

Insight Vacations: Country Roads of Switzerland - Preview 2021

Day 1 - Welcome to Lucerne.

Welcome to Switzerland, a land of snow-capped summits and romantic lakes that has attracted poets, musicians and travellers for centuries. On arrival at Zürich airport, transfers leave for your hotel in Lucerne at 09:30 and 13:30. Meet your Travel Director and travel companions at 18:00 for drinks, followed by a pleasant Welcome Dinner with wine at a local restaurant.(Dinner with Wine)

Accommodations: Hotel Astoria, Lucerne.

Meals: Dinner with Wine

Day 2 - Ascend the summit of Mount Stanserhorn.

Step aboard a funicular railway and open-top cable car for a spectacular journey to the summit of the stunning Mount Stanserhorn. Admire unrivalled views of the surrounding mountains and, on a clear day see as far as Alsace in France and the Black Forest in Germany. Explore Stanserhorn with Insight Choice. Meet a Swiss Ranger and learn about the local wildlife. Alternatively, walk through the Stanserhorn marmot park and along the Rock-Gipfelweg trail leading to the summit. At the highest point you can enjoy a breathtaking 360 degree panorama. Return to the beautiful 14th century city of Lucerne to see its storybook wooden bridges, Baroque church and sorrowful Lion Monument. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at your leisure to walk along the lake or perhaps shop for a special timepiece or chocolate.(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Hotel Astoria, Lucerne.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 3 - Bern, Gruyères and Montreux.

In Bern, your Local Expert is a local English teacher, who shows you the Bear Pits, Cathedral of St. Vincent, Federal Palace and floral displays. Gather at the clock tower to watch the mechanical procession of painted figures before viewing the Ogre Fountain. Your travels continue into the wide, green valleys of the Vaud Alps with snowy summits filling the horizon. Continue through vineyards and alpine meadows to the fortified town of Gruyères, that gives its name to the well-known cheese. Enjoy time on your own to explore the pretty main street and 13th century castle. From Montreux, travel along the shores of Lake Geneva to visit Domaine Bovy and admire the stunning panorama overlooking the lake. Savour a tasting of these tantalising, local wines and delight in a delicious Farm-to-Table light dinner.(Breakfast / Dinner with Wine)

Accommodations: Grand Hôtel Suisse-Majestic, Montreux.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 4 - Lake Geneva & the Swiss Countryside.

On the western bay of Lake Geneva, a Local Expert will show you the medieval Chillon Castle, former home to the Counts of Savoy, immortalised by Lord Byron's 'Prisoner of Chillon.' Keep a look out for where the writer is rumoured to have left his mark. Return to Montreux where the rest of the day is free for you to explore on your own or relax as you wish at your quayside hotel.(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Grand Hôtel Suisse-Majestic, Montreux.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 5 - Geneva and Scenic Lake Cruise.

Follow the shores of the lake to the international city of Geneva, seeing the Jet d'Eau and Floral Clock. Next, relax in first-class comfort on the waters of Lake Geneva during a highlight cruise. This evening, enjoy time at leisure on the promenades of your lakeside resort.(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Grand Hôtel Suisse-Majestic, Montreux.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 6 - Martigny, Sion and Zermatt.

Journey into the upper Rhône Valley to Martigny to view the Roman Amphitheatre. Continue to the town of Sion, dominated by two rocky peaks, each crowned with episcopal fortresses, and see the cathedral and Old Town Hall. Complete your journey via cogwheel train to the traffic-free mountain resort of Zermatt. This evening, take your pick from a selection of local restaurants for your Dine-Around Evening. Perhaps you will delight in the typical Swiss dining experience of fondue?(Breakfast / Dinner with Wine)

Accommodations: Resort Hotel Alex, Zermatt.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 7 - Zermatt at Leisure.

Zermatt in summertime offers many leisure possibilities: try swimming, hiking or relaxing in the fresh alpine surrounds. Perhaps take a trip to the Klein Matterhorn, see the Matterhorn from the church bridge or sample the delicious cakes known as Kuchen?(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Resort Hotel Alex, Zermatt.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 8 - The Italian Lake District to Baveno.

Descend to Täsch for a scenic drive through Brig where you'll commence your ascent of the Simplon Pass, taking in magnificent views over the Alps from the 2,000-metre summit. Cut through northern Italy, stopping along the shores of Lake Maggiore. The afternoon is at your leisure. Perhaps join an excursion to the stunning Isola Bella?(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Hotel Simplon/Hotel Dino, Baveno, Italian Lakes.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 9 - The Glamour and Glitz of St. Moritz.

Journey along the shores of Lake Maggiore, and head north to the three castles at Bellinzona to meet your Local Expert, Julia Guidotti, for a fascinating insight into this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Originally from the midwest of the USA, Julia was married in Ticino - the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland of which Bellinzona is the capital. Having lived in the area for many years, Julia is passionate about this city and is always keen to share her knowledge and delighted to assist with any questions you have about the region. Your travels continue through the Grison Region, travelling via San Bernardino and the town of Tiefencastel, as you follow the young Rhine River. Head east towards the Julier Pass and the glamorous resort of St. Moritz, set in the Engadine Valley with the majestic Grisons Alps towering above.(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Crystal Hotel/Steffani, St. Moritz.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 10 - Leisure Time in St. Moritz.

Enjoy a day at leisure to jostle with the jet-setters in the elegant boutiques or take an exciting train journey over the Bernina pass. To help you make the most of your day, your Travel Director will provide you with a mountain railways pass, offering free travel on all cable cars, funiculars and chairlifts (when available) in Engadine St. Moritz.(Breakfast)

Accommodations: Crystal Hotel/Steffani, St. Moritz.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 11 - The Glacier Express.

Step aboard the Glacier Express to experience one of the world's great railway journeys. Cross the Landwasser Viaduct before heading down through the Oberalp Valley to rejoin the coach at Andermatt. Drive through the dramatic Schöllenen Gorge passing the Devil's Bridge. Marvel at the

Wetterhorn Peaks as you travel along the Grindelwald Valley. Follow the sparkling Lütschine River to Lauterbrunnen, at the head of the Valley of Waterfalls, and see the Staubbach Falls plunge 300 metres from the plateau above.(Breakfast / Dinner with Wine)
Accommodations: Romantik Hotel Schweizerhof Grindelwald.
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 12 - Grindelwald at Leisure.

Enjoy a day at your leisure to explore Grindelwald further. Perhaps take a cogwheel train ride to the summit of the Jungfrau mountain?(Breakfast)
Accommodations: Romantik Hotel Schweizerhof Grindelwald.
Meals: Breakfast

Day 13 - Rural Switzerland to Zürich.

Take in the spectacular lake views, as you journey to Brienz, famous for its woodcarving traditions. Visit the Jobin Swiss Woodcarving Centre to trace the history of the trade back to the early days of the 19th century. Continue over the Brünig Pass and drive alongside the lakes of Lungern and Sarnen to return to Zürich. See the Bahnhofstrasse, Grossmünster, River Limmat and Frauenmünster on an orientation of the city with your Travel Director. Join your travel companions at a local restaurant. Your Celebration Dinner is accompanied with wine - raise your glass to toast to your adventures.(Breakfast / Dinner with Wine)
Accommodations: Mövenpick Hotel Zürich-Airport.
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 14 - Depart Zürich.

Enjoy a complimentary transfer to the airport by hotel shuttle.(Breakfast)
Meals: Breakfast