



SWITZERLAND: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE SWISS ALPS

Discover beguiling historic cities, breathtaking snow-capped mountains and jewel-toned glacial lakes on this exploration of Switzerland. Travel from cosmopolitan Geneva to lovely lakeside Lucerne, visiting the romantic Chateau de Chillon and the pretty alpine hamlet of Zermatt along the way.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



Europe, Switzerland



10 days from AU\$25,780 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Discover beguiling historic cities, breathtaking snow-capped mountains and jewel-toned glacial lakes on this exploration of Switzerland. Travel from cosmopolitan Geneva to lovely lakeside Lucerne, visiting the romantic Chateau de Chillon and the pretty alpine hamlet of Zermatt along the way. There's ample opportunity to sample renowned Swiss chocolate and cheese, as well as take advantage of the trains and boats that famously run like clockwork in this tiny landlocked country. Accommodation throughout this tour is in some of the country's grandest hotels, including the glamorous Beau Rivage Palace in Lausanne and the storied Grand Hotel Zermatterhof, set in the shadow of the Matterhorn.

Journey Highlights

- Tour the charming old towns of Lausanne and Lucerne with an expert guide on foot.
- Visit the highly photogenic Chateau de Chillon, whose stone walls conceal marvellous formal halls and a hauntingly beautiful dungeon.
- Travel along Europe's highest open-air cog railway and the world's steepest cogwheel railway to fabulous scenic viewpoints overlooking the Swiss Alps.
- Stay in some of Switzerland's grandest hotels including the sophisticated Beau Rivage Palace in Lausanne, which has welcomed guests since 1861.
- Enjoy a full day free to explore the idyllic mountain town of Zermatt at leisure



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Geneva, Switzerland

Arrive in cosmopolitan Geneva, where you are met by your A&K Guardian Angel. Transfer by private vehicle to your lakefront hotel in Lausanne, a picturesque city about 40 minutes by road from the international airport.

Beau-Rivage Palace

Day 2: Lausanne

Embark on a half-day tour of Lausanne's largely car-free Old Town, taking in the Gothic splendour of Notre Dame, arguably Switzerland's finest cathedral. Also on your itinerary today is the magnificent Hôtel de Ville, the 17th century Baroque-style town hall complete with copper gargoyles. At the centre of Palud Square, take a moment to admire the striking Renaissance-era sculpture of Lady Justice – part of Lausanne's oldest fountain – created by Laurent Perroud and his son Jacques in 1584-85.

The afternoon is free to explore the rest of this historic city, which brims with museums and art galleries, on your own.

Beau-Rivage Palace | Meals: B

Day 3: Lausanne

Discover the many charms of French-speaking Switzerland on a full day excursion. Your first stop is the romantic 9th century Chateau de Chillon just outside Montreux, which appears to float on the waters of the lake. A wander through the castle's many buildings reveals its dark history, particularly the vaulted stone dungeon, which inspired Lord Byron's epic poem *The Prisoner of Chillon*. Also of note are the three splendid formal great halls, and the chapel, whose wall recesses date back to the 13th century.

Next, board the modern Golden Pass Panoramic Train to Montbovon, savouring sweeping views of the Swiss Alps. On arrival, you are met by your driver and transferred to Gruyères. Home to a number of castles and heritage homes, this medieval town is not only famous for its namesake cheese, but also for delicate meringues served with fresh fruit and heavy double cream.

Beau-Rivage Palace | Meals: B

Day 4: Zermatt

Today's destination is Zermatt, an alluring small town in the Swiss Alps and the starting point for many skiers, hikers and mountaineers on the Haute Route, which runs between the Matterhorn in Switzerland and Mont Blanc in France. You are met here by your A&K Guardian Angel who will assist you with check in at your hotel.

Grand Hotel Zermatterhof | Meals: B

Day 5: Zermatt

Wear sturdy shoes and take your daypack for today's excursion! This morning, you'll ride on Europe's highest open-air cog railway to the lofty summit of Gornegrat, Switzerland's second-highest mountain. On this 45-minute journey, the train winds its way up 3,089 metres to a viewing platform that offers awe-inspiring views of the Matterhorn, Monte Rosa and the dramatic Gorner Glacier.

Grand Hotel Zermatterhof | Meals: B

Day 6: Zermatt

The entire day is yours to experience the many attractions of Zermatt. Shop for souvenirs such as Swiss chocolate along lively Bahnhofstrasse or browse the fascinating displays – showcasing both triumph and tragedy – at the Matterhorn Museum - Zermatlantis. For more mountain scenery, a hike to the ethereal Gorner Gorge is highly recommended, as is an unforgettable helicopter flight over the Matterhorn (additional cost).

Grand Hotel Zermatterhof | Meals: B

Day 7: Lucerne

You are escorted aboard the Glacier Express train bound for Andermatt today. Sit back and soak up breathtaking vistas from your comfortable First Class seat as you make your way into central Switzerland.

Your destination today is Lucerne, a gorgeous fairytale city on the shores of Vierwaldstaettersee, the country's fourth-largest lake.

Hotel des Balances | Meals: B

Day 8: Lucerne

An expert-guided city tour on foot unravels the history of this beguiling city. Admire the classically beautiful Renaissance-era Old Town Hall and inspect the ornate wooden pews and gilded statues that adorn the white stone interiors of the 8th century Church of St Leodegar.

At the Glacier Gardens, get a glimpse of what Lucerne looked like when ice covered this land. This is also where the impressive Lion Monument can be found, a moving sculpture of a dying lion carved into a rock face to commemorate Swiss Guards who died while protecting Louis XVI during the French Revolution.

Enjoy lunch (payable locally) on board a public boat, as you cruise across the Vierwaldstaettersee, taking in the dramatic mountain landscapes.

Hotel des Balances | Meals: B

Day 9: Lucerne

Leave the city behind and travel on the world's steepest cogwheel railway past wildflower-filled meadows and gurgling streams to Pilatus Kulm. This popular lookout can be crowded but it boasts spectacular views of no less than 73 peaks and five different lakes. Make a scenic descent by aerial gondola.

Hotel des Balances | Meals: B

Day 10: Depart Lucerne

Meet your driver for a transfer to the airport.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Beau-Rivage Palace



Many notable guests throughout history from politicians to royalty and celebrities have experienced the outstanding hospitality of staff at Beau-Rivage Palace, widely recognised as one of Europe's finest hotels. Opened in 1861, this majestic lakeside hotel is an oasis of serenity despite being a mere 10 minutes from the vibrant centre of Lausanne.

To mirror the peaceful atmosphere of the surrounding gardens and lake, the beautifully appointed rooms and suites of the Beau-Rivage Palace feature soft, calming colour palettes that were carefully chosen by renowned interior designer Pierre-Yves Rochon.

Whilst there is a wealth of excellent dining options on your doorstep, a meal at one of the fabulous hotel restaurants should not be missed. Choose from a highly awarded fine dining establishment helmed by a three-star Michelin chef or enjoy a theatrical teppanyaki meal served in a contemporary setting. In warmer weather, the elegant brasserie terrace is the place to be; alternatively, take a gourmet cruise aboard a magnificent antique steamboat.

Recreational facilities at the Beau-Rivage Palace include a state-of-the-art gym, two tennis courts, a yoga studio, hammam, ice bath, heated indoor and outdoor swimming pools. A range of wellness services are also

available onsite including massages, facials and hairstyling.

Grand Hotel Zermatterhof



Built towards the end of the 19th century to accommodate wealthy city-dwellers who sought fresh mountain air during their holidays, the Grand Hotel Zermatterhof has upheld a long tradition of offering five-star hospitality to discerning travellers visiting the historic alpine village of Zermatt.

While guestrooms and suites have been brought into the 21st century with an array of modern updates, they retain a timeless Swiss highland charm with interiors featuring classic timber furniture and local pine panelling. Many also provide views over the imposing snow-capped Matterhorn.

Guests at the Grand Hotel Zermatterhof are treated to a wide variety of cuisines at this hotel including French and Italian. The Swiss cheese restaurant is well worth a visit, presenting diners the opportunity to sample the many cheeses produced in the Valais region, and of course, fondue. In the evening, unwind with a nightcap by the crackling fireplace in the bar.

Since most of the activities in and around Zermatt involve spending time outdoors in the cool alpine environment, the Grand Hotel Zermatterhof offers many ways for guests to pamper themselves. Enjoy a relaxing massage or facial treatment in the wellness spa, take a dip in the pool or get your circulation going by alternating between the sauna and ice grotto.

Hotel des Balances



Opened as an inn as early as the 12th century, the Hotel des Balances has a long history of welcoming illustrious travellers to central Switzerland. The intricate murals on the building's façade lend this hotel a romantic Venetian air; however, its fantastic location on the banks of the River Reuss mere minutes to the iconic Chapel Bridge and fascinating Glacier Garden remind visitors they are very much in the heart of old Lucerne.

The comfortable rooms and suites of this hotel feature stylish modern décor and hardwood floors. Large windows ensure plenty of natural light, and guests enjoy an outlook over the picturesque old town or the river.

The hotel restaurant and bar are both popular with guests and locals alike, serving inspired French-Mediterranean dishes and a premium selection of beverages in a cosy setting. On a fine day, don't miss a meal on the terrace which offers unbeatable views across the sparkling clear water of the River Reuss to the handsome Baroque-style Jesuit Church and the world-famous Chapel Bridge, with its octagonal water tower.

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