

Spectacular Switzerland

Day 1 ARRIVE IN ZURICH, SWITZERLAND. Welcome to Zurich! At 6 pm, meet your Tour Director and traveling companions for a welcome dinner at your hotel. (D)

Day 2 ZURICH–BIEL/BIENNE–NEUCHTEL–GENEVA. Discover Zurich's well-preserved OLD TOWN with its medieval guild houses during your orientation walk. Then, leave Zurich and start your Swiss adventure. You'll quickly discover that Switzerland isn't just home to the Alps, but also to some of the most beautiful lakes. First, stop at the foot of the Jura Mountains in the picturesque town of Biel, known as Bienne by French-speaking Swiss and famous for watch making. Explore the HISTORICAL CENTER and take a scenic drive to lakeside Neuchtel, dominated by the medieval cathedral and castle. Time to stroll along the beautiful lake promenade before continuing to stunning Geneva, the second-largest city in Switzerland, with its fantastic lakeside location and breathtaking panoramas of the Alps. Today's Distance: 326 mi / 525 km (B)

Day 3 GENEVA. During your guided sightseeing, see the elegant buildings that house many international organizations, including the headquarters of the International Red Cross and many United Nations agencies. You will also hear about John Calvin, the French theologian who helped reform the church in Geneva in the mid-16th century. Visit REFORMATION PARK, with its International Monument to the Reformation, and walk through the OLD TOWN to see St. Pierre's Cathedral. Balance of the day is at leisure to further explore this fascinating city. An optional lake cruise is available to make the most of your stay. (B)

Day 4 GENEVA–ÉVIAN-LES-BAINS, FRANCE–GRUYÈRES, SWITZERLAND–BROC–GRUYÈRE AREA. Enter France and follow Lake Geneva along the southern shore to the famous spa town of Évian-les-Bains, a popular holiday resort renowned for its mineral water. Return to Switzerland, and cross the Rhône River, France's largest river—originating in the Swiss Alps and, eventually flowing into the Mediterranean Sea. See the vineyards, where some of the best Swiss wines are produced, then leave this "Swiss Riviera" and continue to Gruyères for [LF] a visit to the magnificent CASTLE. Walk through eight centuries of architecture, history, and culture, and afterward enjoy lunch with local specialties and a traditional dessert with meringue and double crème. An extra treat is a [LF] stop in Broc for a visit to MAISON CAILLER chocolate factory to taste this delicious Swiss specialty. Continue to your hotel in nearby Charmey. Today's Distance: 75 mi / 120 km (B,L,D)

Day 5 GRUYÈRE AREA–GSTAAD–INTERLAKEN–GRINDELWALD. Leave the Gruyère area and enjoy a scenic drive to Gstaad, one of Switzerland's most famous ski resorts. After an orientation of this international holiday destination for royalty and celebrities, continue to Interlaken. The town's unique location, nestled between Lake Thun and Lake Brienz and surrounded by the world-famous Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau mountains, guarantees spectacular views. Later, arrive at your charming hotel in the mountain resort of Grindelwald. Today's Distance: 68 mi / 110 km (B)

Day 6 GRINDELWALD. EXCURSION TO THE JUNGFRAU. [LF] An unforgettable trip to the Alpine wonderland of ice and snow is the true highlight of a visit to Switzerland. At an amazing 11,332 feet, the JUNGFRAUJOCH is Europe's highest railway station. Jungfrau's 13,642-foot summit was first ascended in 1811 and, in 1912, the rack railway was opened. There are lots of things to do here: enjoy the Alpine Sensation, the Panorama 360° Experience, the ICE PALACE, and take the elevator to the Sphinx Observatory. Also receive your Jungfrau Passport as a souvenir to take home with you. The round trip to the "Top of Europe" by MOUNTAIN TRAIN will occupy most of the day. (B,D)

Day 7 GRINDELWALD–BERNE–LUCERNE. Arrive in the stately capital of Berne. See the BEAR PARK, and enjoy the panoramic view of the city from the Rose Garden and the OLD TOWN with the Clock Tower and the ornate, flower-adorned fountains. Leave the Berner Oberland and drive via Langnau in the Emmental Valley to picturesque Lucerne. Tonight is your chance to join an optional dinner excursion to a folklore party with yodeling and alphorn blowing. Today's Distance: 124 mi / 200 km (B)

Day 8 LUCERNE. Follow your Tour Director for a pleasant walk and admire Thorwaldsen's impressive LION MONUMENT, dedicated to the Swiss Guards who protected the Royal House of France during the French Revolution. Walk along ornate patrician houses of the walled Old Town, then cross the famous covered CHAPEL BRIDGE to the Jesuit Church, the first large baroque church built in Switzerland on the north side of the Alps. Join an optional excursion to Mount Pilatus, and tonight, a farewell dinner awaits at a local restaurant for a proper auf Wiedersehen. (B,D)

Day 9 LUCERNE–ZURICH AIRPORT. Morning transfer to Zurich Airport in time for homebound flights leaving no earlier than 10 am. Extra nights are available in Zurich. Today's Distance: 34 mi / 55 km (B)