-6586, fax 55-653-6586, [www.braunwald.ch](http://www.braunwald.ch).

## Adventures

### On Foot



Braunwald has 31 miles (50 km) of well-marked trails and hiking paths, with gondolas and chairlifts ready to whisk you away to panoramic restaurants.

### On Snow

In Braunwald you'll want to ski the Bächital. It has all types of slopes, with 20 miles (32 km) of courses, two gondolas, three chairlifts and two ski lifts. Snowboarding is also popular here and you can rent skis and snowboards as well. Cross-country enthusiasts will find two miles (3.2 km) of well-groomed trails, and you can winter hike on 11 miles (17.6 km) of wonderful trails. For lessons, contact the Ski & Snowboard School Braunwald, CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-643-1261 or ☎ 79-215-2125. For equipment rental, contact Kessler Sport in Braunwald at ☎ 55-643-2222.

## Where to Stay



Märchenhotel Bellevue Braunwald opened in 1907 as the "Grand Hotel" and has housed the crowned heads of European society since that time, as well as sports enthusiasts from around the globe. Now, the



*Märchenhotel Bellevue Braunwald*

hotel caters to families with children and makes every effort to accommodate visitors of all ages. Märchenhotel means Fairy-Tale Hotel! All amenities can be found, including an indoor pool, whirlpool, solarium, sauna, massage, billiards, children's menu, daycare, and a high-altitude clinic with a live-in doctor.

Dogs are welcome as well for only 8Sfr per day. Expensive, but well worth it. (\$\$\$\$). CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-643-3030, fax 55-643-1000.

The Panorama Hotel Waldhaus is another luxury resort hotel, with its own golf course, indoor swimming pool and sauna. Not as kid-suitable as the Fairy-Tale Hotel Bellevue, but nice for couples and romantics. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-653-6262, fax 55-653-6263.

Hotel Cristal is family-run, comfortable and very affordable. Lots of amenities in traditional Swiss fashion with modern conveniences. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-643-1045, fax 55-643-1244.

Youth Hostel Im Gyseneggli has 82 beds and is open from December 31-January 4, and January 4-October 20. (\$). CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-643-1356, fax 55-643-2435.

## Where to Eat



Spieserrestaurant Uhu has been run by the Meier family since 1962, and features seasonal specialties from Glarus. Tasty and affordable. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-8784 Braunwald. ☎ 55-643-1736, fax 55-643-2730.

Chämistube is at the Bergstation Grotzenbüel at 5,116 feet (1,560 m) and has a huge sun terrace, a snow bar and a children's playground (open in summer only). For reservations and information, contact Moni or Rolf Schweizer at ☎ 55-643-3528 or 55-643-3284. This couple also runs the Seblengrat Restaurant, near the Bergstation Seblen at 6,248 feet (1,905 m), catering to skiers and snowboarders. Open December to April.

## Elm

**E**lm is a beautiful little village at the end of the Sernf valley and is mostly overlooked by foreign tourists. Home to 760 residents, it has excellent hiking and skiing trails, and houses the Elmer mineral water plant. Just over 35% of the inhabitants here are employed in agriculture, a very high percentage at a time when many of the younger Swiss are abandoning their mountain and farm lives for the lure of the bigger cities. The dark wooden houses in the village center of Elm date back to the 17th

century, and have twice received awards (in 1975 and 1981) from the Swiss Heritage Society for their excellent preservation. The Tourist Office, Elm Tourismus is inside the Verkehrsbüro Elm, CH-8767 Elm. ☎ 55-642-6067, fax 55-642-6061, [www.elm.ch](http://www.elm.ch).

## Adventures

### On Foot

Visitors to Elm can retrace the great Russian general Suvorov's footsteps along a well-marked trail, and visit the house he stayed in, as well as the Swiss Army's modern tank-firing range at the end of the valley. Suvorov and his troupes stopped in Elm in 1799 before retreating from Napoleon's forces on the Panixer Pass.

### On Snow

Elm is one of Switzerland's best-kept skiing secrets, especially if you don't like the hustle-bustle of big crowds and lots of excitement.

The village recently installed a new ski lift that gets skiers to the slopes more quickly and directly. Also, you can take lessons here from one of Switzerland's most celebrated downhill skiers, three-time Olympic champion Vreni Schneider. A native of Elm, Schneider returned to her hometown after winning 55 championships and three Olympic gold medals.

## Where to Stay

### Hotels



#### Hotel Sardona

is a four-star hotel that is best suited for families with children. Includes 66 rooms with a nice restaurant at surprisingly affordable rates and features a



*Hotel Sardona*

sauna, bowling, kids playroom, and billiards. (\$\$). CH-8767 Elm ☎ 55-642-6868, fax 55-642-6869.

Gasthaus Sonne is a simple and clean little inn with 10 rooms. (\$-\$\$). CH-8767 Elm. ☎ 55-642-1232, fax 55-642-1938.

## Hostels & Mountain Huts

Alp Camperdun Alphüttli is on the outskirts of Elm and offers three rooms, with four to six beds in each. (\$). Contact Streiff Hansruedi. Unterdorf, CH-8767 Elm. ☎ 55-642-1910, fax 55-642-2545.

Alp Bergli Panoramahütte in Rietboden and Alp Bergli Unterstafel Loch in Matt are two Alpine huts not far from Elm that are open from June 1 to September 30. The former has 45 sleeping spots, while the latter offers 25 places to bunk down. (\$). Contact Marti Heinrich for reservations. CH-8766 Matt. ☎/fax 55-642-1492.

Niederentalphütte is a 1½-hour hike from Elm, near the village of Mollis. Open from June 1 to mid-October on Saturday and Sunday, with 20 sleeping spaces. Contact Kasper and Irene Hefti for reservations. (\$). Allmeindstrasse 21, CH-8753 Mollis. ☎ 55-612-2466.

## Where to Eat



Suworow-Cheller Elm provides a unique and dark atmosphere in a cave-like setting and features hot and cold specialty drinks and coffees, desserts and Swiss fare such as various types of cheese fondues and raclettes. (\$-\$\$). Open Saturday and Sunday from 4 pm, and Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 5 pm. Closed Wednesday and Thursday. CH-8767 Elm. ☎ 55-642-1731, fax 55-642-5301.

Pizzeria Bar Sternen is the local pizza restaurant/bar/hangout spot. Good pizzas and pasta. (\$-\$\$). Obmoos, CH-8767 Elm. ☎/fax 55-642-2338.

## Filzbach & the Kerenzerberg Range

**F**ilzbach is a tiny village above the Walensee on the Kerenzerberg Mountain range. It has the remains of a Ro-

man watch tower built in 15 BC. Here you can try bungee jumping, the summer toboggan run, or rock and mountain climbing. There are also many easy mountain paths, as well as difficult hiking trails for all levels of wanderers.

## Culinary Journey

Take a hike or a biking excursion along the Goat's Highway to learn about and sample the production of goat's cheese. This "Highway" takes you between three mountain inns (Alpenrösli, Fronalpstock and Froni) on the Mullern and Fronalp. The well-marked path gives information about goat milk production – from the types of grasses and clover the goats feed on, to the actual cheese-making process. Full- and half-day outings are available, on foot or via bicycle. You begin at the mountain station of the Filzbach railway known as Habergschwänd, and traverse Alpine meadows until you reach Ennenda, just east of Glarus, or you can begin in Ennenda and travel in the opposite direction.



*Berggasthaus Alpenrösli*

Berggasthaus Alpenrösli is in Mullern at 3,936 feet (1,200 m). It offers extremely charming rooms at great rates (\$-\$\$) and a fine restaurant (\$-\$\$) with outstanding views. The restaurant serves all types of fondues, as well as burgers and international fare. Mullern, CH-8753 Mollis. ☎ 55-612-1284, fax 55-612-3872.

Berggasthaus Frontalpstockhaus at 4,428 feet (1,350 m) offers outstanding views at very reasonable rates (\$-\$\$) for its rooms. Clean and charming. Run by Bruno and Franzi Reich-Dreher. Closed Wednesday and Thursday. Fonalp, CH-8753 Mollis. ☎ 55-612-1022.

Berggasthaus Fronalp is a beautiful Swiss chalet that was built in 1917, offering 16 rooms with beds for up to 60 people.

Reasonable (\$-\$\$), with great views. Run by the Menzi family. Postfach 61, CH-8753 Mollis. ☎ 55-612-1012, fax 55-612-1001.

## Adventures

Sportbahnen Filzbach AG is the place to rent scooters or to try your luck on the summer toboggan run. The more adventurous will want to try climbing up and roping down a 196-foot (60-m) rock face. For another exciting option, try Tyrolien, where you're suspended above a mountain stream on a single rope. Both of these tests are done with the help of experienced guides. (Cost is 75Sfr per person.) Bring good footwear. Talstation, CH-8757 Filzbach, ☎ 55-614-1268, 55-614-1065.

## Where to Stay

### Hostel



If you want to bunk down up here, the local youth hostel, Lihn, is probably your best choice. Located in the Blaukreuz Kurs and Ferienzentrum, it offers 50 beds, and is open year-round, except from December 13-24. (\$.) CH-8757 Filzbach. ☎ 55-614-1342, fax 55-614-1707.

### Camping

This is available at Campingplatz Gäsi, in a forest on the shores of Lake Weesen. No electricity, but this campground has a nice beach and a children's playground. Accommodates tents only, with campfire spaces. Facilities are suitable for the handicapped. (\$.) Open April-September. CH-8872 Weesen. ☎ 55-610-1357.

## Urnerboden

**U**rnerboden is the largest and one of the most beautiful places in Switzerland. Home to only 56 people, Urnerboden erected a cable railway to the Fisetengrat in 2001. In the summertime over 1,200 cows are brought to graze here, and nearly 700 more are found on the nearby mountains of Gemsfärenalp and Fiseten. Cross-country skiing, ice climbing, downhill skiing, dog-sledding, hiking and biking are all found on the Urnerboden. During the winter Urnerboden can only be reached from within the canton of Glarus, since the





*Urnerboden (Lutz Fischer-Lamprecht)*

Klausenpass is closed at this time. In the summer you can reach Urnerboden via Altdorf (Canton Uri) over the Klausenpass by train or bus.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Urnerboden Tourist Office can provide you with detailed hiking maps of the area. CH-8751 Urnerboden. ☎ 55-643-1705. For cross-country and downhill ski information, contact the Urnerboden Ski Association at ☎ 55-643-2131. For dogsledding excursions, ☎ 55-643-1416 or 79-338-2735.

## Where to Stay & Eat



There are only a few places to stay and eat in Urnerboden: Gasthuas Sonne features a large sun

terrace with 26 clean and comfy rooms. The in-house restaurant serves homemade traditional Swiss and international fare, and features a nice wine list. (\$\$). Open year-round, with plenty of parking. CH-8751 Urnerboden. ☎ 55-643-1512, fax 55-643-1579.

Gasthof Urnerboden offers comfortable, relaxing rooms and an excellent restaurant that is open year-round. Suitable for families as well as large or small groups. (\$\$). ☎ 55-643-1416, fax 55-643-2082.

Restaurant Alpenrösli serves homemade Swiss fare in a cozy and romantic atmosphere provided by the Herger family. (\$-\$\$). Open during the summer season only. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 55-643-1214.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Canton Uri (UR)

### At a Glance

**U**ri sits south and slightly east of Lake Lucerne, encompassing 415 mountainous square miles (1,079 square km), with the cantons of Schwyz and Glarus to the north and northeast respectively. To the west is the canton of Graubünden, to the south Ticino, and on the western side are the cantons of Valais, Bern, Obwalden and Nidwalden. Uri is virtually cut off from all other cantons, with the exception of its old partners, which were the original members of this landlocked nation. As one of the founding cantons from 1291, Uri residents united with the citizens of Schwyz and Glarus to form an Alliance against all oppressors, which eventually grew into the 26-canton country known today as Switzerland.

Home to some 33,661 German-speaking Roman Catholics, Uri is well known for the Gotthard Pass and Gotthard Railway, the Devil's Bridge, and the Sustenpass. It is here that you'll also find the beautiful Urnersee (Lake Urner), the Rütli Meadow, the majestic Dammastock Mountain and the Reuss River.



*The mountain Gitschen looms above Altdorf (Rudolf Ammann)*

## Altdorf

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**A**ltdorf is the capital of Canton Uri, and was home to William Tell for many years. It is, in fact, the town where Tell supposedly shot the apple off his son's head. Altdorf is often overlooked by tourists, and is visited by the Swiss for short historical vacations. It is just two miles (3.2 km) south of the Urnersee at Flüelen on main Highway 4, west of the Klausenpass on Highway 17, and north of Amsteg and Andermatt. Altdorf is also a popular spot for bikers.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The Tourist Office for Canton Uri and the city of Altdorf is in Altdorf, in the Tellspielhaus on Schützengasse 11. Postfach, CH-6460 Altdorf. Here

you can grab some good bike touring and hiking maps. Open Monday-Friday from 9-11:30 am, 1:30-5:30 pm, and on Saturday from 9-11:30 am. ☎ 41-872-0450, fax 41-872-0451.

## Post Office

The post office is at Bahnhofstrasse 9, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-870-2185, fax 41-870-5318. Hours are Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-noon, 1:45-6:15 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon.

## Codes

The area code for Altdorf is 41 and the postal code is CH-6460.

## Getting Around



Getting around in Altdorf is the most fun on a bike or a motor scooter. You can rent bikes at the Altdorf train station (☎ 41-870-1008). Mountain bikes, scooters and motorcycles can be rented from Mototreff, at Fluelerstrasse 20, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-870-9737. Zweirad Affentranger also rents mountain bikes and/or motorbikes at Gotthardstrasse 53, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-870-1315. Bike rental is available at the nearby train station in Flüelen as well at ☎ 41-870-1093.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Just over a mile southeast of Altdorf is the tiny village of Bürgeln, the home-village of William Tell, which is easily accessed on foot, by car or by bus. Here, you'll find the Tell Museum with historical papers and exhibits on Tell. Open from May to mid-October, daily from 10-11:30 am, 1:30-5 pm; July through August from 9:30 am-5 pm daily. Cost is 5Sfr per person. Postplatz in Burglen. ☎ 41-870-4155.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The William Tell statue, made famous on a postage stamp, stands regally in front of Altdorf's 19th-century town hall. The Tell memorial was built by Richard Kissling in 1895. The adjoining tower dates from the Middle Ages.



*William Tell statue (Roland Zumbühl)*

Rütli Meadow is one of the best places to visit in all of Switzerland if you are interested in history. It was here that the members of cantons Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden are recorded as meeting in 1307 to re-establish their 1291 Oath of Eternal Alliance or Oath of Everlasting League – as it is sometimes referred to – in the forming of Switzerland.

On the eastern shores of the Urnersee, at the base of Axen Mountain, is the Tellsplatte – the ledge that

William Tell jumped onto when he escaped from Gessler's ship. You'll also find a tiny church here, complete with frescos depicting Tell's actions. It was originally built at the beginning of the 16th century, but was restored in 1881 when the murals were painted. During World War II, Swiss Commander-in-Chief General Guisan called a meeting of soldiers here to reaffirm their al-



*Rütli Meadow (Markus Schweiß)*

liance with Switzerland. To get here, you can either travel via ship from Lucerne or take the Axenstrasse south from Schwyz or north from Altdorf.

The Rütli Meadow itself is on the western shores of the Urnersee or Lake Uri.

## Where to Stay



**Goldener Schlüssel** (the Golden Key) is a family-run historic inn smack in the center of town and dates back to the 19th century. Original paintings and homemade accessories give this inn a welcoming atmosphere. Rates include breakfast. (\$\$-\$\$\$). The in-house restaurant is one of the best in town for traditional Uri and Swiss dishes. Schützengasse 9, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-871-1002, fax 41-871-1167.

**Hotel Höfli** provides very clean and comfortable rooms at reasonable rates. (\$\$). Attractive, with an affable staff. The in-house pizzeria is open from 7 am to midnight daily, except for Tuesday and Wednesday when it closes at 5 pm. Hellgasse, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-875-0275, fax 41-875-0295.

The **Gadenhaus Beim Rütli** is the local Youth Hostel in nearby Seelisberg. Offering 25 beds, this hostel is open from April 8-October 31. (\$) CH-6377 Seelisberg. ☎ 41-820-1562, fax 41-820-1550.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



**Restaurant Bar Lehnhof** is one of the top restaurants in the area, featuring great pastas and regional as well as international fare. There are many fine wines and spirits to choose from, as well as some very fancy desserts. (\$-\$\$\$). Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11 am-2 pm, 5 pm-midnight; Friday 11 am-2 pm, 5 pm-2 am, Saturday from 11 am to 2 am. Closed Sunday and Monday. Lehnplatz 18, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-870-1229.

**Hotel Restaurant Wilhelm Tell** features Italian dishes, pizza and seasonal fare at reasonable prices. Hearty portions in a swanky, comfortable and lively atmosphere. Open 10 am-

midnight daily Tuesday-Sunday. Closed Monday. Tellsgasse 27, CH-6460 Altdorf. ☎ 41-870-1030.

### **WILLIAM TELL**

William Tell is considered to be the hero of Swiss independence. As a legendary Swiss patriot, Tell refused to salute the Austrian-born governor of Canton Uri, Hermann Gessler. When this happened Gessler ordered Tell to shoot an arrow through an apple set upon the head of Tell's young son. Tell performed the feat without fear, but told Gessler that if he were to kill his son, then he would kill Gessler as well. Gessler imprisoned Tell, whereupon Tell escaped and eventually killed Gessler. Tell is thus credited with helping the Swiss to rebel against their Austrian rulers, and helping to spark the Swiss into unification. Richard Kissling's monument to Tell in Uri's capital city of Altdorf remains one of the most photographed monuments in Switzerland.

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*The old road on the southern side of the St. Gotthard pass (H005)*

## Amsteg

If you travel south only nine miles (14.5 km) on main Highway 2 from Altdorf you'll come to the village of Amsteg, which is at the western edge of the Maderanertal valley. From here, you'll be able to see the St. Gotthard Railway in the distance to the south. The Altdorf Tourist Office can help you with anything you need in Amsteg. There is no train service here, and most folks go to Erstfeld (between Amsteg and Altdorf), then either walk to Amsteg or take one of the many shuttle buses. Many visitors to Amsteg use this small village as a base for walking or hiking excursions, and the village is also considered to be the north/south stop on the St. Gotthard route.

### THE ST. GOTTHARD PASS

This is one of the most memorable of all Alpine passes. At 6,914 feet (2,108 m) above sea level, the St. Gotthard Pass was first crossed in the 13th century, allowing travel from Italy on up into Germany and beyond. In fact, the old cobblestone road that was part of the original pass can still be seen today. It is a great path to wander on, avoiding many of the tourists. You can hike for three hours to Airolo, or try alternate routes through Val Canaria to Airolo that will take about six hours. If you want to bunk down for the night, the Albergo Ospizio San Gottardo (Hotel St. Gotthard) is at the start of the trail. It's reasonably priced (\$-\$\$), and you can stay here from June 1 through the end of October. CH-6780, Airolo. ☎ 91-869-1235, fax 91-869-1811.





Be sure to check out the Museo Nazionale del San Gottardo as well, which shows the history of the St. Gotthard Pass through displays and slide shows. Open May-October, from 9 am-6 pm daily. Cost is 8Sfr per person.

It wasn't until 1775 that a wagon first was able to cross the pass, and then nearly another 100 years before work began on a railway track underneath the pass. The train ride offers spectacular views, and takes you through the mountain at one point for nearly 20 minutes.

Switzerland is building a 35-mile Gotthard tunnel through the base of the mountain, to allow for flatter and faster north-south transit. Completion is expected by 2015, and it will include a number of passages, tunnels and shafts – about 95 miles of thoroughway in total. The main passage will cut through the Gotthard Massif below the existing railway tunnel, which is only able to accommodate up to 2,000 tons of freight trains now. Once completed, the new tunnel will allow for up to 4,000 tons via freight trains.

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*Hotel Stern und Post*

A visit to Amsteg would not be complete without at least one overnight stay in the Hotel Stern und Post. This rustic inn has been managed by the Tresch family since the early part of the 18th century. It is famous for once having housed the then privately owned Swiss Postal Route stop. It was also able to

stable over 400 horses, which were used for transporting mail and supplies over the St. Gotthard Pass. Much of the original charm remains today, and it is lovingly maintained throughout. All rooms feature high ceilings and ornate windows. The in-

house restaurant has a private cellar with many fine wines and the cuisine is second-to-none. There is no finer hotel anywhere in this area. Rates for the hotel include breakfast (\$\$-\$\$\$) and 14 of the 20 rooms come with private baths; the rest have sinks with running water only. Closed January to mid-March. CH-6774 Amsteg. ☎ 41-883-1440, fax 41-883-0261.



*In 1980 the St. Gotthard road tunnel was completed and, at 10.1 miles (16.3 km), is the longest road tunnel in the world. Beware of traveling on this road during bad weather, however, as it often has horrible traffic jams in both directions.*

## Adventures

### On Foot



If you travel east two miles (3.2 km) on the local road out of Amsteg, you'll come to the little village of Bristen at 2,615 feet (797 m) elevation in the Maderanertal Alpine Valley that feeds on the Kärstelenbach River. In Bristen, grab the cable car up to the Golzernsee at 4,626 feet (1,410 m) and follow the well-marked path for a splendid 2½-hour round-trip hike. The Golzernsee is a small lake situated along the northern slopes of the Maderanertal. At the top you'll find the Hotel Schweizer Alpenclub, which is often used by experienced hikers and mountain climbers as a base for many excursions. Alternatively, you can hike from the Golzernsee to the Windgällenhütte (☎ 41-885-1088). For overnight accommodations in Bristen, check out the Gasthaus Wehrebrücke (\$) at ☎ 41-883-1119 or the Gasthaus Alpenblick (\$-\$\$) at ☎ 41-883-1240. Both small inns' rates include breakfast. The Alpenblick is a bit more sophisticated than the Wehrebrücke, but both offer clean, ample rooms.

### *The "Fourcla da Cavardiras" Hike*

For an exciting hike of medium difficulty, you'll want to try the walk from Platten to Disentis/Mustér. Known as the Fourcla da Cavardiras in Romansh, this walk connects the cantons of Uri and Graubünden in a hike that can be as short as one day or as long as three. Total walking time ranges from 12 to 14 hours. Wear a good pair of hiking shoes and stock up on water and

food. Not recommended for seniors or families with very small children.

To begin, take the Golzen cable car to the lower station of Platten and follow the road up the valley until it turns into a dirt road. You'll soon come to the glacial waters of the Chärsterlenbach, and on the south side of the trail and south of these waters will be the Berggasthaus Legni, which is open from mid-May through late October. It features dorm beds and little else. (\$). ☎ 41-883-1143.

Continue on the trail on the north side of the Chärsterlenbach through a few groups of fir trees. After 1½ hours, you'll reach Balmenschachen, a small stop where you can rest. From here, follow the trail along the riverside and eventually the road will reappear and lead you to Guferen. Continue on over a small footbridge as you pass a wider path on your north (left) side. If you'd like, you can go up to the Balmenegg at this point to the Berghotel Maderanertal, with its comfortable rooms. (\$). The hotel serves hearty breakfasts and is open from mid-June to mid-October. ☎ 41-883-1122.

Continue along the south side of the Chärsterlenbach for another hour and the path will cross itself several times as it continues to climb steeply. The trail is fixed by steel plates at some spots and, after approximately 1½ hours, you arrive at the Hinterbalmhütte. This hut is open year-round but has an attendant only from June to mid-October. It offers beds without breakfast but does have kitchen facilities where you can prepare your own meals. (\$). ☎ 41-883-1939. You've now traveled about four hours and can bunk here overnight if you like, as this is a good resting point for the remainder of your journey.

From the Hinterbalmhütte, follow the path along the Brunnital's picturesque grassy slopes. You'll come to a stone footbridge near a beautiful waterfall and the path will soon bring you to a lovely Alpine meadow. From here, cross back over the stream onto the eastern slope which begins to gently slope upwards. The path here becomes rocky, but it is well-marked and eventually leads to a natural plateau, which is a good spot for a picnic. Continue upward until you reach the Brunnifirn Glacier and follow the arrows until the mountain hut comes into view. The path will veer left over the Uri-Graubünden border, and just past this

cantonal separation is the Camona da Cavardiras hut. This hut is also open year-round, but is attended only from early July through early September. It features dorm beds without breakfast (\$), but offers great views. ☎ 81-947-5747. This part of the hike should take about 3½ hours.



*Camona da Cavardiras hut*

The next part of your hike will take the longest – anywhere from four to five hours. From the Camona da Cavardiras, follow the path down a rocky incline across a small snowfield to the grassy basin of the Val Cavardiras. A well-marked, graded trail follows alongside the northern banks of a small creek, careening up and down until you eventually reach Alp Sura after about two hours. Continue on as the path winds its way through thickets and Alpine pastures, crossing back and forth over the creek on a variety of small stone bridges. The path becomes dirt again nearing the Alp Cavrein-Sut as you enter the Russein Valley. The trail will take you to a bridge and then veer right onto a road that runs parallel with the river.

You pass the Barcuns hydroelectric reservoir and a small forest before reaching the Punt Gronda, a small bridge-plateau on the Trun-Disentis Road. From here, walk west and cross the Russein creek through a covered wooden bridge. Just past here you'll see a postbus stop. If you like, you can continue onward, following the signs reading "Senda Sursilvana" by the railroad tracks. Follow this trail marked with yellow diamond-shaped symbols through a few pastures and wooded areas before reaching the village of Disla. You can leave the main road and follow a country path past the old church and farmhouses that will eventually bring you to Disentis.

# Andermatt

**A**ndermatt is at the southernmost tip of Canton Uri, and is the meeting point of the St. Gotthard, Oberalp and Furka Passes. It is situated high in the Urseren Valley and is the main village of the region. However, in the winter it can sometimes become a dead-end resort because the St.



*Andermatt (Lutz Fischer-Lamprecht)*

Gotthard road and rail tunnels bypass it in both directions, and there are no adjoining ski areas or resort villages. It offers great hiking opportunities, as well as cross-country skiing and fantastic mountain biking excursions. Along with its nearby sister cities of Hospental and Realp, Andermatt features 34 ski lifts and just over 100 miles (161 km) of pistes, as well as 12.4 miles (20 km) of cross-country runs between Andermatt and Realp.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Andermatt Tourist Office is at Gotthardstrasse 2, CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-1454, fax 41-887-0185.

### Post Office

The Andermatt Post Office is at Gotthardstrasse 24, CH-6490 Andermatt, and is open Monday-Friday, from 8:15 am-noon, 2-5:45 pm, and on Saturday from 8:15-11 am. ☎ 41-887-1258, fax 41-887-1736.

## Codes

The postal code for Andermatt is CH-6490 and the area code is 41.



*For information on the Andermatt train service, ☎ 27-927-7707 or Andermatt Tourism at ☎ 41-887-1454.*

## Adventures

### On Foot



Andermatt is a good village for walking and was formerly one of Switzerland's main training centers for Alpine troops. The charm and dignity of its cobblestone streets reveals little of the military influence here, however, and there are plenty of shops and cafés to keep one busy for an afternoon. Don't expect a lot of sunshine in the village center, though, since the mountains overshadow most of the village.

I have a number of favorite walks that begin in Andermatt. Or conversely, you can go to the end of each destination and walk back to Andermatt.

- The first walk leaves the village of Andermatt at 4,595 ft (1,436 m) and travels via Realp up a sharp incline to the Furkapass at 7,773 ft (2,429 m). The best time to go is from July through October and it's a six- to seven-hour journey of 20 gradually-ascending kilometers. You basically follow a parallel path beside the Furkabahn.
- The second trip leaves Andermatt, following the Höhenweg for a six-hour journey of 10 mi (16 km) to the hamlet of Tiefenbach at 6,739 ft (2,106 m). The trail is quite level for the first two kilometers, then inclines steeply for the next three – the toughest part of this journey. The rest of the route is fairly straightforward with a few dips here and there. There are restaurants located in Realp and Tiefenbach, but it's always good to bring a backpack with water and some goodies for snacking. This trip is not suitable for elderly persons.
- These next two trips are extremely easy and suitable for anyone: seniors and families with small children. From Andermatt you follow a level path that runs alongside the

train tracks for two kms. It will then descend slightly for three more km. Expect to walk for only one to 1½ hours before reaching the village of Göschenen at 3,526 ft (1,102 m). You'll encounter some lovely bridges and the Gotthard train ice tunnel along the way. Travel info for Göschenen is at ☎ 41-885-1180.

- Another option is a bit more challenging but still suitable for all ages, with the path leading six mi (10 km) from Andermatt to the Oberalppass. This is a three-hour journey which also follows alongside a train line and is level the first two kilometers, then climbs for another two, before leveling off on the final six. You'll find some good cafés at Nätschen and in Oberalppass – the highest point of the Matterhorn Gotthard train route. For info on the Oberalppass train center, ☎ 27-927-7666.
- For a great excursion, but one suitable only for experienced hikers, check out the path from Andermatt to Sedrun. The short option is a 7.7-mi (12½-km), 3½-hour walk that descends steadily from Oberalppass to Sedrun at 4,500 ft (1,406 m) via the Öko-Wanderweg, which follows the Swiss Postal Bus route over some spectacular roads.
- A longer option offers two ways to travel – one a 10-mi (17-km) trek and the other a 12-mi (19.5-km) hike. Both begin at the south side of the Oberalppass train station and travel to the beautiful Tomasee at 7,500 ft (2,345 m). This lake (Der Tomasee) is part of a Rhein tributary and here you'll pass along its east side, walking south and then the trail will turn abruptly north again, traveling downhill until you come to the village of Tschamut at 5,264 ft (1,645 m). Alternately, at the Tomasee you can continue on south for a slightly longer trek and a much tougher route. Be sure to wear good hiking boots for this one. You'll travel via Maighels footpath which leads you to a bridge over the Rhein da Tuma. You'll also encounter a mountain hut on the east side known as Camona da Maighels. This path ultimately ends in Tschamut as well.
- In Tschamut, it's another 3½-hour walk to Sedrun (4.3 mi/ seven km) on a very level, easy path, suitable for everyone. Those families travelling with seniors can allow them to travel to Tschamut via Postal Bus, while younger members of your group tackle the walk. Leaving Tschamut train station, you travel east on a forest path that meanders gently

downhill to Sedrun at 4,611 ft (1,441 m). In 30 minutes or so you'll arrive at Planatsch – a great rest stop to take in the sun. This walk is best attempted from May through September. For information, contact the Sedrun train station at ☎ 27-927-7740 or Sedrun-Disentis Tourism at ☎ 81-920-4030, [www.sedrun.ch](http://www.sedrun.ch).

## On Snow

At either end of the village are two main ski areas, while the little towns of Hospental and Realp each provide less popular, smaller ski areas. The skiing here is not for the faint of heart, but Andermatt has long been popular with the local Swiss communities.



The Gemsstock has a treacherous vertical drop and off-piste skiing suitable for experienced skiers or those with a guide only; most beginners truck over to the Grossboden area. The Snow Hot Line gives information, but in German only at ☎ 41-887-0181.

## On Wheels

Biking is very popular here, and the Snow Limit shop at Gotthardstrasse 41 rents bikes and other summer and winter sports equipment. CH-6490, Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-0614. Also check out Christen Sport for biking equipment, on Gotthardstrasse 55, CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-1251.

One of the best trips you can make by car is a three-pass, round-trip route beginning and ending at Wassen. The Susten Road travels from Wassen through the Meiental and over the Susten Pass tunnel at 7,297 feet (2,295 m), before descending into the Gadmen valley, and the village of Innertkirchen.

The Grimsel Road links the Bernese Oberland with the Upper Valais and the Furka. Beginning in Innertkirchen, it twists through forests and Alpine meadows in the Hasli Valley and climbs to Handegg, where the terrain becomes pure rock, eventually reaching the Grimsel Pass at 7,013 feet (2,138 m).



From this high point, you descend to Gletsch at 5,784 feet (1,763 m).

The Furka Pass Road is a 20-mile jaunt from Gletsch to Andermatt that can take you up to 2½ hours via auto. It is the most exhausting part of your journey in terms of driving, but will offer one of the most spectacular scenic trips anywhere in Switzerland. It is also especially fun if you enjoy driving around hair-pin turns continuously for an extended period of time. The top of the Furka Pass, at 7,976 feet (2,432 m), is unequalled for its raw natural beauty.

## Where to Stay



**Hotel Drei Könige und Post** (Three Kings) was first erected in 1234 and has housed some very famous guests, including Goethe in 1775. This is a beautifully decorated Swiss chalet, inside and out, with paneled bedrooms, some with balconies. (\$\$-\$\$\$). The old inn is well worth an overnight stay. Many amenities. Closed in May and from November 1-December 15 annually. Gotthardstrasse 69, CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-0001, fax 41-887-1666.



*Hotel Drei Könige und Post*

**Hotel Aurora** is a family-owned and -operated inn, overflowing with warmth and charm. Clean, comfortable rooms in traditional Swiss style. (\$\$). Rates include breakfast. Closed May and November. CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-1661, fax 41-887-0089.

The family Danioth offers 26 spots for “Sleeping in the Straw” at their farm (\$). ☎ 41-887-1627, fax 41-887-1622.

**Hospental Youth Hostel** has 65 beds available from January 12-October 31. Gotthardstrasse, CH-6493 Hospental. ☎ 41-887-0401, fax 41-887-0902.

## Where to Eat



Hotel/Restaurant Metropol specializes in classical Swiss and international fare. The atmosphere is elegant and the menu first-class. (\$-\$-\$-\$). The hotel also sports a fun bar, La Curva, that features over 100 types of cocktails in a romantic setting. Open daily from 6 pm to whenever. Gotthardstrasse 43, CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-1575, fax 41-887-1923.

Bahnhofbuffet serves grilled dishes, pastas, fish, meat and Swiss favorites such as rösti in a fun, upbeat setting – old railway cars from the Andermatt/Zermatt lines. The desserts are also mouth-watering. (\$-\$). Open 6 am-8 pm daily. CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-888-0050, fax 41-888-0054.

Restaurant Kronen is in the hotel of the same name and features Alpine treats that are prepared with natural and organic ingredients, for a light and healthy meal. Complemented by a fine wine list. (\$-\$). Gotthardstrasse 64, CH-6490 Andermatt. ☎ 41-887-0088, fax 41-887-1838.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Canton Nidwalden (NW)

### At a Glance

**T**he half-canton of Nidwalden ("lower forest") is encompassed on the south and west sides by its sister half-canton of Obwalden ("upper forest") in the middle of Switzerland. The northern side leans up against the shores of the Vierwaldstättersee-Sud (literally, "four-forest-cities-lake-south"), while the east edge pushes up against the mountain ridges of Canton Uri. The landmass of Nidwalden – which makes up 107 square miles (278 square km) – stretches along the valley of the Aa River nearly to the peak of Titlis and is home to 41,695 German-speaking residents, mainly Roman Catholics, most of whom work in the tourism and service industries. Established in 1291, Nidwalden is the fourth-smallest canton in terms of people in Switzerland. About 38% of this canton is used for agriculture.



*Stanserhorn (Fly01)*

## Stans

**S**tans sits at the south end of the Vierwaldstättersee, and at the northern end of Canton Nidwalden, for which it is the capital city. Stans is best-known for its close proximity to the Stanserhorn (6,232 feet, 1,900 m). The village, which is typically quiet and neat, begins just behind the train station, and runs from the Bahnhofstrasse onto Dorfplatz. It has cobblestone streets and narrow alleyways, with one of the prettiest little central squares found anywhere.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The Tourist Office of Stans and the Vierwaldstättersee-Süd is above the Stans train station, and is open Monday-Friday, from 9-11:30 am and from 2:30-5:30 pm. They have hiking and biking maps and

can provide you with information for the entire Nidwalden area. You can also rent bikes here. Bahnhofplatz 4, CH-6370 Stans. ☎ 41-610-8833, fax 41-610-8866.

## Post Office

The Stans Post Office is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-6:15 pm, Saturdays from 8 am-noon. Bahnhofplatz 3, CH-6370 Stans. ☎ 41-618-3111, fax 41-618-3112.

## Codes

The postal code for Stans is CH-6370; the area code is 41.

## Adventures

### On Foot & Rail



Take a ride up the old cog railway to the summit of the Stanserhorn, where you'll find a terrace restaurant and many hiking trails. You can walk back down to Stans via a pleasant path that should take about 3½ hours or, as an alternative route, follow the steeper path to the village of Wirzweli, a 2½-hour hike.

# Canton Obwalden (OW)

## At a Glance

**T**he half-canton of Obwalden is made up of two areas smack dab in the middle of Switzerland, just south of Lake Lucerne, with their sister half-canton of Nidwalden (NW) between both and circling the smaller portion of Obwalden. Established in 1291, Obwalden means "upper forest," and is home to some 34,105 German-speaking inhabitants who are primarily Roman Catholic. The combined half-cantons are known as "Unterwald," and are made up of 159 square miles (413 square km) of land, 38% of which is used as farmland. The larger portion of Obwalden – known as the Sarneraatal region – is divided by Highway 8, which runs north and south, and includes a number of mountain passes through six municipalities. The smaller portion holds the resort town of Engelberg, which sits at the foot of the snow-clad Titlis. This half-canton is also one of the three

founding cantons of Switzerland, and is the second-smallest canton in terms of population.



The coat of arms reveals the key of St. Peter set on a red and white horizontal background. Obwalden and its sister half-canton of Nidwalden were originally part of Canton Unterwalden, whose arms were a shield of red and silver divided horizontally. When Unterwalden was divided, Obwalden took the old crest, while Nidwalden was given a variation on the original – a double key instead of the original single key.

## Sarnen

This is the capital of Obwalden and, as its largest city, is home to 9,500 residents. It's situated at the north end of Lake Sarnen in the region of Obwalden. The Melchtal Alps tower over the city. Sarnen is known for its charming countryside, tradespeople, crafts and folklore. The city contains cobblestone streets and beautiful fountains, adorned with flowers in the summertime. The Altstadt is especially nice for walking, and here you'll find the Baroque Town Hall, the St. Andreas monastery (a female parish of the "Sarner-Jesuskind") and St. Peter church.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Sarnen Tourist Office offers packages for hikers and skiers. Hofstrasse 2, CH-6060 Sarnen. ☎ 41-666-5040, fax 41-666-5045.

### Post Office

The Sarnen Post Office is at Lindenhof 6, CH-6060 Sarnen 1. ☎ 41-660-1566, fax 41-660-0477. Open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-noon, 1:45-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon.

### Train Station

The Sarnen Bahnhof (train station) contains a currency exchange that is open daily until 11:30 pm. ☎ 51-227-2980.

## Codes

The area code for Sarnen is 41; the postal code is CH-6060.

## Internet Access

You can access the Internet in Sarnen at two of the Obwaldner Kantonal Banks. One is in the center of Sarnen and the other is at Bahnhofstrasse 2, with varying rates.



*On rainy days you can visit the Sarnen Cantonal Library, in the Grundacherhaus. Here you'll find over 50,000 books in all languages. Open Monday-Friday from 1:30-6 pm. ☎ 41-660-1396.*

## Getting Around



This is easy on foot, by bike, or by car. If you need a taxi, you can call Ernst Taxi at ☎ 41-660-1313 or find him at the Bahnhof Standplatz.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are a great number of easy hikes out of Sarnen. One of the most popular is to Flüeli Ranft and back. Here the path will take you through a beau-



*Houses in Flüeli Ranft (Ikiwaner)*

tiful meadow and forest, with a slight incline, to the Lourdes grotte. From here, you'll walk to the Melcha Ravine, then pass over a high bridge to the Fluei. Simply retrace your steps for this three-hour hike. Another easy two-hour hike is to Alpnach. Here you'll walk along the Sarneraa to the protected Wichelsee where you can see various waterfowl.

The path then leads you into a forest and to Alpnach. For hiking maps of various difficulties, consult the Sarnen Tourist Office.

## On Water

### *Windsurfing*

Contact the House of Surf, Tellikurve, Alpnachstad, for lessons and equipment rental at ☎ 79-445-1212. For the Lungerersee Surf School No Limit, ☎ 55 79-677-4020.

### *Fishing*

You can fish on the banks of the Lungerer, Sarnersee and Alpnachersee from April 1 to mid-October without a permit.

Maps for rivers and lakes can be found at the Tourist Office or at the Fishery Administration in Sarnen, at Village Square 4. ☎ 41-666-6383.

## On Wheels

### *Mountain Biking*

Mountain biking treks can be arranged through Velohandlung Zeno Britschgi at ☎ 41-660-6070, or at the Sarnen Bahnhof (train station) at 51-227-2980.

### *Go-Karting*

For indoor and outdoor go-cart racing and a host of other fun-to-do things, go to the Kart-Center Kägiswil. Open Tuesday-Friday from 5-11:30 pm, Saturday from 1:30 pm-midnight, Sunday from 1:30-8 pm. Kernserstrasse 6, CH-6056 Kägiswil. ☎ 41-662-0766, fax 41-662-0765.

## On Snow

Sarnen is a great spot for skiing and snowboarding over the Melchsee Frutt, the Moerlialp, Lungern Schönbüel, the Hasliberg, and the Klewenalp, among others. All are accessible by mountain railways, cable cars and gondolas. To rent

equipment, contact Huwyler Sport, Poststrasse 7, CH-6060 Sarnen. ☎ 41-660-2585.

The Glaubenberg, or "Mountain of Belief," contains one of Europe's finest cross-country skiing sites at 4,500 feet (1,372 m) – the Langis – with 25 miles (40 km) of trails. You can take instruction from the Swiss Cross-Country Ski School, with advance reservations, and rent equipment. Contact them at ☎ 41-675-1146.

## In the Air

### *Paragliding*

Go to High Adventure AG, at Stanserstrasse 107, CH-6064 Kerns, ☎ 41-662-0175, or to Kiwi & H1Z Passagierfluge, CH-6064 Kerns, ☎ 41-660-5471.

## On Horseback

You can ride at the Reitsportzentrum Sand, Aecherlistrasse 15, CH-6064 Kerns. ☎ 41-660-2766.

## Other Sports

For a wide array of sports, including skiing, dog-sledding, cross-country skiing, biking, skating, canyoning, and windsurfing, contact Obwalden Erlebnis-Sport, Brünigstrasse 131, CH-6061 Sarnen. ☎ 41-662-0993, fax 41-662-0994.

### *Fitness & Tennis*

Clubs for tennis and fitness are popular in Sarnen. Check out Top Gym for aerobics, open Monday-Friday, from 9 am-9 pm, Saturday from 9 am-1 pm. Industriestrasse 4, CH-6060 Sarnen. ☎ 41-660-7730.

The local Tennis & Fitness Center is open daily from 8 am to 10 pm and offers sauna, a solarium and tennis, squash and badminton courts. ☎ 41-660-6222. The Kurhaus am Sarnersee offers whirlpool, light therapies, a fitness room and sauna. Open daily at Voranmeldung. ☎ 41-666-7466.

Sun For Fun is a solarium at Tuplenweg 2, open Monday-Sunday from 7:30 am-10 pm.

### *Miniature Golf*

You can play from April to October at the International Norm in Seefeld, Sarnen. ☎ 41-661-0346, fax 660-3146.



### Billiards

If you enjoy billiards, then check out the Billiard und Spiel-Center, open daily from 10 am-midnight. Brünigstrasse 135, CH-6060 Sarnen. ☎ 41-660-5235.

## Alpnachstad & the Alpnach Region

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**A**lthough the Alpnach area is the northernmost section of Canton Oberwalden, it is at the lowest elevation of the six municipalities in the Sarneraatal region – standing at just 1,525 feet (465 m). At the top of Alpnach, just over the cantonal boundary (between Oberwalden and Lucerne), lies the magnificent Pilatus, at 7,000 feet (2,129 m), while the Tomlishorn sits slightly west of Pilatus at 6,979 feet (2,121 m). The eastern portion of this region is made up of thick forests, while the tiny Alpnachersee sits at the south end.

### Alpnachstad



*Mt. Pilatus seen from the rack railway (Vibhugupta)*

Within the Alpnach region there are a few tiny villages that dot the landscape, the largest of which is Alpnachstad. This small village dates back to the time of the Romans, and artifacts from that era have been found on the banks of the Alpnachersee.

Today, Alpnach is known as the main helicopter base for the Swiss Air Force. Contact the Alpnach Tourismus (Tourist Office) in Alpnachstad for hiking maps, help with hotels and information. Bahnhofplatz 6, CH-6053 Alpnachstad. ☎ 41-670-1244, fax 41-670-1355.

The Pilatusbahn first began running back and forth between Pilatus and Alpnachstad in 1889. It was then and is now the steepest rack railway in the world, with a 48% gradient. A rack railway involves the combination of a locomotive cogwheel and a toothed "rack rail," which makes it possible for the train to handle steep inclines. It took three years and 600 Italian immigrant workers to complete the railway and the cost was two million Swiss francs. Call ☎ 41-329-1111, fax 41-329-1112 for information and schedules.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Hiking trips abound in this area, and are especially fun on Pilatus. Here are two which should delight any hiking enthusiast.

Alpnachstad-Aemisgen-Pilatus is a nine- to 10-hour round-trip hike, so it's best to begin in the morning. Walk from Alpnachstad, following the path through forests, where the trail will begin to ascend steeply. The path follows the Pilatusbahn track somewhat, and connects at Aemisgen. Stay on the trail and you'll eventually come to the Alpine meadow of Mattalp, in the summer filled with Alpine flowers, before eventually reaching Pilatus. The second hike is a five-hour jaunt that takes you from Lütoldsmatt-Oberwaldnerfräkmünt-Pilatus. This is a very easy trail, with the exception of the path from Chilhsteinen to Pilatus. For the most part, this trail flattens out through lush meadows. If you want a bit more stress in your life, then opt for the extension from Chilhsteinen to the Matthorn. For information and maps, ☎ 41-670-1244.

### By Rail

A fun trip for any traveler is to take the Brünig Railway from the northern village of Alpnachstad to the southernmost village of Lungern. The train first began running this route back in 1888.

You pass through the cities of Alpnach Dorf, Sarnen, Sachslen, Giswil, Kaiserstuhl, and finally to Lungern, passing the lakes of Wichel, Sarnen and Lungern along the route. It's a great way to view this section of Obwalden – taking you past the forests, meadows, rivers and majestic mountain ranges. To make reservations, contact the SBB at Güterstrasse 3, Postfach 4267, CH-6002 Lucerne. ☎ 51-227-3085, fax 51-227-3133.

## Where to Stay & Eat

### On Pilatus



If you'd like to stay on the mountain itself, then you'll have several options. Hotel Pilatus Bellevue, at the top of Pilatus, provides visitors with imposing views of the Alps and Lake Lucerne. All amenities are available and the restaurant serves fondue and other regional specialties from mid-April until mid-November in its Panoramic Restaurant. It also includes a Snow Bar and sun terraces. (\$\$). ☎ 41-670-1255, fax 41-670-2635.



*Hotel Pilatus Kulm (Roland Zumbühl)*

☎ 41-670-1255, fax 41-670-2635.

You can also dine at Restaurant Fräkmüntegg. At 4,650 feet (1,418 m), it's the starting point for many great Alpine hikes and offers a 100-seat dining area and sun terrace. Closed on Monday and Tuesday from late November to late April, but open otherwise when the gondolas from Kriens to Frakmuntegg are running. ☎/fax 41-329-1177. Restaurant Krienseregg, at 3,375 feet (1,029 m), offers a 35-seat dining area and sundeck. Open from the first of May to the end of November, when the

Hotel Pilatus Kulm was built in 1900 and is a charming hotel that offers clean rooms with spectacular views in good weather. Includes breakfast at very reasonable rates. The restaurant, called Swiss Express, offers regional fare, including fondue, in a fun atmosphere. (\$).

gondolas from Kriens to Frakmuntegg are running. Bergrestaurant Krienseregg. ☎ 41-329-1155.

## Alpnachstad

Hotel Rössli is family-owned and -operated and provides charming rooms in clean, fashionable Swiss style at reasonable rates (\$\$). Contact the family Moll for information. CH-6053 Alpnachstad. ☎ 41-672-9070, fax 41-672-9072.

Hotel Garni Sternen offers guests Internet hook-ups in a clean and comfortable setting just two minutes from the train station. Family Jöri-Röthlin runs this reasonable and beautiful inn. (\$\$). CH-6053 Alpnachstad. ☎ 41-627-7070, fax 41-672-7071.

## Camping



Camping Bachmattli offers close proximity to the Pilatusbahn, restaurants, shopping and swimming, and is open from April 1 to mid-October annually. (\$) Contact Martin and Margrit Iten at CH-6053 Alpnachstad. ☎ 41-671-0703, fax 41-671-0731, [www.bachmattli.ch](http://www.bachmattli.ch).

# The Sachseln Region

**T**he Sachseln region is the fifth-largest of the Obwaldener municipalities, divided into the two main villages of Sachseln and Flüeli-Ranft.

Sachseln lies on the shores of the Sarnersee at 1,590 feet (485 m), and was founded in the 12th century. It remained primarily a farming community until the late 20th century. In August of 1997, a storm dumped hundreds of thousands of gallons of water over the village, devastating most of it and causing millions of Swiss francs worth of damage. Houses and hotels were evacuated, businesses were shut down for days, and many of the local roads were washed away.

Around Lake Sarnen you can find hiking paths, fishing, rowing, canoeing, paragliding, bike paths, horseback riding, tennis, volleyball and climbing.

The Sachseln/Flüeli-Ranft Tourist Office can help with reservations, maps and directions. CH-6072 Sachseln. ☎ 41-660-2655, fax 41-660-9451.



One of the grandest spots to overnight in this region is the Hotel Belvoir, situated on Lake Sarnen. It is very close to the slopes of Lungern-Schoenbuehl and Melchsee-Frutt for winter sports and summer hikes. Clean, comfortable rooms with all amenities, an excellent restaurant (gourmet buffet, fondue, Swiss specialties) with a sun terrace and disco make this hotel a good stop on your tour. Very reasonable rates. (\$-\$\$). Run by the Zumstein family. Bruenigstrasse 5, CH-6072-Sachselsn. ☎ 41-666-7676, fax 41-666-7677.

You can camp at the excellent Sachselsn-Ewil Campground. This huge and well-placed facility has 100 plots for permanent and temporary visitors. (\$). Close to hiking trails and fishing. Contact Albert Von Moos at CH-6072 Sachselsn. ☎ 41-666-3270, fax 41-666-3279.

## Engelberg

The name means "Angel Mountain," and it's the main village in the Canton Obwalden region, at 3,280 feet (1,000 m). Originally a monastery village, today it's home to six mountain railways, ski lifts and numerous hotels and restaurants. It's hard to find a bad hotel or restaurant here.

There is just one road in and out of the town (from either Lucerne, Stans or Dörfli), and it weaves through narrow valleys along the way.

For the hiker, Engelberg provides the splendid Titlis, Spannörter and Uri Rotstock. Mt. Hahnen also looms above.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Engelberg Tourist Office offers packages for hikers and skiers on Dorfstrasse, just around the corner from the train station, at CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-637-3737, fax 41-637-4156. You can also get information from the Engelberg-Titlis Tourismus at ☎ 41-639-7777, fax 41-639-7766. Or contact the Adventure Engelberg Tourist Center at CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-639-5450.

*Opposite: Summit of Hahnen seen from Engelberg (Simon Koopmann)*

## Train Station

The train station is in the middle of Engelberg on Bahnhofstrasse and is open daily from 7:30 am-midnight. Currency exchange and lockers are available here.

## Post Office

The Engelberg Post Office is at Bahnhofstrasse 9, CH-6390. Open Monday-Friday, from 8 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturdays 8:30-11 am. ☎ 41-637-1153, fax 41-637-1939.

## Codes

The area code for Engelberg is 41; the postal code is CH-6390.

## Adventures

### On Foot



A hiker's paradise, with the Titlis – at 10,627 feet (3,239 m) – being the prima donna of the area. To get there, take the cable car to Trübsee, which provides you with great views of the Engelberg village. Here you walk around this beautiful mountain lake, beginning to the right of the cable car exit, for a good 1½-hour hike. On the southwest side of the Trübsee you can take a chairlift to the Joch Pass at 7,241 feet (2,207 m) – which is home to some of the best moun-



*Trübsee (Anniev)*

tain bike trails in Switzerland. You can also take a lift down to the lakes of Engstlensee, Tannen and Mechsee – where a variety of hiking trails can be found. To get to Titlis take the cable car farther up from Trübsee to Stand at 8,038 feet (2,450 m). Then take the unique revolving cable car known as the “Rotair” up to the peak, where it is another 15-minute hike up to the viewing deck, and another 45 minutes to summit. These are some sturdy hikes up, so be prepared with good hiking shoes, sunglasses and a raincoat in case of inclement weather. On the way back, you can hike to Trübsee via Stand on a well-marked path.

Two miles (3.2 km) east of Engelberg, you’ll find the Fürenalpahn, which takes you up to the Fürenalp, at 6,069 feet (1,850 m), allowing great views of the area. From the top of the Fürenalp station, walk to the right and you see a path that slopes slightly downward. You quickly come upon the Abnet village; head toward it through the cows in the pastures on either side. Continue on until you get to the village of Stäfel. Here you can either retrace your steps or follow an alternative path back to the Fürenalp station. This hike should take you three to four hours.

There are two mountain huts in the area: the Rugghubelhütte and the Brunnihütte. The Brunnihütte sits at 6,100 feet (1,860 m) and offers up 40 sleeping spots, with great panoramic views of the area. Contact Christian Wyss at ☎ 41-637-3732 for reservations. This hut can be reached by cable



*The Brunnihütte*

car and then by chairlift. The Rugghubelhütte offers accommodations for 100 people and is open from June to October. Sitting at 7,527 feet (2,295 m), this hut allows you to view wildlife in the surrounding areas. It’s a 2½-hour hike from Ristis. Contact Fredi Schleiss Niderberger at ☎ 41-637-2064. To get



there, follow the well-marked path from Engelberg to the local nature preserve and beyond to the hut, [www.rugghubel.ch](http://www.rugghubel.ch).

For another light jaunt, you can follow a narrow road north and then west and north again to the small village of Schwand. Here's a good spot for a picnic with the family that offers great views of the Titlis and surrounding mountains. Allow a couple of hours for this trip.

## On Snow

Engelberg offers a wide variance in the ski slopes, though its skiing area is small compared to most Swiss resorts, with 26 lifts for 51 miles (82 km) of pistes. There are 25 miles (40 km) of cross-country ski runs heading toward the Trübsee. Contact the Skischule Engelberg Titlis at ☎ 41-639-5454. Snowshoe walking tours are available for 60Sfr with a guide, followed by fondue or raclettes later in the evening. Contact Engelberg-Titlis Tourismus at ☎ 41-639-7777. Snowboarding tours and lessons are also available.

## Summer Adventures

Besides hiking, Engelberg offers kayaking, caving, glacial tours, bungee jumping, rock climbing, golf, downhill mountain biking, and paragliding. Contact Engelberg-Titlis Tourismus at ☎ 41-639-7777.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Waldegg is a four-star, gorgeous and stylish hotel set in the heart of Engelberg. Offers special rates for singles, doubles and families, with ski, gourmet meal and various packages available. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Schwandstrasse 91, CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-637-1822, fax 41-637-4321.



*Hotel Waldegg*

Berghotel Trübsee-Hof sits at the central station of Titlis-Gondelbahn, in the middle of the Engelberg ski region. Beauti-

ful and stately, with gracious accommodations and an excellent restaurant. (\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-6390 Engelberg/Trübsee. ☎ 41-637-1371, fax 41-637-3720.

Hotel Sonnwendhof is quite near to the Titlis tram station, and is a beautiful white stucco house with wood trim and wood paneling throughout. Comfortable, with a garden sun terrace, restaurant and bar. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Gerschniweg 1, CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-637-4575, fax 637-4238.

Hotel Schweizerhof is a comfortable, three-star hotel in the village center that offers all amenities, including saunas, massages and facials. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Dorfstrasse 42, CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-637-1105, fax 41-637-4147.

Berghaus Youth Hostel houses 160 beds and is open from late November to mid-April, and from late May to late October. (\$). Dorfstrasse 80, CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-637-1292, fax 41-637-4988, [www.youthhostel.ch/engelberg](http://www.youthhostel.ch/engelberg).

## Camping



Camping is at Eienwäldli, close to hiking trails and ski lifts with 150 permanent and 100 temporary spots. Contact Josef Bünter at CH-6390 Engelberg.

☎ 41-637-1949, fax 41-637-4423, [www.eienwaldli.ch](http://www.eienwaldli.ch).

## Where to Eat



Bergrestaurant Ristis-Brunni is open daily and is a great spot at 5,248 feet (1,600 m), only five minutes up the mountain via the Luftseilbahn cable car. Includes a banquet hall, an outdoor terrace and a large playground for children. Features regional and international dishes. (\$-\$). CH-6390 Engelberg. ☎ 41-637-1483, fax 41-637-4485.

Restaurant Flüematt can be reached on foot from the Engelberg central train station in 45 minutes or via a small lift in three minutes. Sitting at 4,264 feet (1,300 m), the restaurant is typical of an Engelberg house (they are stacked among throngs of thick trees along a steep mountainside, and are two to three stories high, with dark slanted roofs and white facades).

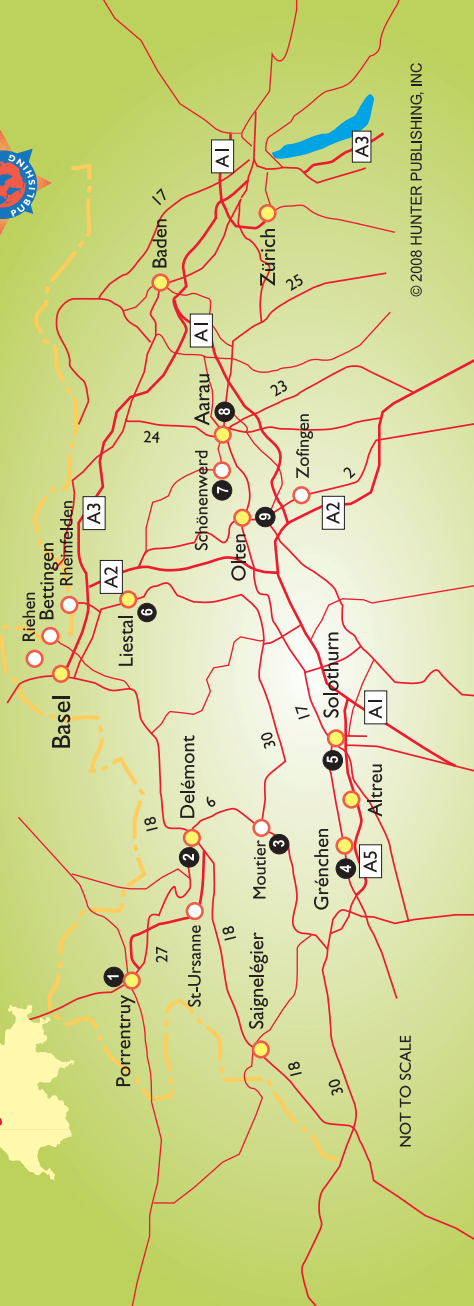
This one serves regional fare at reasonable rates. Run by the Paul Hurschler-Hacki family. (\$-\$). Open daily. ☎ 41-637-1660.

# Northern Switzerland



1. Town Hall; Juventuti School; Porte de France; Hotel Dieu
2. Old Town; Hotel de Ville (town hall); Chapelle du Vorbourg; Jurassic Art and History Museum
3. cheese factory
4. Kunsthaus Grénchen; Kultur-Historisches Museum Grénchen; Mudjibur Riding Hall
5. St.-Ursen Cathedral; Baseltoir; Rathaus; Zeltclockenturm; Mauritius Fountain; Jesuit Church;
6. Krummer Turm; Solothurn Kunstmuseum; Altes Zeughaus; Blumstein Historical Museum
7. Basel-Land Cantonal Museum; Dichtermuseum; Monteverdi Car Collection
8. Schuhmuseum
9. Stadtkirch; Fountain of Justice
9. Kunstmuseum; Historisches Museum

N



NOT TO SCALE



# Northern Switzerland

**T**his region is just north of Central Switzerland and west of Canton Zürich. It includes the international city of Basel and the cantons of Basel-Stadt, Basel-Land, Jura, Solothurn and Aargau. By using Basel as a base, you can travel easily throughout this region within five days or less. For horse enthusiasts, there's no finer place than the village of Saignelégier in Canton Jura. Numerous horseback riding excursions are possible, and the National Horse Fair is held here annually.

From Basel, you can travel either by car or trail to most destinations in this region in an hour or less. For cyclists, the Aare Bike Trail begins and ends in Canton Aargau, which is home to the village of Rheinfelden, famous for its saltwater health spas, and the health-resort village of Baden on the Limmat River.

Solothurn's old city is perfect for rainy-day walks and shopping trips, as is the medieval village of Zofingen, in Canton Aargau. And you definitely won't want to miss the Roman ruins in the village of Liestal, just a short distance east of Basel's city center.

## IN THIS CHAPTER

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■ Canton Basel-Land	311
■ Canton Jura	318
■ Canton Solothurn	323
■ Canton Aargau	330

Basel itself is worth a few days of exploration. The city is filled with museums, and the Old Town, with its numerous bridges and historic buildings, is enchanting and romantic. Basel is also a major junction for trains and highways connecting Switzerland with other European destinations.

# Canton Basel-Stadt (BS)

## Basel

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### At a Glance

Basel is Switzerland's third-largest city – encompassing 14 square miles (36 square km) – and, as a half-canton, borders the Jura Mountains, the German Black Forest and the French Vosges. It is often referred to as the "Gateway of Switzerland," and is well known for its chemical industries, the Rhine harbor and its Fasnacht celebration. Basel-Stadt is at the junction of France, Germany and Switzerland, and influences of all three nations abound in this unique city, which is also the home of Switzerland's oldest university. Mostly Protestant, German-speaking citizens inhabit Basel-Stadt, which is the smallest canton in Switzerland. In terms of population the canton ranks 14th out of the 26 cantons with 179,883 citizens, and it has the third-largest contingent of foreigners found anywhere in Switzerland, behind the cantons of Geneva and Ticino.

Basel dates back to 374 AD, when it was a Roman fortress. It joined the Swiss Confederation in 1501 and has become Switzerland's main artistic and cultural center. Home to over 40 museums and a dozen theaters, the town retains much of its medieval atmosphere, as reflected in the architecture of its buildings.

The city is split into two areas: Grossbasel (Greater Basel) and Kleinbasel (Lesser Basel). Grossbasel sits on the steep left side of the Rhine River, while Kleinbasel is on the right bank. Six bridges link both parts of Basel together, and ferries run continuously back and forth. Grossbasel is the commercial and cultural center of the city, while Kleinbasel is the industrial and business arm. Grossbasel is focused on the Rhine, where visi-

tors can stroll for hours along its banks or explore the cobblestone streets of the Old Town. The Rhine Harbor (Rheinhafen) is on the far northern side of the city, which has 162,800 residents, making it the third-largest city in Switzerland.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Basel Tourismus (Tourist Office) is open Monday-Friday, from 8:30 am to 6 pm, and on Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. Closed Sunday. Schiffände 5, CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-268-6868, fax 61-268-6870, [www.baseltourismus.ch](http://www.baseltourismus.ch). There is a City Information Center at the SBB Bahnhof in Grossbasel. ☎ 61-271-3684.

### Train Stations

Basel has one of the largest rail junctions within Europe. The SNCF train station is on the Centralbahnstrasse, as is the SBB (Schweizerische Bundesbahnen, ☎ 900-300-300) on the south side of the old town. The DB (Deutsch Bundesbahnen, ☎ 61-690-1111) is on the other side of the Rhine on Richenstrasse in Kleinbasel. You can rent bikes at the SBB train station kiosk for 29Sfr daily with an ID. Open 7 am-midnight.



*SBB train station (Roland Zumbühl)*

### Post Office

The main post office in Basel is at Rudengasse 1, CH-4001. ☎ 61-266-1616, fax 61-266-1604. Hours are Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-6:30 pm, and Saturday, 7:30-noon. There are 28 branch offices throughout the half-canton.

### Codes

The area code for Basel-Stadt is 61 and the postal codes range from CH-4001 to 4032.

## Internet Access

Internet cafés abound in Basel-Stadt. You can let your fingers do the surfing at the following locations. Domino, on Steinenvorstadt 54, CH-4051 Basel. ☎ 61-271-7298. Open Monday-Thursday, from 11 am-midnight, Friday and Saturday from 11 am-1 am, and Sunday from 1 pm-midnight. Jäggi Bücher, at Greifengasse 3&5, CH-4058 Basel. ☎ 61-264-2694. Open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9 am-7 pm; Thursday, 9 am-8 pm; Saturday, 9 am-5 pm. Beim Kundendienst, at Greifengasse 22, CH-4058 Basel. ☎ 61-685-4618. Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 8:30 am-7 pm; Thursday, 8:30 am-9 pm; Saturday, 8 am-5 pm. Mausclick at Klingentalstrasse 7, CH-4057 Basel. ☎ 61-683-4183. Open Monday through Friday, 7:30 am-5 pm.

## Getting Around



Public transportation is cheap in Basel, but beware of the taxis, as they are horribly expensive. You probably won't need to take a taxi anywhere, since the best way to see Basel is either on foot or by bicycle. The heart of the city is best explored on foot – especially since most of the main attractions such as the museums and shops are contained in the historic district.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Though Basel is known for its culture and industry, you may be surprised to learn that the city has 744 miles (1,198 km) of dedicated walking trails on its perimeter. These well-marked paths allow for some great hikes. Take city bus #70 to Reigoldswil and then grab the Gondelbahn (cable car) up to the Wasserfallen peak at 3,073 feet (937 m). From here you'll find paths branching out in all directions for relaxing and scenic hikes. For information, ☎ 61-941-1881.

The old part of Basel is unique and self-contained. Informative walking tours are available through Basel Tourismus, leaving from the Schiffflände office. The tours cost only 15Sfr and are well worth it. They operate May through October, Monday-

Saturday at 2:30 pm, and November through April on Saturdays only at 2:30 pm.



*You can purchase a Basel Card at the tourist office. This card allows discounts and special rates at all museums and many restaurants, shops and art galleries. The cost starts at 25Sfr.*

## Festivals

Besides Fasnacht, Basel holds festivals throughout the year, but two main ones are the Vogel Gryff Volksfest and the Basel Art Fair. The Vogel Gryff Volksfest occurs on January 13, 20 or 27, with the three main neighborhoods of the city depicted by their



*Carnival troop at Fasnacht (Flups)*

traditional symbols – a lion, a griffin and a “wild man from the woods.” These three float down the Rhine on a raft and afterwards street celebrations and dancing take place. The Tourist Office or any hotel can tell you exactly when the festival will be occurring. The Basel Art Fair is held in mid-June and displays works by over 1,000 artists worldwide. For information on the Art Fair, ☎ 61-686-2020.

Fasnacht is Basel-Stadt's annual carnival, and brings everyone into the streets for partying, singing and dancing on the Monday following Ash Wednesday. At exactly 4 in the morning, all the lights of the city are turned off and thousands of people gather with masks, drums and pipes for a procession through the city. This is the Swiss version of Mardi Gras, bursting with people, many of whom don masks, and music in a wild celebration for three days and nights.

## Sightseeing



Sightseeing here begins with the Rheinbrücke, Basel's Middle Rhine Bridge, and one of its most his-





*Basel Rathaus (Tobias Helfrich)*

toric sites. The original bridge was built in 1225 of wood and was later replaced with stone during the early 1900s. You'll also want to visit the Rathaus (Town Hall), built to honor the city's joining the Swiss Federation in 1501. It hovers over the marketplace and, with its bright red façade and fancy frescos, it's hard to miss. The Marktplatz is the place to be every morning beginning at 6 am. Here vendors of all kinds come to sell their wares, everything from fruits, vegetables and roasted nuts, to housewares, clothing and electronics. Up a bit on the northwest side of the city from the Marktplatz is the Fischmarkt (Fish Market Square), where the fountain once served as a hold-

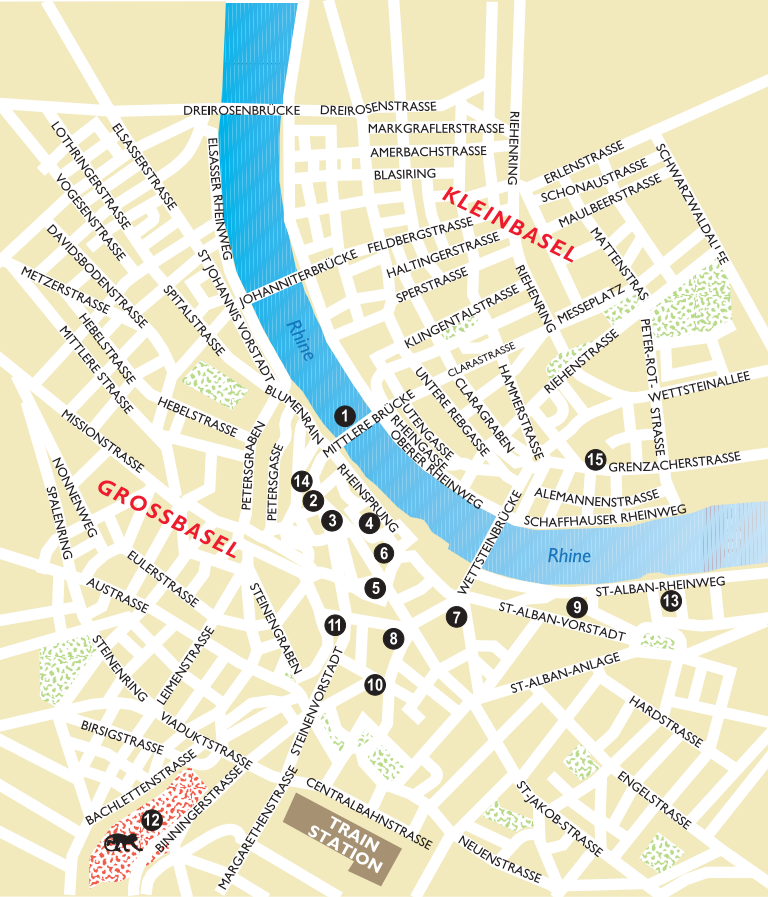
ing tank for the day's fresh catches.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Basler Zoologischer Garten was founded in 1874 and is one of the best zoos anywhere. Just a few minutes walk from the central train station, this zoo encompasses 26 acres in the middle of the city and is famous for breeding a variety of endangered species. A must-see! Open daily, 10 am-5 pm. Admission is 5Sfr for adults and 3Sfr for students, free for kids 15 and under. Binningerstrasse 40, CH-4001 Basel. ☎ 61-205-8600.

## Museums

The Kunstmuseum (Fine Arts Museum) is the oldest museum in Switzerland and features everything from Impressionists to classical and religious sketches and sculpture. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is 10Sfr for adults and 8Sfr for seniors and kids. St. Alban-Graben 15, CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-206-6262.



# Basel

- |                                                         |                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1. Mittlere Brücke (Middle Bridge)                      | 9. Museum für Gegenwartskunst            |
| 2. Rathaus                                              | 10. Haus Zum Kirschgarten                |
| 3. Marktplatz                                           | 11. Puppenhausmuseum (Doll House Museum) |
| 4. Natur Historisches Museum; Museum der Kulturen Basel | 12. Basler Zoologischer Garten           |
| 5. The Münster                                          | 13. Schweizer Papiermuseum               |
| 6. Historisches Museum Baufürslerplatz                  | 14. Pharmazie-Historisches Museum        |
| 7. Kunstmuseum                                          | 15. Jean Tinguely Museum                 |
| 8. Kunsthalle                                           |                                          |

546 YARDS



500 METERS



*Portrait by Hans Holbein (1516) in the  
Kunstmuseum*

The Kunsthalle (Art Gallery) has been the premiere art hall for modern works in Basel since 1872. Open Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm, and on Wednesday from 11 am to 8:30 pm. Admission is 9Sfr for adults, 6Sfr for seniors and kids. Steinenberg 7, CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-206-9900. Museum für Gegenwartskunst (Museum for Contemporary Art) features works by art-

ists from 1960 to the present. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm. Admission is 10Sfr for adults, 8Sfr for seniors and kids. Alban-Rheinweg 60, CH-4002 Basel. ☎ 61-272-8183.

## Where to Stay



Trois Rois Hotel (Three Kings) is Europe's oldest hotel (1026) and was originally a coach stop, later expanded into a classy guest house. The in-house restaurant is extremely formal and serves classic French fare. Expensive but worth it. (\$\$\$\$+). Blumerain 8, CH-4001 Basel. ☎ 61-260-5050, fax 61-260-5060.



*Trois Rois Hotel (Stefan Xp)*

Hotel Basel is in the Old Town and caters mostly to the business crowd. The rooms are stylish, and some have elegant marble bathrooms. Many amenities. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Munegasse 12, CH-4001 Grossbasel.

☎ 61-264-6800, fax 61-264-6811.

Hotel Euler also caters to the business set and is home to a famous bar covered in red velvet and leather. Many amenities in clean and modern Swiss surroundings. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Centralbahnhofplatz 14, CH-4002 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-275-8000, fax 61-275-8050.

Hotel Schweizerhof was built in 1864 and is one of the most



*Hotel Euler*



*Hotel Schweizerhof*

beautiful inns in the city, complete with wrought-iron balconies overlooking a lovely park. Owned and operated by the Goetzinger family for over half a century, it has hosted such notables as Arturo Toscanini.

The bedrooms are traditional Swiss with modern facilities at moderate prices that include breakfast. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Centralbahnhofplatz 1, CH-4002 Basel. ☎ 61-271-2833, fax 61-271-2919.

Hotel St. Gotthard is right across from the train station and has been run by the same family for over 75 years. One of the most friendly staffs anywhere in the city. A clean and comfortable spot to bunk down at reasonable rates. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Centralbahnhofstrasse 13, CH-4002. Basel. ☎ 61-225-1313, fax 61-225-1314.

The Basel Youth Hostel is one of the largest in Switzerland, offering 196 beds and a variety of rooms to choose from. Open February 1-December 21. (\$-\$\$). St. Alban-Kirchrain 10, CH-4052 Basel. ☎ 61-272-0572, fax 61-272-0833.

## Where to Eat



The Bruderholz-Stucki restaurant features the finest international cuisine in Basel in a very formal setting. This restaurant

AUTHOR'S  
CHOICE



was the former venue of one of Switzerland's and Europe's most famous chefs – Hans Stucki – who died unexpectedly in 1998. Fortunately, Chef Jean-Claude Wicky has taken over the reins with grace and aplomb, serving some of the finest French cuisine found anywhere. This innovative, first-class eatery is listed among the "Leading Restaurants of the World." Reservations are required. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed Sunday and Monday. Bruderholzallee 42. CH-4001 Basel. ☎ 61-361-8222, fax 61-361-8203, [www.stucki-bruderholz.ch](http://www.stucki-bruderholz.ch).

Chez Donati features classic Italian fare. This restaurant is well-known for its hors d'oeuvres and classic atmosphere. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed Sunday and Monday. St. Johannis-Vorstadt 48. CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-322-0919.

La Rôtisserie des Rois is famous for its Rhine River terrace and its market-fresh dishes that change with the seasons. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Located in the Trois Rois Hotel. Open daily from noon to 2:45 pm, and 7-11 pm. Blumerain 8, CH-4001 Basel. ☎ 61-260-5050, fax 61-260-5060.

Zum Goldenen Sterren dates back to 1421 and is one of the oldest restaurants in Switzerland. Here you'll find traditional Swiss and French cuisine featuring lamb, eel, trout, lobster and veal. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily, noon-2 pm, and 6-10 pm, St. Albanrheinweg 70, CH-4001 Basel. ☎ 61-272-1666.

L'Escargot is found in the main train station and features a combination of Swiss and French cuisine that is surprisingly good, given the location. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open Monday-Friday, 11 am-2 pm, 6-11 pm. Closed mid-July to mid-August and on Saturdays and Sundays. Centralbahnhofstrasse 14, CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-295-3966.

Brauereri Fischerstube is the local brewery, which specializes in ales and lagers. "Ueli Bier" is the house special and the restaurant features grilled and local dishes. (\$\$). Rheingasse 45, CH-4012 Kleinbasel. ☎ 61-692-6635.

Löwenzorn offers traditional German, Swiss and Italian food, as well as large steins of beer in a friendly, easygoing atmosphere. (\$-\$\$). Closed Sundays only. Gemsberg 2, CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-261-4213.

Café Pfalz is Grossbasel's best-kept secret, featuring vegetarian dishes, a salad and juice bar in a comfy, modern setting. (\$-\$\$). Münsterberg 11, CH-4001 Grossbasel. ☎ 61-272-6511.

## Canton Basel-Land (BL)

### At a Glance

**T**he canton of Basel-Land officially separated from the city of Basel in 1833 after a two-year civil war that occurred between 1831 and 1832. Home to around 266,962 German-speaking Protestant citizens, Basel-Land comprises 165 square miles (429 square km) of narrow valleys and wooded hillsides that are mostly used for agriculture. Farms and small manufacturers call this corner canton home, as it is sandwiched in the far northwestern edge of Switzerland, between the cantons of Solothurn to the south and southwest and Aargau to the east. The countries of France (to the west) and Germany (to the north and east) also border with Basel-Land. Slightly over 26% of residents of this canton work in manufacturing or energy supply, while 29% are employed in tourism-related businesses.

### Liestal

**L**iestal is the capital of Basel-Land, a well-preserved old village about nine miles (14.5 km) south of Basel-Stadt on Highway 12. It has cobblestone streets in a quaint setting and the village is famous for the ancient celebration of "Chienbäse," which falls shortly before Basel-Stadt's Fasnacht (usually in early to mid-March). The traditional Chienbäse dates back to the 16th century, and features locals dragging giant bonfires

*Chienbäse*

(just before Basel-Stadt's Fasnacht).

through the town on floats, while onlookers swing fiery torches made of pine branches over their heads. This, all through the narrow streets (mainly on the Rathausgasse) of Liestal, makes for a spectacular sight and is well worth a visit if you're in the area at the right time of the year

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Basel-Land Tourist Office is at Altmarktstrasse 96, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-927-6535, fax 61-927-6550.

### Post Office

The Liestal Post Office is open Monday-Friday, from 7:30 am-6:15 pm, Saturday from 8 am to noon. Poststrasse 3, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-926-9444, fax 61-926-9445.

### Codes

The postal code for Liestal is CH-4410 and the area code is 61.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Only seven miles (11 km) from Basel-Stadt, and six miles (9.6 km) north of Liestal, is Augusta Raurica, or Rome on the Rhine as it is known. Over 1,800 years ago this Roman town was home to some 20,000 people – native Celts and Mediterraneans. The site today features a large open-air archeological museum with a well-preserved theater, a replica of a Roman house and a Roman farm animal park. Expect to spend an entire day here to take in the more

than 20 exhibits. The grounds are free to the public, and admission to the Roman museum and Roman house is just 5Sfr. If you'd like a guided tour of the grounds and museum, you can make reservations through Basel Tourismus, Schiff-



*Theater at Augusta Raurica (Bernd Reichelt)*

lande, CH-4001 Basel. ☎ 61-268-6832, fax 61-268-6870. Open daily, 10 am-5 pm. For information contact Römerstadt Augusta Raurica, Giebenacherstrasse 17, CH-4302 Augusta. ☎ 61-816-2222, fax 61-816-2261. To get here you can take any train from Basel to Augusta and it is a 10-minute walk to the Roman museum. Or take bus #70 from Basel.

For a fun bike ride to Rome on the Rhine, you can rent a bike at the Rheinfelden train station (reservation necessary at ☎ 51-229-3484), and explore the area via a 1.4-mile path through the ruins. In the summer you can take a boat from Basel-Stadt (Schifflande), or from Rheinfelden to Augst and then walk 15 minutes to the Roman Museum. ☎ 61-639-9507 for departure times. The entire trip from Basel to the ruins takes about 1½ hours. Last, but not least, you can walk from Liestal to Augst along well-marked pedestrian routes marked in yellow.

## Hikes



There are two mountain huts worth a visit in Basel-Land if you're hiking, and the Basel Tourist Office can provide you with maps and information.

The Tierberglihütte is reached by starting from the Steingletscher/Sustenpass for a nice 3½-hour walk along a well-marked trail (with blue and white signs). The hut is open from July 1 to the end of September and offers 70 sleeping spots, with a nice kitchen, where the hut-warden often serves tasty dishes at nominal prices. For information contact the





*Tierberglihütte*

Huettenwartin (hut warden) Trudi Imdorf at CH-3860 Meiringen. ☎ 33-971-6817, or ☎ 33-971-2782 at the hut.

The Waldweldhütte is a private hut from the Basel-Land Hut Club. From here you can take lovely walks throughout the Jura hills of Basel-Land. For an easy 1½-hour walk you can begin at the forest castle in Reigoldswil, southwest of Liesel. Here you'll find the well-marked trail, the "Ruchweg," up to the Waldweldhütte. The hut is open from Saturday afternoon at 2 pm until Sunday at 4 pm, when it is attended by a hut warden.

There are 24 sleeping spaces, but you must make arrangements with the hut warden to stay there. Contact Hans at Moosmattstrasse 3, CH-4416 Bubendorf. ☎ 61-931-2948.

## Museums

The Basel-Land Cantonal Museum is in Liestal, at Zueghausplatch 28, CH-4410 Liestal, and it includes a wide array of historical documents and displays spotlighting the history of the region. Admission is 7Sfr for adults, 5Sfr for kids under 16, students and seniors. Open Tuesday-Friday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday, 10 am-5 pm, closed Monday. ☎ 61-925-5986, fax 61-925-5088.

The Monteverdi Car Collection in nearby Binningen is a must for any auto enthusiast. This museum contains Europe's largest collection of model cars – 8,000 to be exact. Open daily from 1 to 5 pm, but you must make a reservation to visit. Oberwilerstrasse 20 CH-4102 Binningen. ☎ 61-421-4545, fax 61-421-4546.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Engel is the largest of four inns in Liestal, with 80 beds, and caters more to the business crowd, but offers ample amenities in a modern setting. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Kasernenstrasse 10, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-927-8080, fax 61-927-8081.



*Hotel Engle*

Hotel Bad Schauenburg, a 300-year-old inn, has a very nice gourmet restaurant and also caters to many business people. It's a clean and comfortable medium-sized hotel. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-906-2727, fax 61-906-2700.

Seiler's Radackerhof Hotel is a modest and clean, medium-sized inn that has good accommodations at reasonable rates. (\$\$). Rheinstrasse 93, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-901-3222.

Seiler's Gitterli Hotel has only 15 beds, but is a nice, cheap and clean spot to bunk down for the night. Simple, modest rooms. Located on Kasernenstrasse 51, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-921-4188.

## Where to Eat



Hotel Restaurant Bad Bubendorf is near Liestal and features an excellent restaurant in a large hotel. Swiss cuisine in hearty portions. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily until 11 pm, parking available, handicapped-accessible. Kantonstrasse 3, CH-4416 Bubendorf. ☎ 61-935-5555, fax 61-935-5566.

Restaurants Engel are three restaurants in the hotel of the same name, and offer everything from traditional international gourmet and Swiss cuisine to comfort foods in a variety of settings: formal, relaxed and bar-casual. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Kasernenstrasse 10, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-927-8080, fax 61-927-8081.

Restaurant Murenberg serves fish and seafood in an elegant setting. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open daily until 10 pm, closed Wednesday and Thursday. Parking available. Krummackerstrasse 4, CH-4416 Bubendorf. ☎ 61-931-1454, fax 61-931-1846.

S'Chruz offers creative and traditional Swiss dishes at reasonable prices. Open daily until 11 pm, closed from Tuesday afternoon at 2 pm and all day Wednesday. (\$-\$\$). Handicapped-accessible, and a good spot for nonsmokers. Hintergasse 31, CH-4416 Bubendorf. ☎ 61-931-1737, fax 61-931-1998.

Top Stars Sportbar is a cheap little spot with snacks, light dishes and drinks. (\$). Open daily until midnight. Rheinstrasse 4, CH-4410 Liestal. ☎ 61-921-5835, fax 61-921-5833.

## Canton Jura (JU)

### At a Glance

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**C**anton Jura is the youngest of Swiss cantons, having joined the Swiss Federation as the 26th canton on January 1, 1979. Jura is comprised of three main districts that are home to 83 tiny communities: Delémont (the capital), Porrentruy (with the regions of Ajoie and Clos du Doubs) and Les Franches Montagnes. It was formerly a part of the canton of Bern, but the residents of this region decided in the late 1970s that they wanted to have their own canton, and by vote it was so granted. A long period of political unrest since the late 1940s between various factions in the region led to the split. In the 18th century the area around the capital city of Delémont was the site of holiday retreats for the prince-bishops of Basel.

The northwestern and western side of the Jura canton borders France, while the extreme southwestern side touches the canton of Neuchâtel. The entire south and southeastern side bump against Canton Bern, while on the northeastern side Jura borders Canton Solothurn. The canton has an elongated, somewhat triangular shape of 519 square miles (1,349 square km), in which 70,185 French-speaking, mostly Roman Catholic citizens live. About 46% of the populace works in manufacturing, energy supply or construction, while only 22% work in the tourism industry. It is one of the least populated cantons within

Switzerland, ahead of only six other cantons in that regard and 50% of its land is used for agricultural purposes.

This canton is a great spot for horseback riding, as it offers over 125 miles (200 km) of well-groomed horse trails, as well as 930 miles (1,490 km) of hiking trails and cross-country ski trails.

The Swiss Jura are not like the rest of the Alps. There are long valleys, forests, and gently rolling hills. These low mountains (known as the Franches-Montagnes within this canton) extend 93 miles (149 km) northeast along the French and Swiss border, with the lowest peaks in the north near Basel and the higher ones at the south near Lake Geneva. These flowing mountains cover the six cantons of Basel, Solothurn, Jura, Bern, Neuchâtel and Vaud, offering easy and uncomplicated walks compared with the more strenuous paths found in some of the other Swiss cantons such as Graubünden or Valais.

## Delémont

The capital city of Canton Jura, Delémont once belonged to the Dukes of Alsace, before being annexed to France in the 18th century. It was then given back to Switzerland in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna and made a district



*Delémont*

of Canton Bern, before becoming part of Canton Jura. The old town is particularly splendid, and retains its medieval atmosphere, with cobblestone streets, aged fountains and old-world charm. Home to 12,000 inhabitants, Delémont is easily accessed by train or car via Highway A16 and is in the middle of the eastern portion of Canton Jura.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Delémont Tourist Office is small but efficient and is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 2-6:30 pm, Saturday from 9 am-noon, 2-4 pm. 12 Place de la Gare, CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 32-422-9778, [www.delemont.ch](http://www.delemont.ch). The cantonal tourist office (Jura Tourisme) is at 6 Place du 23 Juin, CH-2350 Saignelégier. ☎ 90-112-3400. Here you'll find information about the more than 30 horseback riding centers throughout the canton.

### Train Station

Delémont's train station is across the street from the post office and provides a money exchange and bike rental. The money exchange office is open Monday-Saturday from 5:45 am-9:15 pm, Sunday from 6:30 am-9:15 pm.

### Post Office

The Delémont Post Office is open Monday-Friday, from 7:30 am-6:15 pm, Saturday from 8:30 am-noon. Place de la Poste 4, CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 2-421-3030, fax 32-421-3040. There is also a small branch office at St. Michel 2, CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 32-421-3090, fax 32-421-3095. Open Monday-Friday from 7:30-11:45 am, 2-6 pm, Saturday from 8:30-11 am.

### Codes

The Delémont postal code is CH-2800 and the area code is 32.

## Getting Around



It is best to explore the town of Delémont on foot, and the same goes for the surrounding countryside with its multitude of hiking and walking trails. You can also rent horses at many of the local stables, usually starting at 25Sfr per hour. Bikes are another excellent way to see the area.

## Adventures

### On Foot



One of the top adventures in this region is the 112-mile Jura High Route that runs from Geneva to Basel over some of the highest points of the Swiss Jura. It is specially marked with yellow-red diamonds and takes 10+ days to complete. The Delémont Tourist Office can provide you with information and maps.

The climbing and hangliding school is a popular attraction in Delémont. For a full-day excursion (for adults 16 and up), which begins at 9 am at the Delémont train station, you can expect to pay 265Sfr. You have a morning coffee with guide and instructor Frédéric Lovis before heading out to a nearby slope, where you'll learn the art of hangliding.

At noon you are treated to a farmer's lunch; afterward you work at climbing, either outdoors or indoors (if in bad weather). Climbing maestro Philippe Steulet will lead you to such spots as the Moutier Gorges at Le Vaferdeau or to the Rebeuvelier platform, where you will have a chance to hone your skills. You return to the Delémont train station just before 6 pm.

### Sightseeing



Strolling through the Old

Town is a must, and you won't be able to miss the Renaissance fountains or huge fortress gates and classical 18th-century structures. The town hall – Hotel de Ville – features a Baroque doorway and unique outdoor staircase.



*Delémont's Porte au Loup (Vodimivado)*

If you're into cheese, then visit nearby Moutier in the canton of Bern, just 6½ miles (10½ km) south of Delémont in the direction of La Chaux-de-Fonds. Here you'll find the factory that produces Vacherin Mont d'Or and Tête-de-Moine cheeses.

## Where to Stay



Hotel du Midi is a unique little out-of-the-way stop that is a traveler's delight. With just four cozy and charming rooms, this is one you won't want to miss if you're anywhere in the region. (\$\$). The restaurant is excellent and serves hearty portions of regional and international fare at reasonable prices (\$\$). It's open daily except for Wednesday. 10 Place de la Gare, CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 32-422-1777, fax 32-423-1989.



*Hotel du Midi*

Le National Hotel in the heart of the old village offers 27 clean and comfortable rooms at reasonable rates (\$\$). Route de Bale 25, CH-2800 Delemont. ☎ 32-422-9622, fax 32-422-3912.

Delémont Youth Hostel has 80 beds and is open from early April to October 20. Handicapped-accessible and close to bike trails. (\$). Route de Bale 185, CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 32-422-2054, fax 32-422-8830, [www.youthhostel.ch/delemont](http://www.youthhostel.ch/delemont).



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



Au Gros Pré serves regional and traditional Swiss fare in an elegant setting. (\$\$\$\$). One of the best restaurants around. Route de Porrentruy, CH-2800 Delemont. ☎ 32-422-9033, fax 32-422-9036.

La Tournesol features traditional Swiss cuisine in a rustic and comfy setting. Friendly staff. (\$-\$\$). Rue de l'Avenir 3, CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 32-422-2477.

Confiserie Tea Room Werth offers light snacks at reasonable prices (\$-\$\$). Closed Monday. CH-2800 Delémont. ☎ 32-422-2823, fax 32-422-2824.

## Saignelégier

This town, alone in the middle of the south end of Canton Jura, is *the* place for horse enthusiasts, offering miles of riding paths and one of Switzerland's 11 racetracks. During the second week of August, the annual National Horse Fair is held – drawing crowds from throughout Switzerland, France and Germany. You can ride year-round, and also take sleigh and carriage rides at appropriate times of year. Many farms in the area offer riding packages and tours – some that include overnight accommodations and family packages suitable for small children.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The Saignelégier Tourist Office for the canton sits across from the train station on Rue del la Gare and is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am-noon and during July and August on Sunday from 9 am-noon, 2-4 pm. ☎ 32-952-1952, fax 32-952-1955.

#### Post Office

The Saignelégier Post Office is at Rue de la Gare 6 in the train station and is open Monday-Friday from 8 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturday from 8:30-10:30 am. CH-2350. ☎ 32-951-1165, fax 32-951-1644.

#### Codes

The postal code in Saignelégier is CH-2350 and the area code is 32.



## Getting Around



There is only one good way to see this tiny village – on foot. Otherwise, you'd buzz right through it. You can rent bikes at the train station, but you must call well in advance, as they are very popular once the snow is gone. In front of the local Centre de Loisirs sports center you'll find a helpful map outlining local hiking, cross-country ski, and biking trails – all of which are clearly marked with yellow signs throughout the region. Call ☎ 32-951-1755 for information regarding the sports center's amenities, which include an ice rink, swimming pool, weight room, and gym.

## Adventures

### On Horseback



The Saignelégier Manège de Saignelégier has horses for rent by the hour, ☎ 32-951-1755; while the Jean-Louis Froidevaux Stable offers carriage rides, ☎ 32-951-1067. You can also contact Viviane Auberson at the Centre d'Equitation at Tuilerie 1, CH-2350 Saignelégier. ☎ 32-951-1755, fax 32-951-3508, for information regarding riding lessons.

The Saignelégier Racetrack has both harness racing and steeplechase for two days each year, during the popular Marché Concours over the second weekend in August. This is the largest national horse show in Switzerland and spotlights the only true Swiss breed – the Freiberger horse. Jumping contests as well as Roman chariot races are also held in a county-fair setting. The racetrack features a good restaurant and grass racing surface. Contact director Annick Kuhn for information at CH-2345 La-Chaux-des-Breuleux. ☎ 32-954-1059.

Located just slightly east of Saignelégier is the Swiss version of an equine retirement facility. "Le Roselet" is also known as "The Horse Foundation," or "Fondation pour le Cheval" in French. A must-see for any equine enthusiast. CH-2345 Les Breuleux. ☎ 32-959-1890, fax 32-959-1891.

## Where to Stay



A very popular spot is the Hotel/Café du Soleil, a local hangout for artists, musicians and equestrians.

The hotel only has seven rooms, but they're all clean, cozy and ample for an overnight stay (\$-\$\$). The café's vegetarian food is excellent, with fresh salads, and the live music adds a nice '60s touch. Across the street from the local equestrian hall. (\$-\$\$). Closed Monday. Marché Concours 14, CH-2350 Saignelégier. ☎ 32-951-1688, fax 32-951-2295.

Hotel Bellevue offers 23 rooms in traditional, modern Swiss style, which are comfortable and clean. (\$\$). Gruere 13, CH-2900 Saignelégier. ☎ 32-951-1620, fax 32-951-1606.

## Camping



This is available at either Sous La Neuvevie on the south side of Saignelégier from May-October, ☎ 32-951-1082, or at the nearby town of Goumois from

April-September, ☎ 32-951-2707.

## Where to Eat



Hotel du Doubs, in nearby Goumois, offers excellent regional and traditional Swiss cuisine. The food is better than the rooms here. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 32-951-


1323. Also in Goumois, you'll find Le Theusseret, a local spot in an old mill, specializing in excellent fresh-caught local fish. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 32-951-1451.

# Canton Solothurn (SO)

## At a Glance

**S**olothurn is probably the most oddly-shaped canton in Switzerland. Its northwestern border touches France, while the rest of the canton snakes in between cantons Jura, Bern, Aargau, and Basel. As a result, you'll find a touch of almost everything and anything in this canton. There are hints of French influence, touches of Rome, and an overall lightheartedness in the people that suggests a multitude of international influences.

It is said among the locals that there is no finer place to be during the fall months than in Solothurn, when the narrow passes of the Jura collide with the lovely colors sparked by the Aare River. Slightly less than half (43%) of this canton's land is used for agriculture, and the population is made up of 251,762 German-speakers, mostly Roman-Catholics. Only about 21% of Solothurnians work in tourism, and most (about 41%) work in some type of industry or manufacturing business. Despite its odd shape, it has 126 municipalities within 490 square miles (1,270 square km).

 *Solothurn was the 11th canton to join the Swiss Federation in 1481. Strangely enough, the capital city of Solothurn has 11 churches, 11 chapels, 11 historic towers, and 11 historic fountains. Its most famous church – St. Ursen Cathedral – has a divided staircase, each with 11 steps, 11 altars and 11 bells. It is the 11th-largest canton in terms of population.*

Most of the populace of Solothurn resides in either the capital city of Solothurn, or in Olten or Grenchen. All of these towns offer sophistication, but with the ambiance of a small city.



*Solothurn (Wladyslaw)*

## Solothurn

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**T**he capital city of the canton and Switzerland's finest Baroque city, it sits on both banks of the Aare River at the base of the last ridge of the Jura hills, known as the Weissenstein. Called "Soleure" in French, Solothurn is considered the very classic essence of Baroque – with its narrow cobblestone streets and Celtic influences. It was once home to French ambassadors,

and today is a thriving community with 20,000 citizens, and a variety of industries and people. To get here by car, exit north-west of main Highway One.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Solothurn Tourist Office is at Hauptgasse 69 on Kronenplatz, near the Cathedral and very near the train station. Open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-noon, 1:30-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am-noon. ☎ 32-626-4646. They offer 1½-hour walking tours of the Altstadt from May-September on Saturdays at 2:30 pm. Cost is 5Sfr.

### Train Station

Solothurn's train station is unusually grandiose and offers a wide array of services, including money exchange and bike rentals (open daily from 5 am-9 pm). On Hauptbahnhofstrasse. ☎ 32-621-3474.



*St Ursen Cathedral (Marcel c.)*

### Post Office

The main Solothurn Post Office is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 am to noon, 2-6 pm; Saturday from 9-11 am. Dornacherstrasse 40, CH-4501 Solothurn. ☎ 32-625-2970, fax 32-625-2975. There is also a large post office on Poststrasse 14 (CH-4502, ☎ 32-626-5400), open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-6:30, Saturday from 8 am-noon.

### Codes

The postal codes in Solothurn are CH-4500-4503 and the area code is 32.

## Getting Around



As with most Swiss cities, Solothurn is best explored on foot. From the train station on Hauptbahn-

hofstrasse ("main train station street"), exit to your left and walk to the auto-free Kreuzackerbrücke, which leads you into Old Town. If you're visiting Solothurn in late April, be sure to check out their Solothurner Biertage (Beer Days). This festival brings together over 25 small to middle Swiss beer brewers every year. It's a good chance to meet locale brewers and sample their wares. [www.biertage.ch](http://www.biertage.ch).

## Adventures

### On Foot



The Weissenstein mountain ridge, at 4,211 feet (1,284 m), provides breathtaking views of the Swiss Mittelland, the Juran and the Bernese Alps. You can hike to the ridge by leaving from the center of Solothurn via the corner of Wengisteinstrasse and Verenawegstrasse, following the signs to the top, which should take about two hours. Or you can grab a train in Solothurn that takes you to Oberdorf. From here, you can either hike or take a chairlift to the top, where you'll find the Weissenstein Hotel (☎ 32-622-0264, fax 32-623-8947), great for an overnight stay or a gourmet meal. The chairlift hours of operation are April-October, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday, 8 am-6 pm; in July and August on Fridays from 8:30 am to 9:30 pm; November-March, Monday-Friday, 9 am-5 pm, Saturday from 8 am to 5 pm. A round-trip ticket costs 19Sfr.

There are numerous walks you can take along the mountain crest. For a good four-hour hike, you can walk from Balmberg to Grenchenberg via Weissenstein. This provides stunning views of the Jura, Schweizer Mittelland and the Aare Valley. From the Balmberg bus station, follow the red hiking trail signs toward Weissenstein. Just before reaching Weissenstein, veer to the right and then left as the trail begins to ascend the Höhenweg. Continue on toward Häsenmatt, along the "Hammer Trail." After 1½ hours, you should reach the restaurant at Weissenstein. Continue on the trail toward Häsenmatt and Grenchenberg. After another hour, you should come to the Häsenmatt summit at 4,736 feet. From here, the trail will descend in the direction of Müren, near the restaurant Althüsli. Once in the village of Müren, follow the signs to Oberer Grenchenberg. When you reach the Restaurant Oberer

Grenchenberg, follow the trail to Unterer Grenchenberg. At the Restaurant Unterer Grenchenberg you can grab a bus back to Grenchen.

From the south side of the city on the Aare's north bank, you can begin a good two-hour hike west that will bring you to the village of Altreu. Since 1948, this has been home to one of the largest stork colonies in the world.



Regeneration of the white storks in Switzerland was the brainchild of one Max Bloesch, who began the process by purchasing storks from Algeria. The massive stork colony is now the pride of this tiny village.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Krone is the hot spot in town.

It's located near the clock tower. The rooms are huge, clean and have lots of atmosphere. Napoleon's wife Josephine stayed here in 1811. (\$\$\$). Hauptgasse 64, CH-4501 Solothurn. ☎ 32-622-4412, fax 32-626-4445.

The Hotel Roter Turm dates back to 1100 and has been used as a hotel since 1840. From an architectural standpoint, this has to be one of the most interesting hotels in the world, as its rooms twist and wind through a labyrinth of narrow hallways. Extremely clean rooms with traditional Swiss décor. (\$\$). A good bargain. Rates include breakfast. Hauptgasse 42, CH-4500 Solothurn. ☎ 32-622-9621, fax 32-622-9865.



*Hotel Krone*



*Dining terrace at the Roter Turm*

Hotel Baseltor offers just six comfy rooms, so make your reservations early at this popular spot. (\$\$) Hauptgasse 79, CH-4501 Solothurn. ☎ 32-622-3422, fax 32-622-1879.

Youth Hostel Solothurn Am Land is one of the best in Switzerland – modern and

clean – inside a 17th-century building. (\$) Open January 11–November 17. Landhausquai 23, CH-4501 Solothurn. ☎ 32-623-1706, fax 32-623-1639.

## Where to Eat



Zum Alten Stephan is one of the finest and oldest restaurants in the area and is housed in a building that is over 1,000 years old. There are two separate restaurants here, on two different floors, both with varying menus and dining options. Upstairs (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$) offers a gourmet-like setting and cuisine, while the downstairs (\$-\$\$) is more traditional and relaxed. Downstairs is open daily 11 am–midnight; upstairs is open Tuesday–Saturday 11 am–2 pm, 5 pm–midnight. Friedhofplatz 10, CH-4502 Solothurn. ☎ 32-622-1109.

Manora is a self-service restaurant in the Manor department store, just off the Marktplatz. Great fresh salads and fresh-cooked meals at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open Monday–Friday from 9 am–6:30 pm, Thursday until 9 pm, Saturday from 8 am–5 pm.

Rust, on the Marktplatz, is *the* place to stop for *Solothurner Kuchen*, a tart comprised of nuts and whipped cream on a biscuit. Stop here for an afternoon snack and a great cup of traditional Swiss coffee.

## Olten



*Olten (Voyager)*

**T**he city of Olten leans against the banks of the Aare River at the eastern edge of the canton, and is an important railroad junction within Switzerland. This pleasant little spot – with 19,000 citizens – has a nice old town that is worth an afternoon stroll. The wooden covered Alte Brücke (Old Bridge) is auto-free and leads into the Altstadt. You might want to visit Olten's Kunstmuseum (Fine Arts Museum), featuring paintings and art works from 19th and 20th century artists, or the Historisches Museum on Konradstrasse that has displays relating to regional history.

Just three miles (4.8 km) southeast of the town center is the Sáli-Schlössli. You can hike or drive here, via the Sálistrasse. The road twists and turns as it climbs steadily up to the ruins of Wartburg, in Muttenz, where you'll find a small castle and fire-watching tower that was the responsibility of the Sáli family for over 300 years. The views up here are of Olten, the Aare Valley and the surrounding hills.



# Canton Aargau (AG)

## At a Glance

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**C**anton Aargau has 583,366 inhabitants, making it the fourth-largest canton in terms of population, behind Zürich, Bern and Vaud. Most residents are German-speaking Protestants who work in the energy, manufacturing, supply or construction industries – making up about 40% of the workforce. Another 28% work in tourism.

The name Aargau (Argovia) means the “country of the Aare,” and this region is the least mountainous of any in Switzerland. The 870-square-mile area is home not only to the Aare River, but to the Rhine, Limmat and Reuss as well. Besides these gently flowing rivers, the Hallwilersee (Lake Hallwil) and over 1,000 miles (1,610 km) of hiking and biking trails are sure to delight any wanderer. Aargau faces the German border to the north, Canton Zürich directly east, and Canton Zug southeast. To the south sits the canton of Lucerne, while on the western side it bumps borders with Solothurn and Basel-Land.

## Aarau

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**A**arau is the capital city of Canton Aargau, home to 16,000 people, in the area of Switzerland known as the “Schweizer Mittelland,” or Swiss Middleland. The city sits on the River Aare, just south of the Jura slopes at the western edge of the canton. It was originally founded in 1240 by the Counts of Kyburg, then handed over to the Habsburgs, before coming under Bernese rule in 1415. Today, this well-preserved city features many decorated houses throughout, especially in the Altstadt (Old Town).

Here you'll find lots of good walks, as well as throughout the Aare Valley and surrounding Jura and Mittelland hills. It is a city bustling with business and commerce – one of the wealthiest in Switzerland – with many machine and textile industries based here.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The cantonal Tourist Office is in the fine village of Zofingen, in the south-western region of Aargau. Aargau Tourismus, Postfach, CH-4800 Zofingen. ☎ 62-746-2053, fax 62-746-2041. The Aarau Tourist Office (Aarau Info Verkehrsbüro) is at Graben 42, CH-5001 Aarau. ☎ 62-824-7624, fax 62-824-7750.

### Post Office

The Aarau Post Office is open Monday-Friday, from 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. Bahnhofstrasse 67, CH-5001 Aarau. ☎ 62-835-6822, fax 835-6819.

### Codes

The postal codes in Aarau are CH-5000, 5001, 5003, and 5004. The phone area code is 62.

## Getting Around

The best way to see Aarau is on foot. As you walk through the old town's narrow streets, you'll find frescoed houses with wrought-iron railings and beautifully painted facades. At the extreme western edge of the city is the Stadtkirch (Parish



*Oberer Turm in the Old Town (Voyager)*



*Aarau's Altstadt (Voyager)*

Church), which is highlighted by a 17th-century bell tower. In the nearby square is the Fountain of Justice, dating back to 1643. The Oberer Turm (Clock Tower) in the city center has parts that date back to 1270, though most of the clock hails from the 16th century.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Three miles (4.8 km) southwest of Aarau on the Olten road, just outside of the village of Schönenwerd, is the Schuhmuseum, the Bally Shoe Museum. It was here that Bally's first workshops were opened. Features include exhibits, the history of shoe-making, and books relating to shoe crafts.

### On Wheels



The Aare Bike Trail is part of Switzerland's 2,050 miles (3,300 km) of cycling trails – the country has nine trails in total, each with its own name. The Aare Trail provides the cyclist with varying degrees of difficulty (easy to medium) as well as good scenery and it typically takes six-eight days to complete. Most people start out in Meiringen (in Canton Bern, among the highest of the Bernese Alps) and end up in Aarau for this 155-mile trek. The point of the journey is to follow the movement of the Aare River over the land it has influenced for so many years. From Meiringen, the trail moves past the Brienz Lake, past the Giessbach Waterfalls and Iseltwald to Interlaken (19 miles/30 km). From Interlaken, the trail will then climb up to Beatenberg and a spectacular panoramic route, before slowly taking you back down to the city of Thun, another 19 miles (30 km). Eighteen miles (29 km) farther north on the route is Bern and between Switzerland's capital city and Thun you'll encounter the wide, sweeping Aare Valley. The trail passes right through the middle of Bern, past the famed Clock Tower and out of town again past the Aare River, past Aarburg towards Biel, another 31 miles (50 km) ahead. From Biel, the Aare Trail brings you parallel with the Aare River once more on your way (21 miles/34 km) to Solothurn. The trail then winds and sweeps through old villages and tiny towns as it meanders through Olten, before bringing you up to Aarau (37 miles/59 km between Solothurn and Aarau).

This trip is suitable for families as well as individual cyclists of all levels, and can be complemented with cable car and ship rides to either shorten or lengthen your journey. The Swiss Tourist Office can provide information and maps for you, and there are also US-based travel agencies that specialize in this type of excursion. Adventure Sport Holidays in Massachusetts offers a seven-day ride during the summer months starting at \$1,405, including hotels and meals along the way. Contact them at 815 North Road, Westfield, MA 01085. ☎ 800-628-9655.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Aarauerhof is comfortable and clean, and offers all modern amenities in classic Swiss style, with a business atmosphere. Located very close to the train station (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Their restaurant features gourmet, international fare. Bahnhofstrasse 68, CH-5001 Aarau. ☎ 62-837-8300, fax 62-837-8400, [www.best-western.ch/aarauerhof](http://www.best-western.ch/aarauerhof).



*Hotel Aarauerhof*



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



El Camino Zunftstube features traditional Swiss dishes with a Mexican flare. Pricy, and reservations are recommended (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Pelzgasse 19, CH-5000 Aarau. ☎ 62-822-3677.

Restaurant Graben has a friendly and charming staff that serves traditional Swiss fare at reasonable prices (\$\$-\$\$\$). Good hearty meals. Graben 36, CH-5000 Aarau. ☎ 62-822-3222.

Restaurant Weinberg has wine and beer, as well as regional, diverse dishes from Portugal (\$\$-\$\$\$). Erlinsbacherstrasse 2, CH-5000 Aarau. ☎/fax 62-822-3434.

# Canton Bern



1. Schlossmuseum Bergdorf (Castle Museum); Kornhaus Bergdorf (Swiss Center for Folk Culture)
2. Heimatmuseum
3. Thun Art Museum; Schadau Park and Woher Panorama;
4. Zähringen Castle & Museum
5. Schloss Spiez
6. Blausee (Blue Lake)
7. Oeschinensee (Lake Oeschinen)
8. Schlosskirche (Interlaken Castle Church); Jungfrau Region
9. Museum of Tourism; Jungfraujoeh
10. Giessbach Falls
11. Staubach Falls; Trimmelbach Falls
12. Mürrenbach Falls
13. Glacier Gorge
14. Reichenbach Falls; Aare Gorge; Sherlock Holmes Museum
15. Biel/Bienne: St. Peter's Island; Tierpark Bözingen (Animal Park); Museum Neuhaus; Schwab Museum; Omega Museum

NOT TO SCALE

BERNESE OBERLAND



# Canton Bern (BE)

The Canton of Bern covers some 2,659 square miles, making it second in size only to Canton Graubünden. Thus, because of its size and for the purposes of this book, this canton stands alone as one of the seven regions of Switzerland. Canton Bern is also the second-largest in terms of population after Canton Zürich – with nearly one million citizens.

Curiously, Canton Bern ranks only 22nd in the number of foreigners living here, suggesting that, like Zürich, this is truly a Swiss region. As well, this canton touches no foreign borders. To the north sit cantons Jura, Solothurn, Basel and Aargau, while to the east you'll find Lucerne, Obwalden and Uri. In the south, the cantonal border collides with Canton Valais and on the west side are cantons Vaud, Fribourg and Neuchâtel.

Bern contains most of the country's best-known tourist sites, and is divided into two geographical areas: the Bernese Oberland (the southern part of the canton), and the Bernese Mittelland (middle and northern half of the canton).

The Bernese Mittelland is a relatively flat region that sits in a valley plain between the Jura mountains and the Alps in the northern part of the canton.

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It is home to the cantonal capital and the Swiss national capital of Bern, as well as other small towns and villages such as Burgdorf, Biel-Bienne and Langnau – famous for its Emmentaler cheese. In the capital of Bern, you'll see many historic sites such as the Bear Pits, the Clock Tower and the cobblestoned Old Town. From the city of Bern it is an easy drive to the nearby villages of Langenthal or Sumiswald, where you can shop for the finest Swiss porcelain or linens and go swimming, hiking and biking.

The Bernese Oberland, south of the Mittelland, stretches from Gstaad on the western side to the Susten Pass on the eastern side, and includes the famed city of Interlaken and the Jungfrau Region – home to some of Switzerland's most alluring Alpine scenery. Here you'll enjoy a wide array of both summer and winter sports, as well as adventure activities. Besides the resort villages of Grindelwald and Gstaad, you'll also find lakes Thun and Brienz, shadowed by the imposing Alps at the far south. For exploring the Oberland, it is best to use Interlaken as your base, before embarking out to the nearby regions. If you are driving, and also want to experience Switzerland by rail, then you're in luck. The Oberland is well-equipped with rack and cogwheel railways, cable cars and gondolas. The roads here are twisting and steep, for those who enjoy a good winding drive up treacherous mountain roads.

From Bern you can travel south via Highway 6 to Thun, which eventually becomes Highway 8 and wraps around Lake Thun and brings you to Interlaken. Trains leave every 15 minutes from Bern in the direction of Interlaken, and from Interlaken you can grab a train to any destination in Switzerland or beyond.

# The Bernese Mittelland

## Bern

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**B**ern is the Swiss national capital and the country's fourth-largest city. It is in the heart of the Bernese Mittelland – a low-level plain between the Jura mountains and the Alps – and has some of the most impressive examples of medieval town architecture found anywhere in Europe.



*Aerial view of Berne Old Town (Amstuzmarco)*

Known for its 11 impressive fountains, historical towers, bear pits and famous clock tower, Bern was named a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1983. It is the governmental seat of Switzerland, and the Houses of Parliament are open and accessible to the public, providing a unique insight into the Swiss legislative process.

The city was founded in 1191 by Duke Berchtold V of Zähringen, and was home to a large number of wooden buildings and structures until a devastating fire in 1405. After the fire, the city was rebuilt in sandstone, and today that same architecture can be seen in many of the structures throughout the old village. In 1834 Bern garnered a university charter, and in 1848 it became the capital of the Swiss Confederation, as well as the capital of Canton Bern.

Bern is ideal for walkers, with its covered medieval promenades that allow shopping year-round in all types of weather. Bern's famous Rose Garden, located above the bend in the Aare River near the Bear Pits, provides a stunning panoramic view of the city.

The Aare River wraps around Bern like a quiet serpent, encompassing the old town in all of its architectural splendor.





*Berne's Aare River from the Nydegg Bridge (Daniel Schwen)*

Bern is also known as the "City of Fountains" and has over 100 fountains throughout its streets, with 11 that are particularly noteworthy. These feature figures from history and most were built in the mid-16th century.

On Tuesdays and Saturdays throughout the year, a visitor will find various markets throughout the city, selling everything from fruits and vegetables, to meats, flowers and household goods. One market you won't want to miss is the "Zibelemarkt" (Onion Market), which takes place on the fourth Monday in November, where the onion is honored in every way.

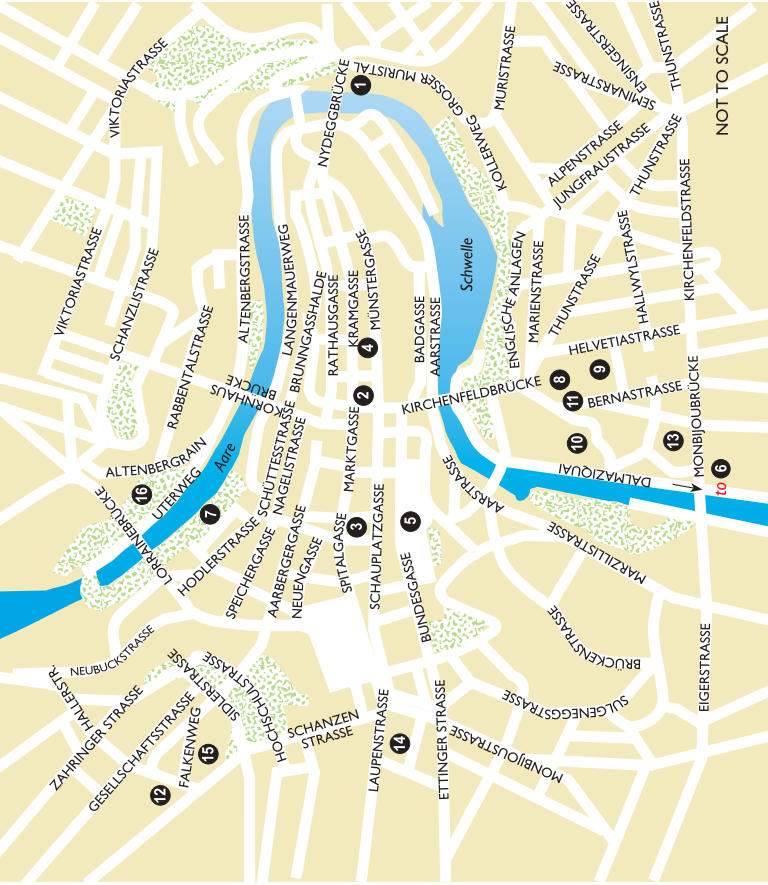


*Bern is also the home of the delicious Toblerone chocolate; Theodor Tobler patented his recipe here in 1909.*

Bern is an ideal starting point for journeys elsewhere in Switzerland or throughout Europe. It is a home base for the high-speed TGV train and is also easily accessed by major highways. From Bern you can take a four-hour ride on the TGV and reach Paris in time for lunch, spend the afternoon at the Louvre and be home by midnight the same day. Better yet, use Bern as your base and go to Paris for the whole weekend. You can get to any destination within Switzerland from Bern's outstanding

# Bern

1. Bärengaben (Bear Pits)
2. Zeitglockenturm (Clock Tower)
3. Käfigturm (Prison Tower)
4. Einstein House
5. Bundeshaus
6. Dählhölzli Tierpark (Zoo); Elfenau & Municipal Gardens
7. Kunstmuseum (Museum of Fine Arts)
8. Historical Museum of Bern
9. Natural History Museum; Museum for Communication
10. Swiss Alpine Museum
11. Swiss Rifle Museum
12. Collection of Classical Antiquities
13. Swiss Federal Archives
14. Salvation Army Museum & Archives
15. State Archive of Bern
16. Botanical Garden



modern train station. Even if you aren't planning any type of rail excursion, exploring Bern's train station is worth a quick stroll.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



Bern Tourismus, the Tourist Office, is in the main train station and is open daily from June-September 30, 9 am-8:30 am. From October to the end of May it is open from 9 am-6:30 pm, Monday-Saturday, Sunday from 10 am-5 pm. Bahnhof, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-328-1212, fax 31-328-1277, [www.bernetourism.ch](http://www.bernetourism.ch). For hotel reservations only, call Bern's "Hotelline" at ☎ 31-328-1210 or you can book online at the above web address.

There is also a Bern Tourist office at the Bärengraben (Bear Pits) that is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-6 pm, June to end of September. From March until the end of May, and during the month of October, the office is open Monday-Friday, 10 am-3 pm. From November 1 to the end of February, it's open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 11 am-3 pm.

For information on the entire Swiss Mittelland, contact the Schweizer Mittelland Tourismus at Postfach, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-328-1228, fax 31-311-1222.

### Train Station

The Bern train station offers money exchange on the lower level, open 6:15 am-9:45 pm daily from June 1-mid-October, and from 6:15 am-8:45 pm, mid-October to the end of May.

This is a major junction for all trains traveling throughout Europe. You'll have no problem making a connection to any major city here. It also offers TGV (high-speed train) service to Paris on a daily basis. For bike rental, be sure to phone ahead to ☎ 51-220-2374. For rail information, ☎ 90-030-0300.

### Post Office

There are numerous branch post offices in Bern, but the main office is located at Schanzenstrasse 4 CH-3001 Bern. The hours are Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-6:30 pm and on Saturday from 7:30-noon. ☎ 31-386-6111, fax 31-386-6112.

## Codes

The area code for Bern is 31 and the postal codes range from 3000 to 3032.

## Internet Access

Internet access is available at the Staufacher Book Shop for 10Sfr per hour, at Neuengasse 25, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-311-2411.

## Police, Fire & Medical Care

Dial ☎ 117 for the national police or call Bern's police station directly at ☎ 31-321-2121. The emergency fire number is ☎ 118, ☎ 144 for an ambulance, or ☎ 31-311-2211 for an emergency doctor or dentist. Bern's University Hospital on Fribourgstrasse can be reached at ☎ 31-632-2111. For drug-store needs, go to the Central-Apotheke Volz & Company, near the Clock Tower on Zeitglockenlaub 2, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-311-4115. They speak English and are open from 7:45 am to 6:30 pm weekdays, Saturday from 7:45 am-4 pm.

## Getting Around



This is best done on foot. If you're driving and want to explore Bern for a day, then we recommend parking just before and north of the Nydeggbrücke (Nydegg Bridge) before it crosses the river Aare at the entrance to the old village, and across from the Bear Pits. This is a good starting point for walking through Bern, and will give you a nice view of the city as you stroll across the bridge and up the slightly-inclined Gerechtigkeitsgasse before you reach the famous Clock Tower. You can get to Bern by train from virtually any point in Switzerland or Europe. The train station is at the western end of the old village, and is close to all shopping and tourist sites.

## Adventures

### On Foot & On Wheels

The Tourist Office also offers guided walking tours and tours by coach bus. Walking tours cost 14Sfr per person and are offered June through September at 11 am daily. Two-hour coach

tours depart daily from April 1 through the end of October at 2 pm for 25Sfr, and on Saturdays as well from November 1 through the end of March at 2 pm. Reservations are strongly suggested for both excursions.



If you've never experienced riding in a Swiss Postauto Bus, the Bern Tourist Office offers excursions to nearby Aarburg for only 24.80Sfr. Allow yourself a day or half a day at least, as the bus leaves Bern once an hour and takes you over the

Seeland plain and on to the Jura heights and the medieval village of Aarburg. Here you'll have time to stroll through this tiny village or wander along one of the many scenic hiking trails.

## On Water

There are a variety of ways to explore Bern, and one of the most unusual that we've found is via raft. The Tourist Office offers 1½-hour guided tours from June through the end of September, daily and upon request, from 5 to 6:30 pm. The cost is 35Sfr per person, and it is an excellent way to see Bern's sandstone bridges and flower-adorned buildings. You must make a reservation with the Tourist Office.

## Summer Sports

Bern is a great place for summer excursions such as swimming, biking and walking, but offers little outside the immediate city in the winter. There are 155 miles of hiking trails and the Tourist Office has excellent maps for exploring the region.

## Sightseeing



There is so much to see here that walking should be mandatory for any visitor. Also, because the Old Town is so contained, you can see most of the village easily in a day or less.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Bear Pits (Bärengaben) celebrate the symbol of Bern – the Bear. You can view the bears in their oval pits during the summer from 8 am-5:30 pm and during the winter from 9 am-4 pm. Free. Located at the eastern edge of the Old Town, just south of the Nydegg bridge.



*Bear Pits (Coolcaesar)*



*Zytglogge (Mike Lehmann)*

The Clock Tower (Zytglogge) is one of Bern's finest prizes – the time-keeping mechanism dates back to the 16th century. It is located between Kramgasse and Marktgasse, and is very hard to miss. The Tourist Office offers one-hour guided tours of the tower for only 8Sfr and they are well worth it. From inside the tower you get a very different perspective of Bern. Open daily from

May 1-October 31 at 4:30, and from July 1-August 31 at 11:30 am and 4:30 pm.

The Prison Tower (Käfigturm) stands at the western edge of the city and was originally built in 1256 and used until 1344. The present tower was built in 1641-43 as a prison, and was used as such until 1897. You'll find it on the Bärenplatz at Spitalgasse.

The Einstein House was home to Nobel prize winner Albert Einstein from 1903 to 1905. Admission is 3Sfr for adults, 2Sfr for students and children. Open Tuesday-Friday from 10 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 10 am-4 pm. Closed Monday. Kramgasse 49, Postfach 638, CH-3008 Bern. ☎ 31-312-0091, fax 31-312-0041.



*Bundeshaus at left & Hotel Bellevue (Adrian Sulc)*

The Bundeshaus is Bern's Federal Palace, and is home to Switzerland's Parliament. Built in 1902, the structure contains beautiful stained-glass windows and has a glass dome that depicts the Swiss cantons. Located on the Bundesplatz, where a flower market is held each Tuesday and Saturday from 7 am-noon. Admission to the Bundeshaus is free and tours are given on the hour, Monday-Saturday, 9-11 am and 2-4 pm. Hours on Sunday are 10 and 11 am, or 2 and 3 pm, except when Parliament is in session. ☎ 31-322-8522.

The Dählhölzli Tierpark (Zoo) features over 2,000 European animals in a delightful setting on the banks of the Aare river just slightly south of the Old Town. Admission is 7Sfr for adults, 3Sfr for children six to 16 and free for kids under age six. Open daily from April-September 30, 9 am-5 pm.

## Museums

The Historical Museum of Bern covers the history of Bern in varying displays, as well as influences by the Celts and Romans. There are artifacts from the tombs of ancient Egypt, Asian and Oceanic art, and Burgundian tapestries. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-5 pm, Wednesday from 10 am-8 pm. Closed Monday. Admission is 13Sfr for adults, 8Sfr for seniors and 4Sfr for children six-16. Helvetiaplatz 5, CH-3005 Bern. ☎ 31-350-7711, fax 31-350-7799.

The Museum for Communication contains the world's largest stamp collection. Unique and worth a visit. Located just south of the Old Town on Helvetiastrasse. To get there, cross the Kirchenfeldbrücke (bridge) and walk south until you come to Helvetiaplatz, where the road splits. Walk along the Thunstrasse for a short block and the museum will be halfway down on the next block, the first street on your right. Helvetiastrasse 16, Postfach 278, CH-3006 Bern. ☎ 31-357-5555, fax 31-357-5599.

The Swiss Alpine Museum first opened in 1905 and is a showcase of Alpine nature, including displays on geology, glaciers, weather, flora and fauna, as well as human exploration of the Alps. Open Monday from 2-5 pm, Tuesday-Saturday from 10 am-5 pm. Admission is 8Sfr for adults, 5Sfr for seniors and 2Sfr for kids ages six-16. Helvetiaplatz 4, CH-3005 Bern. ☎ 31-351-0434, fax 31-351-0751.

The Swiss Rifle Museum has all types of rifles, from the flintlock to the modern firearm, with displays from the 16th century to the present. Admission is free. Open Tuesday-Saturday from 2-5 pm, Sunday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm. Closed Monday. Bernastrasse 5, CH-3005 Bern. ☎ 31-351-0127, fax 31-351-0804.

Swiss Federal Archives is the historical center of the federal government and the keeper of all federal and historical docu-



ments. There is a public reading room, where periodicals and various publications can be viewed. Admission is free. Open Monday-Thursday from 9 am-5:30 pm, Friday from 9 am-3:30 pm. Archivstrasse 24, CH-3003 Bern. ☎ 31-322-8989, fax 31-322-7823.

Salvation Army Museum & Archives honors this organization and has displays depicting its development in Switzerland from birth to the present day. Admission is free. Open Tuesday-Thursday from 9 am-noon, 2-5 pm and by appointment. Laupenstrasse 5, CH-3008 Bern. ☎ 31-388-0591, fax 31-388-0595.

## Parks & Gardens

Bern's Botanical Garden contains over 6,000 species of plants and vegetation spread over more than two acres and in seven greenhouses. Open Monday-Friday from 8 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 8 am-5 pm. The greenhouses are open daily from 8 am-5 pm. Admission is free. Wheelchair-accessible. Altenbergrain 21, CH-3011 Bern. ☎ 31-631-4944, [www.botanischergarten.ch](http://www.botanischergarten.ch).

Elfenau & Municipal Gardens is an 18th-century country manor that contains a tropical greenhouse in a picturesque setting high above the Aare River. Admission is free. Open daily from 8:30 am-5 pm.



*Elfenau (Riccardo Speziari)*

Wheelchair-accessible. Elfenauweg 94, CH-3006 Bern. ☎ 31-352-0713, fax 31-352-6549.

## Shopping

Bern is a perfect spot for shopping at any time of the year, with its over four miles of covered arcades. You'll find everything from designer ware such as Gucci, Fendi and Rolex, to locally owned artisan shops, second-hand book stores and department stores. Most businesses are open Monday from 2-6:30 pm, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:15 am-

6:30 pm, and on Thursday from 8:15 am-9 pm. Also on Saturday from 8:15 am-4 pm. Most are closed Sunday.

If you're looking for a fine Swiss Army Knife, then check out Messer-Klötzli, on Rathausgasse 84, near the Clock Tower. Here they have one of the largest selections of knives (over 1,000!), professional kitchen-wares, tools and Wenger watches (☎ 31-311-0080). You can also walk to Swiss Plaza, which sells Swiss Army Knives, souvenirs and watches at Kramgasse 75 (☎ 31-311-5616, fax 31-311-8465).

For the best Swiss chocolates go to Abegglen at Spitalgasse 36 (☎ 31-311-2111) or to Beeler at Spitalgasse 29 (☎ 31-311-2808, fax 31-312-5303). Sometimes you can find better deals on all types of Swiss chocolate at Merkur, at Spitalgasse 2 (☎ 31-311-0425, fax 31-318-4386).

For unusual miniature porcelain items, go to Chramere 76, an underground shop just a few steps south of the Clock Tower at Kramgasse 76, (☎ 31-311-0865, fax 31-311-1475).

Traditional and historical renditions of Swiss glass art can be found at Art In Martin, at Klösterlistutz 10 (☎/fax 31-331-4266).

Department stores are popular in Bern and have everything from clothing to house wares, watches and jewelry. Look to Globus, at Spitalgasse 17-21 (☎ 31-313-4040, fax 31-313-4088); Migros at Marktgasse 46 (☎ 31-310-3232, fax 31-310-3215); LoebAG at Spitalgasse 47-51 (☎ 31-320-7111, fax 31-312-1788); or EPA AG at Marktgasse 24 (☎ 31-311-2422, fax 31-311-3004).

## Where to Stay



Hotel Bellevue Palace offers outstanding accommodations in the heart of Bern, next to the Parliament Building. With a dramatic entry and many majestic rooms, this hotel caters to royalty and celebrities in grand style. Home to three restaurants, a bar, and a large terrace.



*Hotel Bellevue Palace*

(\$\$\$\$+). Kochergasse 3-5, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-320-4545, fax 31-311-4743, [www.bellevue-palace.ch](http://www.bellevue-palace.ch).

The once-popular Hotel Schweizerhof closed its doors in 2005, but its trendy Arcady Bar is still open for business. It's located under the arcades outside, open daily from 10 am to whenever, with live piano music beginning daily at 5 pm. Bahnhofplatz 11, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-326 -8080, fax 31-326-8090, [www.schweizerhof-bern.ch](http://www.schweizerhof-bern.ch).



*Hotel City am Bahnhof*

Hôtel City am Bahnhof is an extremely modern hotel in the heart of Bern, across from the train station, near the Bern arcades. Very hip and trendy. (\$\$\$). Bahnhofplatz, CH-3011 Bern. ☎ 31-311-5377, fax 31-311-0636.

Gasthof Linde Stettlen (Lime Tree Hotel) is on the outskirts of town, and offers

a more bed-and-breakfast type of atmosphere with traditional Swiss cleanliness and charm. Route 59, CH-3066 Stettlen am Bern. (\$\$). ☎ 31-931-8586, fax 31-931-5503, [www.linde-stettlen.ch](http://www.linde-stettlen.ch).

Hotel Restaurant Jardin is a well-located and very casual hotel with a lovely yellow exterior close to old town and the railway station, also only two minutes from the Bern-Wankdorf highway exit. It is the closest hotel-restaurant to the "BEA-Expo" sports and exhibition grounds. (\$\$). Militärstrasse 38, CH-3014 Bern. ☎ 31-333-0117, fax 31-333-0943, [www.hotel-jardin.ch](http://www.hotel-jardin.ch).

Hotel Goldener Schlüssel is a comfortable hotel in the center of old town, with a cozy restaurant



*Hotel Goldener Schlüssel*

(open 364 days a year) and provides convenience and value a stone's throw from the Aare River. It has a gorgeous exterior and well-lit interior. (\$\$). Rathausgasse 72, CH-3011 Bern. ☎ 31-311-0216, fax 31-311-5688, [www.goldenerschluessel.ch](http://www.goldenerschluessel.ch).

Pension Marthahaus offers inexpensive rooms with lots of features, including free use of bicycles, Internet access, and children's beds. The renovated guesthouse, from the turn of the last century, has 40 rooms in a quiet location with some rooms facing an inner courtyard. Car parking 10Sfr per day (on request). (\$). Wytttenbachstrasse 22a, CH-3013 Bern. ☎ 31-332-4135, fax 31-333-3386, [www.marthahaus.ch](http://www.marthahaus.ch).

The Bern Youth Hostel is very large and offers 156 beds for weary heads. Open January 1-7, January 21-December 31. (\$). Weihergasse 4, CH-3005 Bern. ☎ 31-311-6316, fax 31-312-5240.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



For the finest Berner Lebkuchen (honey cakes decorated with the famous Bern bears) check out Confiserie Eichenberger. Owner Daniel Eichenberger has operated his pastry shop for over 42 years, and has become famous for producing these lovely, tasty cakes. They come in all sizes and make great gifts to bring home, as they are easy to carry and pack. They are similar in texture to our gingerbread cookies, and are more like them than a traditional "cake." Eichenberger produces over three tons of these cakes annually, and also manufactures and markets over 15 tons of chocolate. At his pastry shop you'll also find a tea room that serves delicious light snacks, pastries, cookies, cakes and tortes. Here, you can sample a small Berner Lebkuchen along with a great cup of Swiss coffee. (\$-\$\$). Bahnhofplatz 5, CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-311-3325.

The Kornhaus Café & Kornhaus Keller is one of Bern's most unusual eateries. You really have to see this place to believe it, as it's located in an old underground subway station, in the heart of the city. Excellent cuisine, including steak, fish and re-



*Kornhaus Keller*

plement every meal. Located minutes from the Parliament, the interior is wood-paneled, with privately owned art. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open Monday-Friday from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 5-11:30 pm. Aarburgergasse 24, CH-3011 Bern. ☎ 31-311-4463, [www.moleson-bern.ch](http://www.moleson-bern.ch).



*Restaurant Brasserie Anker*

Sunday, 9:30 am-6 pm. (\$-\$\$\$). Kornhausplatz 16, CH-3007 Bern. ☎ 31-311-1113, fax 31-311-1171.

A local favorite just steps from the Clock Tower is Restaurant Harmonie, a very traditional establishment (wood paneling and white tablecloths) that features such fare as cheese fondue and other Swiss specialties. Owned and operated by the same family since 1915, with a good, friendly staff. (\$-\$\$\$).

gional fare at top prices (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations are strongly suggested. Kornhausplatz, CH-3007, Bern. ☎ 31-327-7272, fax 31-327-7271, [www.kornhauskeller.ch](http://www.kornhauskeller.ch).

Café Moléson offers fine dining with Swiss, French and international cuisine. House specialties feature beef and fish. A fine wine list and dessert tray complement every meal.

Restaurant Brasserie Anker is Bern's premiere rösti café. (Rösti is a one-dish potato casserole loaded with vegetables, veal, pork or cheese.) This local favorite seats 35, serves "good plain cooking" and has Egger beer on tap. Near the Zytglogge (Clock Tower). Open Monday-Thursday, 9 am-11:30 pm, Friday and Saturday, 9 am-noon,

Open daily from 8 am-11:30 pm. Closed Saturday and Sunday. Hotelgasse 3, CH-3011 Bern. ☎ 31-313-1141, [www.harmonie.ch](http://www.harmonie.ch).

Spaghetti Factory serves a wide selection of Italian favorites in an upbeat, lively atmosphere. The help is gracious and friendly and the portions are hearty at reasonable rates. Open daily from 11 am-1 pm. (\$-\$\$). Kornhausplatz 7, CH-3006 Bern. ☎ 31-312-5455, [www.spaghettifactory.ch](http://www.spaghettifactory.ch).

Hotel-Restaurant Ador has good à la carte goodies and describes itself as "small but stylish." It's only a five-minute walk from the main train station and is right next door to the Bern-Forsthaus autobahn connection. (\$-\$\$). Laupenstrasse 15, Postfach CH-3001 Bern. ☎ 31-388-0111, fax 31-388-0110.

Restaurant Dählhölzli offers a good vegetarian menu for solo travelers or families with kids. Swiss cuisine is also available. (\$-\$\$). Tierparkweg 2, CH-3005 Bern. ☎ 31-351-1894, fax 31-351-7141.

## Langnau im Emmental

**T**his is a picturesque village that sits on the banks of a small tributary of the Emme River, and is known for its famous cheese and forestry industry. The village itself is pretty quiet, but the two tourist offices can provide you with maps of the local walking trails, of which there are many.

The Langnau Tourist Office is at Dorfmuhle 22, CH-3550 Langnau. ☎ 34-409-9595, fax 34-409-9598. It is open from 8 am-noon, 1-6 pm, Monday-Thursday; Friday from 1-9 pm, Saturday, 9 am-4 pm. The regional tourist office, Pro Emmental, is also very helpful with maps and sites of the area. Open Monday-Friday from 8 am-noon, 1:15-5:30 pm. Schlosstrasse 3, CH-3550 Langnau im Emmental. ☎ 34-402-4252, fax 34-402-5667, [www.emmental.ch](http://www.emmental.ch).

## Biel-Bienne



*Lake Biel (Roland Zumbühl)*

**B**iel-Bienne is actually only one town, but shares a bilingual name (Biel in French, Bienne in German). One-third of the 60,000 citizens speak French and the rest speak German. All the street signs here are in both languages. This town is known as the hub of watchmaking in Canton Bern, and is a

very busy and somewhat sophisticated city. Both the Rolex and the Omega watch factories are based here. The upper old village is worth a stroll, as many of the historic buildings are well preserved.

You'll find Biel-Bienne at the northern end of Lake Biel, in the northwestern part of this canton, on Highway 6. It offers a rich historic center, complete with fountains, impressive flower-adorned buildings and a 15th-century Gothic church. The Jura mountains are within easy reach, via a funicular, and the lake port is a great spot to embark on scenic river and lake cruises. There are also a variety of walking and cycling paths throughout the city and around the lake. The famed "Vegetable Route" takes you through the nearby quiet farming pastures, with signed panels along the way to tell you about what's growing there. Biel-Bienne is also a good base from which to visit the nearby villages of St. Imier, Moutier and Lyss.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The Biel-Bienne Tourist Office is just in front of the train station at Place de la Gare, and is open from 8 am-noon, 1:30-6 pm, Monday-Friday, and from 9 am-3 pm on Saturday. ☎ 32-322-7575, fax 32-322-7757.

## Post Office

The Biel-Bienne main Post Office is across from the train station at Place de la Gare, CH-2501 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-321-1840, fax 32-322-3720. Open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday, from 7:30 am-noon.

## Codes

The postal code for Biel-Bienne is CH-2500 and the area code is 32.

## Getting Around



This is best done on foot as part of the old town is open to pedestrians only.

For trips around the lake, we recommend renting a bike at the train station for the day.

## Adventures

These center around the lake, and you'll find a wide array of water sports, or hiking, walking and bike trips along the lakeshore. A great outdoor adventure service is Outdoor Experience, at Postfach 3155, CH-2500 Biel-Bienne. They offer all types of summer and winter adventure sports, such as bungee jumping, bike touring, canyoning, snowboarding, skiing, river rafting and kitesurfing. ☎ 32-331-3732 or 79-357-9257, fax 32-331-3733.

## Adventures On Water



If you want to go diving in the Bielersee, then see About Diving AG, at Elfenastrasse 3, CH-2500 Biel-Bienne, for lessons and trips. ☎ 32-325-3666, fax 32-325-3669. For boat rentals/pedal boats, check out Neptun Boat Service at Neuenburgstrasse 168, CH-2500 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-323-9348. Swimming is available at many stops along the lake for free.

## Adventures On Wheels

You can rent bikes at the train station for 30Sfr daily. ☎ 51-226-2281. Also, the Bike Station offers bikes, mountain bikes, roller skates and in-line skates for rent. Open daily from 9 am-



7 pm. Uferweg 5, CH-2560 Nidau-Biel. ☎ 32-333-2525, fax 32-333-2526.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites



While in Biel-Bienne don't miss St. Peter's Island, a wildlife sanctuary at the southwest end of Lake Biel that is a haven for wild birds, and exotic flora. There is an 11th-century monastery on the grounds that was once home to Jean-Jacques Rousseau and can be visited. You can walk to St. Peter's Island via a natural bridge that links it to the mainland or, better yet, you can take the one-hour boat trip from Biel for only 8.5Sfr.

Tierpark Bözingen (Bözingen Animal Park) is a small zoo that is open year-round, with free admission. Handicapped-accessible. Located on Zollhausstrasse, CH-2500 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-342-5917.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Elite is over 70 years old and one of the finest hotels in the city, with attractive, modern and spacious rooms. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). There is also a fine dining restaurant, Amphitryon, with market-fresh cuisine, and an outdoor café (Baramundo) and bar. Bahnhofstrasse 14, CH-2502 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-328-7777, fax 32-328-7770.

Hotel Baren is near the Old Town and offers spacious and simple rooms at reasonable rates. (\$\$). This hotel is also home to a pizzeria that is open daily. Nidaugasse 22, CH-2500 Bienne. ☎ 32-322-4573, fax 32-322-9157.

## Camping



Camping is available at four sites on the southern end of Lake Biel. Local trains will bring you within walking distance of these sites at 30-minute intervals on a daily basis. Open from Easter through October. (\$). ☎ 32-397-1345.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Falker offers an old-world atmosphere, serving Swiss favorites, sandwiches and chicken wings. (\$-\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse, CH-2502 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-322-4761.

Gottstatterhaus creates seasonal cuisine and fresh fish at reasonable prices. (\$\$). Neuenburgstrasse 18, CH-2500 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-322-4052.

Pinocchio is famed for its pizzas, pasta and salads in a rustic pizzeria setting. (\$-\$\$). Nidaugasse 22, CH-2500 Biel-Bienne. ☎ 32-322-4573, fax 32-322-9157.

# The Bernese Oberland: Western Region

## Thun

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*Thun, looking down from the castle (Yesuitus2001)*

**T**hun is the northernmost city in the Bernese Oberland, sitting at the northern edge of Lake Thun (Thuner See) on Highway 8. The Old Town is best-known for its unique walking path along the busy Obere Hauptgasse (literally Upper Main Road), where visitors walk on the flowered terraces that are actually the roofs of the shops below. Home to some 41,039 citizens, Thun

has a polished look and feel to it, and the gorgeous views of the Alps looming over Lake Thun only add to the picture-postcard setting.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Thun Tourist Office is on Bahnhofstrasse 2, right near the train station, offering bike rental, money exchange and lockers. CH-3600 Thun. ☎ 33-222-2340, fax 33-222-8323.

### Post Office

The main post office in Thun is at Panoramastrasse 1, Bahnhofplatz, CH-3601 Thun. ☎ 33-224-8841, fax 33-224-8851. Hours are Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-7 pm, Saturday from 7:30 am-noon.

### Codes

The postal code for Thun is CH-3600 and the area code is 33.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites



Sitting high above Thun is the Zähringen Castle & Museum. It contains a collection of regional history artifacts and documents. Weapons, uniforms and medieval objects from the 18th and 19th centuries are on display. The castle was built in 1911 and provides wonderful views of Thun and the countryside from its towers. To get here, you walk up a covered stairway from the medieval Rathausplatz (Town Square) in the Old Village. Open daily from April-October, 9 am-6 pm, November to March from 10 am-4 pm. Admission is 6Sfr for adults, 2Sfr for kids. ☎ 33-223-2001.

## Adventures

The Thuner See (Lake Thun) is where you'll find many great ship excursions that cross back and forth across this lovely lake. You can drive completely around the lake as well.

Lake Thun is 13 miles long and two miles wide, and was originally connected to Lake Brienz, which is to the east, on the other side of Interlaken. However, so much sediment was de-

posited from the run-off of the Lutschine River that it eventually divided the two bodies of water.

From April to October ships leave from Thun almost hourly to Interlaken West, Spiez and other destinations. Prices start at 35.60Sfr. Lake Brienz is smaller than Lake Thun at just nine miles long and two miles wide. It is often overlooked by tourists in favor of the activities on Lake Thun, but is favored by vacationing Swiss.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Krone is a beautiful inn – originally built in 1590 – that features a beautiful outside tower, and a terrace that overlooks the Aare River in the heart of Old Town. Quiet, with modern, charming rooms (\$\$-\$\$\$), it has a pair of restaurants, Wong-Kun, with Chinese food, and Le Bistro, serving French cuisine. Only half a mile from the train station. Rathausplatz 2, CH-3600 Thun. ☎ 33-227-8888, fax 33-227-8890.



*Hotel Krone*

Freienhof is a four-star hotel right on Lake Thun in Old Town. It features all modern amenities in a sophisticated atmosphere and is open year-round. The international restaurant – Giardino – specializes in locally caught fish and regional dishes. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Freienhofgasse 3, CH-3600 Thun. ☎ 33-227-5050, fax 33-227-5055.

Emmental was originally built in 1898 and continues to charm guests with beautiful rooms that include all modern amenities. The sun terrace offers outdoor dining, and international bands perform live here on a weekly basis. Reasonable rates. (\$\$). Bernstrasse 2, CH-3600 Thun. ☎ 33-222-0120, fax 33-222-0130, [www.essenundtrinken.ch](http://www.essenundtrinken.ch).



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Holiday is the pride of French chef Jacky Levy, who painstakingly prepares regional and French dishes for his guests. A generous wine list complements your meal. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Located in the Holiday Hotel, Gwattsrasse 1, CH-3604 Thun. ☎ 33-334-6767, fax 33-336-5704.



*Spiez, with the Schloss*

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## Spiez

**S**piez is a tiny town on the south shore of Lake Thun at the foot of the Niesen Mountain and makes a good base for summer excursions.

The village is just south of Thun on Highway 8 and is only 11 miles north of Interlaken. Its main attraction is its huge

lakeshore castle – Schloss Spiez – an 11th-century structure containing a 1,000-year-old Norman church. The castle is closed from late October through early April. Otherwise it's open Monday, 2-5 pm, Tuesday-Sunday, 10 am-6 pm. ☎ 33-654-1506.

From Spiez you can travel southwest along road 11 to Zweisimmen, where this junction leads to the resorts of Gstaad or Lenk. Or you can go straight south along the Kanderstrasse (secondary road), which soon splits at Frutigen and then heads to either Adelboden in the west, or Kandersteg in the south. If you continue around Lake Thun on Highway 8, you'll come to Interlaken in about 30 minutes.

## Where to Stay & Eat



Seegarten-Marina is a gorgeous, stately hotel by the lake that has lovely rooms with excellent views of the countryside and the Alps. The in-house restaurant/pizzeria serves up tasty homemade pizzas, and à la carte fare with fish specialties at reasonable rates. (\$-\$\$\$). The restaurant is open from 11:30 am to 10:30 pm nightly, and the pizzeria is open from 5-10:30 pm nightly. The hotel bar – Piratenbar – is open daily from 5 pm to midnight. Schachenstrasse 3, CH-3700 Spiez. ☎ 33-655-6767, fax 33-655-6765.

Aqua Welle is fine hotel in a quiet spot on the Spiez Bay landing, with great views of the Lake and Alps. The hotel contains a swimming pool, sailing school and many opportunities for long hikes and romantic



*Aqua Welle*

walks. There is also a sun-bathing beach for guests. The in-house restaurant serves Italian and Chinese dishes. (\$\$). Seestrasse 67, Schiffstation, CH-3700 Spiez. ☎ 33-654-4044, fax 33-654-7675.

Hotel Des Alpes is in the heart of Spiez and offers excellent views of Lake Thun and the Alps. (\$-\$\$). A good base for hiking

excursions. Seestrasse 38, Postfach 221, CH-3700 Spiez. ☎ 33-654-3354, fax 33-654-8850, [www.desalpes.ch](http://www.desalpes.ch).

Bellevue is a small, family-run inn that has modern and comfortable rooms, close to hiking and biking trails. (\$-\$\$). Seestrasse 36, CH-3700 Spiez. ☎ 33-654-8464, fax 33-654-8448, [www.bellevue-spiez.ch](http://www.bellevue-spiez.ch).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

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## Zweisimmen

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**T**he town sits along Highway 11, at the junction of the road that continues west to Gstaad and the alternative road south, which ends at Lenk. Zweisimmen is set in the midst of meadows and attracts many guests during the summer months, but it is considered primarily a winter resort village. It contains 19 miles of cross-country ski trails, as well as dog sledding and toboggan runs. During the winter months a cable car takes visitors to the high-altitude plateau of Sparenmoos, with 22 downhill ski lifts and 155 miles (250 km) of pistes.

The Zweisimmen Tourist Office is at Thunstrasse 8, CH-3770 Zweisimmen. ☎ 33-722-1133, fax 33-722-2585. Here you can grab maps of the region for summer and winter hiking trips, and get information on local hotels and ski conditions.

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## Gstaad

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**G**staad is five miles southwest of Zweisimmen, just south of the village of Saanen on the Saanenstrasse, and is one of Switzerland's top ski resorts.

The village is considered to be the dividing line between the German- and French-speaking areas of southern Switzerland, although neither really seems to dominate the area. Obviously, people who visit Gstaad are really more interested in skiing than in any lingual disputes.

The village is enhanced by chalet-style housing, and is yet another home of rich and famous jet-setting clients such as Elizabeth Taylor, Julie Andrews, Sting, Prince Rainier and Roger Moore – to name just a few.

The village is wedged between glaciers, mountain lakes and mountain plateaus. Centuries ago, Gstaad was a junction where traders changed horses on the route across the Bernese Oberland. The railways changed all that, and the village soon became a winter playground, and a home and schooling center for the children of royalty from throughout Europe.



*Promenade in Gstaad (M4rCsi)*

You'll find a few street signs scattered here and there, but there are other signs directing you to restaurants and hotels, so getting around isn't a problem.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Gstaad-Saanen Tourist Office is open from July to August, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday, 9 am-6 pm, Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. September-June, the hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturday, 9 am-noon. Promenade, CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-748-8181, fax 33-748-8133, [www.gstaad.ch](http://www.gstaad.ch).

### Post Office

The Gstaad Post Office is on the Bahnhofplatz 778, CH-3780 Gstaad. Hours are Monday-Friday from 8 am-noon, 2-6 pm; Saturday from 8:30-11 am. ☎ 33-744-2003, fax 33-744-5479.



## Codes

The postal code for Gstaad is CH-3780 and the area code is 33.

## Getting Around



Getting around is best done on foot or skis, or via cable car, chairlift or gondola.

## Adventures

### On Snow

#### *Skiing*



This is the main attraction in Gstaad. Along with the sister resort areas of Saanen, St. Stephan, Saanen-Moser and Schonried, it's known to many visitors as "Saanenland." The four valleys that make up this region are criss-crossed by 70 funiculars, gondolas and chairlifts that offer access to 155 miles (250 km) of downhill slopes and 30 miles (48 km) of cross-country pistes.



*Gstaad (Roland Zumbühl)*

Your best bet if you like to ski and plan on spending time here is to get the Ski Gstaad Pass, which can be purchased at any of the resort's funicular stations. This all-inclusive pass varies in price, but you can expect to pay around 100Sfr for two days, up to 200Sfr for five days and about 280Sfr for seven days. The pass is also offered to children and varies in price according to the age of the child and the length of stay. The Eggli-La Vide Manette Pass is your other option, but it is sold only as a one-day pass for 50Sfr, offering limited access throughout this area. The Gstaad Swiss Ski School offers lessons in downhill skiing, cross-country and snowboarding; it also has mountain guides available. ☎ 33-744-1865.

## Other Sports

Alpinzentrum Gstaad offers snow sport instruction and mountain guides for all types of trekking in the winter months. ☎ 33-748-4030. Experience Gstaad also has winter trekking, ice and rock climbing, and guides for off-trail skiing. (☎ 33-744-8800). If you're really in great shape, seeking the ultimate test in outdoor adventures, then call Beats Adventure Tours at ☎ 33-744-1521. Horseback lessons and riding excursions are available through Rietzentrum Gstaad. ☎ 33-744-2460. Tennis lessons and courts are available at Pro Tennis Gstaad, ☎ 33-744-1090, with three indoor and four outdoor courts available for play. For badminton, you'll want to go to the Gstaad Tenniscenter. ☎ 33-744-1090. Reservations are required. For bungee jumping, contact Jumping Keller. ☎ 33-744-8800, fax 33-744-8801.

## Shopping

Shopping abounds in Gstaad, and includes everything you'd expect from a resort catering to a royal clientele. The main shopping street is the Hauptstrasse, where you'll find every designer name known to man, such as Valentino, Gucci, Rolex, DKNY and the like. Otherwise, you can visit the upscale boutiques and salons found in the Palace Hotel for the priciest of goods.

For souvenirs, look to Bazar Ryf on the Bahnhofstrasse (☎ 33-744-1633).

For fine stationery and souvenirs, go to Cadnau on Promenade (☎ 33-744-1492, fax 33-744-4678) or to Potpourri-BodyWell on Gstaaderhof (☎ 33-744-2223). For baked goods, check out Bäckerei Brand, Hauptstrasse (☎ 33-744-1185) and, for fine chocolates, pralines, truffles and other mouth-watering fare, go to Early Beck on the Promenade (☎ 33-748-7048, fax 33-748-7049).

## Where to Stay



Palace Hotel Gstaad is the premiere landmark hotel in the village. Built in 1912, it has corner towers and a medieval façade. This is where you'll find Hollywood royalty as well as European queens, kings and princes. It contains the finest in fitness centers, restaurants, tennis courts, bars, cafés, shops and discos.



*Palace Hotel Gstaad (Roland Zumbühl)*

Each room has been carefully decorated and meticulously maintained. Nothing is left to chance. Be sure to ask for a room facing south, however, as the northern ones overlook the unspectacular parking lot. If you've got unlimited funds, this is the place to be. (\$\$\$\$+). Rooms start at 790Sfr in the wintertime, and a suite goes for 2,200Sfr. Prices are slightly lower in the summer, but only slightly. All modern amenities, free parking and the rates include breakfast (thank goodness!). CH-3780 Gstaad. In the USA you can call toll-free at ☎ 1-800-223-6800; otherwise ☎ 33-748-5050.

Hotel Le Grand Chalet sits on a hilltop just a few minutes from Gstaad's center, and provides visitors with grandiose views of the surrounding Alps. The 20 rooms and four suites are very spacious, with all modern conveniences and sophisticated Swiss charm. (\$\$\$\$). The in-house restaurant and cozy bar are divided by a see-through stone fireplace. This is a great base for hikes, walking trails and cycling excursions.



*Hotel le Grand Chalet*

The hotel also includes a gym, sauna, and heated swimming pool. CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-748-7676, fax 33-748-7677, [www.grandchalet.ch](http://www.grandchalet.ch).

Hotel Olden is a beautiful chalet that caters to the rich and famous. Besides outstanding, well-equipped, modern rooms, the hotel contains two fine restaurants with superb local specialties, a cozy bar with a large fireplace, and an outside terrace and private sunbathing deck. Pets are accepted. (\$\$\$\$). Closed from mid-April to mid-May. CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-744-3444, fax 33-744-6164.

Posthotel Rössli is one of the oldest hotels in town, and one of the most atmospheric. Very cozy and cheery, it features all



*Posthotel Rössli*

modern amenities, and is a popular spot where the locals hang out in the pub and elaborate restaurant.

As an added treat, on a weekly basis, mountain guide and ski instructor Ruedi

Widmer offers walks and grill parties in the summer or skiing treks in the winter at no extra charge to hotel guests. (\$\$\$-

\$\$\$\$). CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-748-4242, fax 33-748-4243, [www.posthotelroessli.ch](http://www.posthotelroessli.ch).

The local youth hostel – known as Chalet Rüblihorn – is in nearby Saanen, with 72 beds for weary travelers. Open from mid-December to mid-March, and from late May to late October. (\$) CH-3792 Saanen-Gstaad. ☎ 33-744-1343, fax 33-744-5542, [www.youthhostel.ch/saanen](http://www.youthhostel.ch/saanen).

There are also two mountain huts in the Gstaad area: the Wildhornhütte, which offers 100 sleeping spaces, ☎ 33-733-2382, and the Wildstrubelhütten, with 70 spots to bunk down, ☎ 33-744-3339. The Gstaad Tourist Office can provide you with maps for reaching both of these huts.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



If you visit Gstaad, then you've got to eat at the Chesery, considered one of the top restaurants in Switzerland. You'll dine on some of the finest cuisine in the world, surrounded by pink marble floors, polished wooden walls, and fancy white linens. The menu changes daily and could include fresh Maine lobster, Scottish lamb, Italian truffles or Grecian octopus. There are fixed-price options for both lunch (\$\$\$) and dinner (\$\$\$\$), or you can order à la carte. Reservations are required. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 7 pm-midnight. Closed mid-October to mid-December, Easter to mid-June and in the winter for lunch from Tuesday through Friday. Lauenenstrasse, CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-744-2451.

The Palace Hotel has three elegant dining rooms, requiring formal attire, and offering the finest in service. Appetizers such as the finest caviar and foie gras are served, and entrées can include venison, duck, pastas, beef, lamb and veal. The dessert trays are especially delightful and beautifully prepared. Reservations are required, and a three-course fixed-price lunch (\$\$\$\$) and five-course fixed-price dinner (\$\$\$\$) are offered, as well as à la carte menus. Open daily from 12:30-2:30 pm and from 7:30-10:30 pm. Closed from late March to

mid-June and from mid-September to late December. Located in the Palace Hotel, CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-748-5000.

Restaurant Bernerhof is an international pub-style eatery in the hotel of the same name. This is a great spot for families or those traveling with children, as the menu is extremely diverse, offering everything from standard Swiss fare to seasonal and regional specialties, as well as freshly made pastas, fondues and Asian delights. Reservations are recommended. Open daily from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 6:30-10:30 pm. Closed late November to December 1. (\$-\$\$\$). Fixed-price menus for both lunch (\$\$) and dinner (\$\$\$), as well as à la carte. In the Hotel Bernerhof, CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-748-8844.

Ristorante Rialto specializes in fine Italian cuisine, with the freshest of salads and pastas found anywhere in Gstaad. Seasonal specials highlight the tempting menu, which includes Mediterranean delicacies such as sea bass and octopus. Reservations are recommended. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open Monday-Saturday from noon-2 pm, 8:30-11:30 pm, Sunday from noon-2 pm. Closed on Mondays during May, June and November. Located in the village center on the Promenade. CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-744-3474.

Posthotel Rössli is in the heart of Gstaad's shopping district, and has delighted shoppers for 150 years with its rustic interior and hearty portions of steaming schnitzels, fondues and pastas. You'll find fresh salads here too. (\$-\$\$). This spot is a long-time favorite among the locals. Open daily from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 4:30-10 pm. Hauptstrasse 1, CH-3780 Gstaad. ☎ 33-748-4242.

## Lenk

**L**enk is a great little resort village in the heart of the Simmental region, on the secondary road that runs south from Zweisimmen off main Highway 11. Although not as famous as nearby Gstaad, Lenk offers a wide array of spa hotels, fitness centers, skiing, hiking and horseback riding excursions – without the crowds or overwhelming prices of Gstaad. The village is split by the Simme River and sits atop the Simmental Mountain Range.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Lenk Tourist Office is open Monday-Friday from 9 am to noon, 2-5 pm. Rawylstrasse, CH-3775 Lenk. ☎ 33-733-3131, fax 33-733-2027.

### Post Office

The Lenk Post Office is open Monday-Friday, 8 am-noon, 2-5 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. Kronenplatz, CH-3775 Lenk. ☎ 33-733-1005, fax 33-733-3101.

### Codes

The postal code in Lenk is CH-3775 and the area code is 33.

## Getting Around



This is easily done on foot in Lenk, as the village is small and split by the Simme River, with the post and tourist offices on the north side, and the train station and sports and riding centers on the south side.

## Adventures

Adventures abound in this resort village and many can be arranged through the Tourist Office. For instance, if you'd like to go fishing on the nearby Iffigsee (Lake Iffig), you'll have to purchase a permit (5Sfr per day) from the Tourist Office. They

can also arrange for you to visit an Alpine cheese factory (Alpkäsereibesichtigung, ☎ 33-733-2020), and provide you with maps for hiking and walking excursions. There are 10 easy walks in Lenk, which take up to 1½ hours and are suitable



*Kronenplatz in Lenk (Roland Zumbühl)*

for anyone. In addition, there are four hikes of medium difficulty and five for experienced hikers only.

For badminton, go to the Reit und Sportzentrum, next to the Hotel Simmehof. ☎ 33-736-3434. You can also take riding lessons or riding excursions throughout the area. ☎ 33-733-3025 for the riding stable.

For tennis, contact Lenk's public tennis center, which offers six courts and a snack bar. Open Monday-Saturday, 7 am-9 pm, Sunday from 7 am-7 pm. ☎ 33-733-2204.

You can play miniature golf at the Hotel Tenne, daily from 10 am to sunset. ☎ 33-733-2221.

The Trainingcenter Lenk offers a wide range of fitness programs, massage and physio-therapies. ☎ 33-733-3366, fax 33-733-3377.

Lenk also has an aquatic center with indoor and outdoor pools, a children's pool, sauna and bistro. Open Monday, Thursday and Friday from 10 am-8 pm, Tuesday from 1:30-8 pm, Wednesday from 10 am-9:30 pm, Saturday from 1:30-8 pm and Sunday from 10 am-8 pm. ☎ 33-733-1901.

## Where to Stay & Eat



Lenkerhof Alpine Resort is a large, first-class hotel that specializes in wellness treatments such as sulphur and salt pools, bio-sauna light therapies, herbal

saunas, steam baths, and various types of massages. The spa also includes a beauty salon, an aerobics pavilion and fitness park. The rooms are beautifully decorated and modern. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). PO Box 241, CH-3775 Lenk Im Simmental. ☎ 33-736-3636, fax 33-736-3637.



*Lenkerhof Alpine Resort*

Hotel Simmehof is a beautiful, modern hotel and wellness center that is great for families with children. It features pools,



saunas, whirlpools and four fantastic dining rooms: the Walliserstube (formal international dining), the Simmerstube (casual Swiss dining), the Tessiner Grotto (elegant haute cuisine) and the Bünderstube (casual international cooking). (\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-3775 Lenk Im Simmental. ☎ 33-736-3434, fax 33-736-3436.

Wildstrubel is a lovely Swiss chalet offering modern rooms, a sauna, solarium, a restaurant, sun terrace and beautiful garden. Rates include breakfast (\$\$). CH-3775 Lenk im Simmental. ☎ 33-736-3111, fax 33-733-3151.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

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## Frutigen

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**F**rutigen is south of Spiez, along the Engstligental Mountain Range at the junction of the Kander and Engstligenbach rivers. From this spot you can travel either southwest to Adelboden or southeast to Kandersteg.

Frutigen is known for its spectacular waterfalls and unusual rock formations. The strong waters from the two conjoining rivers have eroded the rocks and stones near many of the waterfalls and make for some of the most beautiful scenery in Switzerland. Ever industrious, the Swiss have placed numerous walkways, stairs and stone paths and railings around these areas to allow visitors close access. The small information office here can provide you with maps and directions to all of the hiking trails and waterfalls. ☎ 33-672-5200.

While in Frutigen, be sure to take a half-day to visit the small but deep Blausee (Blue Lake), a privately owned lake slightly north of Frutigen. Boat rides, a trout nursery and picnic areas are available for 5Sfr per person from May-November, from 9 am-6 pm daily. The rest of the year it is open at no charge for walks. ☎ 33-671-1641.

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## Adelboden

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**A**delboden is nine miles southwest of Frutigen and is a popular summer and winter resort. The village sits in a sunny spot at the peak of the Engstligentals and is home to some 3,600 res-

idents. It offers hiking excursions in the summer and plenty of snow sport activities in the winter.

There are over 135 miles (217 km) of walking, hiking and snow sports paths in this area.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Adelboden Tourist Office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturday from 8:30 am-noon, 2-5 pm, Sunday from 9 am-noon.

Dorfstrasse 23, CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-8080, fax 33-673-8092.

### Codes

The postal code for Adelboden is CH-3715 and the area code is 33.

## Getting Around



This is best done on foot or on a bike. The village is a mecca of hotels and shops, and there are a great many footpaths just outside the village for exploring.

You can also travel throughout the area on one of the many "Bergbahnen" (mountain trains). One popular trip is to ride the Adelboden-Lenk Bergbahnen from each of these two resort villages. CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-3500, fax 33-673-3535.

## Adventures

### On Foot



In the summer you can follow the Vitaparcours Fitness Trail to keep in (or get in) shape. This path is open to the public and serves as a downhill ski slope in the winter months.- The Adelboden Flower Path offers a 1½-mile walk along the Hahenmosspass that features a wide variety of flowers, each with its own identifying marker. The flowers are in bloom from May until October.

The Adelboden Forest Trail is a two- to three-hour round-trip. There are 13 information boards and a picnic area, leading you through some stunning mountain scenery and sunny mead-



*View of Adelboden from Engstligenalp*

ows. The Aeugli-Lowa Klettersteig (climbing path) takes you from the Hahnenmosspass to the Engstligenalp, with some very steep climbs, but it can be done by amateur mountaineers. From May to October only.

The Vogellisi Path is a two-hour hike that starts out from the Berglager (half-way between Adelboden and nearby Silleren) and takes you through meadows, past mountain streams. It offers beautiful views of the area before reaching the top station of the Adelboden -

Silleren-Bahn. You can either ride the train from here or retrace your steps. Open May to October.

Information and maps available at the tourist office for all of the above trails.

## In Water

The Gruebi outdoor swimming park offers an adult and children's pool, as well as an ice rink, beach volleyball yard and playground. Admission is 7Sfr for adults, 4Sfr for kids. CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-1520, fax 33-673-8092.

## On Wheels

There are over 20 marked and maintained bike trails in and around Adelboden, with treks through the Hahnenmoos Passor to Lake Thun, for bikers at all levels. Bike maps are available through the tourist office.

## On Snow

Cross-country skiing is very popular in Adelboden. If you need lessons, look to Swiss Snowsports School Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-8090.

## On Ice

Curling is available at the local Curling Club, and lessons start at 40Sfr, while a game will cost you 15Sfr per person. The rink is available from 10 am-noon and 2-4 pm for curling games. Call Adelboden's Curling Club at ☎ 33-673-1777, fax 33-673-1761. Ice skating and hockey can be found at the Kunsteiszentrum, open from October 5-December 20, daily from 10 am-noon, 1:30-5 pm; from December 21-October 4, daily from 10 am-5 pm, Wednesday nights from 8-10 pm. Admission is 7Sfr for adults and 4Sfr for kids. You can also rent ice skates here. ☎ 33-673-8080, fax 33-673-8092.

## Where to Stay



The Parkhotel Bellevue & Spa is a charming wellness hotel near the village center in a quiet spot on a hill overlooking Adelboden. The hotel features a private park, sunbathing terrace, pools, whirlpools, fitness center, and a host of beauty and massage treatments. The staff is gracious and hospitable and the atmosphere modern and relaxing. Packages for weeklong or weekend stays are available. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-8000, fax 33-673-8001.

Adler Sporthotel is a family-run inn in the heart of Adelboden across from the church, and near the bus station. It's also close to the cable cars and retail shops. The rooms are furnished in rustic pinewood, with all modern amenities, and the Aqua wellness center includes whirlpools, sauna, steam baths, massage and solarium. There is also a special section for children,

as well as billiards, darts and ping-pong. The in-house restaurant features local and French cuisine in hearty, well-prepared portions. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Dorfstrasse 19, CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-4141, fax 33-673-4239.



*Berghotel Engstligenalp*

Berghotel Engstligenalp is a large, sprawling chalet that sits on a lovely plateau surrounded by mountains, outside of the village center. It is a three-minute walk to the cable car station Unter-dem-Berg Engstligenalp, and a five-minute walk to the ski

lifts. This is a popular spot for cross-country skiers and snowboarders in the winter, and for hikers and mountain climbers in the summer. It's also a great spot for families traveling with children, as the area around the hotel is open and free from traffic. The hotel offers dorms as well as private rooms. (\$-\$\$\$). CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-2291, fax 33-673-4691.

## Where to Eat



La Tosca creates Italian specialties in a sophisticated and formal atmosphere. Open from 6-10 pm daily. Closed Wednesday and Thursday. (\$\$\$).

Dorfstrasse 7, CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-8383, fax 33-673-8380.

Pizzeria Bodehüttli Pension has a wonderful panoramic view. It's part of the Bodehüttli Pension, perched on the mountain-side. The pizzas and Italian dishes are tasty, as is the traditional Swiss food. (\$\$). Pets are welcome. Open daily. Closed Monday. Obere Bodenstrasse 6, CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎ 33-673-3700, fax 33-673-3703.

For a truly enjoyable meal in traditional Swiss style, go to Restaurant Hohliebe-Stübli, just across from the village on the other side of the valley. Meals are served in a rustic, pine-enhanced setting and casual atmosphere. A great spot for large families with kids and handicapped persons. (\$-\$\$). The portions are hearty and the atmosphere is warm and homey.

Hohliebeweg 17, Postfach 225, CH-3715 Adelboden. ☎/fax 33-673-1069.

## Kandersteg

This lies at the north entrance to the Lötschberg Tunnel, just eight miles south of Frutigen on the Kanderstegstrasse. This tunnel links Canton Bern to Canton Valais and the Rhône Valley, taking cars through the Lötschenberg in just 15 minutes. You drive your car onto a train, which is open on the sides, with a canopy on the top. The cost is 25Sfr, and you stay inside your car throughout the journey.

In the late 1700s this village was a cattle-trading center and eventually became a tourist resort some 150 years later. The village sits at the foot of the Blümlisalp mountain chain and is spread out over 2½ miles, so it is rarely crowded. You won't find many street names in this village, but there are plenty of directional signs to guide you on your way through the area. The Blümlisalp (at 12,018 feet/3,700 m) and the Doldenhorn (at 11,949 feet/3,600 m) tower over this lovely area and the Oeschinensee is one spot that should not be missed.

The Kandersteg Tourist Office is open Monday-Friday from 8 am-noon, 2-6 pm. Hauptstrasse, CH-3718 Kandersteg. ☎ 33-675-8080.



*Church at Kandersteg*



*The Balmhorn, above Kandersteg*



*The Balmhorn & Rinderhorn, seen from near Kandersteg*

## Getting Around



This is easily done on foot or bike during the summer months, and in the winter on skis or via snow taxis.

## Adventures

### On Foot



No visit to Kandersteg would be complete without a hike to the Oeschinensee (Lake Oeschinen), at 5,176 feet (1,578 m) above the village on a sunny plateau, surrounded by the peaks of the Blümlisalp. The walk up to the lake can be steep in spots, but not difficult overall and takes from 1½ to two hours. There is also a chairlift to the top of the Oeschinen station that costs 12Sfr one-way or 18Sfr round-trip. It is really much better to walk, however.

### On Snow

Kandersteg has eight miles of downhill ski runs, and 47 miles of cross-country ski paths that double as hiking trails in the summer. There are eight ski lifts and most of the runs here are suitable for beginners to medium skiers. Rates for ski passes are



relatively cheap by Swiss standards. A two-day adult pass is 62Sfr, a five-day pass is 135Sfr and a seven-day pass is 185Sfr. Seniors and children receive discounts depending on their ages and whether they are traveling with other adults or families.

## Where to Stay & Eat



The Royal Park Hotel has been operated and owned by the Rikli family for over 100 years and is one of the finest hotels in the Bernese Oberland. This four-story hotel has spacious rooms and is lavishly decorated with antiques and Victorian furniture, as well as modern, completely updated baths. This is a great spot for horseback riding and the hotel stable offers a wide choice of steeds to suit any level of equestrian. But the hotel also requires that



*The Royal Park Hotel*

you ride in proper attire, so be sure to bring your boots and breeches along. You can also take boat excursions with either a sailing or motorized vessel on nearby Lake Thun. The hotel has tennis courts, a fitness center, two pools, Jacuzzi, bike rental and massage. (\$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$+). You'll also find four outstanding restaurants with all types of cuisine, and a romantic bar in the hotel. CH-3718 Kandersteg. In the USA ☎ 1-800-874-4002, otherwise ☎ 33-675-8888, fax 33-675-8880.

Ruedihaus is a lovely little chalet in a quiet meadow just west of the village center. Built in 1753, this tiny inn with only nine rooms has antiques throughout and the beds have handmade quilts and dainty linens. One in-house restaurant, Käse und Wystuben, serves an all-Swiss menu that includes fondues, salads, sausages and homemade desserts. The other in-house eatery (Biedermeier) is more formal and specializes in meat dishes. There is also a small café on the premises with

light fare. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-3718. ☎ 33-675-8181, fax 33-675-8185.

Hotel Victoria-Ritter is a combination of two inns. First built in 1789, the original building was the Ritter Coach House, named after the local Ritter family. In 1912, the larger Victoria House was added on. This is a good hotel for families with children as it offers kindergarten and babysitting services. There are two tennis courts on the grounds as well. (\$\$). Closed from mid-October to mid-December. CH-3718 Kandersteg. ☎ 33-675-8000, fax 33-675-8100.

## The Bernese Oberland: Eastern Region Interlaken

Interlaken and the Jungfrau Region are in the Bernese Oberland, the southernmost region of Canton Bern. Known as the “capital” of the Bernese Oberland, Interlaken is home to some 15,000 inhabitants, and sits at the foot of the impressive trio of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau mountains, in between the



*Interlaken (Broguybro)*

Thun and Brienz lakes. The region around Interlaken is known locally as the “Bodeli,” a combination of three political communities: Interlaken, Unterseen and Matten.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The Interlaken Tourist Office is at Postfach 369, Hoheweg 37, CH-3800 Interlaken. It is open from July to mid-September, Monday-Friday from 8 am-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am-5 pm, Sunday from 10 am-noon, 5-7 pm. Hours vary at other times of year. ☎ 33-826-5300, fax 33-826-5375. This office will provide you with maps and details of the various hikes available throughout Interlaken and the surrounding area.

Berner Oberland Tourismus is open from 7:30 am-noon, 1-5:30 pm Monday-Friday, on the first floor of Jungfraustrasse 38. CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-823-0808, fax 33-823-0330. Here you can purchase the Bernese Oberland Regionalpass, valid for either seven days (three days of unlimited free travel, four days of travel at 50% reduction) or 15 days (five days of unlimited travel, 10 days at 50% reduction) on all bus, rail, and boat excursions throughout the Bernese Oberland. Good May through October.

### Train Stations

There are two train stations in Interlaken. Interlaken West offers money exchange (Monday-Sunday from 7 am-8 pm) and bike rental. Interlaken Ost (East) has money exchange (Monday-Sunday from 6 am-8 pm). Here you can purchase the Jungfrau Railway Pass, good for travel within the Jungfrau Region, including the Wengen-Mannlichen Aerial Cableway, the Grindelwald-First Mountain Transport Company and the Grindelwald-Mannlichen Aerial Gondola Cableway. This pass allows for unlimited travel on all of these railways for five consecutive days.

## Post Office

The Interlaken Post Office is open Monday-Friday from 7:45 am-noon, 1:30-6:15 pm, Saturday from 8:30 am-noon. Marktgasse 1, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-224-8950.

## Codes

The postal code is CH-3800 and the area code is 33.

## Internet Access

This is available at Buddy's Pub Hotel Splendid, Rosenstrasse, CH-3800 Interlaken, ☎ 33-822-6922, at Hotel Artos, Alpenstrasse 45, CH-3800 Interlaken, ☎ 33-828-8844, or at Backpackers Villa Sonnenhof, Alpenstrasse, CH-3800 Interlaken, ☎ 33-826-7171.

## Medical Services

Medical services in Interlaken are available at ☎ 33-823-2323 and the regional hospital is at Weissenastrasse 27.

## Getting Around



This is easily done on foot or by bike. Driving is very easy here and there are plenty of public parking places, with the streets well-marked. The Höhweg is the main street that winds and twists through the city; most major sites can be found on or just off this main thoroughfare.

## Shopping

Shopping abounds on the Höhweg and near Interlaken West station. You can find all kinds of arts, crafts and Swiss hand-made linens, doilies and handkerchiefs. For the best of these and more, look to Boutique Edelweiss at Höhweg 26 (☎ 33-823-8060) or Heimatwerk Interlaken at Höhweg 115 (☎ 33-823-1653). In addition, at both of these stores you can purchase Swiss Army knives, wood carvings, T-shirts and other items.

## Adventures

Interlaken has almost every type of sport for any enthusiast, and both winter and summer activities are available for all ages. Most tourists who come to Interlaken trek to the south-

ernmost part of the Bernese Oberland. The area consists of a seemingly endless series of mountains, highlighted by the Jungfrau at 13,638 feet (4,158 m), the Mönch at 13,445 feet (4,099 m) and the Eiger at 13,022 feet (3,970 m).

Harder Kulm is Interlaken's own mountain that sits above the city to the north, sandwiched between Lakes Thun and Brienz. From this 4,337-foot (1,822-m) mountain top you'll get a bird's-eye view of the Jungfrau region and marvelous panoramas. The restaurant on the summit offers visitors folk dancing and music on Friday nights, from June through September. The funicular leaves from near the Interlaken East station, on the north side of the Beaurivage Bridge. A roundtrip ticket costs 21Sfr. The train leaves daily from 9:10 am to 6:30 pm every 30 minutes, June through September.

### THE TOP OF EUROPE

The Jungfraujoeh – known as the “Top of Europe” – summits at 13,638 feet (4,158 m). Adventurers and tourists have been traveling to the top of this mighty peak ever since the Jungfrau-bahn was first placed in service in 1912. Excursions to the top of the Jungfraujoeh and the highest railway station in the world (at 11,400 feet/3,476 m) are not to be missed, even if you're scared of heights. There are five modern restau-



*The Jungfrau-bahn (Peter Alder)*

rants at the station and another terrace and observation center, The Sphinx, that you can get to by elevator. It will whisk you

another 364 feet (111 m) skyward. There is also an Ice Palace on the station plateau, and a scientific research station.

During good weather, you can take skiing lessons and go dog sledding here. You may feel a bit dizzy or lightheaded after you reach the station, but the small kiosk in the reception area offers coffee and chocolates to help you adjust to the altitude.

Trains leave once a day from Interlaken West, stopping at Interlaken East, Wilderswil, Lauterbrunnen, Wengen and the Kleine Scheidegg. The return trip takes you back down to Interlaken via Grindelwald. Cost for a round-trip ticket is 162Sfr, and trains depart daily at 7:45 am, with the last train down from the Jungfrauoch at 6 pm. This is a trip that is a lot of fun no matter what time of year you are visiting, although in the winter you may have to deal with limited visibility. When the weather is clear, the views from the Jungfrauoch cannot be defined with mere words. On clear days you can see as far as Germany and France, and the surrounding scenery is spectacular. Jungfraubahnen, Harderstrasse 14, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-828-7233, fax 33-828-7264. For Jungfrauoch weather information, ☎ 33-855-1022.

## Other Activities

Beach volleyball takes place at the Thunersee in Interlaken. For information, ☎ 33-822-9330.

Bowling is popular in Interlaken and the surrounding area. It's available at Piz Paz Pizzeria, Bahnhofstrasse 1, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎/fax 33-822-2533.

The Interlaken Paragliding School offers lessons for would-be gliders at Postfach 455, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-822-0428, fax 33-822-0426.

For in-line skating gear, look to Action Sport Landolt Ag, located on Gsteigstrasse 12, CH-3800 Matten-Interlaken. ☎ 33-821-1001, fax 33-821-1002.

Rock climbing is available through Swiss Alpine Guides, at Postfach 29, CH-3800 Matten-Interlaken. ☎ 33-823-4100, ☎/fax 33-823-4101.

You can play tennis at Interlaken's Sport Center, Hoheweg 53, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-826-0000, fax 33-826-0001.

Zorbing is available through the Alpine Center, in nearby Wilderswil at CH-3812. ☎ 33-823-5523, fax 33-823-5513. This is probably one of the best places in Switzerland to try Zorbing. It's allowed for ages 16 and up. The price is 95Sf and that includes a nice t-shirt. Weight limit is 190 pounds (85kg); long sleeves and pants are recommended and warm socks in the winter since shoes are not allowed.

## On Water

For rafting trips, as well as bungee jumping, canyoning, climbing, glacier hiking, hydrospeeding, paragliding, mountain biking, mountaineering, skydiving, and mountain trekking, contact Swissraft on Jungfraustrasse 72, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-823-0210, fax 33-823-0501.

For fishing on Lake Thun, contact the Interlaken Tourist Office. Boat rentals/pedal boats can be had at the Hang Loose Water Sports Center, on the Thunersee in Interlaken. ☎ 79-233-5228. They also offer water skiing and wind surfing trips.

Cruises are available on Lake Thun or Lake Brienz through the Interlaken Tourist Office. You can take full- or half-day excursions on one of the many lake steamers available. There are evening cruises available as well. Cruises depart at Interlaken Ost for Lake Brienz or Interlaken West for Lake Thun.

## On Wheels

Bikes are available for rent at both Interlaken train stations. At Interlaken West, ☎ 33-826-4748; at Interlaken East, ☎ 33-828-7319.

## In the Air

You can enjoy spectacular views from above in either a helicopter or small plane, via either Scenic Air AG (☎ 33-826-7717) or Bohag (☎ 33-828-9010), both in Interlaken.

### COGWHEEL TRAIN TRIPS

The last stop on the way up to the Jungfrauoch is at the Kleine Scheidegg, at 6,762 feet (2,062 m). Here you'll also greet the north wall of the mighty Eiger.

This is still a busy meeting point today for mountain farmers bringing and taking their cattle to Alpine pastures. Also, it is a grand start for many serious hikers and amateur walkers alike. Mountaineers converge here in preparation for their ascent of the Eiger.



*Train to the Schynige Platte*

Another trip not to be missed from Interlaken is to the Schynige Platte at 6,445 feet (1,964 m). This is considered by many serious mountain trekkers to be the best vantage point to view the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. From here you can take a number of hiking trails suitable for families, kids and seniors. At this wide-open plateau you'll also have access to the Alpine Botanical Garden, which features over 500 species of mountain flora, including the coveted edelweiss.

Cogwheel trains run from 7:30 am-6 pm daily for the 50-minute trip from late May to late October. The cost is 56Sfr round-trip or 32Sfr for a one-way ticket. For information on these excursions, contact the Interlaken Tourist Office, or call the Jungfrauabahn at ☎ 33-828-7233.



## Where to Stay



**Grand Hotel Beau Rivage** is set in a quiet spot between the Höhweg and the Aare River, close to the Interlaken East train station, and is a landmark in Interlaken. This luxury hotel is a good starting point for all types of excursions and adventures. The rooms are modern and clean, many with terrific views of the Jungfrau and the Aare River. There are two in-house restaurants, a bar, pool and health club. (\$\$\$\$). Höhweg 211, CH-3800 Interlaken. In North America, ☎ 1-800-447-7462, otherwise ☎ 33-821-6272, fax 33-823-2847, [www.beau-rivage-interlaken.ch](http://www.beau-rivage-interlaken.ch).



*Grand Hotel Beau Rivage*



*Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel*

**Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel & Spa** has been the pride of Interlaken since 1865, and has been home to guests such as Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and the King of Siam. You'll find this magnificent hotel right in the heart of Interlaken, with 216 rooms of various shapes and sizes. Everything about this place speaks of lux-

ury. (\$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$+). Includes two restaurants, two bars, tennis courts, pool, spa, and sauna. Höhweg 41, CH-3800 Interlaken. In North America ☎ 1-800-223-6800, otherwise ☎ 33-828-2828, fax 33-828-2880, [www.victoria-jungfrau.ch](http://www.victoria-jungfrau.ch).

**Hotel Alplodge** caters to backpackers and has 20 rooms with 70 beds. All rooms are non-smoking and have wash basins; many have showers and bathrooms in the rooms. There are community showers and toilets on each floor as well. Lockers and Internet access are available, and you can rent bed linens

here for 2Sfr. (\$-\$\$). Marktgasse 59, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-822-4748, fax 33-823-2098.

The Interlaken Youth Hostel is just one mile east of the Interlaken East train station in the suburb of Bönigen and has 150 beds, with all sizes of rooms. It is open year-round and there are a wide array of facilities nearby. (\$) Aareweg 21, am See, CH-3806 Bönigen. ☎ 33-822-4353, fax 33-823-3058, [www.youthhostel.ch/boenigen](http://www.youthhostel.ch/boenigen).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Il Bellini is in the Metropole Hotel, specializing in Italian and international fare in a formal setting of pink and green pastels. Everything is delicately prepared and served in a quiet, intimate style. Reservations are recommended. The prices are surprisingly reasonable. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Open daily from 11:30-2 pm and from 6:30-10 pm. Höhweg 37, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-828-6666.

Restaurant-Hotel Bären serves Swiss specialties on their lovely outdoor dining terrace and street café. Open daily from 11:30 am-2 pm, 5:30-10 pm. Closed October-June. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Marktgasse 19, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-822-7676, fax 33-822-2855.

Aare Café specializes in Swiss dishes served up in hearty portions throughout the summer months, from 8 am-9 pm, Monday-Thursday; Friday and Saturday until 11 pm. (\$\$). Strandbadstrasse 15, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-823-1333, fax 33-823-1337.

## Brienzi

**D**irectly east of Interlaken is Lake Brienzi. At just nine miles long and two miles wide, it is the smaller of the two Oberland bodies of water (the other is Lake Thun). Most Europeans tend to make this their holiday destination of choice, as opposed to the more crowded Thunersee (Lake Thun). The village of Brienzi sits at the north end of the lake, across from the Giessbach Falls – a spectacular waterfall that can be reached via funicular (5Sfr for adults and 2.5Sfr for kids). You have to



### *Brienz (Andrew Bossi)*

take a boat to reach the funicular, and you'll find this boat at the lakeshore pier in the center of Brienz. The trip takes two to three hours and is worth it. The Brienz Tourist Office (CH-3855 Brienz) can provide you with information, schedules and tickets. ☎ 33-952-8080, fax 33-952-8088.

You also might want to visit the Brienzer Rothorn at 7,700 feet, which provides super views of the Bernese Alps and Lake Brienz. The cogwheel railway trip costs 66Sfr per person and this entire excursion lasts two to three hours. The train runs up to 10 times daily from June to October. Again, look to the Brienz Tourist Office for tickets and times.

You can also travel around Lake Brienz on a steamer. There are six ships to accommodate any journey; the most popular is a three-hour trip that takes you from Interlaken East to Iseltwald, Giessbach, Brienz and then back to Interlaken East, starting at 30Sfr. This trip takes a half-day. ☎ 33-334-5211 for information.



*The village of Brienz is famous for woodcarving. If you'd like to try your hand at it, carver Paul Fuchs will teach you how to carve a revered Brienzer cow. You can make a reservation with the Tourist Office or call Fuchs directly at ☎ 33-951-1418. His shop is in Hofstetten, between Brienz and Ballenberg, on Scheidweg 19D. The cost is 22Sfr for a one-hour lesson.*

## Lauterbrunnen

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**T**his village is six miles south of Interlaken at 2,612 feet (1,100 m) and is easily accessed from either Interlaken train station.



*Lauterbrunnen (Nate Humphries)*

The village offers chalets and large parking areas for visitors traveling to the resort villages of either Wengen to the east or Murren to the south. From here you can grab the trains heading for the Jungfrauoch or the Schilthorn. You'll find the hotel rates a bit cheaper in Lauterbrunnen than in other nearby resort villages, and this is a good base for walking trips.

There are many spectacular waterfalls throughout the length of the Lauterbrunnen Valley, including the Staubbachfälle (Staubbach Falls) and the Trümmelbachfälle (Trümmelbach Falls). The former are lighted at night and make for a grand sight, while the latter are found inside the Jungfrau Mountain itself – a result of glacier waters from the higher peaks of the Jungfrau. They can be accessed by an underground train. These spots are easily reached from the village, and the paths and walkways are clearly marked to bring you to the falls. Entrance to the underground falls costs 10Sfr. You can visit them from April to June and from September to November, daily, 9 am-5 pm, during July and August, 8 am-6 pm. Closed December-March. ☎ 33-855-3232.



*The Lauterbrunnen Valley (EquatorialSky)*

## Where to Stay



If you want to stay overnight in Lauterbrunnen, look to the Hotel Silberhorn, a family-owned and -operated inn, next to the cogwheel railway that takes you to Mürren. This rustic inn is set in a garden, with 30 pine-paneled rooms and a lovely sun terrace. The casual in-house restaurant serves Swiss favorites such as fondue, raclette and rösti. (\$\$). CH-3822 Lauterbrunnen. ☎ 33-855-1471, fax 33-855-4213, [www.silberhorn.com](http://www.silberhorn.com).

## Mürren

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**M**ürren is seven miles south of Lauterbrunnen in a sunny spot atop the Lauterbrunnen valley at 5,361 feet (2,252 m). It is easily reached from both Interlaken train stations, and is the main stop on the way to the Schilthorn and Piz Gloria. It serves as a good base for many hiking excursions and doubles as a ski resort in the winter. From Interlaken you can take the one-hour train ride to Lauterbrunnen, and then grab the cogwheel train up to Mürren. This is an auto-free village, and can be reached only via the cogwheel train. Besides skiing and hiking, most tourists visit Mürren to take the cable-car ride up to the Schilthorn, a

mountain made famous in the James Bond flick *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. There are no streets in Mürren, but there are plenty of directional signs everywhere to help you find your way. Things can get a bit pricey here, since all supplies and materials have to be hauled up by a cable car or helicopter.

The Tourist Office is in the Sportzentrum, found in the middle of the village, and is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 2-6:30 pm and on the weekends from 2-6:30 pm. ☎ 33-856-8686.

## Adventures

Often overlooked by tourists is Mürren's own Mürren-Allmendhubel Cableway. You'll find the station at the northern edge of the village, and for only 14Sfr the cable will whisk you up to the Allmendhubel at 5,723 feet (1,745 m). This is a delightful spot in the summer, when the area is covered with wild Alpine flowers over the green, hilly plateau. You can stroll around, have a picnic or dine in the restaurant here.

The views are grand, and on a sunny day you will have a panoramic view of the Lauterbrunnen Valley and the surrounding Alps. The cable car runs daily from 8 am-5 pm. ☎ 33-823-1444.

The Sportzentrum has facilities for tennis, squash, curling, swimming, ice skating and hockey. There is also a playground, snack bar and lounge on the premises. It is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 2-6 pm and on the weekends from 2-6 pm. It shares the same phone number as the Tourist Office. You'll find dozens of downhill ski runs throughout the area and a 7½-mile cross-country track, accessed by railway from Mürren. Ski passes range from 52Sfr for a one-day pass to 236Sfr for a seven-day pass.

## The Schilthorn

At 9,742 feet (4,093 m), this is the major attraction here. From Lauterbrunnen you can take a rack railway to the Schilthornbahn base station at Stechelberg, next to the gorgeous Mürrenbachfalle (Mürrenbach Falls) in the valley just south of Mürren. You can also take the Lauterbrunnen-Mürren funicular and railway to Mürren, via Grutschlp and Winteregg, before grabbing the Schilthornbahn. Mürren is actually the sec-



*Piz Gloria*

and stop the Schilthornbahn makes on its four-stop journey (the first stop from the Schilthornbahn base station is at Gimmelwald, the third is at Birg, and the fourth is the Schilthorn summit).

The top station features a unique revolving restaurant, known as Piz Gloria, which

allows fantastic 360-degree panoramic views of the surrounding Alps. Be sure to allow time for a meal in this unique restaurant – the selections change with the seasons, and the salads are crisp and fresh. If you are an ice cream lover, be sure to order the “007” dessert – five scoops of various types of ice cream smothered with fresh fruits. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 33-856-2140. There is also a trendy pub – the James Bond Bar – at the summit. It was here that scenes from the movie *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* were filmed. The round-trip from the Schilthornbahn base station at Stechelberg costs 87Sfr per person during the summer months, with reduced rates in the winter, while the round-trip cost from Mürren is 60Sfr. ☎ 33-856-2141. You can also make your reservations in Interlaken at Schilthornbahn AG, Höhweg 2, CH-3800 Interlaken. ☎ 33-823-1444, fax 33-823-2449, [www.schilthorn.ch](http://www.schilthorn.ch).



*Be sure to check the weather forecast for the summit if you're visiting the Schilthorn in the winter, as snow conditions can put a big damper on your journey. You may ascend to the top on a seemingly clear winter day, only to have a severe snowstorm interrupt your meal in the Piz Gloria, and force a quick return trip back down the mountain.*

## Where to Stay & Eat



The Hotel Eiger is one of the oldest

chalets in Mürren, having been built in the 1920s; the atmosphere throughout is warm and cheery, with great views from most of the rooms.

This place reeks of traditional Alpine hospitality, and is just across the street from the Lauterbrunnen cable car station. Rates include breakfast. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Many modern amenities throughout, including a pool, sauna, bar and fitness center. The in-house restaurant – the Eigerstübli – is the best in Mürren, serving the finest in traditional Swiss favorites. The desserts are especially delightful, and reservations are highly recommended. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open daily from 11:30 am–2 pm, 6–9 pm. The restaurant is closed from Easter to mid-June and from mid-September to mid-December. The Hotel Eiger, CH-3825 Mürren. ☎ 33-856-5454, fax 33-856-5456, [www.muerren.ch/eiger](http://www.muerren.ch/eiger).

The Bellevue-Crystal is a typical Alpine ski chalet, catering to skiers and snow enthusiasts. All of the 17 pine-paneled rooms have small balconies and modern bathrooms. (\$\$-\$\$\$). The in-house restaurant is warm and friendly, specializing in good hot dishes during the winter months. Closed from Easter to early June. CH-3825 Mürren. ☎ 33-855-1401, fax 33-855-1490, [www.muerren.ch/bellevue](http://www.muerren.ch/bellevue).

Hotel Blumental is another traditional Swiss chalet, in the heart of the village, with very reasonable rates for this area. (\$\$). The 16 rooms are attractive, with wood paneling and tidy



*The Hotel Eiger*



bathrooms; some have private balconies. During the summer months you can enjoy your breakfast or supper on the outside dining terrace. Rates include breakfast. CH-3825 Mürren. ☎ 33-855-3638.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Wengen

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**W**engen sits at 4,180 feet (1,274 m), three miles (4.8 km) northeast of Mürren, 16 miles south of Interlaken, a 30-minute train ride from Lauterbrunnen, via cog railway. It is known for its superb hiking trails and peaceful surroundings, with the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau sheltering this auto-free village. To get here, take the Interlaken East train to Wengen for 12Sfr. Trains depart every 45 minutes from 6:30 am to 11:30 pm daily. There are few street names here, but you'll find the Tourist Office in the center of the village. It is open Monday-Friday, from 9 am-noon, 2-5 pm, and on Saturday from 8:30-11:30 am.

Wengen is well known for its skiing pistes, 155 miles (250 km) of downhill runs and seven miles of cross-country trails, which extend throughout the area and on the many plateaus and ridges of the Männlichen, Kleine Scheidegg and Eigergletscher. Ski passes start at 52Sfr for a day pass up to 278Sfr for a seven-day pass. There are endless well-marked hiking trails here as well, allowing even amateurs a chance to hike through some of the Bernese Oberland's most spectacular scenery.

## Adventures

### On Foot



One of the classic hikes here is from Wengen to the Kleine Scheidegg, a relatively easy 2½-hour journey.

The path starts in Wengen, not far from the Tourist Office on a well-marked path, and takes you along the terrace at the base of the Männlichen, before leading through some forests and Alpine meadows.

The trail leads gently upwards to the Wengernalp and to the slopes of the Lauberhorn and the Kleine Scheidegg. From

here, it's an easy walk to the Männlichen plateau or to the Eiger Glacier, and the scenery is breathtaking.

## A Cable Ride

No trip to Wengen would be complete without a ride on the Luftseilbahn Wengen-Männlichen (LWM) aerial cableway, which takes visitors to the top of the Männlichen at 7,317 feet (2,230 m). This gorgeous spot is renowned as one of the best panoramic sun terraces in the Jungfrau region; it rises between the Lauterbrunnen and Lütchen valleys. From here, there are endless hiking possibilities and during the winter months the area between the Männlichen and the Kleine Scheidegg is a haven for skiers and snowboarders. LWM, CH-3823 Wengen. ☎ 33-855-2933, fax 33-855-3510.

The Tourist Office in Wengen can provide you with an excellent hiking map, which outlines 22 hikes of varying difficulties from one hour up to 3½ hours.

## Where to Stay & Eat



**Hotel Silberhorn** is a luxury hotel with 61 pine-paneled, immaculate rooms. The bathrooms all have heated floors to warm cold toes on frosty winter nights. Be sure to ask for a room in the old wing of the building, as these rooms are more charming and rustic. There are two outstanding in-house restaurants – one is a formal dining room, the other, a casual eatery. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-3823 Wengen. ☎ 33-856-5131, fax 33-855-2244, [www.silberhorn.ch](http://www.silberhorn.ch).

**Hotel Eiger** is just behind the train station but is surprisingly quiet. The 33 rooms are clean, spacious and all come with balconies. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). The in-house restaurant – The Arvenstube – is one of the best in Wengen and presents Bernese favorites such as veal, beef and mushrooms and various types of fondues. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open daily from 11 am-2 pm, 6-9 pm (closed May only). In North America ☎ 1-800-528-1234, otherwise ☎ 33-856-0505, fax 33-855-1030, [www.eigerhotel.ch](http://www.eigerhotel.ch).



*Grindelwald & the Black Lütschine River (Wojsyl)*

## Grindelwald

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**G** rindelwald lies 14 miles (23 km) south of Interlaken at 3,445 feet (1,050 m) and is a popular summer and winter resort – sandwiched between the north face of the Eiger and the less-imposing Wetterhorn. It is the only major village that can be reached by car, and thus is often more crowded than some of its surrounding, auto-free neighbors. This “glacier village” has every level of walk or sport for almost anyone, and most places are handicapped-accessible.

The Grindelwald Tourist Office is in the center of the village, just north of the train station on the main promenade. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-1212, fax 33-854-1210, [www.grindelwald.ch](http://www.grindelwald.ch). Ask for a free visitor’s card, which offers many reductions for hotel services, restaurants, shops, trains and ski

passes. The office is closed from mid-September to mid-October; times vary during the rest of the year, so call first.

Guided tours of Grindelwald are available through the Tourist Office every Wednesday from late June until mid-September and are free of charge with a visitor's card or 20Sfr without one. There is a short tour from 10 am-noon and a longer tour from 1:30-4:30 pm. You need to book a reservation one day in advance by calling ☎ 33-854-1212.

Other tours available through the Tourist Office include an Alpine Wildlife Excursion to the Grosse Scheidegg, and a trip to an Alpine dairy farm.

You can also purchase a regional Berner Oberland Pass that is good for excursions by train, boat, bus and cable car in the entire region. A seven-day pass costs 195Sfr and a 15-day pass costs 240Sfr. Available at the Tourist Office.

The Grindelwald Post Office is next to the train station and is open from 8 am-noon, 1:45-6 pm, Monday-Friday. Saturday it is open from 8-11 am. Beim Bahnhof, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1306, fax 33-853-1601.

## Getting Around

This is easy on foot, bike or by car. If you are driving from Interlaken, travel south on the Wilderswil secondary road to Grindelwald. There are signs everywhere leading you to this village.

## Adve

**GLACIER GORGE**

A fun hike from Grindelwald is to visit the Glacier Gorge, only 35 minutes from the village center. There is a 6Sfr per adult entry fee onto the wooden walkway that leads you around and through this spectacular natural wonder of gushing waters and close rock walls that face one another at slanted angles. Follow the signs from Grindelwald. The walkway is open from mid-May to early July, 10 am-5 pm; from mid-July to late August, 9 am-6 pm; and from late August to mid-October, 10 am-5 pm. After visiting the Gorge, you can dine at the nearby Hotel-Restaurant Gletscherschlucht, or stay overnight if you choose. This is a family-owned and -operated inn that is open daily until midnight. (\$-\$\$). ☎ 33-853-6050, fax 33-853-6051.

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Grindelwald Sports provides lessons and excursions at various price ranges for a number of adventure and traditional sports, including mountaineering, glacier hiking, rock climbing, and canyoning. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-1290, fax 33-854-1295.

Paragliding trips and lessons are available at Paragliding Grindelwald. Prices start at 160Sfr for tandem flights. ☎ 79-779-9000, fax 33-853-4788, [www.paragliding-grindelwald.ch](http://www.paragliding-grindelwald.ch).

Helicopter rides are available for 180Sfr per person per 20 minutes through Air-Glaciers SA. They take you from Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen and back. CH-3822 Lauterbrunnen. ☎ 33-856-0560.

Mountain biking excursions are available through the Tourist Office at ☎ 33-854-1212. The cost is 71Sfr and the trip takes you round-trip from Grindelwald to First and Bort.

## Winter Sports

The Grindelwald Ski and Mountain Sports School offers ski and snowboarding lessons for all levels and ages. Schweizer Schnee und Bergsportschule, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-1280, fax 33-854-1295.

For private snowboarding and ski lessons, go to the Swiss Snowboard School (SSBS), Buri Sport Grindelwald, CH-3818. ☎ 33-853-3353.

### MOUNTAIN TRIPS FROM GRINDELWALD

A popular trip from Grindelwald is to take the bubble car gondola to the First Mountain, at 7,113 feet (2,169 m). You'll stop at the two tiny villages of Bort and Grindd along the way, before reaching the plateau at First, where the Bergrestaurant (Mountain Restaurant) has a large menu of international fare in a casual setting.

There are many walks in the First region, with over 60 miles of trails that are also suitable for handicapped persons. Bergbhanen Grindelwald-First AG, Postfach 11, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-5050, fax 33-854-5035.



*The Grosse Scheidegg (Tinelot Wittermans)*

Another excursion from Grindelwald is to visit the Grosse Scheidegg at 6,434 feet (1,962 m). This pass is reachable on foot (three hours) or by bus (50 minutes) and, again, you'll find

numerous walks here. In fact, it is a fun trip to take the bus up and walk back to Grindelwald. Grindelwald Bus, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-1616, fax 33-854-1610.

You can also take the Grindelwald-Männlichen Gondola Cableway (GGM) up to the Männlichen. This is the longest gondola cableway in Europe, stretching nearly five miles in the sky from Grindelwald to the mighty Männlichen. GGM, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-8080, fax 33-854-8088.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Kreuz & Post is in the main square of the village, featuring rustic furnishings and 18th-century antiques in a contemporary atmosphere.



*The Hotel Kreuz & Post*

Balconies are included with most of the rooms, which provide spectacular views of the surrounding mountains. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). This is a first-class operation on all levels. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-5492, fax 33-854-5499, [www.grindelwald.ch/kreuz-post](http://www.grindelwald.ch/kreuz-post).

### Jungfrau-Lodge

Swiss Mountain Hotel. This combination of two hotels was first built in 1903 (the Jungfrau) and 1972 (the Crystal) and they are across the street from one another. Only three minutes from the train station, both feature immaculate, comfy rooms and pleasant sun terraces. (\$-\$\$\$). CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-4141, fax 33-854-4142, [www.jungfraulodge.ch](http://www.jungfraulodge.ch).

Hotel Restaurant Steinbock was originally a pub that dates back to 1798, before becoming a hotel in the following century. It was completely renovated in 1992 by the Ponzio family – who are famous throughout Switzerland for their pizza. Rates include breakfast. This hotel is very close to the main ski lift of the village, and this is also a good base for many walking excursions.

sions. The ski bus stop for the Klein Scheidegg/Männlichen is right beside this lodge. (\$-\$\$\$). The attached Gruppa Bar offers up a wide array of tasty hot and cold drinks. Dorfstrasse, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-8989, fax 33-853-8998, [www.steinbock-grindelwald.ch](http://www.steinbock-grindelwald.ch).



*Hotel Restaurant Steinbock*

Stalden Inn is ideal for families with children.

Family-owned and -run, this Swiss chalet is only five minutes from the village center and serves hearty Swiss fare at its in-house restaurant. This is a good base for hiking, walking and skiing excursions. (\$-\$\$\$). CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1112, fax 33-853-31101.

The Bellevue Bed & Breakfast is in the heart of Grindelwald. It has rustic and clean accommodations at very reasonable rates. (\$). Tuftli, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1234, fax 33-853-1143.

The Grindelwald Youth Hostel offers 125 beds, and is just a little over half a mile from the village center, just north of the post office and train station. Open year-round, except from November 1 to December 13. (\$-\$\$). Weid 12, Terrassenweg, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1009, fax 33-853-5029, [www.youthhostel.ch/grindelwald](http://www.youthhostel.ch/grindelwald).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Camping



This is available at the Eigernordwand Campground, in a quiet and sunny spot at the foot of the north face of the Eiger, only four minutes from Grindelwald's city center, and only a five-minute walk to the base stations of Grund, Kleine Scheidegg, Jungfrauoch and Männlichen. (\$). Close to all major ski lifts. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1242, fax 33-853-5042, [www.eigernordwand.ch](http://www.eigernordwand.ch).



Sleeping in the straw is available at the charming Wyss family farm. Located underneath the north face of the Eiger, and only three miles (4.8 km) from Grindelwald in a beautiful location close to many walking and hiking paths. The family will pick you up at the train station if you call ahead, and can accommodate up to 15 individuals or 30 people in a group. Just bring your sleeping bag and be prepared for a wonderful experience, anytime from the middle of June until the end of September. Reservations strongly suggested. Hagibodmen, Wärgistal, CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-3739.

## Mountain Huts

The Waldspitzhütte is a recently renovated hut and restaurant in the middle of the First hiking area. It is a 2½-hour hike from Grindelwald or a one-hour walk from the First station. Breakfast is included in the rates. (\$). CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1861.



*The Glectsteinhütte*

The Glectsteinhütte is a large stone hut on the sunny terrace of the upper Grindelwald glacier. (\$). CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1140, fax 33-853-2569.

The Stieregg is a cozy mountain restaurant and hut that offers 10 dorm rooms and good views of the Alps. Prices (\$) include

breakfast; dinner is available upon request. An easy one-hour walk from the Pfingstegg. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-1766.

An easy 45-minute walk from the Jungfrauoch, the Mönchjochhütte is a good base for mountaineering and skiing excursions throughout the region of the Mönch, Eiger and Jungfrau. CH-3816 Lütschental. ☎ 33-971-3472, fax 33-853-6235.

The clean and functional Männndlenen-Weberhütte is a 3½-hour hike from First station, and a 2½-hour hike from the Schynige Platte. This hut offers a combination dinner and overnight stay with a night-time meal of raclettes and potatoes, and a hearty breakfast. (\$-\$\$). CH-3815 Zweilütschinen. ☎ 33-853-4464.



*The Grindelwald Tourist office can provide you with maps to and from the huts. If you want to see some outstanding scenery, and don't mind sparse accommodations, then staying in a mountain hut is definitely worth a try.*

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Francais, in the Hotel Belvedere, offers live piano music nightly and is considered one of the finest dining spots in Grindelwald. Lamb, fish and fowl dishes are the specialties, and there is also a spectacular buffet and a lengthy international wine list. (\$-\$\$\$). Open daily from noon to 2 pm, 6:45 to 9 pm. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-5757.

Sportzentrum Restaurant features an outdoor-like dining area, complete with natural trees set into the floor and located in the sports center at the heart of this resort village. From the restaurant, you'll have a good view of the ice hockey rink and the indoor swimming pool. Light dishes and snacks are served, as well as traditional Swiss fare, such as cheese fondue and wiener schnitzel. (\$-\$\$). Open daily from 7:30 am to 11:30 pm. CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-3277.

Memory is a family-style eatery in the Eiger Hotel, well known for its potato and cheese dishes. There are seven different types of rösti served here, as well as a delicious potato and meat garlic soup. (\$\$). CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-854-3131.

Oinkel Tom's Hütte is set across from the Firstbahn in a country A-frame cabin. The owner creates his own fresh pizzas with a large iron baking oven for all in the restaurant to see. The large salads and homemade desserts are outstanding, and this unique pizzeria also features a surprisingly large international wine list. (\$-\$\$). CH-3818 Grindelwald. ☎ 33-853-5239.

## Meiringen



*Meiringen*

**T**he small village of Meiringen was the backdrop for Sherlock Holmes' final excursion at the Reichenbach Falls in the story *The Final Problem*. A great hiking base, it sits at the junction of three Swiss passes – the Grimsel, Susten and Brunig – in the Häsli Valley. The village is eight miles east of Brienz on Highway 8, alongside the Aare River. It is renowned for its me-ringue dessert, which was supposedly invented in this village.



*The Reichenbach Falls (Jacktheripper83)*

You'll find over 185 miles (298 km) of marked hiking trails and walking paths here and 37 miles (60 km) of downhill ski slopes.

The Meiringen Tourist Office is in the center of town, across from the train station and is open Monday-Friday, from September-June, 8 am-noon, 2-6 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. In July and August the office is open Monday-Friday from 8 am-6 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon, 4-6 pm. ☎ 33-972-5050, fax 33-972-5055, [www.meiringenhasliberg.ch](http://www.meiringenhasliberg.ch).

## Adventures

The Reichenbach Falls are one of the main reasons to visit Meiringen, especially if you're not into meringue. These falls are the point at which the rivers of the Rosenlauer Valley join, and they can be reached by a funicular that leaves every 10 minutes daily from mid-May to mid-September, 8:15-11:45 am and from 1-6 pm. The funicular takes you up 2,779 feet (1,168 m) above the falls and provides outstanding views along railed terraces. The cost is 7Sfr for adults and 3.5Sfr for children. For more information, ☎ 33-971-4048.



*In Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Final Problem, detective Sherlock Holmes and his arch-enemy Professor Moriarty both plunged into the swirling waters of the Reichenbach Falls.*

The Aare Gorge is another natural wonder close to Meiringen. The Aare River has made this gorge into a work of art by sculpting it with its harsh waters over the centuries. To get there, take the Grimsel-Susten road and follow the signs. The gorge is open daily May to October, 10 am-5 pm, and in July and August from 8 am-6 pm. Cost is 6Sfr for adults and 3.5Sfr for children.

A popular hike is the 15 miles (24 km) from Meiringen to Grindelwald, which can take six to 10 hours, depending on how fast



*The Furka Pass (Rolf Nagel)*

you walk. The Tourist Office can provide you with maps, and advise you on weather conditions in the winter months.

## The Three Passes (Grimsel, Furka & Susten)



*The Grimsel Pass (BerndGehrmann)*

To visit these three major passes of the Bernese Oberland, you can use Meiringen as a base village. The Grimsel Pass, at 7,103 feet (2,984 m) is south of Meiringen on Highway 6, just before you get to the village of Gletsch. From this pass you can view the

Galenstock mountain summit, the lovely Grimselsee (Lake Grimsel) and the Rhone Glacier. When you reach Gletsch, if you then go east on Road 19, via foot or auto, you will pass over the Furka Pass at 7,975 feet (3,350 m), toward the village of Andermatt. You can stop at the Hôtel Furkablick (☎ 41-887-0499) to get views of the mighty Galenstock up-close, or enjoy an overnight stay or hearty meal in the restaurant. The Furka Pass is the highest point on the shelf of Alpine ridges that separate the cantons of Bern, Valais and Graubünden.

## On Foot

### *Walks from the Furka*



There are several walks from the Furka Pass, but the best we've found is the trek to Brig. You begin near the Postbus stop at the top of the Furka Pass for a leisurely, downhill jaunt that takes just over three hours (7.4 miles/12 km) and gives you spectacular views of the Rhone Glacier as you travel to your first stop at Oberwald (1,376 meters). For information at Oberwald, ☎ 27-927-7666.

From Oberwald you walk another 14 miles/24 km but it's level the whole way and should take only six hours at the most to reach your next stop of Ernen at 3,840 feet/1,200 m. This is a delightful walk suitable for anyone and will bring you through small villages, over covered bridges and near lakes, ponds and rivers. There are some nice eateries in the villages along the way, but it's still best to stock your backpack for this excursion.

From Ernen to Brig – at 2,169 feet/678 meters – it is another 13 miles/21 km, which can be done in six hours at an easy pace. In Ernen be sure to note the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Pfarr Church, which sits atop a ridge near the village. You'll need to stock up in Ernen for this final leg of your journey, which offers a bit more adventure than the previous legs in terms of the trail. You meander over some dips and turns, but basically this is another walk suitable for almost anybody, except those in poor health. For information, contact Brig-Belalp Tourism at ☎ 27-921-6030 or [www.brig.ch](http://www.brig.ch).

For those seeking a real challenge, consider the path from Oberwald to Brig via Münster and Bellwald. This trip, 30 miles/48 km, is best done from May through October. The trail begins on the north side of the Oberwald train station, where you can also grab a trail map. The first portion via Höhenweg, which ends in Münster at 4,442 feet/1,388 m, will take about 3½ hours and climbs and dips in several spots. From Münster you climb up a bit as the trail ascends, then levels off midway and dips sharply at one point before climbing again. This leg of the trip should take nearly five hours and is probably the toughest part of your journey. It's only 9.3 miles/15 km and travels through some picturesque and awesome valleys, forests and lovely fields. You reach Bellwald at 4,989 feet/1,559 meters, where you can also opt to take the Seilbahn to Brig if you want. For information on Münster, ☎ 27-921-7650.

The trail continues from Bellwald at the Fiesch-Eggishorn Train station and heads steeply downhill for the first 2.4 miles/four km. From here it's another 10.5 miles/17 km to Brig at 2,169 feet/678 meters. However, along the way you'll pass numerous 16<sup>th</sup>-century churches that are worth a look. Figure on six hours at most for this leg, which ends at the Brig train station.

The Susten Pass is due east of Meiringen on Road 11 and reaches its highest point of 7,411 feet (3,114 m) above the quarter-mile tunnel on the pass (which is at 7,296 feet/3,065 m). It is easy to walk to the top of the pass, as there is a car park at the west end of the tunnel, or you can drive through it, but you'll miss the spectacular views from the top. There are massive glacier deposits to be seen here and grand views of the Bernese Alps.

## Museums

If you're a big Sherlock Holmes fan, you can visit the Sherlock Holmes Museum in Meiringen, located in the center of the vil-

lage. You'll find a replica of Holmes' living room at 221B Baker Street. Admission is 3.8Sfr. Open May-September, Tuesday through Sunday from 1:30-6 pm; October through April, Wednesday-Sunday from 4:30-6:30 pm. Bahnhofstrasse 26, CH-3658 Meiringen. ☎ 33-971-4221.

## Where to Stay & Eat



Wellness und Spa-Hotel Beatus is an outdoor adventure spa that features a variety of treatments and amenities, including an indoor pool, sauna, sa-

lon, massage, solarium, rowboats, pedal boats, water skiing, golf and hiking excursions. The hotel is just 15 minutes from Interlaken and Thun. (\$\$\$\$). CH-3658 Meiringen.

☎ 33-252-8181, fax 33-251-3676, [www.beatus.ch](http://www.beatus.ch).



*Wellness und Spa-Hotel Beatus*

Hotel Victoria Meiringen is relatively new (built in 1999), only two minutes from the village center, train station and bus station. Rooms are modern, tidy and cheery. You'll also find a solarium, children's playground, underground parking, in-house doctor, florist and baby-sitting service. Small pets are permitted. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Bahnhofplatz 9, CH-3860 Meiringen. ☎ 33-966-3400.

Sporthotel Sherlock Holmes is a three-star hotel with a warm atmosphere and a gracious staff. It caters to backpackers, hikers, skiers and families. Nearly all of the 55 rooms in this unpretentious hotel overlook the Reichenbach Falls. There is an indoor pool on the top floor.

There is an in-house restaurant, a health club, sauna, billiards, table tennis and a bar. The rooms are clean and bright. Packages are available that include ski lift tickets, a four-course dinner and access to the swimming pool and sauna, starting at 138Sfr. (\$\$). Rates include breakfast. Alpbachallee 3, CH-3860 Meiringen. ☎ 33-972-9889, fax 33-972-9888.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.



# Lake Geneva & Western Switzerland

**T**his area is made up of cantons Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Vaud and Geneva, and is in the far-southwestern corner of Switzerland. It includes

the lakes of Geneva and Neuchâtel and is home to some of the most impressive vineyards anywhere in Europe. If you've flown into Geneva, then you'll find that this international city is a great base from which to begin your travels.

Lake Geneva, shaped like a cucumber, is easily distinguished by its high-shooting Jet d'Eau fountain and the stately hotels along its lakeshore. The French call Switzerland's largest body of water Lac Léman, and you can catch any number of ships sailing over to France and the many little lakeside villages that dot the shoreline there.

From Geneva, you can drive along Lake Geneva north on Highway 1 to the lakeside town of Lausanne and then continue north on the same highway until you reach Yverdon-les-Bains, before exploring the rest of the French-speaking canton of Neuchâtel. Otherwise, you can travel north and then east along the perimeter of Lake Geneva, stopping in Vevey for a day or

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two. If you're coming from Bern, it's an easy trip south on Highway 12 to the city of Fribourg, before journeying farther south to Vevey.

## Canton Geneva (GE)

### At a Glance

There are 441,877 people in the canton of Geneva (also known as Genève or Genf), making it the sixth-largest canton in terms of population. However, only five other cantons are smaller than Geneva in terms of actual land mass – as this canton encompasses just 109 square miles (283 square km). Most of the locals speak French, and the majority are Protestant. Also, nearly 40% are foreigners – the largest number in any one canton within Switzerland – making Geneva and its capital city a land of international sophistication.

Located in the Rhône Valley between the Jura mountains and the Alps, Geneva lies at the southwestern edge of Lake Geneva or Lac Léman – as it is commonly referred to in French.



*The countryside around Geneva (Régis Colombo [www.diapo.ch](http://www.diapo.ch))*

# Lake Geneva & Western Switzerland



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1. Montreux Jazz Festival; Château de Chillon
2. Food Museum; Historical Museum of Vevey; Musée Suisse du Jeu (Museum of Games)
3. International Museum of Wine Labels; Museum of Viticulture & Wine
4. Artisan & Folklore Museum of the Old Highlands; Le Châlet
5. Castle of Morges and Vaud Military Museum
6. Musée Suisse du Cheval
7. stalagmite and stalactite caves; underground military fort; Iron & Railway Museum
8. Centre International de Mécanique d'Art
9. Centre Thermal; Pestalozzi Château; Science Fiction Museum; Modemuseum (Museum of Clothing)
10. Abbey Church
11. Aventicum (Roman city remains) and Roman Museum; Institut Equestre National Avenches
12. Hotel DuPeyrou; Collegial Church; Les Halles Square; Château; Tour des Prisons;
13. Military and Painted Fabric Museum
14. Château & Museum at Valangin
15. Agricultural Museum
16. Museum of Firemen; Farming Professions Park
17. Tour de Pierre (Stone Tower); Areuse Museum; Musée de la Vigne et du Vin
18. Musée International d'Horlogerie
19. St. Nicholas's Cathedral; Eglise des Cordeliers; Town Hall; Fribourg Museum of Art & History; Fri-Art Fribourg; Gutenberg Museum; Fribourg Brewery & Beer Museum; Museum of Natural History; Swiss Museum of Sewing Machines; Fribourg Museum of Puppets
20. La Maison de Gruyères cheese factory

The focus of this canton centers around the capital city of the same name, which is one of the largest European centers of tourism. The canton itself joined the Swiss federation in 1815 and at the time was one of the major banking centers in Europe, a title it still holds today.

Geneva has a long and storied history – beginning with Julius Caesar's visit in 58 BC and leading up to the forming of the League of Nations in 1919. The canton also was home to Jean Henri Dunant, famed for founding the International Red Cross in 1864. Over the years it has been a haven for writers and artists, including such notables as Mary Shelley, Richard Wagner, Franz Liszt, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas and Lord Byron.

This is also one of Switzerland's major (third-largest) wine-growing regions – home to 3,700 acres (1,500 hectares) of vineyards. In the small village of Satigny, you'll find the largest wine-growing community in Switzerland. The countryside surrounding Geneva is full of rich, fertile soil that is near-perfect for grape growing. It also is home to forests, small streams and rivers – making it ideal for bicycle outings, horseback riding, or romantic walks.

## Geneva

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**T**his is Switzerland's second-largest city (behind Zürich), with 178,900 residents, and is heavily influenced by its French neighbors to the west and south. Here you'll find the quintessence or haute école of everything Switzerland stands for in the new century: beauty, wealth, education, international relations and culture, not to mention romantic scenery at its finest. Geneva is easily reached by train or car, and is the home to Switzerland's second major airport. Nearly 400,000 people live in or around the Geneva city area.

The city has been known as a traditional meeting spot for over 2,000 years, and its international role is heightened by the fact that its foreign population comes from 157 different nations worldwide. During the 16th and 17th centuries, Protestants who were being persecuted in their own countries fled to Geneva in droves as it was known to be a safe haven for refugees. Today Geneva – often referred to as the City of Peace – is home to over 200 international governmental and non-

# Geneva



1. English Garden; Flower Clock
2. Main Tourist Office
3. Gare de Cornavin (train station)
4. Voltaire Institute & Museum
5. Jet d'Eau
6. Museum of Art & History
7. Museum of Contemporary Art
8. Palais des Nations; International Red Cross & Red Crescent Museum; Geneva Military Museum; Ariana Museum; Botanical Garden; Musée d'Histoire des Sciences; Museum of Swiss Citizens in the World



*Jet d'Eau & Old Town (Ricardo de la Riva)*

governmental offices and headquarters, including the Office of the United Nations.

Geneva is also renowned as a research, scientific and university center of Europe. The first academy was founded here in 1559 by Calvin, and today it is home to the European Center of Nuclear Research (CERN), among other institutions. In addition, Geneva has over 30 museums and private galleries, all containing prestigious private and public displays of art work, historical documents and cultural highlights. Geneva offers a diverse variety of cultural and sporting

events such as classical music concerts, open-air movies on the lakeshore, as well as various trade fairs. Annually Geneva hosts the Inventions and New Techniques Fair, a rousing Automobile Show, an International Book and Press Fair and the High Watchmaking Fair.

The city is divided by Lake Geneva and the Rhône River into two areas: the Right Bank and the Left Bank. The Left Bank (Rive Gauche) is home to the Vieille Ville, or Old Town, and features cobblestone streets, wrought-iron balconies, a host of sidewalk cafés and eateries, and a hearty helping of shops and local stores. A visitor can get lost just wandering through the



*The Flower Clock*

streets, which are reminiscent of Paris at times, due to the overwhelming French influence here.

The main avenue or Grand' Rue features homes dating from the 15th to 18th centuries and meanders up-

hill until it reaches the famed Place du Bourg-de-Four – one of Geneva's most popular squares. Lakeside – along the quai Gustave-Ador – you'll find the English Garden (Jardin Anglais), the Flower Clock, and the public parks Parc LaGrange and Parc des Eaux-Vives.

The Rues Basses or "lower streets" of the Left Bank are the major shopping streets of Geneva. Here you'll find designer wares as well as local artisans.

The Right Bank (Rive Droite), on the north side of Lake Geneva, has been the home of watchmakers and jewelers since the

18th century. It has many public parks (Parc de L'Ariana, Jardin Botanique, Parc La Perle du Lac, Park Mon-Repos) and tree-lined walking paths along the Rhône River. The quai Woodrow Wilson runs along the lakeside and then becomes quai du Mont-Blanc – an area of many prestigious hotels and international meeting sites. Eventually this lakeside avenue veers left around Lake Geneva, at pont du Mont-Blanc, before veering left again with the beginning of the Left Bank at the Jardin Anglais.



*Place du Bourg-de-Four*



### *Les Fêtes de Genève*

You'll find that many hotels in Geneva cater to the rich and famous. This city by the lake does not have many of the more personal, family-run establishments found elsewhere in Switzerland.

Every August the city comes alive with Les Fêtes de Genève – a 10-day festival that features fireworks set to music over the lake. In December, the Escalade is celebrated, a festival com-

memorating a battle that took place on December 11th in 1602 between the Savoyards and the Genevois. For this, locals don costumes for a parade that makes its way slowly through Geneva's Old Town.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



There is a small branch office in the train station, but Geneva's main tourist office (Office du Tourisme de Genève) is at 3 Rue du Mont-Blanc, CH-1201. ☎ 22-909-7000, fax 22-909-7011. The office is open mid-June to mid-September, Monday-Friday from 9 am-6 pm, and on Saturday and Sunday from 8 am-5 pm. From mid-September to mid-June the office is open Monday-Saturday from 9 am-6 pm. The office will provide you with free walking maps of the city and also offers an English audio-guided tour that you can rent for 10Sfr. This two-hour tour comes with a cassette player, map, and earphones, covering most of Geneva's highlights.

### Train Station

The Geneva train station (Gare Cornavin) offers a money exchange (open 6:45 am-9:30 pm daily), and bike rental office. From here you can catch the super-fast TGV to Paris for just 80Sfr one-way, second class. The TGV departs five times daily and is a great way to see Paris for a few days if you have limited time. You can also catch trains going to any major city within Europe from this station, and it also has a direct link from the Geneva-Cointrin Airport (☎ 22-717-7111), with trains leaving every 10 to 20 minutes to the city center from 5:30 to midnight daily. The seven-minute trip costs just 5Sfr in second-class. If you opt for a taxi from the airport be prepared to shell out at least 30Sfr. A bus ride will cost only 2.5Sfr.

### Post Office

Geneva's main Post Office is at Rue des Gares, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-739-2111. Open Monday-Friday from 8 am-10:45 pm, Saturday from 8 am-10 pm, Sunday from noon-8 pm. Fax, telephone and telegraph services are offered here. The other main Post Office is at 18 Rue du Mont-Blanc, with similar hours.



## Codes

The area code for Geneva is 22, and the postal codes are CH-1201-1211.

## Internet Access

You can access the Internet at the Funet Discount Internet Café, close to the train station. Open Monday-Friday, from 9 am-9:30 pm, weekends from noon-9:30 am. 44 Rue de Lausanne, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-738-5000. Or at Club Video Rom, 19 Rue des Alpes, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-731-4748. It is open from 11 am to midnight daily for 5Sfr per hour. The Placette Department Store also has Internet access on its fourth floor for 10Sfr per hour.

## Media

English-language news services: WRG (88.4 FM) features news in English, and Radio 74 (88.8 FM) offers BBC news.

*The International Herald Tribune* is available in most major hotels, as is *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *SA Today*, as well as French, Italian and British papers. Nearly all hotels offer English-language channels, including CNN, and major stations such as ABC/NBC/CBS.

The American Library on 3 Rue du Monthoux features English-language books and provides a free guide to Geneva in English. Open daily except Monday. ☎ 22-732-8097. The ELM Bookstore has a large assortment of English-language books at 3 Rue Versonnex, Eaux-Vives, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-736-0945.

## Medical Services

Medical services abound in Geneva, and many doctors speak English. For emergencies, ☎ 111 or 144 for an ambulance, or contact the Cantonal Hospital, 24 Rue Micheli du Crest at ☎ 22-372-3311. The Medico Chirurgicale, 21 Rue de Chantepoulet is a private clinic that is open 24/7. ☎ 22-731-2120. Dental services are available at Servette Clinic, 60 Avenue Wendt. Open 8 am-7 pm, Monday-Friday. ☎ 22-733-9800.

For other emergencies, the national number is 117 for police, and 118 for the fire department.

## Getting Here & Getting Around



This is most easily done on foot. The town is a virtual plethora of winding streets and roads, which can be confusing if you're driving. Geneva is easily reached by traveling south on Highway 1 from Lausanne, and you can get there on any train from virtually any spot in Europe, as it is a popular crossroad destination.

You can also arrive in Geneva or leave via ship. Daily steamers arrive from and leave for other ports, such as Lausanne, Montreaux or Vevey, as well as French ports on the southern side of Lake Geneva. For ship and boat excursions, ☎ 22-312-5223. It must be noted here that Geneva is less than ideal for biking – there is a lot of traffic and many of the streets are steep and unpaved.

## Sightseeing



A highlight is the Palais des Nations, the second-largest complex in Europe after Versailles. In 1936, the League of Nations switched its meeting site from the Palais Wilson to the Palais des Nations until they disbanded in 1946. After the United Nations was formed that same year in San Francisco, the Palais des Nations was deemed the headquarters for the European branch of the United Nations.



*Palais des Nations (Yann)*

Tour times vary so be sure to call ahead. Open July-August daily, 9 am-6 pm, September-June daily, 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm. Admission is 8.5Sfr for adults, 6.5Sfr for students, 4Sfr for children five and under. Parc de l'Ariana 14, Avenue de la Paix. CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-907-4896.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Flower Clock (L'Horloge Fleurie) was created in 1955 to pay tribute to the Swiss watchmaking industry. This accurate clock is made up of 6,500 flowers and plants. It is at quai du General Guisan and pont du Mont-Blanc and is especially beautiful in the summer.

The Jet d'Eau is Europe's tallest fountain, shooting some 460 feet (140 m) into the air. This attraction is hard to miss, as it is in the middle of Lake Geneva, and operates from April to September. Built in 1891, it underwent renovation in 1951 and is called "jeddo" by the Genevese.

## Museums

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum features audio-visuals that depict humanitarian kindness. Artifacts, records and papers from prisoners of war are also displayed, as are disaster relief kits.

The museum has guided tours and brochures in English. Open Wednesday-Monday from 10 am-5 pm. Admission is 10Sfr. 17 Avenue de la Paix, International Area, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-748-9525, fax 22-748-9528. [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org).

The Geneva Military Museum presents weapons, uniforms and papers on the Swiss military. Admission is free. Open February-March on Saturday, Sunday from 2-5 pm; April-December, Wednesday-Friday, 2-5 pm, Saturday from 2-6 pm, Sunday from 10 am-noon, 2-6 pm. Closed from late December to late January. 18 Chemin de l'Impératrice, International Area, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-734-4875.

Voltaire Institute & Museum is in the same spot where the great writer Voltaire lived from 1755 to 1760, and at various times after those years. Included are manuscripts, letters, documents, and furniture. Admission is free. Open Monday-Friday from 2-5 pm. 25 Rue des Délices, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-344-7133.

Museum of Art & History displays artistic works, armor, pottery, furniture, glass works and paintings from throughout history. Admission is free. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-5 pm. 2 Rue Charles-Galland, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-418-2600.

Museum of Contemporary Art first opened in 1994 and shows artwork from 1960 to the present, with over 1,000 pieces on display. Admission is 8Sfr for adults, 6Sfr for kids 13-18, kids under 12 free. Open Tuesday from noon-9 pm, Wednesday-Sunday from noon-6 pm. 10 Rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-320-6122.

The Swiss National Museum is between Geneva and Lausanne and features a romantic park depicting life in 18th- and 19th-century Switzerland. Known as the Château du Prangins, it also has a beautiful terrace, fine artwork and a very nice restaurant. Open daily from 11 am-5 pm all year long. Closed Dec 25, Jan 1 and 2 only. Château du Prangins, CH-1197 Prangins. ☎ 22-994-8890, fax 22-944-8898. Restaurant ☎ 22-361-3969.

## Parks & Gardens



*Jardin Botanique (Frank Auberson)*

The Jardin Botanique (Botanical Garden) was built in 1902 and includes a small zoo, greenhouses, an Alpine garden and various exhibits on 69 acres of beauty. Admission is free. Open daily May-September, 8 am-7:30 pm; October-April, 9:30 am-5 pm.

Parc LaGrange is the site of the first Geneva Convention on August 11, 1864 and actually dates back to Roman times. The park now hosts two theaters and offers many concerts and performances year-round, especially in the summer months. Located at Gustave-Ador, Eaux-Vives.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are countless walking and jogging paths along the quais and in many of Geneva's parks. The Parc Mon-Repos and Parc Bertrand have some of the best jogging paths.

### On Water

Look for *Le Neptune* on quai Gustave-Ador, a barge built in 1904 and restored in 1970 that today is used for daily sailing excursions on Lake Geneva. ☎ 22-736-4804. For regular lake cruises that feature half- and full-day boat trips along the lake with several ports of call, there are several companies from which to choose. The Mouettes Genevoises Navigation specializes in small



*Mouettes* (Ricardo de la Riva)

boats of 100 people or less that traverse the lake and the Rhône River, with guides in English and French. You'll find them at 8 quai du Mont-Blanc. The Compagnie Generale de Navigation (CGN) offers tours of an hour up to a full day that include

lunch in dining rooms with white linen tablecloths. They are at quai Mont-Blanc, ☎ 22-312-5223.

Geneva Beach, at Port Noir, is a great spot for swimming, and admission is 7Sfr daily from 9 am-7 pm. ☎ 22-736-2482.

## On Snow

A trip to Geneva would not be complete without going up Mont Blanc – Europe's highest mountain and the topper of the French Alps. Key Tours S.A. can arrange for an all-day trip, with prices starting at 88Sfr per person (48Sfr for children).

You'll travel to Chamonix by bus and then board a cable-car for ascent to the summit at 12,610 feet (3,844 m). The bus usually leaves by 8:30 am and returns around 6 pm, with lunch included, and an English-speaking guide. You'll find Key Tours at 7 Rue des Alpes, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-731-4140. If you're looking for skiing excursions, most people travel across the border to France.

## Other Sports

The Silhouette Health & Fitness Club is close to all of the major hotels on the Right Bank and offers a fitness room with weights and exercise machines, plus all types of exercise classes. Rates start at 20Sfr per hour. Open Monday-Friday, 9 am-9 pm, weekends from 10 am to 5 pm. 4 Rue Thalberg, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-732-7740.

The Golf Club de Genève has an 18-hole course (open March-December, Tuesday-Sunday, 8:30 am-12:30 pm, 2-6 pm). You must call ahead, however, as they typically offer playing rights to those who are members of a golf club in their own country. Fees start at 150Sfr for the 18 holes. ☎ 22-707-4800. For tennis, check out Le New Sporting Club, which offers both indoor and outdoor courts. ☎ 22-774-1514. The Patinoire de Noël at Place du Rhône on the Left Bank is a free outdoor ice skating rink from December-March. The Patinoire des Vernets at 4-6 Rue Hans-Wilsdorf is an indoor ice rink that provides equipment rental, lessons and rink time, Tuesday-Saturday from October-March. ☎ 22-418-4022.

## Shopping

Geneva is a shopping paradise, featuring everything from the finest boutiques to small markets that sell items from local artisans. Most shops are open Monday-Friday from 8 am-6:30 pm, and Saturday from 8 am-5 pm. Often, on Thursday night, the stores will stay open until 8 or 9 pm. You'll find some of the most

unusual shops in the old part of Geneva – harness makers, antique dealers, and many of the local craftspeople. Very few shops in Geneva offer inexpensive items, however, especially on the Rue du Rhône and the Grand Rue. There is no finer city than Geneva for buying watches. Here you'll find the prestigious Bucherer, at 45 Rue du Rhône, ☎ 22-319-6266; Patek Philippe, 41 Rue du Rhône, ☎ 22-781-3448; and Piaget, 40 Rue du Rhône, ☎ 22-817-0200 – all in the Centre Ville (center of town). Fine jewelry shops such as Cartier, Bulgari, and Chopard are also in this area.

## Where to Stay



Hôtel Beau Rivage was built in 1865 and retains the upscale Victorian ambiance that has made it a favorite among royalty for decades. This fancy overnighter has played host to many celebrities over the years, including

Richard Wagner and Sarah Bernhardt. All modern amenities can be found here, amidst the classic, plush surroundings. The rooms are spacious and feature beautiful marble bathrooms. (\$\$\$\$+). 13 quai du Mont-Blanc, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-716-6666, fax 22-716-6060, [www.beau-rivage.ch](http://www.beau-rivage.ch).



*Hotel Beau Rivage*

Four Seasons des Bergues is an elegant, sprawling four-story hotel adorned with chandeliers and marble baths. Expensive, plush and elegant, with two of the best dining rooms in Geneva: Le Pavillon and L'Amphi-



*Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues*

tryon. (\$\$\$\$+). 33 quai des Bergues, CH-2111 Geneva. ☎ 22-908-7000, fax 22-908-7090, [www.hotelbergues.com](http://www.hotelbergues.com).

Grand Hotel Kempinski Geneva, one of my favorites, is the largest hotel in Switzerland, sitting on the edge of the lake. From here you can walk to almost everywhere in the city. All first-class rooms are very large, with marble baths, and most offer Internet hookups. (\$\$\$\$). 19 quai du Mont-Blanc, CH-1201 Geneva.

☎ 22-909-9081, fax 22-908-

9090, [reservations.grandhotelgeneva@kempinski.com](mailto:reservations.grandhotelgeneva@kempinski.com).

Strasbourg-Geneva was built in 1900 and sits near the main train station. This is one of the few hotels in Geneva that is run by a local family. Clean. Room sizes vary. Breakfast is included in the rates. (\$\$\$). 10 Rue JJ-Pradier, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-906-5800, fax 22-728-4208. In the USA, ☎ 1-800-528-1234.

Hotel Ibis is great for backpackers and train travelers, as it accommodates people 24/7. Only a five-minute walk from the train station. (\$\$). 10 Rue Voltaire, St. Gervais, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-338-2020, fax 22-338-2030.

The Geneva Youth Hostel is one of the largest in Switzerland, offering 334 sleeping spots for weary travelers. (\$-\$\$). You'll find it at 30 Rue Rothschild, CH-1202 Geneva. ☎ 22-732-6260, fax 22-738-3987, [www.youthhostel.ch/geneve](http://www.youthhostel.ch/geneve).

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Robert caters to an upscale crowd, but the ambiance and staff are very friendly and somewhat casual in this fashionable eatery. Pasta and fish are the specialties, and the wine list features unusual choices. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). 10 Rue Pierre-Fatio, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-311-8033.

Le Perle du Lac is, just as its name suggests, a pearl from the lake. Serving up fresh-caught trout, sea bass and other lake



*Grand Hotel Kempinski Geneva*



fish, this restaurant also has good seasonal and international dishes, and a lengthy wine list with mostly French wines. The flowered terrace overlooks Lake Geneva, with splendid



*La Perle du Lac*

views of Mont Blanc. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open Tuesday-Sunday, noon-2 pm, 7:30-10 pm. Closed Mondays and during January. 128 Rue de Lausanne, International Area, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-909-1020.



*Le Neptune*

Le Neptune serves some of Geneva's finest seafood in a grandiose setting of floral arrangements, beautiful frescos and paintings. The menu changes weekly in accordance with the local catch and the dishes are lovely in both appearance and taste. This place also offers delightful pasta and a very nice rack of Scottish lamb. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open

Monday-Friday from noon-2 pm, 7:30-10 pm. Reservations required. Located in the Hôtel Mandarin Oriental du Rhône, 1 quai Turretini, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-909-0006.

La Mère Royaume serves French dishes in one of the oldest restaurants of Geneva. It is named after a woman who poured a pot of hot stew on a soldier and then smashed him in the head with the steel bowl in 1602. Despite the name, the restaurant has pristinely prepared dishes such as lamb, venison, shrimp and fresh-caught fish. You'll also find such Swiss favorites as

raclette and fondue. Reservations required. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Open Monday-Friday from noon-2 pm, 7-10:30 pm; Saturday from 7-10:30 pm. 9 Rue de Corps-Saints, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-732-7080.

Chez Jacky is a trendy spot hailed for its innovative dishes. It attracts a wide array of customers and has reasonable rates. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open Monday-Friday from 11 am-2 pm, 6:30-11 pm. Closed early January and for three weeks in August. 9-11 Rue Necker, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-732-8680.

Café du Centre is a mainstay in Geneva, having been established here in 1871. Lively and energetic, it offers a variety of dishes that include fresh fish, meat, and seasonal fare. This is also a great place for families with kids, and features a fixed-price lunch menu for 19.5Sfr. Open daily from 7 am-midnight. (\$-\$\$). Reservations recommended. 5 place du Molard, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-311-8586.

Pizzeria da Paolo is the best pizzeria in Geneva with the best prices. The setting is very homey and cozy; they serve 20 different kinds of pizza, as well as pastas, salads and soups. Reservations are recommended. Open daily from 11:45 am-2 pm, 6:45-11 pm. (\$-\$\$). 3 rue du Lac, CH-1201 Geneva. ☎ 22-736-3049.

Café-Restaurant Papon has been in operation since the 17th century and is one of Geneva's best kept secrets. This tearoom and restaurant is a great place to grab a bite of food, or relax after an afternoon of shopping. It is also a good spot for people watching. (\$) 1 Rue Henri-Faxy, CH-1211 Geneva. ☎ 22-311-5428.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Canton Vaud (VD)

### At A Glance

**E**stablished as part of the Swiss Federation in 1803, the Canton of Vaud is home to the vineyards of the Lavaux, the Castle of Chillon, and the sun-blazed slopes of Lake Geneva. As Switzerland's fourth-largest canton in terms of land, it encompasses 2,018 square miles (5,247 square km), with 653,856

residents who are mostly French-speaking Roman Catholics, making it the third-largest canton in terms of population (behind Zürich and Bern). Nearly 27% of the inhabitants are foreigners, and most have chosen to settle in the lakeside towns around Lake Geneva. The name Vaud is pronounced *Voh* in French and *Waddt* in German, although few visitors even recognize the name of this canton. Most foreigners and locals alike tend to think of this area as the “Lake Geneva region,” which is somewhat irritating to many Vaudois.

Vaud is at the far southwestern end of Switzerland, just north of Canton Geneva and just south of cantons Neuchâtel and Fribourg. At the far eastern tip, it briefly collides with Canton Bern, while at the south and southeast sides it borders Canton Valais. Directly south, Lake Geneva gently laps against the shores of Vaud. It is central Europe's largest lake, covering 225 square miles (585 square km).

## Central & Eastern Vaud

### Lausanne

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**A**s Switzerland's fifth-largest city, with 125,000 residents, Lausanne dates back to the Roman era. The rulers at the time used this outpost as a stop along the route from Italy to Gaul when they trudged through the St. Bernard Pass. Since that time, it has evolved into one of Switzerland's most eclectic cities, with one of its liveliest art communities. It has been the International Olympic Committee headquarters since 1915, and is also the home of Switzerland's highest court of appeals – the Tribunal Fédéral. Lausanne is also heralded for its outstanding universities and technological institutes. It is on Highway N1, just 40 miles (64 km) northeast of Geneva.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Offices



The Office du Tourisme du Canton de Vaud is at 60 Avenue d'Ouchy, CH-1006 Lausanne. ☎ 21-613-2626, fax 21-613-2610, [www.lake-geneva-region.ch](http://www.lake-geneva-region.ch).

The Lausanne Tourist Office is at 2 Avenue de Rhodaine, CH-1006 Lausanne. ☎ 21-613-7321, fax 21-616-8647. This office offers walking tours of Lausanne from April to September. Call ahead to see when their English guides are available. Consult [www.lausanne-tourisme.ch](http://www.lausanne-tourisme.ch).

The Office des Vins Vaudois offers free maps of vineyard walks in the region, including stops where you can sample the wines. They can also provide you with the *Guide du Vignoble Vaudois* that includes suggested alternative walks. Contact the office at 6 Chemin de la Vuachère, CH-1005, Lausanne. ☎ 21-729-6161.

For hiking and walking excursions, contact the Vaudois Association of Trekkers and Hill Climbers, at 23 Grand St.-Jean, CH-1003 Lausanne. ☎ 21-323-1084. They will help you plan itineraries and provide you with detailed maps.

## Train Station

The local train station is known as the Gare CFF de Lausanne and offers baggage service, storage, money exchange and bike rental. The train information office is open Monday-Friday from 8 am-7 pm daily, and Saturday from 8 am-5 pm on 1 Place de la Gare, CH-1000 Lausanne. ☎ 51-224-2162.

## Post Office

There are 25 post office branches in Lausanne, but for convenience, the post office nearest the train station is the best. Located at Avenue de la Gare 43, CH-1000 Lausanne. It is open 7:30 am-6:30, Monday-Friday, and on Saturday from 8 am-noon. ☎ 21-344-3513, fax 21-344-3005.

## Codes

The postal codes in Lausanne range from CH-1000 to 1026, and the phone area code is 21.

## Internet Access

Access the Internet at In Comm for 15Sfr per hour. 32 Rue du Petit-Chêne, CH-1000 Lausanne. ☎ 21-351-1191.



# Lausanne



1. Place de la Palud; Hôtel de Ville (Town Hall); Fountain of Justice
2. Place de la Cathédrale; Lausanne Cathedral
3. History Museum of Lausanne
4. The Olympic Museum
5. Château de Beaulieu et L'Art Brut
6. Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts; Archaeological and Historical Museum; Zoological Museum; Paleontology Museum; Geology Museum
7. Mon Repos Park
8. Tribunal Fédéral

## Getting Around



In Lausanne this is best done on foot, so be sure to bring comfortable walking or tennis shoes, because many of the streets in this cobblestone village are very steep and layered.

There are a good many narrow streets and alleys still to be found in the close-knit buildings of the Old Town. The city does have a local tram available, but it is frightfully slow and you can usually beat it to any destination by walking.

## Adventures

### On Water

Ship excursions abound throughout the Lake Geneva region, and many ships and ferries will bring you to the French side of the lake, where you can visit such neat little villages as Yvoire or Evian-les-Bains. Many ships have half-day or full-day itineraries, leaving at various times throughout the day. Many of the ships come equipped with full restaurants or snack bars on board. Contact the CGN (Compagnie Générale de Navigation) at Avenue de Rhodanie 17, CP116, CH-1000 Lausanne 6. ☎ 84-881-1848 or 21-614-6222 for information and reservations, fax 21-614-6502. [www.cgn.ch](http://www.cgn.ch).

For sailing trips, rentals and classes, contact the Ecole de Voile d'Ouchy at ☎ 21-635-5887 or the Ecole de Voile de Vidy at ☎ 21-617-9000.

You can rent boats or pedal boats at the various stands located along the shoreline. For the best, look to the suburb of Ouchy at the Ste. C. Barke, Place du Vieux-Port, CH-1003 Lausanne-Ouchy. ☎ 21-616-0844.

Swimming in Lausanne is best done at the Piscine de Montchoise (open May-August at 30 Avenue de Servan, ☎ 21-616-1062), which features a wave machine, or at Belle-rive Beach, which has a lakefront beach as well as three pools and a self-serve restaurant. It's located in Ouchy at 23 Avenue de Rhodanie. ☎ 21-617-8131.

In the city center, Mon-Repos offers a covered swimming pool that is open from late August through the end of June. 4 Avenue du Tribunal-Fédéral. ☎ 21-323-4566.

*Following page: Lake Geneva, near Lausanne*



Ice skating is available from October to March in a pair of Lausanne open-air ice rinks. Patinoire de la Pontaise (11 Route Plaines-du-Loup, ☎ 21-646-8163) and Patinoire de Montchoisi (30 Avenue du Servan, ☎ 21-616-1062). Both offer skates for rent.

## Sightseeing



For a fun train ride, consider taking the Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher railway. Here you'll find over 100 marked hiking trails and paths for a train and bike adventure. When you stop in Echallens, check out the Wheat & Bread Museum and Folklore markets (during the summer months). The steam train includes a bar and restaurant. This trip begins in Lausanne and travels north or vice versa, and stops periodically to allow for bikers and hikers to embark/disembark. Runs year-round. CH-1040 Echallens. ☎ 21-886-2000, fax 21-886-2019.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Olympic Museum is home to the International Olympic Committee, and was opened in 1993 to honor the history of the games. It features a coin and stamp collection, an Olympic Study Center, video and book libraries and commemorative artifacts. A must-see for any sports enthusiast. Open May-September from 9 am-6 pm (Thursdays until 8 pm); October-April, Tuesday-Sunday from 9 am-6 pm. Admission is 14Sfr for adults, 7Sfr for kids 10-18, free for kids nine and younger. 1 Quai d'Ouchy, CH-1006 Ouchy-Lausanne. ☎ 21-621-6511.

Château de Beaulieu et de L'Art Brut is housed in a château that dates from 1756. It's now home to a museum of modern art that displays artwork done by the mentally ill, the criminally insane and prisoners – all collected by artist Jean Dubuffet. This kind of art was christened "Art Brut" by Dubuffet and is bizarre and extreme, to say the least, but most interesting. Admission is 6Sfr for adults and 4Sfr for seniors, kids and students. Open Tuesday-Friday from 11 am-noon, 2-6 pm; Saturday and Sunday from 11 am-6 pm. 11 Avenue des Bergières. CH-1003 Lausanne. ☎ 21-647-5435.



## Parks & Gardens

Mon Repos Park on the eastern side of Lausanne features expertly manicured gardens, the Empire Villa and the Tribunal Fédéral – Switzerland's highest court.

Located just a short trip northeast of the center of Lausanne is the Servion Zoo, on the edge of the Jonate forest. This zoo features the great cats and great apes, along with exceptional Nordic and local fauna, with a self-service restaurant and children's playground. Open daily, 9 am-6 pm during the warmer months and 9 am-5 pm in the winter. From main highway 9 exit Lausanne/Venes and go toward Berne/Moudon for six miles/10 km. CH-1077, Servion. ☎ 21-903-1671, fax 21-903-1672.

## Shopping

If you're a kid at heart, or if you're traveling with children, then you won't want to miss Franz Carl Weber, the ultimate Swiss toy store, at 23 rue de Bourg in the city center (☎ 21-320-1471). Globus is the local department store, at rue Centrale in the city center (☎ 21-342-9090), or you can scope out designer wares at Bon Génie, 10 Place St.-Francois in the city center (☎ 21-320-4811). For Vaudois items, there is no finer store than Heidi's Shop, at 22 Rue du Petit-Chêne. Located just minutes from the train station and just south of the Place St.-Francois. CH-1003 Lausanne. ☎ 21-311-1689, fax 21-311-1883.

## Where to Stay



Beau-Rivage Palace is one of the finest hotels in Switzerland, and is set inside a 10-acre garden, filled with trees, hedges and sculpture. The original building was constructed in 1861 and additional rooms were added in 1908. It was in this hotel that the Treaty of Lausanne was ratified in 1923 to settle disputes between World War I allies. The rooms are tastefully decorated with Oriental carpets and each has a private balcony overlooking the lake. All contain the finest of amenities, with outstanding room service. (\$\$\$\$). Three restaurants, fitness center, two pools, tennis courts and a pair of bars round out this beautiful hotel. 17-19 Place du Port, CH-

1006 Lausanne. ☎ 21-613-3333, fax 21-613-3334, [www.brp.ch](http://www.brp.ch). In the USA, ☎ 1-800-223-6800.

Hôtel Agora Fassbind S.A. offers 80 first-class rooms not far from the train station and lakeshore. Rooms are clean, comfortable and spacious, with all modern amenities. The in-house restaurant serves vegetarian fare as well as traditional Swiss dishes. This hotel is suitable for the handicapped and is in a quiet area. (\$\$\$). Avenue du Rond-Point 9, CH-1006 Lausanne. ☎ 21-617-1211, fax 21-616-2605.



*Beau-Rivage Palace (Wofratz)*



*Hôtel de la Paix*

Hôtel de la Paix has splendid views of the surroundings from all rooms, and features a good restaurant – Le Café de la Paix – and a lively after-hours pub, Jacky's Bar. Located minutes from the train station, this

hotel is in the heart of the business and shopping districts. (\$\$). Avenue B Constant 5, CH-1003 Lausanne, ☎ 21-310-7171, fax 21-310-7172.

Hostellerie Les Chevreuils is a 100-year-old inn in a beautiful country setting in the Lausanne suburb of Vers-Chez-les-Blanc. Features include a nice garden terrace and two restaurants offering holistic cooking and traditional Swiss fare. (\$\$). Free parking and breakfast is included in rates. Kids three and under stay free in their parents' room. Route du Jorate 80, Vers-Chez-les-Blanc/Lausanne. ☎ 21-784-2021, fax 21-784-1545.

Hôtel-Restaurant Albatross Navigation sits perched on the lakeshore next to the yachting marina only two minutes from

the Olympic Museum. Features an excellent restaurant with homemade and vegetarian dishes, plus a terrace and garden dining area. Pets are welcome and kids 12 and under stay free in their parents' rooms. (\$\$). Avenue de La Harpe 49, CH-1006 Lausanne. ☎ 21-614-3800, fax 21-616-7080.

The Lausanne Youth Hostel offers 240 beds (\$) at Ch. Du Bois-de-Vaux 36, CH-1007 Lausanne. ☎ 21-626-0222, fax 21-626-0226, [www.youthhostels.ch/lausanne](http://www.youthhostels.ch/lausanne).

## Where to Eat



Café Beau-Rivage is one of the most elegant restaurants in Lausanne but, surprisingly, its prices are not as out-of-sight as one might expect. You can dine



*Café Beau-Rivage*

on the lakeside terrace, adorned by flower containers overflowing with blooms year-round. The restaurant serves seafood, pasta, steaks and grilled fare, as well as many Swiss favorites. (\$-\$\$\$). The dining room becomes a piano bar after 7:30 pm nightly. The adjoining café is open from 11 am to 1 pm, Monday-Friday, and from 9 am to 1 am on the weekends. It serves light meals, snacks, coffees and desserts. (\$-\$\$\$). In the Beau-Rivage Palace, 17-19 Place du Port, CH-1006 Lausanne. ☎ 21-613-3333, fax 21-613-3334.

La Grappe d'Or, a well-known Lausanne eatery, serves French fare by world-renowned German chef Peter Baermann in a relaxed atmosphere. Dishes are

carefully prepared and served under the supervision of Baermann's wife, Angelika. They include regional and seasonal specialties such as venison, fresh fish and seafood. The desserts are out of this world. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations required. Open Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner. Saturday for

dinner only, closed Sunday. 3 Cheneau de Bourg, CH-1000 Lausanne. ☎ 21-323-0760.

Not far from its parent restaurant above, La Petite Grappe is a lighthearted bistro that caters to the younger crowd of Lausanne, and features similar dishes to its older family member up the street.

(\$-\$\$\$). Reservations

required. Located at 15 Cheneau de Bourg, CH-1000 Lausanne. ☎ 21-311-8414.



*La Grappe d'Or*

A la Pomme de Pin is one of Lausanne's oldest wine pubs and offers a wide array of dishes that will appeal to most palates. Open for lunch and dinner Monday-Friday, Saturday for lunch only. Closed Sunday. (\$-\$\$\$). 11-13 Rue de la Mercerie, CH-1000 Lausanne. ☎ 21-323-4656.

Pinte Besson dates back to 1780 and is a favorite with the locals for its cheese and meat fondues, grilled steaks and typically Swiss fare. Hearty dishes at very reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open Monday-Friday noon-2 pm, 6 pm-midnight, weekends noon-2 pm. Closed during the month of August. 4 Rue de l'Ale, CH-1000 Lausanne. ☎ 21-312-7227.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Montreux

**M**ontreux is often considered the most popular resort on Lake Geneva and is just 13 miles (21 km) southeast of Lausanne, or two miles (3.2 km) south of Vevey. This town of 20,000 residents extends some five miles (eight km) along the lake, with magnificent views of the surrounding Alps and beautiful green countryside. For centuries Montreux has attracted some of history's finest writers, artists and musicians, including Tolstoy,



*Château de Chillon (Flore Allemandou)*

Byron, Nabokov, and Stravinsky, to name just a few. One of the main reasons to come here, aside from its annual music festivals, is to visit the Château de Chillon, a 12th-century castle that sits, literally, in the waters of Lake Geneva, and for many years served as a state prison. In fact, it was the basis for Lord Byron's poem *The Prisoner of Chillon*. The castle was originally built on the foundation of a Roman site by order of Duke Peter of Savoy. It is best to visit Chillon in the off-season if you really want to spend any time here enjoying the atmosphere; otherwise you'll be one of the many tourists who parade through the mighty structure in a long, stoic line. See next page for more details. Montreux's Tourist Office is at 5 Rue de Theatre, CH-1821, Montreux. ☎ 21-962-8484, fax 21-963-7895, [www.montreux.ch](http://www.montreux.ch).

### ON THE RAILS

The Swiss Chocolate Train begins here in Montreux, travels through Gruyères, then Broc and back, and is a joint venture of GoldenPass Services and Cailler-Nestlé. You'll ride in first-class comfort in a "Belle Epoque" Pullman car, vintage 1915 and a modern panorama car affording stunning views of the vineyards surrounding Montreux and medieval Gruyères.



*Onboard the Swiss Chocolate Train*

You leave Montreux on the Swiss Riviera, ascend to Gruyères, home of the famous Gruyère cheese, and eventually continue to Broc, where the chocolate factory is situated. The compulsory supplement to a 1st class pass or ticket is available for CHF 25 and includes: seat reservation, coffee and croissants on the train, bus from and to Gruyères train station, a visit to Castle Gruyères, a visit to cheese factory Gruyères, and a film presentation, factory visit and chocolate sampling in Nestlé Chocolate Factory. For information, contact the Swiss Chocolate Train toll-free at ☎ 800-100-200-30, fax 800-100-200-31, Monday to Friday, 8 am-7 pm.

Other train journeys throughout this region – known as the Swiss Riviera – include trips from Montreux to Caux, Rochers-de-Naye, Vevey, Blonay, Les Pléiades and Mont-Pèlerin. These are combinations of cogwheel train and funicular from Montreux and Vevey.



*You can use the Swiss Pass, Swiss Flexi Pass, or Swiss Youth Pass: ride for free to Caux, Blonay and Mont-Pèlerin and get a 50% discount on connecting tickets to Rochers-de-Naye and Les Pléiades. Swiss Card: 50% discount on all trains in the Swiss Riviera Region. No seat reservations possible.*

At Rochers-de-Naye (Marmots' Paradise) you'll be high above Lake Geneva, offering breath-taking views of the lake and the French Alps. A cogwheel train leaves Vevey and brings visitors to Les Pléiades, a vantage point offering many lovely hikes and an open-air exhibit depicting the planets and galaxies (Astro Pléiades). Another leg of the journey connects Vevey and Mont-Pèlerin, a plateau high above the city with a wonderful view.

## Music Festivals



*Ray Charles at the Montreux Jazz Festival*

The Montreux Jazz Festival is known worldwide. Held the first two weeks in July, it has free concerts during the day; evening concerts require tickets, which you can purchase at the UBS Bank ticket counters throughout Switzerland (☎ 84-880-0800) or from the Montreux Jazz Boutique at 100 Grand-Rue, CH-1821 Montreux. ☎ 21-961-

1166. The festival has a website at [www.montreuxjazz.com](http://www.montreuxjazz.com), or call festival reservations at ☎ 21-963-8282 for more information.

The Montreux-Vevey Music Festival is held from late August to the end of September annually and includes a wide array of classical music. For information on tickets and concert times, contact the Festival de Musique at 5 Rue de Théâtre, Case Postale 162, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-966-8025, fax 21-963-2506, [www.montreux-festival.com](http://www.montreux-festival.com).

## Historic Site

The Château de Chillon is open daily from April-September, 9 am-7 pm, and from November-February, 10 am-5 pm. Admission is 8.5Sfr. The castle is only two miles (3.2 km) south of

Montreux, easily accessed on foot or by car. It was in Chillon that Geneva native Francois de Bonivard was imprisoned in the 16th century.

He was held in the dungeon – which visitors can explore today – for six years, chained to one of the pillars there for preaching about the Reformation, which was strictly forbidden at the time. When the Bernese armies ar-



*Chillon*

rived in 1536, he was finally released. Chillon has been a source of inspiration for writers such as Lord Byron, Victor Hugo, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and others throughout the centuries. The castle is actually made up of 25 buildings that are joined together by three separate courtyards, the square tower and internal walls. There are four levels, including the still-intact underground vaults, the largest of which was occupied by Bonivard. The upper levels contain a banquet hall, apartments, a torture chamber, bedrooms and other living quarters. Chillon is both impressive and chilling at the same time, if one ponders its history, and it is well worth a visit.



*Train to Les Rochers-de-Naye*

Chillon Castle, CH-1820 Veytaux-Montreux. ☎ 21-963-3912, fax 21-963-8581.

Les Rochers-de-Naye, the "Marmot's Paradise," sits at 6,400 feet/2,000 m elevation and



boasts a wide range of marmot species from all over the world, as well as a learning center, Alpine garden and tons of flowers. You can get here via a train from a number of train stops throughout the area. For information, call the Golden Pass Services, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 900-245-245 or 21-989-8101.

## Where to Stay



**Hôtel Eden au Lac** is a century-old hotel decorated with Louis XVI furniture; it retains much of its Victorian flavor. There are three restaurants and a public lounge area. La Terrasse and Le Jardin both offer fine dining, while Le 1900

serves breakfast only, which is included in the rates. (\$\$\$\$). The views overlooking Lake Geneva are spectacular. Rue du Théâtre 11, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-966-0800, fax 21-966-0900.



*Hôtel Eden au Lac*



*Le Montreux Palace*

**Le Montreux Palace** is a luxury hotel on the shores of Lake Geneva that was originally built in 1906. This grand Art Nouveau and Neo-Baroque hotel offers all of the modern conveniences available today and features qual-

ity restaurants, a stunning wellness center and the most modern of guest facilities. (\$\$\$\$). 100 Grand Rue, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-962-1212, fax 21-962-1717.

Grand Hôtel Suisse et Majestic is across from the train station. This first-class hotel is just as its name suggests – and more. Built in 1870, it was completely renovated in 1992 and each room has a private balcony. The staff is friendly and gracious. Pets are allowed at no extra charge. Breakfast is



*Grand Hôtel Suisse et Majestic*

included in the rates, and there is a nice snack bar and open-air restaurant. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Avenue des Alpes 43, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-966-3333, fax 21-966-3000.

The Montreux Youth Hostel is open from February 15 through November 15 and offers 112 beds and rooms of various types. Reservations are suggested. Near a variety of attractions, including hiking trails, tennis courts and the lake. Passage de l'Auberge 8, CH-1820 Montreux-Terriet. ☎ 21-963-4934, fax 21-963-2729, [www.youthhostels.ch/montreux](http://www.youthhostels.ch/montreux).

## Camping



This is available near the lakeshore in Villeneuve at Les Horizons Bleus campground. Open from April 1 to September 30, it offers spaces for tents and campers at a nominal fee. (\$). Reservations required. ☎ 21-960-1547.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



New Space Metropolis is a restaurant, brewery and pizzeria all rolled into one, serving soups, salads, seafood and meat fondues, as well as pastas and pizzas. Located in the heart of Montreux, it is handicapped-accessible and has a sun terrace for dining. (\$-\$\$). Mainsrasse 57, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-963-7558, fax 21-963-3906.

Le Museum was originally a 13th-century convent that now has three dining rooms and a large rustic fireplace. Specialties include grilled meats and Swiss favorites such as cheese and meat fondues. Open daily. Closed December 25-January 1, July 25-August 15. (\$-\$\$). 40 Rue de la Gare, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-963-1662.



*Le Museum*

Caveau des Vignerons is a unique spot set inside a cave, where you'll dine in candlelit bliss. Fondues and seasonal Swiss fare are the specialties, and the dessert tray is outstanding. (\$-\$\$). Reservations are recommended. Open Monday-Friday from 9 am-midnight, Saturday from 3 pm-midnight. 30 Rue Industrielle, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-963-2570.

## Vevey

**V**evey is just west of Montreux on the lake, and was the home of comedian Charlie Chaplin for 25 years, until his death on December 25, 1977. The famous silent screen genius is buried in the Corsier cemetery alongside his wife, Oona. Chaplin and his family originally settled in the Beau-Rivage hotel in 1953, before moving to Manoir de Ban, just north of Vevey in the village of Corsier.

Vevey's Tourist Office can provide you with information regarding their Vineyard Train (Le Train de Vignes) that cruises the local vineyards, with tastings and tours of area cellars. Grande-Place 29, Case Postale 27, CH-1800, Vevey. ☎ 21-922-2020, fax 21-922-2024, [www.vevey.ch](http://www.vevey.ch).



*Vevey is also the headquarters for chocolate manufacturing giant Nestle.*

## Museums

The Food Museum – owned and operated by Nestlé – offers social, scientific and historic perspectives on the subject. Open year-round, 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm; 10 am-5 pm during the summer months. Admission is 10Sfr. Quai Perdonnet, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-924-4111.

Just on the outskirts of Vevey is Blonay-Chamby, home to the Railway Museum. This fine little railroad takes visitors 1.8 miles/three km over trestle, viaduct and tunnel – all of which were built between 1874 and 1935 – utilizing steam and electric powered trains that overlook Lake Geneva. Worth the trip. Open May through October, Saturday and Sunday, from 9 am-6 pm. CH-1001, Lausanne. ☎ 21-943-2121, fax 21-943-2221.

## Adventures

There are several fun treks that combine hiking with funiculars and/or trains throughout this region. Funicular Vevey travels to Chardonne and on to Mont-Pèlerin – passing between forests, orchards and vineyards. This trip brings you to great walking paths, which in turn allow you to explore the local vineyards, gastronomy and wines. When you reach Plein Ciel, you can grab the glass lift there, which takes you straight up in the air, giving you a 360-degree all-around view of the countryside, the Alps and Lake Geneva. This is open Easter to October.



*Funicular Vevey (Michel Azéma)*

For wine enthusiasts, there is also “The Vineyard” train – leaving from Vevey and stopping at Chexbres and Puidoux. You travel slowly through the terraced vineyards of the Lavaux region.

For a nice walk, consider strolling through the Lavaux vineyards on foot. Known as “The Cellars,” this is a well-marked trail with signs along the way explaining the intricacies of wine-

making and the grape-growing process. You'll also find traditional wine cellars in the center of local villages. The local wine makers are usually very eager to have you sample their wares. For information on this region – known as Appellation St. Saphorin – ☎ 21-921-1305 or Appellation Chardonne at 21-921-5568.

For information on all of the above mentioned activities, contact the Golden Pass Center at Rue de la Gare 22, CH-1820 Montreux. ☎ 21-989-8181, fax 21-989-8101. [www.mob.ch](http://www.mob.ch).

## Where to Stay



Hôtel de Bahyse dates back to 1700 and sits on the shores of Lake Geneva. Owned and operated by the same family for three generations, this inn, with a private garden, is decorated

with rustic Swiss charm and offers all modern amenities. Northwest of Vevey in the village of Blonay, and close to many snow excursions, ski lifts and pistes, as well as a toboggan track. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). 11 Road of the Village, CH-1807 Blonay on Vevey. ☎ 21-943-1322, fax 21-943-4810.



*Hôtel de Bahyse*

Astra Hotel is a modern, chic hotel in the city center with air-conditioned rooms and a beautiful winter garden terrace, a traditional restaurant (The Brasserie) and a bar (The Orient Express). There is also a fitness and wellness center here. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Place de la Gare, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-



*Astra Hotel*

925-0404, fax 21-925-0400.

Hôtel de la Place is a quaint old inn that dates back to 1692 and includes a nice café, fireplace and rustic interior. The rooms are small but functional, and each has a washbasin. Every floor has a communal shower and restroom. Great for families and romantics. (\$-\$\$). Place du Temple 5, CH-1804 Vevey. ☎/fax 21-921-1287.

Hostellerie de Genève is a small hotel in the city center, near the lake and with an Italian restaurant. Rooms are small, but clean and comfortable. (\$-\$\$). Place du Marché 11, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-921-4577, fax 21-921-3015.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Denis Martin is a local favorite and offers a sophisticated setting without pompous service.

The waitstaff is friendly and the food is delicious. You'll find everyone from businessmen to winegrowers here year-round. Reservations required. (\$-\$\$\$). Closed Sunday and Monday. Located in the cellar of the Vevey Historical Museum at 2 Rue du Château, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-921-1210.

White Horse Pub offers scrumptious summer salads, pub dishes and daily specials. (\$-\$\$). Simplonstrasse 33, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-921-0234.

The Welcome Pub features regional specialties, with a small garden terrace. (\$\$). Closed Sunday only. Town Square 29, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-921-2744.

Charly's Pub has salads, sandwiches, and grilled fare. (\$-\$\$). Seestrasse 45, CH-1800 Vevey. ☎ 21-921-5006.

## Château d'Oex

**T**he two main ski and winter sports areas of this region are Les Diablerets and Château d'Oex, both easily accessible from Aigle.

Château d'Oex is between Gstaad and Gruyères, 20 miles (32 km) northeast of Aigle on the Cole des Mosses Highway. At 3,280 feet (1,000 m), this village of 2,900 residents is a junction between the cantons of Vaud, Fribourg and Bern, and is well known as a winter sports playground and for its hot air balloon-



*Château d'Oex*

ing. In the winter, many Swiss families come to this area with their children, as the majority of slopes are easy.

There are 31 miles (50 km) of downhill runs, 19 miles (30 km) of cross-country ski runs reachable by 10 ski lifts, two chairlifts and one cable car. You'll also find a two-mile sled run here. A one-day pass costs only 33Sfr; a six-day pass is 166Sfr.

The Château d'Oex Tourist Office is in the village center, right below the clock tower. ☎ 26-924-2535, fax 26-924-3070.

## Adventures

### Winter Sports



For ski lessons, contact the local ski school at ☎ 26-924-6848.

To rent ice skates contact Planete Sports at ☎ 26-924-4464; for snowshoes, call Haute Pression Sports at ☎ 26-924-5653.

## Summer Sports

You can swim in Château d'Oex's open-air pool that also has a little restaurant. Admission is 6Sfr. ☎ 26-924-6234. For mountain biking excursions and bike rentals, contact Palaz Bike at ☎ 26-924-4251 or Planete Sports at ☎ 26-924-4464.

You can choose from several whitewater rafting trips through Rivières et Aventures, Case Postale 68, CH-1837 Château d'Oex. ☎ 26-924-3424.

If you want to experience ballooning over some of the most beautiful mountain ranges and countryside found anywhere, contact Sky Event, the local ballooning service, at ☎ 26-924-2520.

## Sightseeing



Le Châlet is a mountain cheesemaker's house that has daily afternoon demonstrations of cheesemaking. Visitors can sit in the café and watch the entire process. There is an attached visitor's shop that sells local and regional crafts and cheese products as well. Admission is free. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 1:30 pm. CH-1837 Château d'Oex. ☎ 26-924-6677.

Espace Ballon is a hot air balloon museum that honors the magic of ballooning in a variety of virtual experiences. Open June 15-September 15 from 10 am-6 pm daily and from December-March from 2-6 pm. Adults



8ChF, kids 4ChF. La Place, CH-1660, Château d'Oex. ☎ 26-924-2222, fax 26-924-2221.



## Where to Stay & Eat



The Ermitage is the most charming inn in this little village, featuring timbered and wooden ceilings, wood furnishings and 16 comfortable rooms, or four lovely suites. (\$-\$\$\$). The sun terrace is perfect for hot air balloon watching and the in-house restaurant features a five-course gourmet meal with Swiss and Italian dishes. (\$-\$\$\$). There is also a playground for children and free parking for guests. CH-1837 Château d'Oex. ☎ 26-924-6003, fax 26-924-5076.

Hotel Buffet de la Gare is a lovely little café and restaurant located in the train station, serving regional and international fare at very reasonable prices. (\$-\$). This is a popular spot to people-watch, and the food is surprisingly good. Reservations are recommended. ☎ 26-924-7717.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

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## Les Diablerets



**T**his is 12 miles (19 km) due east of Aigle, on a small, secondary road that will eventually lead you to Gstaad in Canton Bern. This tiny resort village sits at 3,806 feet (1,160 m) at the base of the 10,525-foot (3,209 m) Les Diablerets mountain and the 9,840-foot

(3,000-m) glacier of the same name. Skiing and adventure sports are top priority here, with 18 lifts and six cable cars that bring snow bunnies to 75 miles (120 km) of downhill runs, 19 miles (30 km) of cross-country trails and four miles (6.4 km) of tobogganing trails. A one-day pass for the area, including a ride on the Glacier 3000 cable car, costs 52Sfr. Prices go up from there, with a six-day pass costing 264Sfr.

For snowshoeing, rock climbing, and dirt-bike excursions, as well as other adventurous tours, contact Mountain Evasion, at Parc des Sports, CH-1865 Les Diablerets. ☎ 24-492-1232. For hanggliding, sledding, dirt biking, zorbing (rolling down a mountain in a plastic ball) and canyoning, see the folks at Centre Paradventure, Rue de la Gare, CH-1865 Les Diablerets. ☎ 24-492-2382.



The Glacier 3000 is a high-altitude cable car that stretches from the Col du Pillon station (four miles/6.4 km outside of Les Diablerets) to the Scex-Rouge cliff. The views are awesome and the steep ride will take your breath away. At the top, you'll find a beautiful restaurant designed by architect Mario Botta. The cost is 49Sfr round-trip. Open from November to mid-April, daily from 9 am-4:30 pm; June and July, daily from 8:20 am-4:50 pm; August to October, daily from 9 am-4:50 pm. Closed from late April through May. ☎ 26-492-3377.

Hôtel Les Diablerets is a charming chalet that features clean, rustic rooms bursting with Alpine ambiance. The restaurant and café serve traditional Swiss fare. There is also a sauna, bar and parking lot on the premises. Open year-round, except for late April to June, and in October and November. (\$\$). Chemin du Vernex, CH-1865 Les Diablerets. ☎ 24-492-0909, fax 24-492-2391.

Auberge de la Poste has housed such guests as Stravinsky, David Bowie and Sting over the years in their seven-room inn. It's rustic and authentic, with wooden furnishings. The restaurant serves Swiss dishes in hearty portions and there is a homey feel throughout. (\$\$). Rue de la Gare, CH-1865 Les Diablerets. ☎ 24-492-3124, fax 24-492-1268.

# Western Vaud

## Morges

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**M**orges is seven miles (11 km) west of Lausanne and 16 miles (26 km) east of Geneva on Highway N1 – a great base for anyone wanting to explore Vaud's vineyards. It was also the home of screen legend Audrey Hepburn and was originally an important port and trade city centuries ago.

Today its sophistication and chic ambiance is matched only by Geneva, and it is considered one of the major ports of call for the rich and famous, many of whom dock their yachts at Morges. The Morges Tourist Office is at Rue du Château, CH-1110 Morges. ☎ 21-801-3233, fax 21-801-3130, [www.morges.ch](http://www.morges.ch).

## Adventures

### On Wheels



Bike trails abound through this region, and there are a variety to choose from – beginning at the Morges train station. You can rent a bike here for 26-32Sfr per day and the Tourist Office will provide you with maps or help you design an itinerary all your own. One of the major bike paths is a 35-mile round-trip route from Morges to Begnins and back. It can take a whole day to complete the circuit if you stop and have a picnic or lunch; otherwise, the ride time is from 5½ to six hours. From Morges, you'll travel north to Bussy, then farther north to Apples, west to Ballens, and then finally to Bière, where you'll have spectacular views of Vaudois vineyards. From Bière, you head south past Gimel, eventually reaching the village of Begnins and the panoramic lookout post at Fechy. From here, you can ride down to the portside village of Gland and head north along the shore road back to Morges, via Rolle, Allaman and St.-Prex.

### On Water

From May to September, you can catch the numerous steamers and ships that stop at Morges every day en route to

Geneva, Lausanne or to the French side of Lake Geneva. Contact the CGN (Compagnie Générale de Navigation) at ☎ 84-881-1848 in Lausanne for schedules and reservations or in Geneva at ☎ 21-614-6200.

## Where to Stay & Eat



If you choose to bunk down in Morges for the night there are two pleasant inns. The first, the Fleur du Lac (Lake Flower), has 29 rooms – each of which is unique. All rooms face south, allowing for spectacular views of Lake Geneva, the Alps and Mont Blanc when the weather is clear. Rates are high, (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$), but well worth it. A group can stay for 470Sfr in a very good suite. The hotel also houses the best restaurant in this small village, a combination of seasonal



*Fleur du Lac*

Swiss and French cuisine that is delicately prepared at all times. (\$-\$\$\$). There are over 250 wines to choose from in the dining room, which during the summer months becomes an outdoor terrace. Reservations required. There is also a smaller café on the premises that offers light fare at reasonable rates. (\$-\$\$). Both are open daily from 11:30 am-2 pm, 5:30-10 pm. Quai Igor Stravinsky, Route de la Lausanne, CH-1110 Morges. ☎ 21-811-5811, fax 21-811-5888, [www.fleurdulac.ch](http://www.fleurdulac.ch).

Your other option is the splendid Hôtel de Savoie, in Morges Old Town. This rustic inn offers 14 basic rooms, each with a private bath, phone and TV in a clean and unpretentious setting at very reasonable rates (\$\$), with a good breakfast included. The in-house restaurant (de l'Union) offers French fare with stunning pastries, grilled meats such as horse and lamb, plus side-dishes of steamed veggies. (\$-\$\$\$). Open Monday-Saturday from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 6:30-11 pm. Reservations recommended. 7 Grande-Rue, CH-1110 Morges. ☎ 21-801-2155.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## La Sarraz



*Chateau de La Sarraz (Arnaud Gaillard)*

This is a country village just slightly west off Highway 1 between the northern cities of Yverdon-les-Bains and Lausanne, in the watershed basins of the Rhône and Rhine rivers. This little village is often overlooked by tourists, but offers a large swimming complex

(☎ 21-866-7979), horseback riding lessons in dressage, western and jumping (☎ 21-634-4871), a golf course (☎ 21-634-4871), and climbing expeditions (☎ 21-625-2555) from Magasin de Sports le Passe Montagne out of Lausanne. The local Tourist Office can be found at Grand-Rue 1, CH-1314 La Sarraz. ☎ 21-866-0229, fax 21-866-0227.

For equine enthusiasts, this tiny village also contains a nice museum devoted to horses – the Musée Suisse du Cheval. This small museum – housed in a farmhouse that dates back to 1725 – was established in 1982 and displays artwork, harnesses, saddles, carriages, rocking horses and sculptures depicting horses throughout the ages. In 1986 it was awarded the International Museum of the Year award by the European Arts Council. Open daily 1-5 pm, admission is 7Sfr for adults, 6Sfr for seniors and students, and 4Sfr for kids ages six-16. To get here, take Highway 1 (A1) toward Yverdon-les-Bains, exit at La Sarraz, and go to Avenue Château et dans le Bourg, where there is a parking lot. ☎ 21-866-6423, fax 21-866-1180.

## Where to Stay



There are several hotels in La Sarraz. Hôtel du Soleil Masetti Paolo offers clean and comfortable lodgings, an Italian restaurant, café and bar in a

country setting. (\$\$). Route de Cossonay 14, CH-1315 La Sarraz. ☎ 21-866-7139, fax 21-866-1020.

Hôtel de la Croix-Blanche is another option, with 11 rooms, run by the Porchet family at Grand-Rue 22, CH-1315 La Sarraz. ☎ 21-866-7154, fax 21-866-7529.

## Camping



There is a campground near the village, with modern conveniences and a parking lot, swimming pool, and on-site restaurant.

## Vallorbe



*Vallorbe (Roland Zumbühl)*

**V**allorbe sits next to the French border on the western edge of Canton Vaud, just off Highway 9. It's known for its unique caves, the Iron Museum and an unusual military fort. The train station offers bike rental and money-changing services, and there is a small Tourist Office located nearby, just off the main street (Grand-Rue). ☎ 21-843-2583, fax 21-843-2262. Open daily from 9:30 am-noon and 1:30-6 pm.

Just 1½ miles (2.4 km) southwest of Vallorbe's village center you'll find the stalagmite and stalactite caves that were formed by the Orbe River. You can walk there from Vallorbe; just follow the signs marked "Source Grottos," or, if driving, there's a free car lot just before you reach the caves. A one-

hour guided tour costs 12Sfr for adults, 6Sfr for children. The caves are open from May 1-November 1 annually, from 9:30 am-4:30 pm daily, and until 5:30 during the summer months.

To reach the underground military fort at Pré-Giroud will take you at least an hour on foot. There is a train that travels there as well, taking a little more than half an hour from Vallorbe. This underground military installation was built in 1937 to guard the Jourgne Pass and the Joux Valley route. On the outside it looks like a typical Swiss chalet, but underneath it has accommodations and quarters for over 130 people, including dorms, mess halls, a kitchen, and a medical facility with an operating room. Admission to this fascinating fort (which was never used during World War II), is 9Sfr for adults, 8Sfr for students, 5Sfr for children and includes a 75-minute guided tour in French. A written guide is available in English.

The Iron & Railway Museum features a natural forge, complete with a blacksmith hammering at his iron work, and a paddlewheel furnace driven by the Orbe River. You'll also find models of trains, with their Swiss routes and history. Admission is 9Sfr for adults, 8Sfr for students, 5Sfr for kids, and it's open daily from 9:30 am-noon and from 1:30-6 pm.

## Northern Vaud

### Yverdon-les-Bains

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**T**his is at the far northern tip of Canton Vaud, along the southern shores of Lake Neuchâtel, and is primarily noted as a health resort. Considered to be the capital of northern Vaud, it has 24,000 inhabitants.

Yverdon-les-Bains was once a Roman camp and remains have been found that date back beyond that era to 2800 BC. The village's main attraction is the Centre Thermal – thermal baths that the Romans used for medicinal purposes. Every day some 1,300 people come to this lakeside village to bathe in its mineral waters.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Office du Tourisme et du Thermalisme is at Avenue de la Gare 1, CH-1401 Yverdon-les-Bains.

☎ 24-423-6290, fax 24-426-1122. Hours are from 8:30 am-noon and from 1:30-6 pm, Monday-Friday. On Saturday it is open from 9 am-noon.

### Train Station

The local train station has bike rentals and a money exchange office that is open daily from 5:30 am-8:40 pm.

### Post Office

There are three post offices in Yverdon-les-Bains, but the most convenient one is next to the train station at Avenue de la Gare, CH-1401 Yverdon-les-Bains. ☎ 24-424-2550, fax 24-424-2551. Hours are 7:30 am-6 pm, Monday-Friday. Saturday hours are from 8:30 am-noon.

### Codes

The postal codes in Yverdon-les-Bains are CH-1400, 1401, 1402 and 1403; the phone code is 24.

### Internet Access

For Internet access, you'll have to walk to Le Garage, an arcade with one computer at Rue de la Plaine 52, CH-1400 Yverdone-les-Bains. ☎ 24-426-0495.

## Getting Around

The only ways to get around Yverdon-les-Bains are by bike or on foot, as the village's Old Town area is car-free.

## Adventures

### In the Water



You won't want to miss taking a dip in Yverdon-les-Bains' waters at Centre Thermal, east of the Old Village center just off of the Avenue des Bains. Here you can test a number of treatments in one of the indoor or outdoor pools, get a massage or take a sauna or whirlpool treat-



ment. Admission is 13Sfr to the pools, which are open Monday-Friday from 8 am-10 pm, and on the weekends and holidays from 9 am-8 pm. ☎ 24-426-1104, fax 24-423-0232.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

Yverdon-les-Bains is dominated by its castle, Pestalozzi Château, found in the center of town, Pestalozzi Platz. The château was originally owned by the Dukes of Savoy. It was later passed to the governors of Bern, and then became the home of the



*Pestalozzi Château*

Pestalozzi Institute in 1805. Johann Pestalozzi was a famous European scholar and educator during the early 19th century and ran his school from here for 20 years. In 1912, it was modified into a library and small historical museum. You'll also find the Hotel de Ville (town hall), built in 1769-1773, in the main square of the village.

## Museums

The Science Fiction Museum features books, magazines, photographs, comic books, films and videos, all devoted to the fantasy of science fiction. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 2-6 pm. ☎ 24-425-9310.

The Museum of Clothing (Modemuseum) displays thousands of articles of clothing and fashion accessories from 1850 to the present day. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 2-6 pm. ☎ 24-426-3164.

## Where to Stay



Grand Hotel des Bains is an old castle that has been lovingly restored inside and out. It features private thermal baths and a beauty and health salon.



*Restaurant in the Grand  
Hotel des Bains*

(\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Very swank rooms in a picturesque setting. 22 Avenue des Bains, CH-1401 Yverdon-les-Bains. ☎ 24-424-6464, fax 24-424-6465.

L'Ecusson Vaudois is in the old section of Yverdon-les-Bains and has a lively bar and pleasant eatery, along with nine rooms. Very close to all of the tourist sites, with reasonable

rates (\$\$). Rooms are spacious, clean and lightly decorated. Rue de la Plaine 29, CH-14 Yverdon-les-Bains. ☎ 24-425-4015, fax 24-425-4015.

La Prairie is a charming inn set on the edge of the Grand Parc and is only five minutes from the thermal baths. Open year-round, this inn is close to hiking trails and features tennis courts, a nice restaurant and all modern amenities. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Avenue de Bains 9, CH-1400 Yverdon-les-Bains. ☎ 24-425-1919, fax 24-425-0079.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Restaurant de la Plage offers a variety of fish specialties as well as great choices of Italian and French wines to complement your meal. (\$-\$\$\$). This French restaurant sits at the edge of Lake Neuchâtel and has a gorgeous view of the area, with a playground for the kids. CH-1400 Yverdon-les-Bains. ☎ 24-425-3513, fax 24-426-4050.

Gift Camillo dishes up hearty portions of ox, pig, steaks, pastas and salads at reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Moulins 10, CH-1400 Yverdon-les-Bains. ☎ 24-425-4282, fax 24-425-4229.

## Avenches

**A**venches is another small village, just to the north of Payerne. Home to just 2,000 residents, the village sits on a small hill,

with a medieval castle and interesting old homes that were actually part of the Roman settlement known as Aventicum. Just east of Avenches you can explore the excavated remains of this Roman city, which was at its height during the 1st and 2nd centuries. You'll find the remains of public baths, faint sections of the town walls, a theater, and a Corinthian column that is thought to have flanked a forum. There is also a small museum nearby that contains many other artifacts found at this site. Simply put, however, most Swiss come to Avenches to visit their nation's newest and largest equestrian facility, where both thoroughbred, steeplechase and harness racing take place during the year, as well as other equestrian disciplines, such as three-day events in dressage, show jumping and four-in-hand driving.

The Avenches Tourist Office is open from April to September, Monday-Friday from 8 am-noon, 1:30-5:30 pm; Saturday from 9 am-noon. Place de l'Eglise 3, CH-1580 Avenches. ☎ 26-675-1159, fax 26-675-3393.

Avenches' Roman Museum, located next to the excavations, features artifacts and historical finds from the ruins. Open March-September, Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-noon, 1-5 pm, October-March, Tuesday-Sunday, 2-5 pm. Admission is 2Sfr. Avenue Jomini, CH-1580 Avenches.

Switzerland's newest racetrack is the Institut Equestre National Avenches, simply known to the locals as Avenches. Established in September 1999, this state-of-the-art equestrian facility features hurdle, steeplechase, flat racing and trotting. It has three main racing tracks and four training tracks, with 350 stalls. The complex also has a 400-foot (122-m) indoor arena with a viewing area/restaurant, bar, press room, and jumping paddock. The restaurant (Le Paddock) in the grandstand serves international fare overlooking the racetrack from a sun terrace, and also has an indoor dining area where you can watch jumpers perform in an indoor stadium. For information on racing times and dates, contact the IENA Secretariat at CH-1580 Avenches, ☎ 26-676-7676, fax 26-676-7677. For reservations in the dining room, ☎ 26-676-7671. This huge complex is hard to miss, located just off Highway A1 at the Avenches exit. You can see the complex from across the highway in either direction.

# Canton Neuchâtel (NE)

## At a Glance

**N**euchâtel is renowned for its vineyards, lakes, green rolling hills, Jura Mountains and watchmaking. Not to be overlooked, either, is the French language spoken here. Many parents in the German-speaking areas of Switzerland send their children to Canton Neuchâtel to perfect the official second language of the country. Over 169,538 French-speaking, primarily Protestant, citizens reside in Canton Neuchâtel, which joined the Swiss Federation in 1815, making it the second-youngest canton (along with Valais and Geneva). In terms of population, only six cantons have fewer inhabitants than Neuchâtel – Aargau, Glarus, Nidwalden, Uri, Obwalden, and Appenzell Innerrhoden.

The River Doubs officially separates the frontier between Switzerland and France on the western side of the canton, while Canton Vaud sits at the southern border, and cantons Jura and Bern are at the north and east.

Lake Neuchâtel is the dividing line on the eastern side between cantons Bern, Fribourg and Vaud, and is connected to the Bieler See via the Zühl-Kanal at the north end of the lake. In the upper northeast end of the canton is the Val de Ruz (Ruz Valley), while the Val de Travers (Travers Valley) is at the southern end.

Neuchâtel, while not a large canton – only 494 square miles (1,284 square km) – offers some of the most diverse and enlightening activities found anywhere in Switzerland. Ballooning, flying, horsebacking, hiking, wine-tasting and water sports abound here. In addition, there are a number of historic villages and towns worth exploring.

## Neuchâtel

The capital of this canton of the same name is on the north shore of Lac de Neuchâtel, south of the Jura mountains on the east side of the canton.

Ferries and motorboats criss-cross the lake daily, and the heart of the old city is on the lakeshore, just north of the harbor, where many 19th-century buildings can be seen. Just north of the city is the area known as Val-de-Ruz (Ruz Valley) – a montage of fields and tiny villages.

### Information Sources

#### Tourist Office



The main Tourist Office for Neuchâtel is the Tourisme Neuchâtelois at Hôtel des Postes, Case Postale 3176, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-889-6890, fax 32-889-6296, [www.neuchatel.ch](http://www.neuchatel.ch).

#### Post Office

The Neuchâtel Post Office is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-5:30 pm year-round, Saturday from 8:30-noon. Hôtel des Postes, Avenue 1er Mars, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-720-2601, fax 32-720-2619.

#### Codes

The area code for Neuchâtel is 32 and the postal codes are CH-2000, 2001 and 2003-2009.

### Getting Around



This is best done on foot, or you can opt for a bike, which is available for rent at the train station. Lake Neuchâtel offers the opportunity for long walks or bike rides along the shoreline as well. Trains come in and out of Neuchâtel from throughout Europe on a regular basis, and this is also one of the stops for the TGV en route to Paris.

### Sightseeing

Guided tours of the entire city are available through the Neuchâtel Tourist Office. Most are done in groups of 25-30

people, with a group rate of 120Sfr. One of the most popular two-hour tours features the Hotel DuPeyrou, the Collegial Church and Les Halles Square. You can also visit the town via the Tourist Train, which provides visitors with a 45-minute ride through the Old Town – daily during July and August; May, June and September on the weekends only. Admission is 6Sfr for adults and 3Sfr for kids. Reservations are made through the Tourist Office.

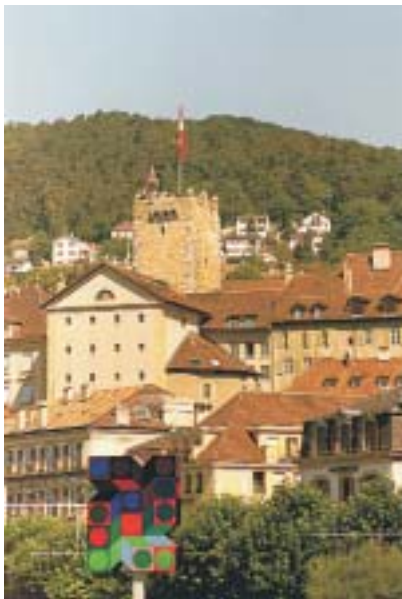
Wine Tasting takes place Monday through Friday from 9 am-noon, 1:30-5:30 pm at the Caves du Vignoble Neuchâtel

(Neuchâtel Vineyards Wine Cellar). Contact the Tourist Office for information and reservations.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Tour des Prisons (Prison Tower) provides a great panoramic view over Neuchâtel, the lake and the Alps. Open April 1-September 30 from 6 am-6 pm daily. Château, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-717-7602.

Château de Vaumarcus was formerly known as the Château of 1,001 lives, and is situated on the shores of Lake Neuchâtel. This huge, walled fortress and castle dates from 1476 and is a definite must-see. It's now home to a restaurant, shops, a museum and a cultural center in the La Vaux valley. You can visit the Château upon request. The cost is 7.50Sfr for adults, 5Sfr for kids. ☎ 32-836-3636, fax 32-836-3637. Shops ☎ 32-836-3620. Winetasting is available upon request at ☎ 32-826-3636. The Restaurant La Cour du Peintre features excep-



*Tour des Prisons (Mchevroulet)*

tional gourmet cuisine for both lunch and dinner, with set menus or à la carte, and specializes in regional and international dishes. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, with varying times. Reservations are highly recommended.

Château de Vaumarcus & Restaurant La Cour du Peintre. Cédric Gigon, CH-2028 Vaumarcus. ☎ 32-836-3610, fax 32-836-3637.

## Museums

The Neuchâtel Museum of Art & History has 20 permanent and temporary exhibition rooms spotlighting traditional arts and their history. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-6 pm. Closed Monday. Wednesday free admission; otherwise adults 7Sfr, students and kids 4Sfr. Esplanade Leopold-Robert 1, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-717-7925, fax 32-717-7929.

The Natural History Museum of Neuchâtel offers displays on mammals and birds from throughout Switzerland. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-6 pm. Closed Monday. Wednesday admission is free; otherwise adults 6Sfr, students and kids 3Sfr. Rue des Terreaux 14, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-717-7960, fax 32-717-7969.

Just south of Neuchâtel, along Highway 5 near the lakeshore, is the picturesque village of Boudry, the birthplace of Philippe Suchard. Here you'll find the Tour de Pierre (Stone Tower), that now serves as a winetasting cellar, offering panoramic views of the area. Open May 1-October 31, Friday and Saturday from 5-8:30 pm, Sunday from 11 am.

## Parks & Gardens

Neuchâtel's Botanical Garden is one of the prettiest gardens anywhere in Europe. Free to the public unless you want a guide, and then it's only 5Sfr per person, per hour. Open April 1-September 30, from 9 am-8 pm, October 1-March 31 from 9 am-5 pm. The greenhouses are closed on Monday. Pertuis-du-Sault 58, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-718-2350, fax 32-718-2357.

The Jardin de Senteurs (Garden of Scents) contains over 1,000 aromatic and cultivated plants and is free to the public. Open April-October, Monday-Friday from 8:15 am-noon, 1:30-

5 pm, Saturday from 8:15-11:45 am. Philippe Détraz, Châble 1, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-753-2810, fax 32-753-2992.

Farther north along Highway 5 is the small, walled and cobblestoned medieval village of Le Landeron – home to many small shops, cafés, restaurants and a modern art museum. This is an especially delightful little village that is ignored by many tourists. September is a great time to visit Le Landeron, when the village hosts its annual Antique Market.

At the far north end of Lake Neuchâtel is the port village of Marin. This simple village thrives on excursions such as hiking, biking, snowshoeing, canoeing, scuba diving, windsurfing, climbing and rafting – to name just a few. Marin's Nature Excursions can plan virtually any type of outdoor adventure – at reasonable rates. Rue Fleur-de Lys, CH-2074 Marin. ☎ 32-753-0545, fax 79-679-4802.



The Papiliorama (Swiss Tropical Gardens) in nearby Kerzers, is home to three domes containing diverse tropical biospheres – one houses nocturnal creatures such as bats, opossums and raccoons, another contains butterflies, birds and fish, while the third is home to all types of insects. A fourth dome is slated to open in 2008. A self-service cafeteria, the “Toucan Bar,” is on the premises, serving non-alcoholic drinks, ice cream and sandwiches, salads, various croissants and pastries. You can get here via train, at stop “Kerzers Papiliorama” and the entrance to the park is only about 100 yards/80 m from the station. You can purchase advance combination train and park entrance tickets at [www.RailAway.ch](http://www.RailAway.ch). To get here via car or bike, take Highway A1 from Yverdon toward Bern. Take the “Kerzers” exit and follow the signs. The Papiliorama is half a mile from the village of Kerzers on the road to Lyss.



Ample parking is available. Open April-September daily from 9 am-6 pm, October to March from 10 am-5 pm daily. Closed Christmas & New Years Day only. Admission is 6Sfr for kids, 12Sfr for students and 14Sfr for adults. Papillorama, Moosmatte 1, CH-3210 Kerzers. ☎ 31-756-0460, fax 31-756-0469.

## Adventures

### On Foot



A number of one-day walks over 787 miles/1,270 km – including three new Nordic Walking Trails (1.8 miles/three km, 4.8 miles/seven km and 7.7 miles/13.5 km) are outlined in brochures available through the Neuchâtel Tourist Office. Also offered are full-day excursions via a 15-seat minibus, complete with a guide and meals for 98Sfr per person. Call ☎ 32-721-2100, fax 32-725-1111 for information. The Time Path gives the visitor an insight into evolution via a three-mile footpath, complete with a series of wooden signs and sculptures that trace the history of evolution. The path (free, year-round) is near the Botanic Garden and a booklet is available through the Tourist Office for 12Sfr.

#### A FEW GOOD HIKES

All of these walks can be accessed via the Neuchâtel train station.

- For a nice and easy eight-hour walk that takes you along the lakeshore, you can start in either the train station of Vaumarcus or the Marin-Epagnier station and follow the path that connects the two villages. You pass by many lovely beaches and small ports that include shops and local eateries.
- Another easy hike of about 7½ hours takes you from the high point of Saint-Sulpice, down along a flat plane of Fleurier, Couvet, Travers and Noiraigue, before heading downward via Champ-du-Moulin, Boudry and finally Areuse, near the lake. Very easy and there are many stopping points along the way offering food, sleeping ac-

commodations and other forms of transportation. Nice, easy and well-marked trails here.

■ For a more difficult five-hour jaunt, consider starting at the Noiraigue railway station and working your way back to Beraix, near the lake, via Les Oeuillons and Le Soiat – the high point at nearly 4,800 feet/1,500 m, which offers great views of the Alps.

■ An easy walk, lasting just over two hours, begins at nearby Chaumont at the funicular and follows the path to Les Trois Cheminées, then to Enges, and ending in Cressier. Great views of the lake and surroundings with a well-marked trail make this a terrific trip even for seniors.

## In the Air

The Neuchâtel Flying Club offers flights over the three lakes, the Jura, the Alps and the entire canton. Prices vary depending on the type or length of flights, which can be experienced in a small plane or glider. Reservations required. Flights are made only in good weather. ☎ 32-841-3156, fax 32-841-1391. If you want to try ballooning, then contact Captive Balloon at ☎ 32-841-3156, fax 32-841-1391. Weather permitting, flights provide spectacular views of the city, lakes and surrounding countryside. Open daily from 9:30 am to midnight. Night flights from midnight to 2 am are available on Friday and Saturday nights and prices vary according to flight times and length. Reservations are required 48 hours in advance. ☎ 32-725-2800, fax 32-725-2802.

## On the Water

Cruises on Switzerland's largest navigable stretch of water begin at the Port of Neuchâtel. Prices vary depending on the length and type of cruise. Port of Neuchâtel, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-729-9600, fax 32-729-9601. Public beaches abound on the shores of Lake Neuchâtel, and you can also swim at the Municipal Complex's indoor and outdoor pools at

Nid du Cro, Route des Falaises 30, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-722-6222.

## On Wheels

There are 248 miles (397 km) of bike paths around Neuchâtel, and the Tourist Office can provide you with maps and routes for free. You can rent mountain bikes at the train station or at Alilze, Place du Septembre 12, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-724-4090.

If you have a car, then you definitely won't want to miss the Vue des Alpes, a viewing area just north of Neuchâtel on Highway 20. The road climbs eight miles (13 km) from the city to this crest, which allows fantastic views of the Alps.

Neuchâtel also has its own indoor go-cart track, open daily. Cost is 20Sfr per 10 minutes. Monday-Thursday, 5 pm-midnight, Friday, 5 pm-1 am, Saturday from 2 pm-1 am, Sunday and holidays from 2-8 pm. Rue de Tivoli 11, CH-2000 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-730-3038, fax 79-449-4167.

## On the Rails

The Transports Publics du Littoral Neuchâtelois offers the only panoramic funicular ride in the Jura region. Built in 1910, this funicular links Chaumont to La Coudre, a small suburb of Neuchâtel. The 13-minute ride to the top of the crest of Chaumont is worth a visit. Chaumont rises 3,775 feet (1,150 m) above Neuchâtel, and is the starting point for many hikes and walks throughout the region. Open daily, admission is 9.20Sfr round-trip, 4.60Sfr for a one-way ticket. Bikes are carried up free until noon each day. Place Godet, Quai 5, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-720-0600, fax 32-724-5134.

## On Horseback

In nearby Chaumont you'll find the Topeka Ranch, where you can ride Western-style on horseback or enjoy a stagecoach ride, followed by an apertif. One- and two-day excursions either on horseback or on foot are also available, as are riding lessons. The Ranch features a nice "Saloon" that specializes in fondue, raclettes and barbecues upon request. Reservations are required. Prices range from 15Sfr for kids pony rides, 40Sfr for a 1½-hour horseback ride to 240Sfr for a two-day horseback

excursion. Chemin du Grand Hôtel, CH-2067 Chaumont. ☎ 32-753-2636.

## Shopping

There are many little shops and cafés that offer chocolate, pastries and the like in Neuchâtel. If it's souvenirs and trinkets you desire, then look no farther than Magasin Caché, Rue du Saint-Honoré 2, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-721-2022.

## Where to Stay



Beau-Rivage is a 19th-century hotel that sits beside the lake and offers the finest views of the area. Huge, luxurious bedrooms with cherry wood and rustic furnishings make this inn a place not to be missed. (\$\$\$\$). The restaurant, with its seasonal specialties and fine wine list adds to the appeal of this unique inn. The ambiance is old-world and spectacular. 1 Esplanade de Mont-Blanc, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-723-1515, fax 32-723-1616.



*Beau-Rivage*

Le Maison du Prussien sits in the heart of the watch-making section of Neuchâtel, on the lakeshore in an area that once belonged to Prussia (hence, the name). This ornate stone building features three floors, richly colored on the outside with blue and white shutters and gold trim. Inside, you'll find wooden ceilings, fireplaces and glamorous, modern bathrooms. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Au Gor du Vauseyon, CH-2006 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-730-5454, fax 32-730-2143.

Hotel Touring Au Lac is located conveniently beside the lake, only two minutes walk from the port of Neuchâtel, and a 10-minute walk from the main train station. It offers 51 clean, mod-

est rooms, 41 with shower or bath at modest prices (\$-\$-\$-\$), and a decent café. Hotel Touring Au Lac, 1 Place Numa-Droz, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-725-5501, fax 32-725-8243.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



Le Cardinal Brasserie is one of the nicest cafés in Neuchâtel's Old Town, dating back to 1905. Fish and seafood are the seasonal specialties of the house, as are traditional Swiss dishes. Open daily. (\$-\$-\$-\$). 9 Rue du Syon, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-725-1286.

La Maison des Halles features two restaurants: the top floor is formal and reserved, while the bottom level is more bar-like and relaxed. Both serve excellent cuisine, freshly caught local fish and other traditional Swiss favorites. (\$-



*La Maison des Halles*

\$\$\$\$). Reservations recommended. Open daily (top level) noon-2 pm, 7 pm-midnight; (bottom level) 11 am-midnight. Rue du Trésor 4, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-724-3141.

La Gondola has fresh salads and tasty pizzas at reasonable prices (\$-\$-\$-\$). Wheelchair-accessible, all major credit cards accepted. Rue de l'Ecluse 32, CH-2001 Neuchâtel. ☎ 32-721-321.

## La Chaux-de-Fonds

**T**his town sits in a high valley of the Jura mountains, in the upper northwestern portion of Canton Neuchâtel. It is the birthplace of auto manufacturer Louis Chevrolet, the painter Leopold Robert, and the poet Blaise Cendrars. It is also home to the International Watch and Clock Museum and features a wide

array of both summer and winter activities, sports and adventures.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



La Chaux-de-Fonds Tourist Office (Tourisme Neuchatelois-Montagnes) is very helpful and can arrange many different types of tours, including an architectural tour of the town on foot. This two-hour guided tour costs 100Sfr total for up to 30 people. A regular foot tour is 80Sfr for up to 20 persons, or a bus tour for 1½ hours with up to 15 people is 100Sfr. From May-October, a two-hour horse carriage tour can be taken, including a complete tour of the city and the Farming Museum. Cost is 15Sfr for adults and 7.5Sfr for kids. Espacite 1, CH-2302, La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-919-6895, fax 32-919-6297.

### Post Office

La Chaux-de-Fonds Post Office is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-noon, 1:30-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. Avenue Leopold-Robert 63, CH-2301 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-911-4171, fax 32-914-1159.

### Codes

The area code for La Chaux-de-Fonds is 32, and the postal code is CH-2300.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are many foot paths and trails in this area. If you're looking for a nice, medium-level hike, then consider starting at the La Chaux-de-Fonds train station and following the trail through Le Maillard-L'Escarpineau and Les Recrettes, ending in Les Brenets. The trail is a bit steep at one point, but then levels off quickly before heading downhill. This walk takes on average about four hours.

## On The Rails

Consider a journey on the Jura Railway system, which takes you over undulating hills dotted with horse farms. From La Chaux-de-Fonds the train chugs through the beautiful countryside to the charming and untouched villages of Le Noirmont and Glovelier/Tavannes. From Glovelier, there is a lovely and well-posted four-hour hike to St. Ursanne. Recently, some remnants of Roman roads and a Roman tunnel were found near Tavannes, another good departure point for interesting hikes. There are also train connections to the rest of the Swiss Travel System in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Glovelier and Tavannes. The Jura Railway trains run at hourly intervals. No seat reservations are taken. For information, ☎ toll-free, 800-100-200-30 or fax 800-100-200-31, Monday-Friday, 8 am-7 pm.

## In the Air

The Aero Club of the Neuchâtel Mountains offers trips in a plane or glider over the three lakes, the Jura and the Alps, weather permitting. Open year-round; prices vary. Boulevard des Eplatures 56, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. Helicopter rides are available from Helit Helicopters year-round. Avenue Leopold-Robert 161, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-926-6060, fax 32-926-5632.

## On Snow & Ice

La Chaux-de-Fonds features a variety of winter sports, including cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, sledding, tobogganing, illuminated ski trails for night-time skiing and indoor and outdoor ice rinks. The Tourist Office can provide you with maps and information of these activities.

## Museums

Musée International d'Horlogerie (International Watchmaking Museum) has over 4,500 exhibits with 2,700 watches and 700 clocks. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-5 pm. Closed Monday. Admission is 8Sfr for adults, 4Sfr for seniors, students and kids. Rue des Musées 29, CH-2301, La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-967-6861, fax 32-967-6889.

The Museum of Farming and Handicrafts is on a 17th-century farm, and shows what family life was like among watch-

making farmers. Lace-making demonstrations are held on the first Sunday of each month. Admission is 5Sfr for adults, 3Sfr for kids. Open April-October, Tuesday-Saturday from 2-5 pm, Sunday from 10 am-noon, 2-5 pm. Closed Monday. November-February, open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 2-5 pm. Crêtets 148, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-926-7189.

## Parks & Gardens

Bois du Petit Château is home to over 600 animals in a huge free public park that includes a zoo and a vivarium. Open daily from April 1-October 31, 8 am-7 pm; November-March 30, 8 am-5 pm. Rue Alexis-Marie Piaget, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds.

## Where to Stay



**Grand Hotel  
Les Endroits**  
contains spa-

cious, clean rooms in a quiet setting just outside the city center. Hearty meals are served at the in-house restaurant. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). 94 Boulevard des Endroits, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-925-0250, fax 32-925-0350.

Hotel du 1er Mars is simple and clean in the heart of old town. The restaurant features Swiss fare in

generous portions. (\$\$). Rue du 1er Mars 7a, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-968-2832, fax 32-968-9022.

Fleur De Lys Hotel has quiet rooms in a tranquil setting, with a hospitable staff. (\$\$\$). 13 Avenue Leopold-Robert, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-913-3731, fax 32-913-5851.



*Grand Hotel Les Endroits*



La Chaux-de-Fonds Youth Hostel offers 80 beds from January 19 to November 24. (\$) . Rue du Doubs 34, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-968-4315, fax 32-968-2518, [www.youthhostel.ch/chaux.de.fonds](http://www.youthhostel.ch/chaux.de.fonds).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Capucin au Gourmand features gourmet cuisine, including locally caught fresh fish and lobster. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations required. Charriere 125, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-968-1591.

Cercle Italien offers wood-oven pizzas, pasta and seafood at reasonable rates in a fun setting. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Parc 43, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds. ☎ 32-913-1333.

The Nemrut Restaurant specializes in Turkish and vegetarian dishes. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Daniel-Jeanrichard 14, CH-2300. ☎ 32-913-2048.

## Le Locle

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**L**e Locle is five miles (eight km) southwest of La Chaux-de-Fonds on Highway 20 and is the “Second City” of watchmaking in this canton.

The Le Locle Watchmaking Museum offers free 1½-hour guided tours on Sunday at 2:30 pm. Otherwise, admission is 7Sfr for adults, 4Sfr for kids and seniors. Open November 1-April 30, Tuesday-Sunday from 2-5 pm, May 1-October 31, from 10 am-5 pm. Closed Monday. Route des Monts 65, CH-2400 Le Locle. ☎ 32-931-1680, fax 32-931-1670.

The Moulins Souterrains (Underground Mills) are underground caverns that contain a hydraulic factory. These have been in use since the 16th century and are a truly unique experience. Open May-October from 10 am-5 pm daily; November-April, Tuesday-Sunday from 2-5 pm. Admission is 9Sfr for adults, 6Sfr for kids. Le Col 23, CH-2400 Le Locle. ☎ 32-931-8989, fax 32-931-8915.

Only a few miles northwest of Le Locle is the Lake of Les Brenets and the spectacular Doubs Waterfall, a sight not to

be missed. The Les Brenets Boat Company offers tours of all types, from April 1-October 31. Adults 11.5Sfr, kids 6.5Sfr. Le Pre du Lac, CH-2416 Le Brenets. ☎ 32-932-1414, fax 32-932-1717.

The Agence Feel Concept offers a variety of adventures, including canoe trips and "Tyrolienne" (crossing between cliffs), as well as food-oriented excursions. Prices vary according to the type and length of trip. Case Postal 565, CH-2400 Le Locle. ☎ 32-931-0865, fax 32-931-0919.

For the serious trekkers, consider trying this 9½-hour hike of 22 miles/37.5 km. You start out at the Le Locle train station and follow the path to L'Escarpineau, then on to La Chaux-de-Fonds and then La Vue-des-Alpes, where you'll have great views of the Alps and surrounding areas. The first part of your journey should take about 5½ hours. From this point, you'll have a much easier time of it, as most of the trail heads downward, through Les Hauts-Geneveys, Valangin, Neuchâtel and finally arriving at Hauterive.

## Les Ponts-de-Martel

**L**es Ponts-de-Martel is in the middle of the canton and provides a great spot for hiking and adventures. You won't want to miss the Fromagerie Les Martel (Cheese Dairy). It has a visitor's gallery and cheese tasting (4.5Sfr) or breakfast (12.5Sfr). Open daily from 8 am-noon, 5-7 pm. Major Benoit 25, CH-2316, Les Ponts-de-Martel.

You should check out the Green Trek Group. They offer week-long or weekend trips of varying types in the countryside, including hiking with llamas, cycling, boating, horse-drawn carriage tours. Sleep in Indian teepees, tents, on straw or in dorms. All tours include shower and bathroom facilities, with campfires and outdoor grills. Prices range from 499Sfr for adults for a week (399Sfr for kids) to weekend trips at 249Sfr for adults (195Sfr for kids six to 12). Nathalie Guye, CH-2316, Les Ponts-de-Martel. ☎ 32-937-1516, fax 32-937-1532.

## La Sagne

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**S**outheast of Le Locle is the village of La Sagne, featuring La Corbatière Equestrian Center. Here you can take riding lessons or participate in riding holidays on horseback or in a carriage. Farm vacations are also available. Rides start at 25Sfr per hour. ☎ 32-913-4955. A nice little free Regional Museum can also be found in La Sagne, showing 20th-century objects and fauna of the region with an emphasis on local history. Open the first Sunday of each month from 1:30-5 pm. Le Crêt 103a, CH-2314 La Sagne. ☎ 32-931-8875.

A good 1½-hour walk, known as the Statues Route, takes you from Les Petits-Ponts north up to La Sagne. This walk is steeply graded and a little challenging at points. For information, ☎ 32-919-6895, fax 32-919-6297.

Another tough trail is a near four-hour trek that begins in Les Hauts-Geneveys (you can get here via the Neuchâtel train station) and ends in La Sagne. The terrain is rugged and leads you through many heavily-forested areas. There are several steep climbs on this path, with the high point being at Mont Racine. However, the 1½-hour trip down is very pleasant and relaxing.

## Travers

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**S**outh of Noiraigue on Highway 10 is the village of Travers, best-known for its asphalt mines. It features a restaurant known as the Café des Mines that offers ham cooked in asphalt.

All visits are in the form of 1½-hour guided tours. Open April 1-October 20, daily from 10 am-2 pm; October 21-March 31, Sunday at 12 and 2 pm. Admission is 12.5Sfr for adults, 10Sfr for seniors and students, 7.5Sfr for kids ages six-16. The Café is open April-October 20, from 9:30 am-5:30 pm.

## Môtiers

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**M**ôtiers is a tiny village that is southeast of Highway 10, south of Travers on a local road. If you're into serious hiking, then consider a 3½-hour trip on foot, beginning in Môtiers. The start

of this trek is very steep and should be attempted only by those folks who are quite fit. You'll travel for the first two hours up a steep grade that leads to the Haut des Gorges, before peaking at La Combax. From there you'll hike another hour or so to Mauborget. Worth the journey if you like a challenge.

## Le Bémont

**A**t the far southwestern end of Canton Neuchâtel is the tiny village of Le Bémont, on a high plateau in the fold of the Jura mountains, just south of the Lac de Taillères. The village – only half a mile from the French border – is situated on the Jura Highway, a road well-known to hikers, cyclists and cross-country skiers, and is a great base for panoramic walks and excursions. It is also a bird-watcher's paradise, and home to indigenous falcons. You can get here via auto or train, and just across from the wee train station is a very cute youth hostel that is suitable for families with children or the lone wanderer. The hostel is open from the end of January to mid-November annually and offers 93 beds. (\$) CH-2877 Le Bémont. ☎ 32-951-1707, fax 32-951-2413, [www.youthhostel.ch/bemont](http://www.youthhostel.ch/bemont).

# Canton Fribourg (FR)

## Fribourg

### At a Glance

**F**ribourg is best-known for its Holstein cows – those black-and-white beauties that provide most of the agricultural folk in this region with their income. About 252,850 people reside in this mostly rural canton, which is 1,036 sq miles (2,694 square km) of gently-rolling green hills, making it the eighth-largest canton in terms of land mass. It is the 12th-largest canton, comprised of mostly French-speaking Roman Catholics. Nearly 90% of the residents are natural-born citizens. Fribourg joined the Swiss Confederation in 1481 and has retained much of its medieval flavor, especially in the capital city of Fribourg.



*Fribourg*

With its green pastures and low-rolling hills, Canton Fribourg is excellent for walking, biking and hiking excursions and is often overlooked by tourists, though during the summer months many flock to the towns of Fribourg and Gruyère. Here you'll find the best fondue, made from Gruyère cheese, as well as the traditional fall dish – *Kilbi*. The Fribourg feast, which takes place each autumn (in September), marks the return of the Fribourgeoise cows from the upper Alpine pastures. It features sweet smoked ham, lamb stew and a mixture of liquored pears.

The capital city contains a great number of castles, churches and monasteries in a cobblestone village with quaint, narrow streets that sits along the shores of the Saane River. Founded in 1157, Fribourg is home to 42,000 inhabitants who enjoy Wednesday and Saturday mornings throughout the year, when a lively market is held near the village's town hall. Here you'll find fresh-baked goods, produce and local artisans selling handmade crafts. Most of the Old Town is on the west bank of the river.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Fribourg Tourist Office is open Monday-Friday, 9 am-12:30 pm, 1:30-6 pm; Saturday, 9 am-12:30 pm, 1:30-4 pm; Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm.

Closed from October-April on Saturday afternoons. Avenue de la Gare 1, CH-1700 Fribourg. The cantonal information numbers are ☎ 26-321-3175, fax 26-322-3527, and the town information numbers are ☎ 26-350-1111, fax 26-350-1112, [www.fribourgtourism.ch](http://www.fribourgtourism.ch).

## Train Station

The train station is in the center of Old Town at Avenue de la Gare 1.

## Post Office

There are nine post office branches in Fribourg, and one of the most convenient is near the train station at Avenue de Tivoli 3, CH-1701 Fribourg. ☎ 26-351-2655, fax 26-351-2656. It is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am to noon.

## Codes

The area code for Fribourg is 26 and the postal codes are CH-1700-1709.

## Getting Around

Getting around in Fribourg is easiest on foot, as most of the streets are narrow, steep and cobblestoned. If you're into fountains, then you'll love this city, as there are quite a few medieval fountains in the Old Town. Many of them are copies, as the originals have been relegated to the Museum of Art & History.

## Adventures

### On Foot



You'll want to get the view of Fribourg from the top of a small hill that overlooks the city and another one that offers a panoramic view of the countryside, with the Bernese Alps in the background. If you're lucky, on a very clear evening, you can even glimpse the southern Alps as well. To get here, you can either walk or take the local funicular that leaves hourly. You'll also pass a covered wooden bridge that dates back to 1580, known as the Pont de Berne.

You might want to visit the Schwarzsee (Black Lake) while in Fribourg. This is an easy journey either by car, bike or on foot. It

is 17 miles (27 km) south of Fribourg, and really makes for a pleasant bike ride in the summer. To get there, take the local road that travels southeast from Fribourg in the direction of Plaffeien. When you reach this village follow the signs to the village of Gypsera and the Schwarzsee (south). The scenery along this route is breathtaking.

## On Snow

The Alpes Fribourgeoises (Fribourg Alps), as they are known, offer plenty of opportunities for downhill and cross-country skiing as well as snowboarding and sledding. The Schwarzsee (Black Lake/Lac Noir in French) is 17 miles (27 km) south of Fribourg, offering three ski areas with eight lifts. You'll also find a short cross-country ski trail, and a skiing and snowboarding school.

There are several peaks here ranging in height from 5,500 to 6,500 feet (1,677-1,980 m).

## Sightseeing

### Landmarks & Historic Sites



The Town Hall of Fribourg is a 16th-century structure that features an octagonal clock tower with motorized figures appearing every hour.

### Museums

The Gutenberg Museum is housed in a 700-year-old building, now opened as the Swiss Museum of Graphic Arts and Communication. The museum features displays documenting the history of the printing press, as well as possible future techniques. Open Wednesday-Sunday, 11 am-6 pm. Place Notre Dame 16, CH-1700 Fribourg. ☎ 26-347-3828.

The Fribourg Brewery & Beer Museum is housed in the former cellars of the Cardinal Brewery, featuring many antiquated objects related to brewing beer by traditional methods. The brewery adjoins the museum and provides insight into modern-day brewing and bottling methods. Admission by appointment only at Passage de Cardinal, CH-1700 Fribourg. ☎ 26-429-2211.

*Fribourg*

## Shopping

Some of the best shopping spots are in and around the Place de Tilleul (Linden Square), the Rue de Romont and the Rue de Lausanne. Here you'll find local artisans as well as a few designer stores, as well as lots of cafés and coffee shops. La Clef du Pays sells souvenirs from Fribourg. Rue de Tilleul 1, CH-1701 Fribourg. ☎ 26-322-5120. You can also find such items at the Office de Tourisme (Tourist Office) at 1 Place du la Gare, CH-1700 Fribourg. ☎ 26-321-3175.

## Where to Stay



The Golden Tulip is one of the best hotels in the city, near the train station and offering luxury rooms and suites, with a fine restaurant and private parking. It has good views of the old town and the Alps. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Grand-Places 14, CH-1700 Fribourg. ☎ 26-351-9191, fax 26-351-9192, [www.goldentulip.ch](http://www.goldentulip.ch).



Au Parc Hotel is ultra-modern, clean and comfortable and includes a French and Thai restaurant, a bar, disco and a shopping center. The rates include breakfast. (\$-\$\$\$). The disco "Le Baccara" is open Tuesday-Saturday from 9:30 pm-4 am. Route de Villars 37, CH-1700 Fribourg. ☎ 26-429-5656, fax 26-429-5657, [www.auparc-hotel.ch](http://www.auparc-hotel.ch).

## Camping



Camping is available in nearby Marly, at La Follaz Campground, just south of the Fribourg center. Sitting on the riverbank, this campground is open from April to the end of September (\$). ☎ 26-436-2495. Campground Schiffenen is north of the city in the village of Dudingen, and is open year-round (\$-\$). ☎ 26-493-1917.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Acacia is in the nearby village of Marly, only two miles (3.2 km) from Fribourg's center. It has a handful of nice rooms should you decide to spend the night (\$-\$). The restaurant serves French fare and includes a nice sun terrace for outside dining, with a large brewery set in an informal atmosphere. (\$-\$). Rte de la Gruyère 8, CH-1723 Marly. ☎ 26-430-0700, fax 26-430-0705.

# Murten

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**M**urten is located on the north-south route (E4 & A1) between Bern and Lausanne. It is the capital of the Lake District of Canton Fribourg, and this small medieval town is one of the best kept secrets in Switzerland. The village lies along the Swiss "Midlands" at the edge of the Great Marsh, on the shores of the Murtensee. The town, with 5,100 inhabitants who speak mostly German, was founded by Duke Berchtold in the late 1100s. In 1416 it was entirely destroyed by a devastating fire, then rebuilt. Nearly 300 years later it was the scene of a bloody battle, but was saved by the Swiss Army. From 1484 through 1784 the town was controlled by both the canton of Bern and Fribourg and, near the end of the century, the French invaded the town. However, in 1803, Napoleon returned the town of Murten to Fribourg.

## Information

### Tourist Office



Murten Tourismus, Kirchgasse 6, CH-3280 Murten.

☎ 26-670-5112, fax 26-670-4983, [www.murten.ch](http://www.murten.ch).

Guided tours of the village, with historical references, last 75 minutes and the cost varies, depending upon the number of people in your group. Special or private tours are available upon request.

### Train Station

The station is accessible from all venues in Switzerland and Europe. ☎ 512-20-7411, fax 512-20-7414.

## Getting Around

### On Foot & Bike



You can grab maps that will take you on walks or bike rides around the perimeter of Lake Murten at the Bikecenter in the Murten Train Station. There are various types of bikes available, including tandems. For information and reservations, ☎ 51-221-1552. If you choose to walk around the perimeter of Lake Murten, it will take you about four hours on a very level, easy-to-follow trail.

### On Water

There are a number of private boats for rent that hold from 10 to 190 people. For a group ride, call TSM Perrotet AG at ☎ 26-673-1162 and, for more intimate excursions (10 persons maximum), call Heinz Jost at ☎ 79-439-8308 or 26-672-1665. If it is a sailboat ride you're looking for or pedal-boat rentals, then contact Pierre Tschächti at Segelschule Murtensee, ☎ 26-670-4817. For canoeing, ☎ 79-640-9288. Reservations required at all venues.

For round-trip boat rides (70 minutes) around the Murtensee beginning at Murten, ☎ 79-408-6635. Daily trips, except Mondays, from May through October, begin at 10:30 am and run every half-hour until 6 pm. This trip is ideal for families with children who want to combine a walk with a boat ride to the opposite side of the lake.



*Murten Rathaus (Jungpionier)*

For an all-day trip, known as the “longest water route in Switzerland,” the region has boat rides throughout the three lakes of Murtensee, Neuchatel and Bienne. Offered daily from April through the end of October, they begin at 10:10 am and arrive at 6:50 pm, beginning in either Murten or Biel.

Swimming is available at various spots along the lake, but you can also swim and take a sauna at the Hallenbad Schwimmstrand. It includes several pools, as well as table tennis and a solarium. Open from the middle of May through the middle of

September, Monday from 2-9 pm, Tuesday-Friday from 9:30 am-9 pm and on Saturday and Sunday from 9:30 am-6 pm. Prices range from 4Sfr for kids to 8Sfr for adults. There is also a café on the premises. ☎ 26-672-363, fax 26-672-3639.

Fishing is available either with or without a license – although one is recommended for extended stays in the area. You can get them at the tourist office. For information, ☎ 26-670-2257.

If you're looking to golf, then check out the Golf & Country Club Wallenried, located just outside the village. ☎ 26-684-8480 for information.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Murten Museum has historical displays and information regarding the village throughout its development and history. Ryf 4, CH-3280 Murten. ☎ 26-670-3100.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Schiff am See is a classy spot along the lake that offers first-class rooms, service and a terrific restaurant that specializes in fresh-caught fish from Lake Murten. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-3280, Murten. ☎ 26-670-2701, 26-670-3531.

Parkhotel Schloss Münchenwiler is a medieval castle that sits in a spectacular setting amid well-manicured grounds, offering first-class service, and classic rooms. (\$\$\$\$). All major credit cards accepted. CH-1797 Muchenwiler. ☎ 26-672-8181, fax 26-672-8182.



*Parkhotel Schloss Münchenwiler*



*Hotel-Restaurant Ringmauer*

Hotel-Restaurant Ringmauer is a charming villa in the heart of Murten. Very reasonable prices (\$\$). Deutsche Kirchgasse 2, CH-3280 Murten. ☎ 26-670-1101, fax 26-672-2083.

Hotel-Restaurant Bahnhof offers modest accommodations in a

clean and comfortable setting. No frills, but a nice spot for families or bargain hunters. (\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 14, CH-3280 Murten. ☎ 26-670-225, fax 26-672-1336.

For Camping, check out the Camping Les 3 Lacs Sa, which offers 100 camping spots, a restaurant and a sun terrace. For information, ☎ 26-673-1993.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



Murten is known for two things when it comes to food: wonderful bakeries and great fresh fish. You can't go wrong in any of the restaurants along the lakeside or in the village area.

Zum Buttergüfel is one of the best spots in the village for authentic baked goods. They specialize in the famous Nidelkuchen (cakes) of the region. (\$-\$\$) Open daily 6 am-1:30 pm, 3-6 pm. Located at Bernstarasse 15, CH-3280 Murten. ☎ 26-670-2158.

Confiserie Monnier is an upscale tea room that serves up delicious fare at reasonable prices. Local cuisine, including home-baked goods in the heart of the village. Closed Mondays. (\$\$). Hauptgasse 25, CH-3280 Murten. ☎ 26-670-2542.

Bar & Blumen is a bar in the heart of Murten that serves excellent drinks in a lovely setting and offers lively music. (\$-\$\$). Open Monday-Saturday from 10 am and on Sundays from

11 am. Rathausgasse 9, CH-3280 Murten. ☎ 26-670-0190, fax 26-670-0191 fax.



*In Gruyères's Old Town (Voyager)*

## Gruyères

**A**t the foot of the Moleson, this is one of the fine jewels of Switzerland. Best visited in the fall, winter or spring, when all the tourists are gone, Gruyères is home to one of the country's finest cheese-making factories. When mixed with Vacherin – another style of cheese produced in Fribourg – Gruyère becomes the perfect fondue mixture. For centuries Gruyères belonged to a series of local counts, who took refuge in the giant castle here. The

host of medieval houses and cobblestone walkways and lookout spots are especially fun.

If you visit Gruyères in the early summer, you'll be sure to catch the cow herders leading their droves of cattle to high Alpine pastures.



*The Castle of Gruyère (Paebi)*

The herders – known as *armaillis* – allow the cows to graze on the rich grasses found on the sunny mountain slopes until the fall months, when they make the annual pilgrimage back down to their winter quarters.

The Gruyères Tourist Office is in the town center, CH-1663 Gruyères. ☎ 26-921-1030, fax 26-921-3850, [www.gruyeres.ch](http://www.gruyeres.ch).



*Don't miss La Maison de Gruyères – the local factory for Switzerland's famous cheese. They produce 48 huge wheels of cheese each day here, and can stock 7,000 cheese wheels. Admission is 5Sfr per person. It's open from 9 am to 7 pm (May-October), and from 9 am to 3 pm (October-May). You can watch the cheese being made, with explanations in a variety of languages. There is also a restaurant and gift shop. Located just downhill from the village of Gruyères, at Pringy-Gruyères, CH-1662. ☎ 26-921-8400, fax 26-921-8401.*

If you have children, then consider heading up to the village of Moléson, where the mountain of Le Moléson offers everything for families with kids – both young and old. Activities include biking, skiing, sledding, downhill scootering, mountain-karting, mini-golf, botany, astronomy, archery and an Alpine cheese making shop. You can access this area via foot, funicular or ca-

ble car. Moléson-sur-Gruyères, Office du Tourisme, CH-1663.  
 ☎ 26-921-8500, fax 26-921-8509.

## Where to Stay



La Fleur de Lys hotel and restaurant was built in 1653 in the heart of this medieval village. It was recently renovated to include all modern amenities, while the restaurant offers local dishes, including trout from local lakes, fondue, raclette, chalet soup, and Alp macaroni, with a wide range of home-made desserts. (\$\$). Very reasonable rates and a cozy, homey atmosphere prevail here. CH-1663 Gruyères. ☎ 26-921-8282, fax 26-921-3605.



*La Fleur de Lys*

Six miles (9.6 km) outside of Gruyères and three miles (4.8 km) from Bulle is Hotel Chalet Les Colombettes, set in the unpretentious countryside. There are only 14 rooms here, but they are all ultra-modern, clean and comfy. There is on-site free parking, a café (open 7:30 am-noon) and a restaurant (open 11:30 am-10:30 pm). They also offer currency exchange in the hotel. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-1628 Vuadems, Gruyères. ☎ 26-919-6063, fax 26-919-6069. In the US, you can call ☎ 800-359-4827.

Hostellerie Des Chevaliers is charming and homey, with splendid views of the surrounding countryside. The rooms were individually decorated with lots of period and antique furniture. The in-house restaurant is closed Sunday and Monday. (\$\$-\$\$\$). CH-1663 Gruyères. ☎ 26-921-1933, fax 26-921-2552.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



La Chalet Gruyères is one of the most popular spots in the village, featuring fondue, raclette with dry meat, cold and hot sandwiches, and delightful des-

serts such as fresh raspberries and Gruyères-made cream. There are three separate dining areas, one more formal and elegant than the other two. Be sure to try the Soupe de Châlet, a delightful mix of vegetables, Gruyères cream, and croutons. (\$-\$). CH-1663 Gruyères. ☎ 26-921-3434, fax 26-921-3313.

Auberge de la Hall is in the heart of Gruyères and has all types of fondues, cheeses, trout and fruits with cream. Hosts Christian and Marie Chassot-Corboz serve hearty dishes in a rustic and cozy setting at very reasonable prices (\$-\$). CH-1663 Gruyères. ☎ 26-921-2178, fax 26-921-3313.



# Southern Switzerland



1. Tourbillon Castle; Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts; Cantonal Natural History Museum
2. Cantonal Archeological Museum; Cantonal Historical Museum; Châteaux de Valère
3. Grosser Aletsch Glacier; Stockalper Castle; Matza Gallery
4. Le Château de La Bâtière; Pierre Giannada Foundation
5. Haut Val de Bagnes Nature Reserve
6. Alpine Museum; Radio Matterhorn Museum; climbers' cemetery
7. Saaser Museum; Ice Palace
8. Lido beach; Swiss Miniature Village; Herman Hesse Museum; Cathedral of St. Lawrence; Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli; Cantonal Museum of Art; Modern Art Museum; Museum of Extra-European Cultures; Villa Heleneum; Cantonal Museum of Natural History; Parco Civico; Tassino Park; Florida Park; Giardino Belvedere
9. Fossil Museum
10. Three Castles: Castello di Montebello; Castello di Sasso Corbaro
11. Piazza Grande

NOT TO SCALE



# Southern Switzerland

The final region covered in this book contains the two southernmost cantons of Valais and Ticino. Though connected, both are vastly different in terms of geography, language and culture.

Valais is home to some of Switzerland's best ski resorts, including the village of Zermatt, and the mighty Matterhorn.

Located on the western side of this region, Valais is literally one long valley that sits snugly between the Bernese and Valais mountain ranges.

You can drive through this region easily via Highway 9, which will take you from one edge of the canton to the other, or you can take a train from almost anywhere in Switzerland. One of the best drives ever is to go south from Visp on Highway 9 to the village of Täsch, park your car and then take the rack railway up to the auto-free village of Zermatt. The scenery is spec-

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tacular and the roads are just plain fun if you enjoy a bit of challenging driving.

The sister canton of Ticino at the eastern side of this region features palm trees, fruit groves and beautiful lakes. Here, Italian is the most popular language, and the atmosphere is laid-back and much more relaxed than in any other Swiss canton. Ticino is a mountainous area with attractive Alpine foothills, lakeside walking paths, and majestic peaks. Merlot is a very popular local wine, and the landscape and hills are dotted with tiny houses that are more reminiscent of neighboring Italy than of traditional Swiss chalets. It is here that you can travel through the St. Gotthard Pass or walk along the Strada Alta hiking trail.

## Canton Valais (VS)

### At A Glance

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**T**he canton of Valais is perhaps best-known as the home of the ever-stunning Matterhorn – perhaps the most frequently photographed mountain in the world outside of Mt. Everest. Throughout this canton of 286,983 residents you'll also find lovely mineral collections, outstanding wines, healthy hot springs and natural spa waters.

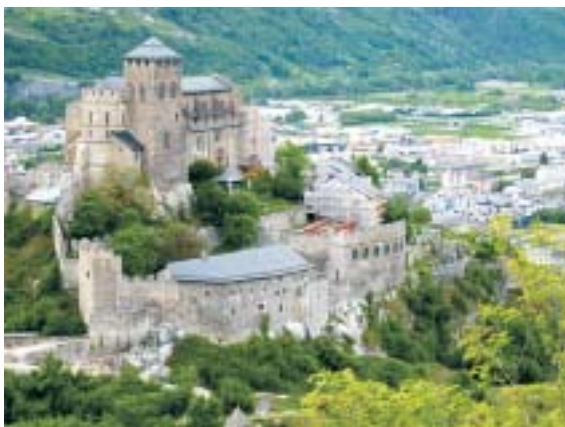
Valais joined the Swiss Confederation in 1815 and, as such, is one of the youngest and most rugged cantons. It is also the third-largest, behind Graubünden and Bern in terms of land mass at 3,240 square miles (8,424 square km). Nearly 40% of its residents work in the tourism industry, with French being the dominant language among these primarily Roman Catholic people, although you'll hear a good deal of Swiss-German and Swiss-Italian as well.

## Sion

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**S**ion, the capital of Canton Valais, is best-known for its castle, Tourbillon, and the 11th-century church, Notre-Dame-de-Valère, whose mighty silhouettes hover over this village.

"Sitten," as it known in German is also home to a host of vineyards and is a wine-making spot, with about 28,000 primarily French-speaking residents.



*Notre Dame de Valère above Sion (Filzstift)*

Here you'll find more museums than any other city in Valais. Sion is also an especially nice town for walking.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



Sion Tourisme can be found at Place de la Planta, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-327-7727, fax 27-327-7728. Hours are Monday-Friday 8:30-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-4 pm, Sunday 9 am-noon during July and August. Otherwise, the hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 am-noon, 2-5:30 pm, Saturday 9 am-noon.

For cantonal information, contact Valais Tourism, Rue Pré-Fleuri 6, CH-1951 Sion. ☎ 27-327-3570, fax 27-327-3571, [Swww.matterhornstate.com](http://Swww.matterhornstate.com).

### Train Station

The Sion train station is on the city's south side, at Cour de la Gare, and it offers bike rental and money exchange offices that are open daily.

### Post Office

Sion's Post Office is open from 8 am-noon, 1:30-5:30 pm daily, Saturday 8 am-noon. It is just slightly west of the train station on a tiny side street between Cour de la Gare and Avenue de France, across from the bus station.



*Château Tourbillon*

## Codes

The postal code in Sion is CH-1950 and the area code is 27.

## Getting Around

Sion is easiest to explore on foot. It's a lovely little village, especially with the castle and the church looming impressively above.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are numerous wine-tasting and vineyard trips to take in and around Sion. The Tourist Office can help you with arrangements and details.

You can play 18 holes of golf at the Golf-Club de Sion year-round during the week for 90Sfr, and on weekends for 100Sfr. It's at Route de Vissigen 150, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-203-7900, fax 27-203-7901, [www.golfclubsion.ch](http://www.golfclubsion.ch).

### On Horseback

You can go horseback riding in Sion or take a group lesson at the Manège de Tourbillon, Rue du Stade 52. An hour ride costs 30Sfr or a lesson in a group is 27Sfr. ☎ 27-203-3427 for information.

The Ranch des Maragnènes also offers one-hour rides through the countryside starting at 24Sfr per hour, or a one-hour lesson for 20Sfr. Week-long excursions start at 450Sfr. Contact them at Route de Vex, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-203-1313, [www.ranch.ch](http://www.ranch.ch).

## In the Air

For airplane and helicopter trips over and around the Alps of Sion, Valais and Zermatt, contact Air-Glaciers, at Rte de l'Aéroport, CH-1951 Sion. ☎ 27-329-1415, fax 27-329-1429, [www.air-glaciers.ch](http://www.air-glaciers.ch). Prices start at 268Sfr for one to five people in a plane and 344Sfr for one to four people in a helicopter. The Groupe de Vol à Moteur, at the Sion Airport, CH-1950 Sion, offers flights in planes (two people, 164Sfr) and helicopters (three people, 206Sfr). ☎/fax 27-323-5707, [www.gvmsion.ch](http://www.gvmsion.ch). Hélicoptère Service at the Aéroport de Sion, CH-1950 Sion, does flights around the Matterhorn from Sion for 164Sfr per person. ☎ 27-327-3060, fax 27-327-3061, [www.heliservice.ch](http://www.heliservice.ch).

For parachuting and sky-diving, contact the Para Club Valais, at Case Postale 1061, CH-1951 Sion. Introductory jumps start at 250Sfr, and tandem jumps range from 300-350Sfr. ☎ 32-315-2885, fax 27-323-2497, [www.pcv.ch](http://www.pcv.ch).

## In the Water

Scuba diving lessons are available from Ecole de Plongée des Iles, which gives outdoor and indoor pool instruction. Route des Iles 22, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-323-0202.

## On Snow

The Sion Snowboarding School offers lessons. Phone them at ☎ 27-327-7727 for costs and times.

## Other Sports

If you enjoy in-line skating, check out the Sion Rollerpark (Skatepark Tourbillon). ☎ 27-324-1262, fax 27-324-1288.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Tourbillon Castle sits high above Sion on the north side of the village. This medieval castle was first built in the 13th century and later destroyed by a fire in 1788. Its ruins are definitely impressive. Open from mid-March to mid-November, every day except Monday, from 10 am-6 pm. CH-1950. ☎ 27-606-4670. You also don't want to miss the Tour des Sorciers (Sorcerer's Tower), at Rue de la Tour – the last standing testament to the fortress walls that once surrounded this village. Open October-

May, Tuesday-Sunday from 1-5 pm; June-September, Tuesday-Sunday from 1-6 pm. Admission is 3Sfr.

## Shopping

Between the Rue de Conthey and Rue de Lausanne you'll find a small shopping mall. Closer to the train station on Avenue de France is a huge Migros store with a self-service restaurant on the first floor, and almost anything you could want elsewhere throughout the store.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Rhône sits on the outside of the Old Town and features 45 small rooms with very tidy bathrooms and spiffy furniture. Very reasonable rates (\$\$) with breakfast included. The hotel's restaurant serves hearty chow. 10 Rue du Scex, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-322-8291, fax 27-323-1188.

Hotel Castel is on the road to Simplon on the northeastern side of Sion. If you want good views of the area, then this is the place to stay. (\$\$). 36 Rue du Scex, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-322-9171, fax 27-322-5724.

There is a good Youth Hostel in Sion, offering 79 beds from February 2 to November 30 each year. (\$). Located at Rue de l'Industrie 2, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-323-7470, fax 27-323-7438, [www.youthhostel.ch/sion](http://www.youthhostel.ch/sion).

## Where to Eat



Le Jardin Gourmand is probably the best restaurant in town, and certainly serves the best Vaudoise dishes anywhere in the area. The restaurant is made up of three rooms that feature Victorian furniture, marble floors and wooden ceilings. Fine fish, seafood, filet and delicious desserts abound here. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations recommended. Open year-round except for four weeks in July and August. Hours are Monday-Saturday from 11:30 am-2 pm, 7-10 pm. Near the train station at 22 Avenue de la Gare, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-323-2310.

Au Chevel Blanc is in the heart of Old Town. It has a comfortable atmosphere and serves hearty portions of Swiss favorites, as well as seasonal dishes such as venison and spaetzle. (\$-

\$\$). Open daily except for Sunday and Monday, and closed the last two weeks of December. 23 Rue du Grand-Pont, CH-1950 Sion. ☎ 27-322-1867.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Brig

**B**rig, a small village on Highway 9 at a junction on the eastern side of the canton, has for centuries been a trading stop between Switzerland and Italy. It is an ideal starting point for excursions to such spots as Zermatt, Saas-Fee, or Crans-Montana. Brig is considered to be the main town of Upper Valais, with a population of 11,800, and was an important village during Roman times because it was the start of the Simplon Pass.

The village sits at the convergence of the Rhône and Saltine rivers and is also the junction for the roads to the Rhône Glacier and the Furka Pass.



*Brig's Old Town (MySwissAlps)*

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Brig Tourist Office is at Postfach 688, CH-3900 Brig.

Hours are Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturday from 9 am-1 pm. Closed Sunday. In July, August and September, the hours are Monday-Friday from 8:30-6 pm,





*The Stockalperpalast, built between 1658 and 1678 (MySwissAlps)*

Saturday from 9 am-6:15 pm and Sunday from 9 am-1 pm,  
☎ 27-921-6030, fax 27-921-6031, [www.brig.ch](http://www.brig.ch).

## Train Station

From the Brig train station you can catch the Glacier Express, which runs every day from Zermatt to St. Moritz via Brig (and vice versa). The trip takes approximately 7½ hours and leaves Zermatt starting at 8:10 am, with four trains daily in the summer, and one a day in the winter. For reservations and information, ☎ 27-922-8111, fax 27-922-8101.

Brig is an important train stop for many travelers, and it has a train that carries cars and motorcycles through the Lötschberg Tunnel, from Goppenstein to Kandersteg (cost is 25Sfr) every 30 minutes from 6:10 am until 11:10 daily. The trip takes only about 20 minutes and is a real treat if you've never traveled this way. You stay in your car and drive it directly onto the train. You will be inside the tunnel for about 12 minutes. There are grand views on both sides of the mountain when you first board the train and as you exit the tunnel. It's the shortest route between Canton Valais and Canton Bern and helps you to avoid an extra two hours of traveling by road around the mountain. This is the



*Near Brig, with the Eggishorn in the background (MySwissAlps)*

Brig-Spiez route, and there is also a Spiez-Locarno train that carries motor vehicles as well.

Brig is the site of the 12.4-mile Simplon Tunnel and Pass, which brings you to Locarno in Canton Ticino. The cost is 50Sfr per rider and there are no vehicles allowed for this 2½-hour trip. It stops in Domodossola, Italy for a change of trains.



*If you are driving over the Simplon Pass, take care, especially in the winter months, as the roads are steep and winding, and at times can be treacherous.*

## Post Office

Brig's main Post Office is in the train station on Bahnhofstrasse 1, CH-3900 Brig. Hours are 7:30 am-noon, 1:30-6:15, Monday-Friday. Open Saturday from 8-11 am. ☎ 27-921-6030, fax 27-921-6031. Inside the train station is a money exchange, lockers and bike rental.

## Codes

The postal code in Brig is CH-3900 and the phone code is 27.

## Adventures

### On Foot



For a fun afternoon journey or half-day hike, consider going up to the Grosser Aletsch Glacier – the longest glacier in the Alps (16 miles long/26 km), which flows out of the Jungfrau in Canton Bern. From Brig, you can either drive (east on Highway 19) or take a local eastward train to the village of Fiesch. From here, you can take a gondola up to the Eggishorn at 9,489 feet (2,893 m), where you'll find the well-marked footpath with little effort. Follow the trail a bit north along the ridge before it becomes suddenly steep, then reverses back down a stoney slope. You'll come to an old farm road that suddenly turns westward and will bring you to the middle terminal of the gondola you came up on. Continue westward toward the village of Donnerstafel, past the Beemersee, at which point the trail veers around the small lake on the right side before continuing west again to the Blausee (Blue Lake). When you reach the Blausee, you can pass it on the north side and continue on along the ridge before it meanders south toward Rieder Furka, with a gondola station at the Riederalp. From here, you can ride the gondola down to Morel and catch a train or bus back to Brig, or you can simply walk, following the main road.

## Museums

The Matza Gallery tells the story of the Simplon-Brig pass. Admission is free and the museum is open May 1-October 31, Tuesday-Sunday from 9:45 am-noon, 1:45-5 pm. Simplonausstellung, CH-3900 Brig. ☎ 27-921-6030.

## Where to Stay



Ambassador Brig is a good four-story hotel in the city center that has clean rooms at very reasonable rates. (\$\$). There are two dining rooms. One (Cheminots) is a small, cozy restaurant with wooden walls and ceilings and the other (Jagerstube) is a larger dining area with a viewing window. Both are open from 9 am-11:30 pm daily. The hotel is family-owned and -run and is very quiet, but only a

three-minute walk from the train station. Saflischstrasse 3, CH-3900 Brig. ☎ 27-922-9900, fax 27-922-9909, [www.ambassador-brig.ch](http://www.ambassador-brig.ch).

Hotel Garni Europe is very near the train station, offering easy access to the Zermatt Railway, the Furka-Oberalp Railway and the Glacier Express. The rooms are clean and tidy, and breakfast is included in the rates, which are very reasonable. (\$\$). Victoriastrasse 9, CH-3900 Brig. ☎ 27-923-1321, fax 27-923-1323.

## Where to Eat



The Walliser-Weinstube (Valais Wine Cellar) is one of the best spots in town for traditional Valais and Swiss fare, served in hearty portions, with a good wine list and exceptional service. Very reasonable. (\$-\$\$). Bahnhofstrasse 9, CH-3900 Brig. ☎ 27-923-1428.

The Schlosskeller (Castle Cellar) features traditional Swiss cuisine in a lovely atmosphere, with good wines from the region. (\$\$). Alte Simplonstrasse 26, CH-3900 Brig. ☎ 27-923-3352, fax 27-923-6975.

The Brig train station has a surprisingly good buffet. Zumthurm Odiolo is at Bahnhofplatz 1, CH-3900 Brig. (\$) . Hours vary. ☎/ fax 27-923-3522.

## Martigny

This is considered to be the artistic capital of Canton Valais – and is home to the famous Pierre Gianadda Foundation. In addition to an art gallery, the foundation includes the Gallo-Roman Museum and the Automobile Museum. This little village sits in the heart of the Alps at the southwestern edge of the canton on Highway 9, at the beginning of the St. Bernard Pass and it's a good base for many excursions.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Martigny Tourist Office is at Place Centrale 9, CH-1920 Martigny. ☎ 27-721-2220, fax 27-721-2224. It is open from July-August, Monday-Friday,

9 am-noon, 1:30-6 pm, Saturday, 9 am-noon; May, June, September and October, also open on Saturday from 2-5 pm. They can provide you with maps of the area and for various hiking and walking trails throughout the region, including the Grand St. Bernard Pass and the Val de Bagnes.

## Train Station

The train station is open Monday-Saturday from 6:30 am-8 pm, Sunday from 6:50 am-8 pm. You can rent bikes here from 5:45 am-8:45 pm, Monday-Saturday, and on Sunday, 6:15 am-8:45 pm. There is also a money exchange office that is open Monday-Saturday from 5:45 am-8:45 pm and Sunday from 6:15 am-8:45 pm.

## Post Office

The Martigny Post Office is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 pm-noon, 1:30-6:30 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. Avenue de la Gare 34, CH-1920 Martigny. ☎ 27-722-5120, fax 27-722-1229.

## Codes

The postal code for Martigny is CH-1920 and the area code is 27.

## Internet Access

The Casino Bar/Café & Cinema offers Internet access for 20Sfr an hour, daily until midnight. 17 Avenue de la Gare, CH-1920 Martigny.

## Getting Around

This is easily done on foot, as there are really only two major streets – the Avenue de la Gare and Place Central, which you can easily cover in an hour or two.

## Adventures

### On Foot



Just 10 minutes south of Martigny is where you'll find the Trient Gorge and the Pissevache Waterfalls. You can either walk or drive (head southwest out of Martigny on the local road, toward Trient) to the bridge that passes above the Trient River. This bridge was built in 1934

and connects a pair of 636-foot-high walls (193 m) on either side of the river. There is also a small path along the river shore. The river, rock walls and waterfalls are a spectacular sight, and this is a great spot for climbers and naturalists. The waterfalls have a drop of 374 feet (114 m). You can access them, the gorge and surroundings from 9 am-6:30 pm, May-October. Gorges du Trient, CH-1904 Vernayaz. ☎ 27-764-1613.

A popular nine-mile hike takes you from the nearby village of Bourg St. Pierre to Cabane de Vêlan (Velan Cabin). Bourg St. Pierre (where Napoleon once stayed) is south of Martigny on the Grand St. Bernard Pass Road, and is shadowed by the Grand Combin, a 14,150-foot (4,314 m) glacier/mountain that sits imposingly at the border of Italy and Switzerland.



*Cabane de Vêlan*

You'll be following Le Valsorey river for most of the journey, which takes around seven hours round-trip. From Bourg St. Pierre (at either the bus stop or a parking area), you'll find the well-marked trail just to the left of Le Valsorey, which will criss-cross the old narrow farm road at various points. After 1.2 miles (1.9 km), you'll see a farmhouse where the road ends, and just a little farther up the trail you'll have to play hopscotch on some large rocks over the glacial stream. Be aware, however, that after a rainstorm this tiny stream often becomes a wider river where the waters can be very strong. Soon after making this crossing, you come to a fork in the trail, and you'll want to veer right here to the Cabane de Velan.

The left trail takes you to the Cabane de Valsorey, another mountain hut, but this definitely requires an overnight stay, and some parts of this trail are only suitable for very experienced hikers. You cross the stream on an old wooden bridge and then



*Cabane de Valsorey (Cosley & Houston)*

travel another 4.3 miles up a wide, mountain meadow along the mountainside before reaching the hut. To get back, you can simply retrace your steps. You'll find that many hikers come up here for an enjoyable day of picnicking and relaxation. In the

high season, it is a very popular route, so be prepared for lots of other folks moving up and down the footpath.

## Museums

The Pierre Gianadda Foundation was founded in 1978 and is built on the site of a sanctuary dating back to Roman times. It houses a Gallo-Roman museum, a vintage car museum and a sculpture garden, but is best-known for its art collections. The Roman artifacts lie in the shadow of Mont-Chemin and include ruins of an ancient Roman villa, public baths, latrines, temples and the Vivier amphitheater, which has been fully restored. It now hosts open-air concerts and performances of all types. 59 Rue de Forum, CH-1920 Martigny. ☎ 27-722-3978, fax 27-722-5285.

## Where to Stay



Hotel du Forum is a pleasant inn with 29 wood-paneled rooms. There are two very good restaurants housed here – one formal and another very informal café. (\$-\$\$). Reservations suggested. 74 Avenue de Grand-Saint Bernard, CH-1920. ☎ 27-722-1841, fax 27-722-7925.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Camping



Camping and dorm rooms are available at Les Neuvelles Campsite, at 68 Route du Levant. You can rent rooms for 20Sfr or a four-person tent for up to 85Sfr. Clean site, with showers and hiking trails nearby. CH-1920 Martigny. ☎ 27-722-4544, fax 27-722-3544.

## Where to Eat



Restaurant/Hotel des Trois Couronnes is one of Martigny's most popular spots, serving fine French cuisine at inexpensive to mid-range prices. (\$-\$\$\$). Open daily until 11:30 except for Sunday and Monday. 8 Place du Bourg, CH-1920 Martigny. ☎ 27-723-2114.

## Verbier

**V**erbier is in the heart of the French-speaking part of the Valais Alps, and is set upon a high plateau – at 4,921 feet (1,500 m) – that offers exceptional views of the surrounding mountains. Since the city is on the southwest shelf, it receives an overabundance of sunshine.

This resort town is made up of mostly wooden chalets, and caters to the skiing crowd with a network of ski runs and nearly 100 lifts situated among four valleys. It is difficult to find a street sign or name anywhere in town – a common occurrence in many Valais villages.

This area enjoys near-perfect snow conditions from November to April, allowing skiers and snowboarders of all levels to hone their skills here. One-third of the runs are classified as easy (blue), another third are intermediate (red) and the rest are for experienced skiers only (black). The highest run tops out on the Mont-Fort Glacier at 10,824 feet (3,300 m).



*Cableway in Verbier (Norbert Aepli)*



The village is 18 miles (29 km) east of Martigny. If you're driving, exit in the direction of Sembrancher. Via train, you have to go first to La Châble, and then transfer to a postal bus, or you can take a cable car directly up to Verbier from La Châble.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



Verbier-Bagnes Tourism, CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 26-775-3888, fax 27-775-3889.

### Post Office

The Verbier Post Office is open Monday-Saturday from 8 am-noon, Monday-Friday from 2-6 pm. Post de la Station, CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-771-1046, fax 27-771-6615.

### Codes

The postal code in Verbier is CH-1936 and the area code is 27.

## Getting Around

This is very easy in Verbier, which has one of the best networks of ski lifts anywhere – with 46 that give access to 253 miles (405 km) of well-marked pistes. It also contains 12 gondolas, five cable cars, and 32 chairlifts. One-day lift tickets start at 58Sfr.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are 12½ miles (20 km) of well-marked hiking trails in and around Verbier that are suitable for walking in all seasons.

The Tourist Office can provide you with maps of Verbier and other regions in the area at no charge.

### On Wheels

There are 150 miles (240 km) of biking trails in Verbier. Jet Sports (☎ 27-771-2067) and Medran Sports (☎ 27-771-6048) both offer equipment rental, excursion details and additional gear.

If you're driving, you might also want to visit the Great St. Bernard Pass, but only during the summer months. You can reach it by driving along the winding road east of Verbier toward Sembranchen. From this village, take road 21 and it will bring you to this historic pass in about an hour.

## On Snow

Verbier is basically about skiing and snow sports. The Swiss Ski School has 170 instructors and offers group and private lessons. ☎ 27-775-3363. For information on skiing throughout the area, contact the Televerbier S.A., which offers passes on more than 98 lifts throughout the four-valley region. ☎ 27-775-2511.

The Bureau of Guides in the Maison du Sport can provide you with ski and snowboarding lessons. ☎ 27-775-3363. If it's mountain trekking you're interested in, then check out either La Fantastique (offering hut-to-hut journeys, as well as rappelling and rock climbing excursions at ☎ 27-771-4141) or No Limits Center (for snowshoeing and cross-country ski touring at ☎ 27-771-7250).

## Other Sports

Center Polysportif features swimming, tennis, squash, curling, a solarium, sauna and whirlpools, as well as a fitness center, and Internet café. (☎ 27-771-6601). There are two 18-hole golf courses in Verbier: Les Moulins (☎ 27-771-7693) and Les Esserts (☎ 27-771-5314).

## Parks & Gardens

Verbier's Haut Val de Bagnes Nature Reserve is open from mid-May to early October and you can see a variety of plant and animal life here, including a wide range of Alpine flora such as edelweiss, lilies and orchids.

## Shopping

Shopping in Verbier revolves around skiing and other sports, so don't be surprised to find a good variety of sporting goods and ski shops here. Many are near the ski lifts or gondolas.

## Where to Stay



*Hotel Rosalp*

months of May, June, October, and November. (\$\$\$\$+). Rue de Medran, CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-771-6323, fax 27-771-1059, [www.relaischateaux.ch.rosalp](http://www.relaischateaux.ch.rosalp).

Hotel Vanessa is a top-rated four-star hotel, the largest in Verbier. Its huge modern rooms have balconies. Closed from April to June and from mid-October to early December. Includes a restaurant, bar, sauna, Jacuzzi and



*Hotel Vanessa*

baby-sitting services. (\$\$\$\$-\$\$\$+). Place Centrale, CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-775-2800, fax 27-775-2888.

Hotel Catogne looks like a Swiss chalet, and offers a pleasant atmosphere, with simple, clean and comfortable rooms at reasonable rates. Rooms are not huge, but are charming. There is also an in-house restaurant and bar. Closed for one month after Easter and from mid-November to mid-December. (\$\$\$). Chemin de la Croix, CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-771-6506, fax 27-771-5205.



See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

## Where to Eat



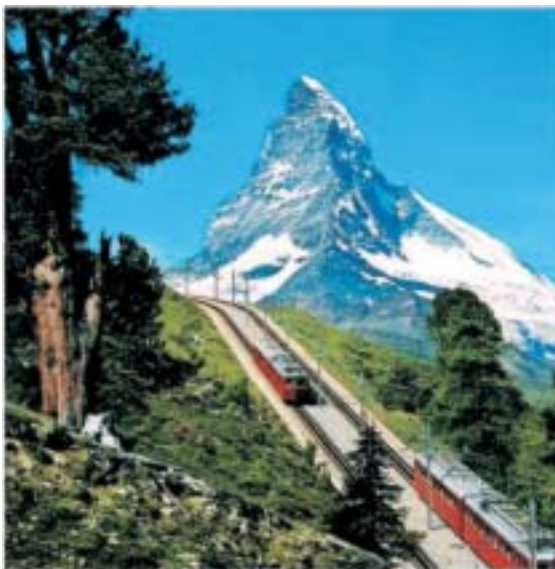
Roland Pierroz serves the finest French food found anywhere in the region at his premiere spot. The menu changes often, but the meals are always an exquisite blend of fine meats and delicately prepared dishes. There are over 35 cheeses to choose from, and you won't find a finer dessert tray anywhere in Switzerland. Located in the Hotel Rosalp. Reservations are required, and it's best to make them a few days in advance of your meal. Fixed-price menus start at 150Sfr. Open daily, noon-2 pm, 7-9:30 pm. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Rue de Medran. CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-771-6323.

La Caveau (The Cave) has a cozy, warm atmosphere above Verbier's main square. Here you'll find five varieties of fondue, grilled steaks, rösti, and other Valais delights. Very reasonable and a really cool spot to hang out. The waitstaff doesn't care if you come just to have a drink and people-watch either. Reservations recommended. (\$-\$\$). Place Centrale, CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-771-2226.

Pizzeria Cheval is a real bargain in pricey Verbier. It offers the best pizza in town in a rustic, wood-paneled setting that includes a sun terrace. Besides pizza, they have great salads, pastas and steaks. (\$-\$\$). Reservations recommended. Rue de Medran. CH-1936 Verbier. ☎ 27-771-2669.

## Zermatt

**T**his tiny, car-free village is set at the base of Switzerland's most spectacular mountain – the Matterhorn. It's also a world-famous resort town that for years has catered to the rich and famous. It has often been said that more Americans reside in Zermatt than do Swiss. This picturesque village first gained notice, however, when British explorer Edward Whymper made a number of attempts to climb the Matterhorn from its Italian face. When Whymper then changed strategy and attempted the mountain from the base of Zermatt, he was finally successful on July 14, 1865 – becoming the first person to reach the summit of this impressive peak. He did, however, lose four of his fellow travelers during this process. Only three days after Whymper's ascent, an Italian explorer by the name of Jean-Antoine Carrel successfully reached the Matterhorn's summit via the Italian side.



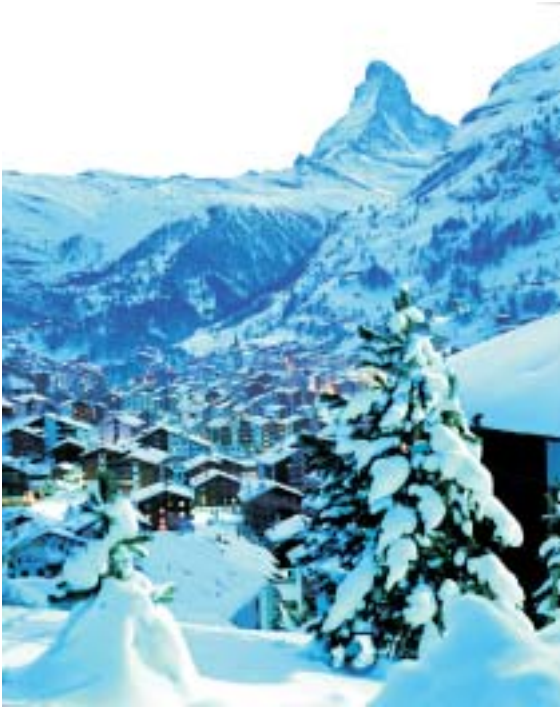
*The cog-wheel railway to the Gornergrat between Riffelberg and Riffelalp backdropped by the Matterhorn (Franziska Pfenniger)*

Zermatt is easily accessible by train from Brig or Visp, but I'd suggest you drive down through the scenic mountain passes and valleys to the base town of Täsch, where there is a large car park on the righthand side of the road. You can park here for a nominal fee, and then board the cog railway for the ascent up to Zermatt. A round-trip ticket costs 14.8Sfr. To find your way around in Zermatt, look to the signs posted for hotels and restaurants, since you won't see a typical street sign here.



*The best time to visit Zermatt, if you're not into skiing, is in early May. All the tourists and a good portion of the skiers have left by that time, and most of the shops are having sales, especially on tourist items such as T-shirts, handkerchiefs and even jewelry. You can find lots of bargains, even when it comes to hotel rates at this time.*

Zermatt is home to some 5,600 residents – most of whom speak Swiss German, French, Italian and English with ease.



*The town of Zermatt (Christof Sonderegger)*

The village has five doctors, one dentist, three pharmacies and, since 2000, its own television station that features live panoramic views of the various hiking and skiing areas.

You'll also be able to watch CNN and other English-language programs from your hotel, as well as movies and world news.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Zermatt Tourist Office is on the Bahnhofplatz near the train station, and is open from mid-June to mid-October, Monday-Saturday from 8:30 am-6 pm, Sunday from 9:30 am-noon and 4-7 pm. At other times of the year, it is open Monday-Saturday from 8:30 am-noon, 1:30-

6 pm. Info Zermatt, Haus Cheminots B, PO Box 424, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-8100, fax 27-966-8101.

## Post Office

Zermatt's Post Office is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-noon, 1:45-6 pm, Saturday from 8:30-11 am. ☎ 27-967-1992, fax 27-967-5930.

## Codes

The postal code for Zermatt is CH-3920 and the area code is 27.

## Getting Around

This is easy on foot, or you can take a horse-drawn carriage ride. An electric vehicle is provided by many of the hotels here to bring you, your skis and luggage to your hotel.

## Adventures

### On Foot



There are a variety of hikes to Alpine huts throughout Zermatt. Your best bet is to contact the Zermatt Alpine Center at Postfach 403, CH-3920 Zermatt.



*Young ibexes in the Monte Rosa massif (15,000 feet), high above Zermatt (Christof Sonderegger)*

☎ 27-966-2460, fax 27-966-2469, [alpincenter@zermatt.ch](mailto:alpincenter@zermatt.ch). They can provide you with itineraries, maps, suggestions and guides, and offer easy day tours for individuals, couples and groups, as well as hiking and trekking tours for all levels of wanderers. They also have ice climbing, gorge-climbing adventures, snowshoe walks and indoor climbs.

The new Matterhorn Trail has added to the already 248 miles (397 km) of extended hiking paths in and around the Zermatt area. There are a number of especially nice walks that you can take – ranging from those that are suitable for everyone to others that should only be attempted by serious hikers. Most of these hikes should only be attempted from June through October and, even then, it is best to consult the tourist offices for weather conditions, which can change rapidly in many of these spots.

For the truly adventurous, consider taking a multi-day trek that follows the journey of the Matterhorn Gotthard train route (see below: *On The Rails*, ☎ 27-927-7777 or [www.mgbahn.ch](http://www.mgbahn.ch)). You can begin at the top of the Gornergrat station, at 10,132 feet (3,089 meters) and then decide on a variety of routes that will bring you back to Zermatt, and on to Visp.

Hiking from the Gornergrat station to the first stop downward at Riffelberg (2.7 miles/4.4 km) will take about 1½ hours. There is a small restaurant at this stop and in the summer the views are spectacular on this very level walk that is suitable for almost anyone. This will take you down to the 8,262-foot/2,582-m level.

From Riffelberg continue the descent to Zermatt at 5,136 feet/1,605 m – another 2½ hours – along a well-marked path that is mostly downhill. You pass through the small hamlet of Ritti/Moos, where there is a nice restaurant and restroom facilities. Alternately, you can bypass the Riffelberg and instead travel to the lower station of Riffelalp at 7,075 feet/2,211 meters via the Grünsee. The walk is a bit steep for the first two hours and then levels off. The entire trip should take you no longer than three hours and you'll find eateries at the Grünsee and at Riffelalp.

*Following pages: The Riffelalp chapel (7,300 ft) in the Gornergrat area, with the Weisshorn in the background*







From Riffelalp you can choose four different routes down to Zermatt and one alternative trip along a level path to Blauherd at 7,075 feet/2,211 meters, which takes almost two hours. It's definitely worth your time in clear weather. Otherwise, you can leave Riffelalp for Zermatt via Sunnegga (very level, easy walking, two hours); via Moos (slight climb, mostly downhill, three hours); via Finden (level, steep downhills at times, 2½ hours); via Findelbach (slightly downhill, mid-level difficulty, 1.4 hours). Continue on down from Zermatt to the base of the valley in Täsch (at 4,600 feet/1,438 meters), a five-hour trip that follows right alongside the railroad route. This is a fairly level walk that takes 1½ hours. For a map, contact the Täsch train station at ☎ 27-927-7505 or at [www.taesch.ch](http://www.taesch.ch).

From Täsch, continue on along a nearly flat trail for another hour (2.6 miles/4.2 km) to Randa. You walk on the west side of the river with lovely views of the valley. Continue walking another 2½ miles/four km (one hour) on the level trail that dips occasionally and you can cross the river again in the village of Herbrigger at 4,010 feet/1,253 meters. Continue along the well-marked trail another 1.4 hours and you soon come to the hamlet of St. Niklaus (train info: ☎ 27-927-7540). You criss-cross the river several times. The path here is level and suitable for folks of all ages and is just a fun walk with great views.

From Herbrigger you can take an alternative route where you bypass St. Niklaus – ultimately ending up in Grächen. This path begins on the east side of Herbrigger and is 6.2 miles/10 km (3½ hours), with some steep, rocky and arduous spots. The last 1.2 miles/two km involves a steep drop at a sharp angle that brings you into Grächen.

From St. Niklaus, there are two paths that lead to the village of Stalden at 2,557 feet/799 m. The first is longer (5.9 miles/9½ km, five hours) and is a moderate trail with a few steep descents and climbs in the first half-hour, following the Höhenweg. The second path is a more straightforward journey and shorter (time wise) choice. You travel via the Kalpetran (5.6 miles/nine km) – a nearly level trail to Stalden. There are restaurants along the way and this walk should only take three hours at the most. For information, phone the Stalden train at ☎ 27-927-7550 or the Stalden travel info at 27-952-1512.

From Stalden, it's only another two hours on a very level trail to Visp at 2,083 feet/651 m – the lowest point in this entire area. For train information, ☎ 27-948-3333 or [www.visp.ch](http://www.visp.ch).



*The Matterhorn, from the Gornergrat Railway (Christof Sonderegger)*

### CLIMBING THE MIGHTY MATTERHORN

This is a serious undertaking that should be attempted by experienced climbers only, in good physical condition and with an experienced guide at your side. If you are inexperienced, there are plenty of easier, kinder peaks to attempt in the area. However, if you've got the experience (rock climbing, walking with crampons, previous climbs), and want to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience, ascending the Matterhorn is for you. You will also need to spend at least 10 to 15 days in Zermatt acclimating to the area through daily hikes at high altitudes (3,280 to 4,920 feet/1,000 to 1,500 m).

The best time to attempt the Matterhorn is from mid-July to mid-September. Your guide can pick a suitable date for you, based on weather and snow conditions. The mountain can be congested with climbers from the end of July through mid-August, so it is best to avoid those dates. The guide will arrange for a meet-


ing spot the night before your ascent. Typically, that spot is the Matterhorn hut. The ascent attempt will begin early in the morning, usually no later than 4:30 or 5 am, and allowing four hours to reach the summit. You will need a similar time frame for the descent as well. Your best bet is to use the Zermatt Alpine Center mentioned above. They offer a one-to-one guide-client ascent trip, at a cost of 1,070Sfr per person.

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## On Snow

Zermatt offers skiing year-round, since most of the ski runs lie between 8,250 and 12,800 feet (2,515-3,900 m). The Rothorn, Stockhorn and Klein Matterhorn (Little Matterhorn) are for intermediate and experienced skiers; beginners have few options here. The Klein Matterhorn is reached by the highest cable gondola in Europe and features 20 miles (32 km) of pistes at the top.

From here you can ski back down to Zermatt, or (be sure to carry your passport) you can ski down the other side for lunch in Italy at Cervinia.

 *If you go for lunch on the Italian side, beware that you don't get shut out for the trip back, as lift times in Italy are not the same as in Switzerland.*

In town, the Zermatt Ski School offers certified instruction and mountain guides, as well as tours at ☎ 27-966-2466. The Alpine Center of Zermatt can teach you all about mountaineering at their public facility. Rates vary. CH-3910 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-2460, fax 27-966-2469, [www.zermatt.ch/alpincenter](http://www.zermatt.ch/alpincenter).

If you think you'd like to try trekking over some of the most famous Alps on the back of a mule, then contact Zermatt Mule Trekking's Jacques Christinet at ☎ 79-285-6638 or 27-967-6459. A one-day trek costs 160Sfr per person, while a two- to three-hour trek costs 35Sfr.

## On the Rails

No trip to Zermatt is complete without a ride on the Gornergrat rack railway. The Gornergrat-Monte Rosa-Bahnen first went into operation on August 20th, 1898, making the Alps accessi-

ble to all visitors for the first time. It provides excellent views of the Matterhorn and, at the top, you'll see the mighty mountain mirrored in the waters of the Riffelsee. You continue on to the summit station at 10,135 feet (3,090 m), and from here you can walk to the Gornergrat observatory, which is a rocky outpost that sits above the Gorner glacier. You get a sweeping panoramic view of the Alps from this point.

You can walk back from the Gornergrat to Zermatt – on the way be sure to stop at the Findel Glacier Restaurant for either a hot or cool drink – depending on the weather conditions. Your walk will pass through the tiny resort village of Findeln at 7,102 feet (2,165 m), before bringing you back to Zermatt some 60 minutes later. For schedules and prices, contact the GGB Gornergrat-Monte Rose-Bahnen, Nordstrasse 20, CH-3900 Brig-Glis. ☎ 27-921-4111, fax 27-921-4119. [www.ggb.ch](http://www.ggb.ch).

The Gornergrat Bahn offers great hiking access throughout this territory. You can get maps of the trails when you book your train ride. There are also Nordic walking trails and four well-marked bike routes. Riders can load their bikes onto the Gornergrat (10Sfr per day) for great exercise once they reach the top. You can also rent bikes at the train station for one day, which includes transportation on the Gornergrat at 73Sfr for adults for a full day; 38Sfr for a half-day for adults and kids six-16, or 6Sfr for kids under six.

For early birds who want to get spectacular views of the Matterhorn in the early morning hours, consider taking a Sunrise Gornergrat trip. You have to make reservations at the Tasch ticket office (☎ 27-927-7505) the day before by 4 pm (check the weather forecast!). The trip leaves from Tasch 20 minutes earlier than from Zermatt. The train leaves from Zermatt on Thursdays at 4:30 am starting in mid-June and runs until mid-September when it leaves at 6:05 am. It's a great trip and you can watch the sunrise via the panorama platform with a buffet breakfast at the 3100 Kulmhotel Gornergrat, and also take a guided walk to observe the native wildlife for another 79Sfr (adults) to 34Sf (kids). If you prefer, you can spend the night at the top of Switzerland by booking a room at the Kulmhotel Gornergrat. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Hefty prices, as you might

expect! CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-6400, fax 27-966-6404. [www.gornergrat-kulm.ch](http://www.gornergrat-kulm.ch).

Other guided treks are available for 112Sfr that lead you from Rotenboden to the second-longest glacier in the Alps, the Gorner Glacier, walking toward the Monte Rosa hut. You are responsible for bringing the appropriate clothing, gloves, and hiking boots. The Gornergrat Bahn brings you to both the starting and ending points of this journey.

A fun train journey is to ride the rails from Zermatt via the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn to Göschenen/Disentis, via Brig, Oberwald and Andermatt. You can also connect to this train from the other direction, beginning in Zurich, Lucern and Milan. From Göschenen the trip leads through the wild Schöllenen gorge up to Andermatt. Or you can begin in Disentis and continue towards Andermatt, crossing the Oberalp Pass (6,709 feet/2,033 m) and along Lake Oberalp – making wide curves all the way to Andermatt.

From Andermatt the train travels on level ground through the Urseren valley to Realp and from there through the 10-mile/16-km Furka tunnel to the sunny and lovely Goms (headwater of the Rhone), the wide, high valley with its sun-tanned villages typical for the Valais. From Brig, the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn brings you to Zermatt, the car-free village at the foot of the Matterhorn. The journey leads through a wildly romantic valley offering a view up to numerous mountain peaks and glaciers. Reservations are required only for the Glacier Express trains on the sector Disentis-Brig-Zermatt. You can get a 50% discount with the following: Swiss Pass, Swiss Flexi Pass, Swiss Youth Pass and Swiss Card.

In late 2002 the new Matterhorn-Express gondola-lift was unveiled, featuring an eight-person lift that travels from Zermatt to Schwarzsee via Furi in just 12 minutes. It took seven months to complete the project, which cost 25 million Swiss francs and eliminated two previously standing cable cars and one gondola along the route. The new lift was built to eliminate the bottlenecks of skiers at the Furi stop. This also allows more visitors to the Schwarzsee area, which is the traditional starting point for attempts to ascend the Matterhorn.



## In the Air

Air-Zermatt can take you by helicopter for some stunning views of the Matterhorn for 195Sfr. Contact them at CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-8686, [www.air-zermatt.ch](http://www.air-zermatt.ch).

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

You'll want to visit the local climbers' cemetery in Zermatt. It's midway through the village just to the left of the main street, across the river and below the Parish church. Here you find many folks who tried, but never accomplished their goal of making it to the top of the Matterhorn. The gravestones are impressive in their statements honoring the mountain and the fallen explorers.

## Museums

The Alpine Museum tells the history of mountaineering in Zermatt. Open daily in the summer from 10 am-noon, 4-6 pm; in the winter from 4:30-6:30 pm, Sunday-Friday (closed Saturday). Admission is 5Sfr for adults, 1Sfr for kids. Located behind the train station. CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-967-4100.

## Shopping

Most stores in Zermatt are open from 8:30 am-noon, 2-6:30 pm daily. If it's souvenirs you're searching for, than look no farther than Zermatter Swiss Souvenirs on Bahnhofplatz 6F, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-967-1060, fax 27-967-1676. Davis (☎ 27-967-6070), Perren Elfriede (☎ 27-967-2463), Rempfler Textil (☎ 27-967-8400) and WEGA (☎ 27-967-2166) offer similar wares and all are on the Bahnhofstrasse – Zermatt's main street (it extends the length of the village on the right side of the river if you're facing the Matterhorn).

For Switzerland's best linens, try Langenthal AG, also on the Bahnhofstrasse. ☎ 27-967-1434. Bayard-Shop features sport and fashion products for all ages, with five shops in Zermatt. They also rent skis, snowboards and mountain climbing paraphernalia and service these products too. Bayard Sport & Fashion, Bahnhofplatz, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-4950.

For tempting baked goods, and the famous "Matterhorn chocolates" (tiny kiss-sized renditions of the Matterhorn), walk into



Hörnli on the Bahnhofstrasse (☎ 27-967-4457) or the Zellner (☎ 27-967-1855).

## Where to Stay



Hotel Alpenblick is one of the best-kept secrets in Zermatt and, if you ask for a corner room, you'll have stunning views of the Matterhorn from your private balcony and windows day and night. I've stayed here on five separate occasions and each time have experienced a quiet stay in a clean and comfortable room, with a spotless marble bathroom, not far from the ski lift area. The in-house restaurant features a hearty breakfast, and delightful lunches with fresh greens and homemade dishes served in a light and informal atmosphere.



*Hotel Alpenblick*

Reasonable rates and a very friendly staff make this a nice alternative to many of the pricier hotels in Zermatt. It's at the far end of the village, so older travelers might need to take an electric taxi, although I brought my parents here (both in their mid-70s) and they had no trouble walking from the train station with their light luggage. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). The Pannatier family are kind and gracious hosts. Oberdorfstrasse 106, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-2600, fax 27-966-2605.

Hotel Mont Cervin is rated as one of the leading hotels in the world, and rightfully so. In the center of Zermatt, only five minutes from the train station, this hotel originally



*Hotel Mont Cervin*

opened its doors in 1851, and in 1994 added the Residence across the street – a state-of-the-art building with 15 deluxe suites. Open from the end of November to the end of April and from

mid-June to mid-October, this first-class hotel features all of the modern amenities you'd expect and is only a few minutes walk from shopping, restaurants and the mountain railways and gondolas. There are two restaurants – a dining area with à la carte services and weekly buffets that seats 240, and Le Cervin Grill that seats 95 and specializes in charcoal-grilled meat and fish. There is also a piano bar in the hotel. (\$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$+). Bahnhofstrasse 31, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-8888, fax 27-966-8899.

Hotel Bahnhof is very popular with hikers and mountaineers, as it has 12-bed dorms and showers on each floor. Prices (\$-\$\$) don't include breakfast, but there is a small kitchen on the premises. Nothing fancy, but it's clean and the showers are hot. Directly across from the train station. CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-967-2406, fax 27-967-7216.



*Hotel Bahnhof*

The Zermatt Youth Hostel offers 140 beds from January 1-April 15, and from May 31-December 31. They have a wide range of facilities with great views of the Matterhorn. (\$). About a mile east of the train station at Winkelmatten, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-967-2320, fax 27-967-5306.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Camping



This is available in and around Zermatt. At Zermatt's campsite (open June-September), you'll have to transport your equipment by train or taxi. Reservations recommended. ☎ 27-967-3921, [matterhorn@campings.ch](mailto:matterhorn@campings.ch). There is also camping available at Täsch (☎ 27-967-3635), Randa (☎ 27-967-2555) and at Grächen (☎ 27-956-3202).

## Where to Eat



The Grill Room and Stübli are two of our favorite spots in Zermatt. This former farmhouse, in the middle of town, is open year-round, and offers a pair of delightful dining areas sure to please any picky palate. The Grill Room is a bit more formal, and has a fine selection of smoked fish, veal and fine foods prepared with either an Italian, French or German touch. The Stübli serves hearty portions of Swiss favorites in a more informal and atmospheric setting. Located in the Hotel Walliserhof on the Bahnhofstrasse. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Reservations are recommended. Open daily from 11 am-2 pm, 7-11 pm. CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-966-6555.

Grillroom Stockhorn is one of the finest restaurants in town, and features a lovely fireplace in the dining area, along with wooden beams, stucco walls and a general rustic atmosphere. Courses range from Swiss favorites to pasta and grilled meats. The attached bar is equally delightful. (\$-\$-\$-\$). Reservations are required. Open daily 11:30 am-1 pm, 6:30-10 pm. Closed May to mid-June, and from October to mid-November. Riedstrasse, CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-967-1747.

Le Gitan is another favorite, often booked weeks ahead in the high ski seasons. Small and comfortable, with a beautiful fireplace, this restaurant serves Swiss and regional specialties, including venison and other game dishes. The lamb is considered the house specialty. Reservations required. (\$-\$). Open daily from 6:30-10 pm in the Hotel Darioli on the Bahnhofstrasse. CH-3920 Zermatt. ☎ 27-968-1940.

For a great treat, check out Elsie's Place, a local hangout for skiers and snowboarders that serves great Irish coffee known throughout Zermatt. You can also dine here during the day and feast on such goodies as hot dogs, grilled cheese, BLTs and even caviar. (\$-\$). Open daily from 11 am-2 am in the summer and from 4 pm-2 am in the winter. Located at Kirchplatz, this house is an original from 1879. ☎ 27-967-2431.

A quirky hangout for the funky-minded tourist is the Brown Cow, on the Bahnhofstrasse about midway through town. Here you'll find a very relaxed atmosphere, a bar and small café that serves up anything and everything – from burgers to hot soups,

pasta and salads daily. The best part of this place is that the owner's dog gets to hang out and visit the patrons. (\$-\$\$).

## Saas-Fee

Saas-Fee is where many of the Swiss go for skiing, hoping to avoid the mass of crowds that tumble into the nearby resorts of Zermatt or Verbier. Here you'll find 13 peaks that loom up to 13,000 feet (4,000 m) or higher above this Alpine village. This car-free village provides an atmosphere of peace and the charm of an old-time resort with its wooden chalets, outdoor sun terraces, sidewalk cafés and delightful restaurants. Rightfully so, Saas-Fee is known as "the pearl of the Alps," and boasts the highest revolving restaurant in the world, as well as its largest ice pavilion.



*Hikers above Saas-Fee (Lucia Degonda)*



*Saas-Fee is one of the quietest ski resort villages you'll visit in Switzerland, and is definitely not a party town. Unlike St. Moritz or Verbier, Saas-Fee virtually falls asleep each night on the dot at 10 pm, and late-night noisemakers are typically fined 200Sfr or more!*

## Information Sources

### Tourist Office



The Saas-Fee Tourist Office, ☎ 27-958-1858, fax 27-958-1860, is across from the bus station, and is

open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am-noon, 2-6 pm; Saturday from 9 am-noon, 3-6 pm.

## Post Office

At the bus station you'll find Saas-Fee's Post Office and lockers for luggage and backpacks.

## Codes

The postal code for Saas-Fee is CH-3906 and the area code is 27.

## Internet Access

For Internet access go to the Hotel Dom (☎ 27-957-2300), where you'll pay a rate of 20Sfr per hour.

## Getting Around

This is only done on foot or by electric car since the village is auto-free. You can also grab a "horse taxi" or take an evening ride in one of the many carriages found throughout Saas-Fee. It is important to note that there is no train service here – but you can get here by bus or by driving and parking your car at the entrance to the village for 13Sfr per day. Until 1951, Saas-Fee was accessible only on foot or by mule. The buses leave Brig, Visp and Stalden Saas every hour and the cost is 17.4Sfr for a one-way ticket.

## Adventures

### Summer Sports



Saas-Fee in the summer is a hiker's paradise, with over 174 miles (280 km) of hiking trails and foot paths suitable for all levels of wanderers. The tourist office organizes tours of the village, as well as of the mountains. Village tours meet every Monday at 5 pm at the tourist office, with talks in English about the history of Saas-Fee and other interesting facts. Most of the hiking tours take place on Hannig (Saas-Fee's mountain). Every Friday at 2 pm, the tourist office features a 2½-hour hike from Hannig to the glacier lakes. ☎ 27-958-1858 for information.

If you want to trek to a mountain, meet at the Metro Alpin station at 7:30 am for a fine 2½-hour hike to the Allalinhorn summit.

The cost is 130Sfr per person. ☎ 27-957-4464 for a reservation.

Horse trekking excursions abound in Saas-Fee. Every Tuesday at 9 am riders meet at the Campground Kapelweg for a one- to three-hour trek. Cost is 80Sfr per person and reservations can be made through the tourist office (☎ 27-958-1858). On Wednesdays, the trek takes you to Kruezboden. For horseback riding in Sass-Grund, you'll pay 22Sfr for one hour. For a panoramic ride on Fridays from 1:30-4 pm, the cost is 40Sfr for adults and 30Sfr for kids. For romantics, you can take a carriage ride at dusk, on Wednesdays and Fridays at 8 pm. A minimum of four people are required at 17Sfr per person.

Guided mountain bike tours are available in Saas-Fee at 20Sfr for adults and 10Sfr for kids. ☎ 27-957-2825.

There is a good driving range in Saas-Fee for golfers and it is open daily from 8 am-7 pm at Kalbermatten. Prices start at 18Sfr. ☎ 27-957-2825.

There is also a miniature golf course at the Valley Station Alpin Express, open June to the end of October, from 8:30 am-noon, 2-6 pm for 4Sfr per person.

Wine tasting takes place every Tuesday night at 8 pm at the Tourist Office for a fee of 20Sfr per person. Here you can sample wines of Valais, Vaud and Ticino.

The Leisure Center Bielen and AquaWellness is a huge, modern fitness center that houses a pair of indoor tennis courts, badminton courts, a pool, sauna, steam baths, a whirlpool, ping-pong and billiards. Open 8 am-10 pm daily. Tennis lessons are available; ☎ 27-957-1606.

## Winter Sports

There are 62 miles (100 km) of ski slopes, a natural ice rink, winter walking trails and a sled run in Saas-Fee. You can cross-country ski on 14.3 miles (22.9 km) of runs between Saas-Almagell and Saas-Balen too. The Saas-Fee Ski and Snowboarding School provides lessons for all levels of snow bunnies. ☎ 27-957-2348, fax 27-957-2366. The Eskimo Swiss Snowboard School also offers lessons and equipment rental at ☎ 27-957-4904, fax 27-957-8124.



*Saas-Fee in winter (Saas-Fee Tourism)*

Winter walks on the Hannig, Saas-Fee's non-ski mountain, are very popular. There are 28.6 miles (45.7 km) of well-kept winter walking trails up here that stretch from Melchboden to Saas-Almagell. There is also a 3.1-mile sledding path that brings you back down to the base at Saas-Fee.

You'll find a nice restaurant on Hannig (☎ 27-957-1419, fax 27-957-2268).

Nighttime sledding takes place every Tuesday and Thursday from Haning to Saas-Fee, starting at the Haning station, from 6-9 pm. The cost is 18Sfr per person, and sled rental is 8Sfr.

Saas-Fee's mountaineering school offers tours for beginners and advanced climbers alike year-round. Contact Mountain Life for information at ☎ 27-957-4464. This company also conducts ice climbing excursions as well as gorge crossings between Saas-Fee and Saas Grund.

Dog sledding is available on request and dependent upon the snow conditions. Cost is 40Sfr for adults and 35Sfr for kids over 12. Contact the Tourist Office at ☎ 27-958-1858.

Walking with snowshoes to various mountain huts is a fun alternative to cross-country skiing, especially because once you reach the hut, you are able to enjoy a good Swiss meal or a tasty fondue. The Tourist Office arranges a walk every Thursday at 5:30 pm for 20Sfr per person, and reservations are required (☎ 27-958-1858). On Wednesday at 6 pm, you can take

a similar walk with Alpine Sport. ☎ 27-957-3733 for reservations or Cesar Sport at ☎ 27-957-1416.

Snow tubing is the latest in adventure sports, as you tumble down the mountain in a giant plastic tube. The cost is 15Sfr per person, and you must register at the Tourist Office. Monday-Friday at 5 pm. ☎ 27-958-1858.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The Ice Palace is the world's largest ice pavilion, located on the Mittelallalin. The long gallery entrance to the pavilion can be reached via the Metro-Alpin rack railway. The inside of this ice castle is simply stunning and forever fascinating. Open daily. Admission is 7Sfr for adults, 3.5Sfr for adults. Eispavillon, CH-3960 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-957-3560.

## Museum

There is one little museum in Saas-Fee, the Saaser Museum, which details the history of the village and its customs and traditions. Admission is 4Sfr and it's worth a rainy-day visit.

## Where to Stay



Waldhotel Fletschhorn is one of the top hotels in Saas-Fee and offers ultra-modern rooms in a rustic setting. Many people come here just to enjoy the fine dining room that specializes in local dishes. (\$\$\$\$). CH-3906 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-957-2131, fax 27-957-2187.

Ferienart Walliserhof has a complete wellness center, as well as an art gallery and an in-house waterfall. Located in the center of Saas-Fee, with great views of the village and surrounding mountains. Features four restaurants, a café, Internet access in all rooms and many amenities. (\$\$\$\$). CH-3806 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-958-1900, fax 27-958-1905.



*Ferienart Walliserhof*



Beau-Site is a very elegant and stately hotel, with intimate rooms and tastefully decorated bathrooms. Also home to three restaurants, a café, bar, indoor pool, sauna, and hot tub. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Postfach 135, CH-3906 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-958-1560, fax 27-958-1656.

Hotel La Gorge is right next to the Alpin-Express cable car and provides superior views of the glaciers and surrounding mountains. Rooms are tidy and clean, with modern amenities in this fine looking Swiss chalet. (\$\$). CH-3906 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-958-1680.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Fletschhorn is an excellent restaurant on the northern edge of the village, with prix fixe meals ranging from 130Sfr and upwards. They also have à la carte service, which is more reasonable. (\$-\$\$\$\$). If you're really into cooking, then you can stay in the hotel here, and take cooking lessons from Fletschhorn's premiere chef, Irma Dutsch. Prices for the cooking lessons start at 280Sfr for two-day sessions and include your lodgings. Two-, three- and five-day packages are also available. CH-3906 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-957-2131, fax 27-957-2187.

Skihütte Restaurant serves good Valais dishes on a sunny terrace all year round. Close to the ski lifts, this restaurant is a great spot to people-watch during the daytime. (\$-\$\$\$). CH-3906 Saas-Fee. ☎ 27-958-9280.

La Ferme is right around the corner from the bus station/tourist office and has good vegetarian meals, as well as traditional Swiss favorites in hearty portions. (\$-\$\$). This former agricultural house has farming tools hanging on the walls, and is open daily.

## Leukerbad

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**T**his is the highest spa resort village in Europe and sits at 4,628 feet (1,410 m) near the Torrenthorn mountain, just north of the village of Leuk, between Sierre and Visp on Highway 9. Those seeking natural spring and hot mineral waters have

been visiting Leukerbad for centuries to sample their medicinal and rejuvenating effects.

There are 42 miles (67 km) of downhill and cross-country ski runs in and around Leukerbad, reachable by the popular Torrent cable car. You'll also find the Gemmi Pass – a popular

and historic crossing between the Berner Oberland and Lower Valais regions. It has been known to traders and travelers for hundreds of years. This pass can be easily crossed in a day by almost anyone.

However, the main reason to visit Leukerbad is for the hot waters. The Burgerbad is a multi-level spa that features indoor and outdoor pools, a solarium, sauna and exercise rooms. It is excellent for families with children, and costs 21Sfr per person to use the facilities. Open Sunday-Thursday from 8 am-8 pm, Friday and Saturday from 8 am-9 pm (☎ 27-470-1138).

Leukerbad's other main resort is Lindner Alpentherm, which is statelier and caters more to an upscale clientele. It includes a medical center, a shopping arcade, a beauty salon and pharmacy, and a juice bar. You won't see many children here, as those aged six and younger are not allowed. Open Monday-Thursday from 8 am-7 pm, Friday and Saturday from 8 am-8 pm. ☎ 27-472-7272.



## Canton Ticino (TI)

### At a Glance

**A**s the fifth-largest canton in Switzerland, Ticino is 1,085 square miles (2,821 square km) of Alpine beauty, with lakes, meadows and many other natural wonders. Located in the southern portion of Switzerland, Ticino is flanked by Canton Graubünden to the north and northeast, by Uri to the north, and by Valais to the west. Nearly the entire western portion of the

canton, as well as the southern and half of the eastern side, bumps frontiers with Italy. As a result, Ticino has become a region of transit – forever influenced by its geography, which offers surprisingly little in terms of natural resources overall. While the scenery is lovely, with countless lakes, streams and rivers, it has abundant stone, but little else. Ever resourceful, the people of Ticino – in the early history of this canton – became some of the world's finest and most respected masons.

A vast number of fine architects have sprung from this region as well – the most famous being Mario Botta. Botta was born in 1943 and built the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, as well as buildings in Paris and Venice. He is known for his bold, contemporary style. Not surprisingly, this canton is comprised of mostly Italian-speaking inhabitants, who are Roman Catholics. Ticino is also the only region in Switzerland that is entirely south of the Alps, and the only canton in which Italian is the official language. Just over 318,696 people reside here, making it the eighth-largest canton in terms of population. In addition, more foreigners live here (27% of the cantonal population), than in any canton except Geneva.

Because of its dual heritage, Canton Ticino offers some of the most diverse gastronomic choices anywhere in Switzerland. From the lake areas you'll be treated to locally caught fresh fish, and in the vast countryside you'll find hearty, home-cooked meals in one of the many *grotti* (taverns) that are usually off the beaten path. In addition, throughout this region there are fine wines – usually from a variety of the Merlot grape that is grown on the slopes surrounding Lake Lugano. Well over six million bottles of wine are produced annually in Ticino.

Ticino is split geographically into two regions by the relatively small mountain range of Monte Ceneri, at the southern tip of the canton. This southern region – known as the Sottoceneri – encompasses what lies below the valley of Bellinzona (mainly Lugano), while the northern region is referred to as the Sopraceneri area, home to many valleys and the lakeside towns of Locarno and Asona. The Sopraceneri region tends to be mellower and less flashy than its southern counterpart of Sottoceneri and it's here that a visitor will come upon many

small villages of only a few dozen people, tending to their small flocks of goats or quietly making their way through a valley or mountain path.

This canton also offers 1,240 miles (1,984 km) of well-marked foot paths – most of which are suited for families and children. The *Strada Alta*, the *Sentiero delle Meraviglie*, and the *Sentiero Basso* are just a few of the footpaths here, as well as the “Swiss Path,” which passes through Ticino via Canton Graubünden and Italy.

## The Sottoceneri Region

### Lugano

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*Lugano (OmriAR)*

**L**ugano sits at 892 feet (272 m) above sea level in the Sottoceneri region and offers a warm, relaxing climate with stunning scenery and vegetation. Here you'll find a full range of sporting options, such as hiking, skiing, walking and water sports. There are festivals of all kinds throughout the year in this region, where Italian culture and atmosphere mesh with Swiss charm, cleanliness and tradition. The city itself is situated around lakeside ports and village piazzas, many with extensive footpaths and gardens. In addition, the Lake Lugano Region is now the third-largest banking area in Switzerland, and encom-

passes more than just Lugano and its nearby suburbs. Ceresio, Malcantone, Valli di Lugano and Mendrisiotto all come under this heading. This region sits at the crossroads between Switzerland and Italy.

Lugano also has three outstanding mountains – each of which offers idyllic views and splendid hiking and walking opportunities. Monte Bré, Monte San Salvatore, and Monte Generoso each have nature trails with well-marked signs designating native plant and tree species.

## Information Sources

### Tourist Offices



The main Lugano Tourist Office is open from April through October, Monday-Friday from 9 am-6:30 pm, Saturday from 9 am-12:30 pm, 1:30-5 pm, Sunday from 10 am-3 pm. From November through March, it is open Monday-Friday from 9 am-noon, 1:30-5:30 pm. Palazzo Civico, CH-6901 Lugano. ☎ 91-913-3232, fax 91-922-7653, [www.lugano-tourism.ch](http://www.lugano-tourism.ch).

You'll also find two information offices in Lugano regional train stations. Stazione FFS, CH-6815 Melide, ☎ 91-649-6383, fax 91-649-5613; or Piazzale Stazione, CH-6950 Tesserete, ☎ 91-943-1888, fax 91-943-4212. The Malcantone Tourist Office is at CH-6987 Caslano, ☎ 91-606-2986, fax 91-606-5200, while the Mendrisiotto & Basso Ceresio Tourist Office is at CH-6850 Mendrisio, ☎ 91-646-5661, fax 91-646-3348.

### Post Office

The main Post Office in Lugano is at Via della Posta 7, CH-6901. Hours are Monday-Friday 7:30 am-5:15 pm, Saturday from 8 am-noon. ☎ 91-807-8104, fax 91-923-1616. There are six other regional post offices in and around Lugano with similar hours: Paradiso CH-6902, Stazione CH-6903, Molino-Nuovo CH-6904, Cassarate CH-6906, Loreto CH-6907, Massagno CH-6908.

### Codes

The area code for Lugano is 91 and the postal code is CH-6900.

## Internet Access

Internet access is available at City Disc, Via P Peri, for 10Sfr an hour. Open daily from noon to 9 pm.

## Getting Around



You can get around the town of Lugano and the surrounding region by foot or by bike. The area has a vast network of footpaths and bike trails, all of which are clearly marked. The Tourist Office will be happy to provide you with walking excursion itineraries and maps of the area. You can rent bikes at the train station for 27Sfr daily, at ticket window one. ☎ 91-923-6691.

Monte San Salvatore (2,992 feet/912 m), Monte Generoso (2,865 feet/873 m) and Monte Bré (3,061 feet/933 m) can all be reached by funiculars, bus or railway.

For information/train schedules/costs on each: ☎ Monte San Salvatore, ☎ 91-985-2828, [www.montesansalvatore.ch](http://www.montesansalvatore.ch); Monte Generoso, ☎ 91-648-1105, [www.montegeneroso.ch](http://www.montegeneroso.ch); Monte Bré, ☎ 91-971-3171, [www.montebre.ch](http://www.montebre.ch).

## Adventures

### On Foot



A popular hiking excursion in Lugano is a five-day trip known as the Valli di Lugano hike – a 40-mile, mountain-top trek that rarely drops below 4,920 feet (1,500 m) elevation. This walk offers great views over a well-marked path and, while long, is suitable for almost anyone who just loves to walk.

- Day One (3½ hours walking time): Astano-Monte Lema. Take a bus or drive to Astano, a small village west of Lugano near the Italian border in the Malcantone region. From here, walk uphill toward the Motto della Croce. You pass through la Forcolla (at 3,667 feet/1,120 m), before coming to the crest of Monte Lema. There is a cross on the summit and a chairlift to Migliaglia – which has a small restaurant, great views and a place to bunk down if you choose.
- Day Two (four to five hours walking time): Monte Lema-Alpe Foppa. You don't want to miss the sunrise, if the

weather is good and clear. From Monte Lema, you'll be able to see the snow-capped peaks of the Matterhorn and Monte Rosa, which is a spectacular way to begin your day. Follow the path along the crest, to the rocky peak of Breno on the Magno summit. You'll see the villages of the Malcantone on the left, while on the right is the Veddasca valley with its scattered tiny towns. Continue on to Monte Gradiccioli, and the trail will descend into the Bassa di Indemini, then climb upward once again to the summit of Monte Tamaro. Once you pass the Motto Rotondo, the trail heads down again to the Alpe Foppa restaurant, where it is possible to see ibex and chamois at the Alpine nature reserve.

- Day Three (six hours walking time): Alpe Foppa-Monte Bar Hut. From Alpe Foppa, follow the path downward through some woods to the villages of Rivera, Bironico and Camignolo. At Camignolo, follow the signs posted to Gola di Lago, which is behind the Camignolo cemetery. This path takes you through some peat bogs before reaching the crest line of the Alpe di Davrosio. Walk on to the Motto della Croce and the summit of Caval Drossa, at 5,352 feet (1,632 m). From here, you'll see Lugano, the lake, Monte Bré, Monte San Salvatore and the Denti della Vecchia, as well as the Magadino plain and Lake Maggiore. Walk on along the crest to Monte Bar, where just below the summit is a fine Alpine Mountain Hut with a large terrace.
- Day Four (eight hours walking time): Monte Bar Hut-Pairola Hut. Once you leave the hut, you follow the road south along the crest line around Monte Gazirola. On your left are the slopes of Val Cavargna, and on the right are those of Val Colla. From here, continue on south to the summits of Foiorina and Oress, before arriving at the Pairola Alpine Mountain Hut.
- Day Five (five hours walking time): Pairola Hut-Gandria. Follow the trail from the Pairola Hut along the crest line to the village of Bre, at the south end of the trail, near the Italian border on Lake Lugano. From here you can return to Lugano via the funicular, by bus, by ship, or you can walk. Another fun option is to walk to the tiny lakeside village of Gandria, then take a boat back to Lugano.

Deemed the "Floral Route" by many locals, this one-day outing begins with a ride on the Monte San Salvatore funicular.

Once you exit the cable car at the top, you'll find a path to the summit of San Salvatore near the restaurant. From just below the restaurant, the trail leads to Ciona, then on to Carona, which is home to four churches, all with many splendid paintings, frescos and stucco work. You then have two options from Carona. You can either visit the botanical gardens of San Grato, or you can follow the trail to the Baroque sanctuary of the Madonna d'Ongero, before heading downward to the village of Morcote, an ancient town on the shores of Lake Lugano.

This tiny village, with its narrow streets and many "grottos" (small pubs offering light menu fare), is a delight to explore.

There is great fresh fish here and an abundance of little shops and cafés. From Morcote, there is regular bus and ship service back to Lugano.

## On Water



*Lugano (Rooster133)*

Lake Lugano provides a wide array of sporting and adventure options. The many lakeside ports and quays offer numerous boating (motorboats, paddleboats, cruise ships) excursions.



The Lake Lugano Navigation Company runs daily trips around the lake with breakfast, lunch and dinner options. They can be found at most ports on the lake. There are also private trips via mahogany boats. Contact Gaetano and Mario Castelnuovo at ☎ 91-967-2013 or Arnoldo Mascetti at ☎ 79-686-2914 to arrange a custom outing.

You can rent sailboats at Circolo Velico by the hour. ☎ 91-972-6298. For water-skiing and windsurfing, contact the Nautical Club of Lugano at ☎ 91-649-6139. For diving and snorkeling, contact Lugano-Sub at ☎ 91-994-3740. The Lido is Lugano's most famous beach. Admission is 7Sfr for adults, 5Sfr for children six-14, and 1Sfr for kids under age six. Open daily from 9 am-7:30 pm in the summer.

## Sightseeing in Lugano



You won't want to miss the Swiss Miniature Village, in the suburb of Melide, just a 10-minute train ride from Lugano's main station. This display accurately portrays Switzerland, complete with Alps such as the Jungfrau and the Matterhorn, and major cities like Zürich, Lausanne, Geneva, and Bern. A great way for kids to learn about the major sites and cities in Switzerland. Admission is 12Sfr for adults, 7Sfr for kids 15 and under. Open daily from 9 am-6 pm. Vian Cantonale, CH-6906 Melide-Lugano. ☎ 91-640-1060.



*Hermann Hesse: If you're a fan, then you probably already know that the famed writer lived in Montagnola for 38 years. Since July 2, 1972 (the 120th anniversary of his death), the Hermann Hesse Museum in the walls of the Tower of Casa Camuzzi has celebrated his life and times. Admission is 6Sfr. Open March-October, Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am-12:30 pm, 2-6:30 pm; November-February on weekends, from 10 am-12:30 pm, 2-6:30 pm. ☎ 91-993-3770.*

The Fossil Museum, on the south side of Lake Lugano in the village of Meride, displays petrified relics from Monte San Giorgio, which looms above Meride. This small museum shows discoveries by teams of scientists from the Paleontology Institute of Zürich University. Included are remains of marine animals and fish, reptiles and invertebrates, along with some

fossilized plants. To get here, drive south 10 minutes from Lake Lugano on main Highway 2 to Mendrisio, and from there travel west on the local road toward the Italian border and the village of Arzo, where you then turn right (north) to Meride. You'll also find the Church of San Rocco here, which dates back to 1578.

## Parks & Gardens

Parco Civico – Lugano's main public park – is one of the finest anywhere in Switzerland. In the center of Lugano, and bordered on one side by the lake and on the other by the Cassarate River, the park encompasses many acres of gardens, rare, tropical and regional trees and all types of plant species. Paths lead throughout the park, which also includes a large aviary and a small pasture for red and fallow deer.

The Tassino Park is reminiscent of an English rose garden. Located on the slopes surrounding the bay of Lugano and Parco Civico, the Tassino has huge manicured lawns and rose terraces containing 300 bushes and 80 types of roses, which bloom from May to late fall. To get here, walk from the train station and follow the signs to Paradiso. Once you come to the railroad crossing, cross the track and turn left onto a narrow lane leading into the park. Here, near the entrance, is an enclosure that contains fallow and red deer, and wild mountain sheep.

## Shopping

The Franz Carl Weber Toy Store is Switzerland's finest, and this is one of their largest outlets. Lots of toys, mechanical games, dolls, etc. Via Nassa 5. ☎ 91-923-5321. The Mùnger, at Via Luvini 4, sells some of the best chocolates and pastries in the region. ☎ 91-985-6943. Bottega dell'Artigiano has outstanding handicrafts from Canton Ticino. Via Canova 18. ☎ 91-922-8140. If you want to take home a Ticino wine, then stop in at Bottegone del Vino, Magatti 3, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-922-7689. In nearby Mendrisio, you'll find FoxTown – a huge shopping outlet mall consisting of over 80 stores and shops, plus a casino. There are local merchants here, as well as Nike, Bally, Gucci, Prada, Versace and others. FoxTown is open daily from 11 am-7 pm and includes a restaurant, snack bars and ample parking.

## Where to Stay



Wellnesshotel Kurhaus Cademario is seven miles (11 km) outside of Lugano. This spa resort has outdoor and indoor pools, as well as a sauna, fitness room, physiotherapy and treatments for all types of ailments.



*Wellnesshotel Kurhaus Cademario*

It's beautiful, clean and offers all types of sports, including archery, mountain biking, aerobics, gymnastics, dance, Tai Chi, escorted walks, and cricket, to name a few. Equipped with an on-site pharmacy, a medical lab, and an in-house dietician. There is an à la carte restaurant and piano bar as well. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$+). CH-6936, Cademario. ☎ 91-610-5111, fax 91-610-5112.

Villa Sassa offers luxury at its finest in the heart of Lugano. Beautiful and first-class all the way, it includes a gourmet Mediterranean restaurant, a wellness center and a swimming pool. Close to everything, including shops and museums. (\$\$\$\$+). Via Tesserete 10, CH-6900 Lugano.

☎ 91-911-4111, fax 91-922-0545.



*Villa Sassa*

Hotel Lugano Dante is in central Lugano, close to the lake and train station, in an 18th-century building that was completely restored to its original state in 2001. If you like historic structures, than this is the hotel for you. Includes all modern amenities.

(\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Piazza Ciccario 5, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-910-5700, fax 91-910-5777, [www.luganodante.ch](http://www.luganodante.ch).

Tresa Bay Hotel is in the nearby suburb of Ponte Tresa, just five minutes from the Italian border. All modern rooms face the lakeside in this lovely inn, which has a fitness and wellness center. Breakfast included in rates. There is a bar, pizzeria and an Italian restaurant. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Via Lugano 19, CH-6988 Ponte Tresa. ☎ 91-611-2700, fax 91-611-2709.



*Hotel Albatro*

Hotel Albatro is a high-rise hotel in the center of Lugano, but only a few minutes walk to Lake Lugano. Ultra-modern and elegant air-conditioned rooms with a swimming pool. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Features an Italian restaurant and bar. Via Clemente Maraini 8,

CH-6907 Lugano. ☎ 91-921-0921, fax 91-921-0927.

Hotel Walter au Lac has been in business since 1888, and sits on the shores of Lake Lugano near the auto-free village center. All rooms face the lake, and all are equipped with modern amenities. (\$\$\$). Piazza Rezzonico 7, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-922-7425, fax 91-922-4233, [www.walter-aulac.ch](http://www.walter-aulac.ch).

Hotel Cacciatori can be found in a quiet country setting surrounded by a chestnut grove. Features include two tennis courts and mountain bikes for



*Hotel Walter au Lac*

guests. This is a wonderful sports-oriented hotel, and there are many walking paths here. Open year-round, except from mid-February to the end of March. (\$\$\$). The in-house restaurant is well-known for its Ticino and Lombardi specialties, including an extensive collection of home-produced wines. CH-6936 Cademario. ☎ 91-605-2236, fax 91-604-5837, [www.hotelcacciatori.ch](http://www.hotelcacciatori.ch).

Hotel Garni Domus has 30 cozy rooms in a high-rise building at the foot of Mount San Salvatore, only 150 feet (45 m) from the lake. Breakfast is included in the rates. (\$-\$\$). Riva Paradiso 24a, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-994-3421, fax 91-994-0269.

Hotel Montarina sits in a large park near the train station and town center. It has a large swimming pool and caters to backpackers. (\$-\$\$). Via Montarina 1, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-966-7272, fax 91-966-0017, [www.montarina.ch](http://www.montarina.ch).

Youth Hostel Lugano-Savosa offers 110 beds from mid-March through the end of October. A wide variety of overnight options are offered by this hostel, in a 10,000-square-mile park that includes a swimming pool and sundeck, Internet room and TV room. A good base for hikes and walking excursions. (\$-\$\$). Via Cantonale 13, CH-6942 Lugano-Savosa. ☎ 91-966-2728, fax 91-968-2363.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Camping



This is available on Lugano's southwest side at Eurocampo (\$), ☎ 91-605-2114, or at La Piodella (\$-\$\$), ☎ 91-994-7788.

## Where to Eat



Ai Giardini di Sassa is in hotel Villa Sassa and features the finest Mediterranean cuisine in Lugano. Specialties are complemented by a red Merlot produced locally. The outside dining terrace offers relaxing and romantic views of Lake Lugano. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Via Tesserete 10, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-911-4111, fax 91-922-0545.

Ristorante al Portone serves excellent Italian cuisine and some of the finest desserts found anywhere in the region. With

fixed-price menus, the daily specials invariably include fresh-caught fish. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed January 1-10 and from mid-July to mid-August. Via Cassarate 3, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-923-5511.

Restaurant Orologio serves a variety of pastas, along with home-grown veggies and regional favorites such as venison, scampi, pheasant and fresh fish. (\$\$-\$\$\$). Open Monday-Saturday from noon-2:30, 7-10:30 pm. Via Nizzola 2, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-923-2338.

Panoramic Restaurant-Bar Casino Kursaal offers fine dining in a fancy outdoor setting; inside, trees grow up out of the wood floor. This restaurant and bar offers sushi, exquisite soups (zuppa), pastas, risotti and fish dishes, as well as fine Swiss wines from Vaud, Neuchâtel and Vallais.

They also have a good selection of Italian, French, Spanish, Australian and American wines. Handicapped-accessible. (\$-\$\$\$). Open from noon-2:30 pm, 7 pm-midnight Monday-Saturday. Closed Sunday. The bar is open until 2 am on Friday and Saturday nights. Via Stauffacher 1, CH-6901 Lugano. ☎ 91-921-0203, [www.extreme.ch](http://www.extreme.ch).

Restaurant Lungolago is a piano bar and restaurant with quiet views of the lake in a romantic setting. Specialties include pastas, fish and meats, as well as seasonal dishes. (\$-\$\$\$). Open 8:30 pm-1 am daily. Via Nassa 11, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-923-1233.

Osteria Del Portico is a charming little restaurant with pasta and fish specialties, plus good wines from Ticino, Italy and France. (\$-\$\$). Open 8:30 pm-midnight Monday-Friday. Closed Saturday and Sunday. Corso Postalozzi 21A, CH-6900 Lugano. ☎ 91-921-0295, fax 91-923-9972.

The Grotto dei Pescatori, in the small village of Gandria, is reached only by boat. To get here, you have to board a boat (12Sfr round-trip) on Lake Lugano, and disembark at the Caprino/Grotto dei Pescatori stop. Inexpensive, hearty meals are served on a lakeside terrace in this simply decorated restaurant. Most dishes include pasta and fresh fish. (\$-\$\$). Open Monday-Saturday from 11:30 am-11 pm. Reservations recommended. ☎ 91-923-9867.

## Other Sites in the Sottoceneri Region

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**T**esserete is just a stone's throw north of Lugano in the region known as the "Valli di Lugano." This is a classic destination for families and hosts an annual carnival. There is a good hike around Lake Origgio that brings you to the church of San Bernado in Comano. The Val Colla has jagged rocks known as the "Denti dell Vecchia" (old woman's teeth).

The villages of Mendrisio, Basso Ceresio and Chiasso all lie at the southern tip of Ticino, near the Italian border. This region is dominated by Monte Generoso – the highest peak (at 5,589 feet/1,704 m) in southern Switzerland. You can reach the top by taking the little cogwheel railway from Capolago for a 40-minute ride to the summit, where you'll find a nature trail. Throughout this region you'll see chestnut forests, and fields of tobacco and wheat.

## The Sopraceneri Region

### Bellinzona

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**T**his is one of the first stops in the Sopraceneri region, if you're travelling from the north to the south, and is easily accessible by train or auto (via Highway 2 through the St. Gotthard Tunnel). Known as "la città dei castelli" (the city of castles), this village – as the capital of the canton – is believed to have Roman roots, since it sits along one of the most popular military and trade roads between Rome and northern Europe.

It is a great base for exploring the other parts of this canton, and the village itself has castles, tree-lined streets and a relaxing old-world charm.

Bellinzona is known for its medieval fortresses – Castelgrande, Castello di Montebello and Castello di Sasso Corbaro. The Saturday morning market takes place in the heart of Bellinzona's Old Town and is great fun. Weekly, from 7:30 am-noon, this part of the city becomes a popular spot

for local vendors to offer their wares to the public. Here, you'll find fresh produce, handicrafts and clothing in all price ranges.

The Bellinzona Tourist Office is open Monday-Friday, from 8 am-6:30 pm, Saturday from 9 am-noon. Via dell Stazione, Piazza Civico, CH-6500 Bellinzona. ☎ 91-825-2131, fax 91-821-4120. The cantonal tourist office is also in Bellinzona at Ticino Tourism, Casella Postale 1441, CH-6501 Bellinzona. ☎ 91-825-7056, fax 91-825-3614.



*Castelgrande (Peter Berger)*

## Landmarks & Historical Sites

The Three Castles of Bellinzona. Admission is 8Sfr for all three castles.

Castelgrande (often called Castle Uri) was built in the sixth century and then rebuilt at various times throughout the ages. It has two massive asymmetrical towers, complemented by additions from the 11th and 14th centuries that give it a maze-like





*Castello di Montebello & Castello di Sasso Corbaro (M. Macconi)*

feel. You can walk here via a very scenic path starting at Piazza Collegiata or take an elevator from Piazza del Sole. Open daily from 10 am-6 pm, the Castelgrande was completely restored to its original state in 1991 and now houses museums and restaurants. ☎ 91-825-8145.

Open daily, 10 am-6 pm from February-December, Castello di Montebello (Castle Schwyz) dates back to the 13th century, and today is home to both a civic and archeological museum. This is the finest medieval castle in Bellinzona. ☎ 91-825-1342.

Castello di Sasso Corbaro (Unterwald Castle) is a block-like structure that was built in 1479 for the Duke of Milan, and it is used for temporary art exhibitions today. This castle (the smallest of the three) is just uphill from Castello di Montebello, and is open from April-November, from 10 am-6 pm daily. ☎ 91-825-5906.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Unione is one of Bellinzona's finest hotels, in the heart of the city, and offers all modern amenities. Breakfast is included in the rates. (\$\$). Via Generale Guisan 1, CH-6500 Bellinzona. ☎ 91-825-5577, fax 91-825-9460, [www.hotelunione.ch](http://www.hotelunione.ch).

Hotel Internazionale has clean and comfortable accommodations in the heart of Bellinzona, and includes a nice in-house restaurant with Italian, Swiss and International fare at reasonable rates. (\$\$). Viale Stazione 35, CH-6500 Bellinzona. ☎ 91-825-4333, fax 91-826-1359.



*Hotel Unione*

Hotel San Giovanni features rustic and simple rooms in the old part of Bellinzona. (\$-\$\$). Via San Giovanni 7, CH-6500 Bellinzona. ☎/fax 91-825-1919.

Tsui-Fok offers cheap rooms in a beautiful old building in the old town. (\$). Clean and simple, with an in-house café, close to hiking trails. Via Nocca 20, CH-6500 Bellinzona. ☎/fax 91-825-1332.

Youth Hostel Montebello has 70 sleeping beds in a huge old mansion, and is suitable for handicapped persons. Just minutes from the train station. (\$). Via Nocca 4, CH-6500 Bellinzona. ☎ 91-825-1522, fax 91-825-4285, [www.youthhostel.ch/bellinzona](http://www.youthhostel.ch/bellinzona).



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Where to Eat



Grotto Paudese is in the tiny hamlet of Paudò, just a 12-minute drive southeast of Bellinzona on a small, local road.

This is a great little spot (sitting on the edge of the road with terrific views of the Alps), which also offers four rooms for an overnight stay. Very pretty and unpretentious; the staff is friendly and the restaurant and rooms are spotless. All the meals are homemade and regional. You won't find a better place for local ambiance and real Bellinzona cuisine. (\$) CH-6582 Paudò. ☎/fax 91-857-1468.

For fine regional dining, you'll want to try Castlegrande, in the 13th-century castle of the same name. This restaurant is sophisticated, with a serious wine list, and a formal waitstaff. (\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Closed Monday. Monte San Michele. ☎ 91-826-2353.

## Locarno

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**J**ust 14 miles (22 km) west of Bellinzona, Locarno is known as Ticino's sunniest town and is home to 20,000 inhabitants. Sitting on the northern shores of Lake Maggiore, and encircled by mountains, it is a haven for all types of tropical and subtropical plants and trees, and is known for producing some of Europe's best figs and olives. Locarno is also famous for its annual International Film Festival, which takes place every August.

The city is actually a trio of communities: Locarno, Muralto and Minusio. These three villages have a few auto-free streets, lots of tiny shops and cafés, and many fun places to sit and people-watch. The 40-mile-long Lake Maggiore, connecting Switzerland and Italy, provides many opportunities for excursions and water sports.

### Information Sources



The Locarno Tourist Office is part of the Lago Maggiore Tourism Bureau (Ente Turistico Lugano Maggiore). Open March-October, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-7 pm, Saturday, 10 am-4 pm; November-February, Monday-Friday, 9 am-12:30 pm, 2-6 pm. ☎ 91-791-0091 or 91-751-0333, fax 91-785-1941. This office offers guided walking tours of the city every Tuesday from March-October at 9:45 am for 5-10Sfr. Via Bernardino Luini 3, CH-6600 Locarno.

### Adventures

Isole di Brissago (The Brissago Islands) are in the middle of Lake Maggiore, and reachable via ship from Locarno, Ascona or Porto Ronco. They offer a mixture of subtropical plants and trees and, since their opening in April of 1950, have hosted over four million visitors. The main island, St. Pancrace or the Big Island, has a rich collection of exotic plants, while the Small Island, or St. Apollinaris, contains natural vegetation left untouched. The mild climate of this region makes it possible for

subtropical plant species to grow and thrive in an outdoor setting. Plant species are found here that are native to China, South Africa, Central and South America, Australia and the Oceania Islands. Roman artifacts have been found



*The Brissago Islands (Acp)*

on these small islands dating back to 125 AD. It wasn't until 1949 that Ticino purchased this land, making it an official cantonal Botanical Park. There are over 1,500 species of plants, with markers designating the name of each plant.



*The Big Island (Acp)*

The park also has a fine restaurant, dining terrace, a convention center and a scientific research laboratory. The park is open from April-

October from 9 am-6 pm. Admission is 7Sfr for adults and 3Sfr for children six-16. For more information, contact the amministrazione, Isole di Brissago, Parco Botanico del Canton Ticino, CH-6614 Isole di Brissago. ☎ 91-791-4361, fax 91-791-0763, [www.isolebrissago.ch](http://www.isolebrissago.ch).

Another fun adventure is to spend half a day or even a whole day exploring the Gambarogno Riviera alongside Lake Maggiore's south shore near the Italian border. Here there are

125 miles (200 km) of superb trails and hiking paths. The Locarno Tourist Office can provide you with maps of the area.

## Landmarks & Historic Sites

The main section of Locarno is highlighted by a broad square known as the Piazza Grande. You'll find lots of shopping opportunities on the north side of this piazza, while on the south are the Public Gardens. From here the narrow Via Francesco Rusca divides into four smaller walkways that all lead to the Old Town.

To the east of the train station is the Muralto district, while on the northeast side is the Minusio region of Locarno.



*Madonna del Sasso (Bernd Gehrmann)*

The Santuario della Madonna del Sasso is considered to be one of the most important sights of Locarno. It sits high in the hamlet of Orselina at 1,165 feet (355 m). You can either hike to the top or take the funicular that

leaves every 15 minutes from 7 am-11 pm daily. A round-trip costs only 5.6Sfr for adults or 4Sfr for children. This church was founded in 1480 by a friar and contains religious artwork and a small museum next to it. Open daily from March-October, 7 am-10 pm (closes at 9 pm in the off-season). ☎ 91-743-6265.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Romitaggio sits in the middle of the vineyards and has a large sun terrace that overlooks the Mogadino plains. Clean and modest with a friendly staff. (\$-\$\$\$). CH-6597 Agarone-Locarno. ☎ 91-859-1577, fax 91-859-1600.

Hotel Garni Gottardo is an ultra-modern, beautifully decorated hotel only a few feet from the lake and train station. Most rooms have a balcony facing the lake, but be sure to request one just in case. Breakfast is included. (\$\$). Very clean and tidy. Via S. Gottardo 18, CH-6600 Muralto-Locarno. ☎ 91-743-3183, fax 91-743-4454.

Hotel Carmine is a large, modern five-story hotel that includes Internet connections in every room. (\$\$). CH-6602 Muralto-Locarno. ☎ 91-735-3060, fax 91-735-3061.

Garni Stazione is a cute little inn with a family atmosphere. Close to the train station, town center and the bus stop. Breakfast included. (\$-\$\$). Piazza Stazione, CH-6600 Locarno. ☎ 91-743-0222, fax 91-743-5406.

The Locarno Youth Hostel Palagiovani is open year-round on the west side of Lugano's city center (just west of the Piazza San Francesco), and offers 188 beds starting at 32Sfr. (\$-\$\$). Open in the summer from 8-10 am, 3-11:30 pm; winter from 8-10 am, 4-10:30 pm. Via Varenna 18, CH-6600 Locarno. ☎ 91-756-1500, fax 91-756-1501, [www.youthhostel.ch/locarno](http://www.youthhostel.ch/locarno).

## Where to Eat



Restaurant Cittadella is in the heart of the Old Town of Locarno, and has a fine dining area upstairs, with a more informal "grotto" on the main level. They have regional and seasonal specialties such as fresh fish, duck, goose and shrimp. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Reservations required. The upstairs restaurant has a fixed-price menu at times. Open daily from noon-1:30 pm, 7-10 pm (closed on Monday in June and July). Via Cittadella 18, CH-6600 Locarno. ☎ 91-751-5885, fax 91-751-7759.



*See pages 119-20 for hotel and restaurant price codes.*

## Ascona

This is the quieter sister town of Locarno, and has a lovely town square that is simply referred to as *La Piazza*. For centuries fishermen, craftsmen and farmers have lived here, the latter leading their cows through the streets at night from nearby pastures to their home barns. During the summer months the

huge Piazza is filled to capacity with hundreds of locals and visitors enjoying all kinds of concerts – from classical to jazz to hip-hop.

Ascona is also well known for its sophistication and elegance, and is filled with art galleries and high-end boutiques. Often referred to as the “Queen of Lago Maggiore,” it has been home to some of the world’s most notable artists, writers and philosophers, including Karl Jung and Hermann Hesse, among others. With just 5,000 citizens, it offers over 3,000 hotel beds and some of the finest overnight accommodations within Ticino. It also hosts an annual New Orleans Jazz Festival.

The Tourist Office Lago Maggiore of Ascona is in Casa Serodine, Piazza San Pietro, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-0091, fax 91-785-1941. There is no train station here, so if you don’t have a car, your best bet is to get off the train in Locarno and hop a bus or taxi for the quick ride (five minutes) to Ascona. Bikes can be rented for 20Sfr daily at Facci Claudio on Via Ascone 12, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-1341.

## Where to Stay



Hotel Ascona is a four-star hotel only five minutes from La Piazza, set in the midst of a tropical garden with spectacular views of the lake and surrounding

mountains. It includes all modern amenities, with an outdoor heated pool, sauna, whirlpool, solarium and dining terrace. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$+). Via Collina, CH-6612 Ascona.

☎ 91-785-1515, fax 91-785-1530.



*Hotel Ascona*

Hotel Castello is a 13th-century castle that has been restored and renovated to feature modern rooms in a beautiful setting at the end of Ascona’s lakeside promenade. This hotel has stone stairways, thick stone walls and retains much of its original fortress works. The in-house restaurant, Locanda de’ Ghirigioni



*Hotel Castello*

is one of the best in the area, with fine dining in a cozy setting. There is also a lakeside garden/terrace and a wine bar as well. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$+). Open March-November. Lakeside Promenade, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-0161, fax 91-791-1804.

Casa Berno Ascona sits high above Lake Maggiore, surrounded by a subtropical garden. This hotel offers golfing and hiking excursions led by the knowledgeable hotel staff. There are two in-house restaurants that serve rich buffets as well as regional specialties on a nightly basis, along with a very fine wine selection. Sauna, fitness room and massages are also available. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-3232, fax 91-792-1114.



*Casa Berno Ascona*

Casa Wülfigen sits on the southwest slope of Monte Verita in a quiet location and offers a fine view of Ascona – only 10 minutes away on foot. This charming, rustic inn is a good spot for hikes and walks, and also features a private beach. (\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$). Via Rondonico 101, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-785-1820, fax 91-785-1821.



*Casa Wülfigen*



Hotel Sole is perfect for families or solo travelers and includes a windsurfing school and swimming pool. A good spot for walks and views of the lake. All rooms have balconies, and the in-house restaurant serves tasty Italian fare. (\$\$). Via Leoncavallo 76, CH-6614 Brissago-Ascona. ☎ 91-793-1148, fax 91-793-1211.

## Where to Eat



Al Pontile serves a great combination of French, Italian and local dishes, but what makes us keep coming back here is the ambiance. The interior is dark and romantic, with lanterns and an overall warm ambience that is unique. The desserts are delicious. (\$-\$\$\$\$). Open daily from 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 6-9 pm. Reservations recommended. Closed Mondays from January to March. Via Longalago G. Motta 31, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-0101.

Trattoria della Ruga is in the heart of the city and has Italian and Ticinesi specialties, including a fine homemade ravioli or a succulent rabbit dish. The wine list includes over 140 varieties. (\$-\$\$\$). Open daily from 9:30 am-2:30 pm, 5 pm-1 am. Closed Monday. Via Village 28, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-2743, fax 91-791-2877.

Restaurant Da Ivo is a pleasant and homey restaurant run by hosts Alfredo and Luisa Cormano, who dish up regional and Mediterranean fare. Lobster, swordfish and grilled calf are complemented by fine Ticinesi, Italian and French wines. (\$-\$\$\$). Open 11:45 am-2:30 pm, 5:45-11 pm. Closed Monday. Via College 7, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-6093, fax 91-791-3393.

Osteria Nostrana is a hopping place on the wharf of the promenade. Good pizzas and pastas, but most folks come here to people-watch. (\$-\$\$). Via Longalago G. Motta, CH-6612 Ascona. ☎ 91-791-5158.

Ristorante della Posta is a unique little find in the tiny village of Ronco, which sits high above Ascona overlooking Lake Maggiore and the Brissago Islands. It offers international, Italian and Mediterranean dishes at very reasonable prices. (\$-\$\$). Open 11:30 am-2 pm, 6-9:30 pm daily. Closed mid-November to early February. It also has a few small rooms for a cheap overnight stay. A former post office, it is one of the few buildings in this village, and very easy to find. ☎ 91-791-8470, fax 91-791-4533.

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