

Lucerne - 1 night

DAY 1: Arrive in Lucerne

Welcome to Switzerland! Upon arrival a local guide will meet your group in the arrivals hall of Zurich Airport and accompany it by private coach to Zurich's city center. Located along the shores of glimmering Lake Zurich and the banks of the Limmat River, against a spectacular mountainous backdrop, you will soon see why Zurich is one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

While Zurich is the largest city in Switzerland, a major transportation hub and a global financial center, the city's origins are ancient. Today your group will have a walking tour of Zurich along the cobblestone lanes of its impressive Old Town or "Altstadt" as it is called in German. During the tour you will see some of Zurich's prettiest and most historic squares, medieval homes, quays and churches with visits included inside the 11th-century Romanesque Cathedral (Grossmünster) and the 13th-century Fraumünster church, which houses five original Marc Chagall stained-glass windows. In addition to the walking tour, your group will also have free time for lunch in Zurich before traveling south into the heart of Switzerland. Your destination is Lucerne, a medieval, spire-topped town that looks straight out of a fairytale. While many traveling to Lucerne base themselves there due to its proximity to Mount Pilatus and Rigi, the town has plenty of natural and cultural attractions to merit a visit in their own right.

Upon arrival to the hotel in Lucerne, your group will check in and have time to relax before tonight's traditional Swiss raclette meal. Before dinner, consider taking a stroll along the shores of gorgeous Lake Lucerne.

Interlaken - 4 nights

DAY 2: Arrive in Interlaken

After breakfast and check-out, your group will set out on guided walking tour of Lucerne's best sights including the iconic, wooden Kapellbrücke (Chapel Bridge), the Löwendenkmal (Lion Monument), the 12th-century St. Peter's Church, and the renaissance Old Town Hall (Altes Rathaus). After breaking for lunch, your sightseeing tour of Lucerne will pick back up with a visit to the Swiss Museum of Transport (Verkehrshaus der Schweiz). Dedicated to all things related to transportation, this really is the finest museum of its kind in Europe. Inside you will see exhibitions showcasing anything from steamboats to historic railway cars to flying machines!

At the conclusion of your guided tour, re-board your private coach and travel southwest to the Bernese Oberland, one of the most visited Alpine regions in Switzerland. Your destination is the resort town of Interlaken, which will serve as your base for the next four nights. Lovely Interlaken takes its name from its location between the transparent, blue waters of Lake Thun and Lake Brienz. A mecca for adventure sports enthusiasts, while there you are likely to see fellow tourists skiing, mountain hiking, hang gliding, canyoning, paragliding or sailing. However, most visitors travel to Interlaken to tackle the mighty Jungfrauoch, which your group will do in two days' time.

After checking in to the hotel in Interlaken, enjoy an evening at leisure.

DAY 3:

After breakfast in the hotel, a local guide will take your group on a relaxing, walking tour of Interlaken. (This could be done with horse carriages if your group is interested). Interlaken is small and very easy to get around. As part of the tour you will also visit a local chocolatier to see how chocolate, one of Switzerland's best exports, is produced.

At the conclusion of your morning tour, the rest of the day is free for you to enjoy Interlaken. You can shop, relax, check out the town's relaxing 35-acre Hoheweg park, or take a boat cruise on Lake Thun or Lake Brienz (note: the cruises do not operate in the winter months). There are also numerous water sports that can be arranged on the lakes in the summertime. Should your group want to include sightseeing this afternoon, we recommend visiting the town of Thun, located at the northwestern tip of Lake Thun, which is home to Schloss Thun. At approximately 900-years-old, this castle is a true masterpiece of European medieval architecture, and today it houses an interesting history museum.

DAY 4:

After breakfast in the hotel, your group will set out on the railway adventure of a lifetime! Today you will journey to over 11,300 feet above sea level to Europe's highest railway station, located atop the extraordinary Jungfrauoch. A true feat of Swiss engineering, the Jungfrau Railway began construction on its route to the Jungfrauoch in 1896. It was inaugurated in 1912, 102 years ago. The building of the railway made it possible to explore and enjoy the immense beauty of this Alpine region.

Despite the construction of the railway, this is one of the least disturbed areas in the Alps. It is also home to the Aletsch, which is the largest glacier in the Alps; in area, length and depth. The beauty of the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau mountains and their surrounding valleys is indescribable. All of these reasons have led the area to be named an official UNESCO World Heritage Natural Site.

From the hotel your group will walk to the Interlaken Railway Station and then travel to the Lauterbrunnen Valley by cog rail. From there you will change chains and ascend to the station at Kleine Scheidegg, which offers spectacular views of the Eiger Wall, the Monch, and the Jungfrau. In Kleine Scheidegg your group will board the historic Jungfraubahn railway that will take you to the Jungfrauoch, stopping briefly at the Eigerwand and Eismeer stations. Once you reach the top, prepare yourself for magnificent views of the Alps' largest glacier. Your group will visit the beautiful Ice Palace as well as the Sphinx Observation Hall before having lunch in a restaurant.

The descent will take you from the Jungfrauoch back to the station at Kleine Scheidegg, then on to the popular ski resort of Grindelwald and finally back to Interlaken. Should your group be interested, it could consider taking the historic Eiger Ambassador Express (complete with coffee, tea and digestif) on the return journey. As parts of the Eiger Ambassador Express made the first journey up to the Jungfrauoch in 1912, taking this historic train is a dream come true for train enthusiasts!

Once returning to Interlaken in the early evening, you are free as nothing has been scheduled for tonight.

DAY 5:

After breakfast in the hotel, prepare yourself for another day of incredible Alpine scenery beginning with a short train ride from Interlaken to the resort of Wilderswil. From there, your group will take the 120-year-old cogwheel train to the beautiful mountain area of Schynige Platte. The incredible mountain journey, which spans 4.5 miles and takes roughly one hour, will take you up to approximately 6,000 miles above sea level.

As soon as you arrive to the Schynige Platte mountain station, you will realize that you are in a prime, post-card like hiking region. Enjoy fantastic views of the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau mountains as well as Lake Brienz, Lake Thun and the Lutschinen river valley. While there your group will have lunch in a restaurant and then visit the Alpine Botanical Garden, which boasts over 600 species of plants.

Your group will return to the hotel in Interlaken by late afternoon and have time to relax and freshen up before tonight's traditional Swiss folklore dinner show.

Bern - 1 night

DAY 6: Arrive in Bern

After breakfast and check-out, your group will set out on another morning of fresh mountain air and magical scenery beginning with a train ride from Interlaken to the resort town of Grindelwald. You will then board a 6-seater gondola lift and travel over three very panoramic miles to the station of First. Located 7,100 feet above sea level, this area is both a hiking paradise (it has over 60 miles of summer hiking trails) and a winter wonderland (75 miles of ski slopes).

There are many outdoor activities to do in the First region, but today your group will take the thrilling First Flyer from First to Schreckfeld. This zip line is like nothing else you will see in the Alps. Strap into your harness, hold on and travel 2,600 feet at 52 miles per hour! (Note: your decent on the First Flyer will be stopped by a spring mechanism. Upon to four group members can go at the same time on this colossal zip line. For safety reasons, participants doing the First Flyer must weigh at least 77 lbs. and no more than 275 lbs.). From there you will hike two miles to Bort where you will get your very own "trotti bike" and ride back down to Grindelwald. The ride down will look like something straight out of Heidi. We guarantee you are more likely to see cows than cars. Trotti bikes, which are admittedly weird but incredibly fun, are extremely popular in Switzerland. It's basically a scooter with good brakes. If you hate the idea, no worries; you can always take the gondola lift back down, or we can propose a less rigorous activity.

After a morning filled with adrenaline, your group will have free time for lunch in the resort of Grindelwald before catching the train back to Interlaken. From there you will travel northwest by private coach to Bern, Switzerland's beautiful capital city. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel in Bern and enjoy some time to freshen up before tonight's group dinner, which will take place at a local restaurant in Bern.

Zurich - 1 night

DAY 7: Arrive in Zurich

After breakfast and check-out, your group will set out on a sightseeing tour of Bern, which dating back to the 1100s is one of Switzerland's oldest cities. Despite being smaller than Zurich, Geneva, Basel and Lausanne, Bern (also spelled "Berne") is the capital of Switzerland. Because of its wonderful heritage (particularly its medieval architecture), the Old City of Bern is also an official UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Site. As you visit Bern this morning, you will feel that you have truly stepped back in time.

Your guided walking tour of Bern's Altstadt (Old Town) will feature the Cathedral of St. Vincent (Munster), Heiliggeistkirche (Church of the Holy Ghost), the 13th-century Prison Gate, the Marktgasse, the Kornhausplatz, the historic Zytgloggeturm (Clock Tower), the Federal Palace as well as the Samson, Bagpiper, Justice and Zahringer Fountains. You will also see Bern's famed bear pits (Barengraben), which have housed the city's mascots since the 15th century.

After your morning tour and free time for lunch and shopping, your group will return by private coach to Zurich. After checking in, you will have free time to enjoy Zurich until tonight's farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

DAY 8:

After breakfast and check-out, your group will transfer by private coach to Zurich Airport for its return flight to the USA or Canada.