

# ABSOLUTELY ALPS

*An Alpine Driving Journey*





Zell am See in summer © Zell am See-Kaprun/Daniel Chytra



Hochalm cablecar © Stefan Herbke



Lavaux, Lake Geneva © swiss-image.ch



## *Top-of-the-World Experiences*

Journey to the most spectacular landscapes on earth, the Alpine nations of Switzerland, Germany and Austria. Begin at any point on the map to follow a route that leads to places where you can indulge your passions for the great outdoors, history, art, fine food and wine, music and festivals. Below, find suggestions and insider tips for your visit to this magnificent mountain region.





Hohenwerfen Fortress © Österreich Werbung / Volker Preusser



Zugspitze summit © GNTB, Hans Peter Marten



Aerial view of Montreux, Lake Geneva © swiss-image.ch

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# Good to know...

Driving the Absolutely Alps itinerary is uncomplicated and offers the greatest flexibility and freedom: you explore at your own pace. Roads are well maintained, whether you select a superhighway or a meandering byway.



Alpine driving, St. Moritz © swiss-image.ch

## Car Rental

There are car rental agencies at airports and downtown locations in most larger cities. Except at airports, rental agencies are closed Sundays. Smaller vehicles have manual transmissions; automatics require advance reservations. Drivers must be over 21 years of age.

Include satellite navigation in your rental package to reduce stress during the journey.

## Road Regulations

### Reflective Safety Vest

Drivers are required to carry a reflective safety vest in their car at all times. This new regulation is required by law and is subject to heavy fines. Please check with your car rental company to ensure a Reflective Safety Vest is located in the car.

### Road tolls

Toll stickers are required on all vehicles on Austria's and Switzerland's motorways and highways! Stickers can be obtained from the gasoline stations well as post offices and sundries

### Seat belts

Seat belts are compulsory and children under-12 are required to sit in the back. Dipped headlights are compulsory in tunnels. Use of the horn is discouraged except on mountain roads with blind turns.

### Speed limits

Maximum speed on motorways

Switzerland	120 km/h (75 mph)
Austria	130 km/h (81 mph)
Germany	no speed limit or as posted

Be sure to check when these routes are open, as most high passes close during winter.

## Gasoline

Most petrol stations are closed at night, even on motorways; self-service petrol pumps remain open.

## Emergencies

Emergency telephones are available on motorways, larger roads and in the mountains.

Motorist help calls can also be made from any telephone 24hr a day by dialing:

Austria 120, Germany 112 and Switzerland 140



Grossglockner High Alpine Road © Österreich Werbung / Popp Hackner

## Store Opening Times

Most shops open from 9 am to noon and 2-6.30 pm (Sat 4pm or 5pm) although in large towns they may not close for lunch.

## Useful Websites

[Austria.info](http://Austria.info), [Germany.travel](http://Germany.travel), [myswitzerland.com](http://myswitzerland.com)

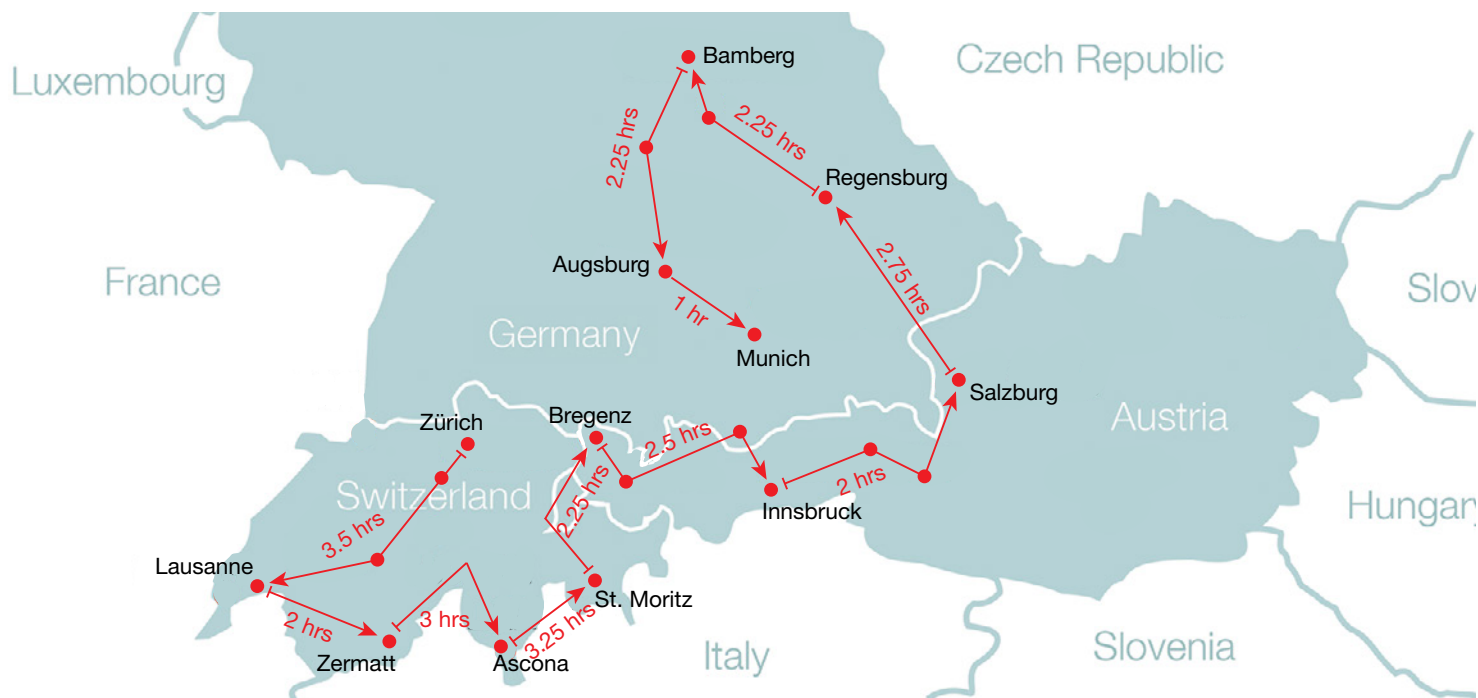


Alpine driving, St. Moritz © swiss-image.ch



## Driving times

The map below gives approximated driving times between some of the destinations, not counting the stop overs in between.



## Best times to travel

### Summer Season

May – September

### Special Seasons

Oct (Wine Harvest)

Nov – Dec (Christmas Markets)

Jan - Feb (Viennese Ball Season)

March (Easter Celebrations)



Grossglockner High Alpine Road © Österreich Werbung / Homberger



Tauernautobahn Werfen © Österreich Werbung / Weinhäupl W.



# Zurich

Switzerland

A horizon of snowcapped Alps. Over 50 museums and 100 art galleries. A renowned design scene. The liveliest nightlife in Switzerland. One of the greatest opera houses in the world. An exploding gastronomy sector. It's no surprise Zürich so often tops international quality-of-life surveys. The so-called "metropolis of experiences," this famously clean and efficient city consistently wins over travelers on multiple fronts, from its exclusive Bahnhofstrasse to its access to breathtaking hikes to its famed jewelry, fashion and watches.

[zuerich.com](http://zuerich.com)



Old town of Zurich with river Limmat © swiss-image.ch

## EAT

Zurich exploded onto the international culinary scene in recent years. A variety of restaurants exists, starting with the **Zunftthaus zur Waag**, a traditional house dating to 1315; locals still enjoy the traditional food, not far from the Cathedral Grossmünster. The **Hiltl Restaurant**, open since 1898, is a vegetarian mecca with the city's largest salad buffet. At **Quai 61**, light, market-fresh dishes are served alongside breathtaking views of the city, the Alps and the lake, whose banks it occupies.

[zunftthaus-zur-waag.ch](http://zunftthaus-zur-waag.ch), [hiltl.ch](http://hiltl.ch), [quai61.ch](http://quai61.ch)

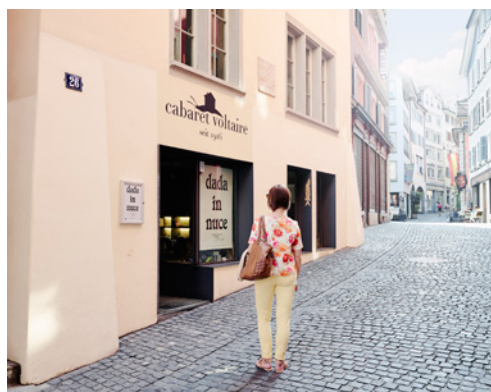


Widder Hotel © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

The fairy tale-like **Dolder Grand** is synonymous with exclusivity, relaxation and stunning vistas. Located between the pulsating city and a peaceful green zone, the five-star hotel offers magnificent views of Zurich, the lake and the Alps all at once. Within the city itself, the deluxe **Widder Hotel** consists of nine medieval heritage buildings, conveniently located in the heart of the Old Town. The penthouse suite features a rooftop terrace with unparalleled postcard views.

[thedoldergrand.com](http://thedoldergrand.com), [widderhotel.ch](http://widderhotel.ch)



Cabaret Voltaire in the old town of Zurich © swiss-image.ch

## DO

Founded in 1916 by the poets and performers Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings, the **Cabaret Voltaire** in Zurich's Old Town is considered the birthplace of Dadaism – and remains vital to the movement today. In 2016, the landmark celebrates its centenary. That same year, Manifesta – the itinerant and esteemed European Biennial of Contemporary Art – will be held in Zurich.

[cabaretvoltaire.ch](http://cabaretvoltaire.ch)





# Lucerne

Switzerland

The gateway to central Switzerland, Lucerne has long drawn travelers dazzled by the surrounding mountain panorama and the city's perch on gorgeous Lake Lucerne. The nearby mountains Rigi, Pilatus and Stanserhorn offer unforgettable hikes, while the souvenir and watch shops in town deliver premiere shopping. And of course the famed Chapel Bridge has formed the centerpiece of Lucerne's townscape since the 14th century – and is one of Europe's oldest, covered wooden bridges.

lucerne.com

## EAT

Located near the Lion Monument in the center of the city, the handsome **Old Swiss House** is one of the most photographed attractions around. For its part, the **Opus** is a lively, unpretentious wine bar, set within a pair of interconnected medieval buildings and opening onto views of the river. In summer, Swiss folklore comes alive at the **Stadtkeller**, over platters of smoked pork and accompanied by rollicking folk music.

[oldswisshouse.ch](http://oldswisshouse.ch), [restaurant-opus.ch](http://restaurant-opus.ch), Stadtkeller



Lucerne's lake promenade © swiss-image.ch



Stadtkeller © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

The **Park Hotel Weggis**, situated right on the shores of Lake Lucerne, offers equal parts charm and sumptuous design. Enjoy your own private beach, as well as mountain views and stylish rooms/suites. The plush **Montana**, for its part, sits higher up above the lake, thereby affording unmatched views, not to mention 66 art deco rooms and suites, and a restaurant with 15 Gault Millau points. The Montana joined "Small Luxury Hotels of the World" in 2004.

[parkweggis.ch](http://parkweggis.ch), [hotel-montana.ch](http://hotel-montana.ch)



A craftsman at the glassworks © swiss-image.ch

## DO

**The Hergiswil Glassworks** has called Lake Lucerne home since 1817. The tradition of craftsmanship lives on, via modern design. Visitors can observe the glassblowers working at the furnace, as well as a fascinating history of the operation's evolution over time.

[glasi.ch](http://glasi.ch)



# Interlaken

Switzerland

Tucked between Lake Thun and Lake Brienz is Interlaken, a small city famed as much for its geographic identity as its storybook scenery. Three mighty mountains, Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, tower above, while the city itself is intimate enough that visitors can get around by bicycle or on foot. Situated on an alluvial plane, Interlaken is the starting point for numerous activities. Over 45 mountain railways, cable cars, chair lifts and ski lifts service 200 kilometers of pistes and a dense network of hiking trails. Excursion ships, including historic paddle steamers, ply the waters of the two surrounding lakes.

[interlaken.ch](http://interlaken.ch)



Beatenberg with Mt. Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau © swiss-image.ch

## EAT

The **Hotel Krebs** is right in the heart of Interlaken, and its attractive terrace commands unforgettable views of the peaks of the Bernese Oberland. The menu and wine list at Restaurant Krebs go perfectly with the scenery. Like much of the old city, the cool and glassy **Restaurant Benacus** merges charming elements of middle age ruin with modern accoutrements. The result is an intimate atmosphere for enjoying the delicacies that emerge its inventive kitchen.

[krebshotel.ch](http://krebshotel.ch), [benacus.ch](http://benacus.ch)



Above Interlaken with view over Lake Thun © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

Combining traditional style and spaciousness with modern luxury and comfort, the **Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel & Spa** is nestled between lakes and rivers, and affords great views of its beautiful natural surroundings. The **historic hotel Giessbach Fälle** peers down on Lake Brienz and the foaming Giessbach waterfalls -- a small, exquisite world all its own. The unspoiled lake scenery is breathtaking.

[victoria-jungfrau.ch](http://victoria-jungfrau.ch), [giessbach.ch](http://giessbach.ch)

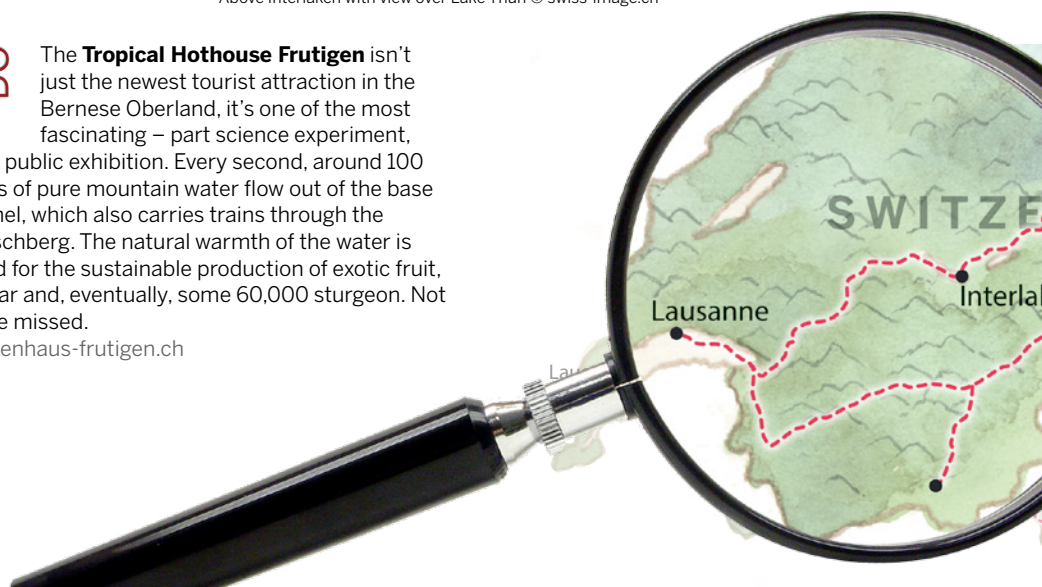


The Tropical Hothouse in Frutigen © swiss-image.ch

## DO

The **Tropical Hothouse Frutigen** isn't just the newest tourist attraction in the Bernese Oberland, it's one of the most fascinating -- part science experiment, part public exhibition. Every second, around 100 liters of pure mountain water flow out of the base tunnel, which also carries trains through the Lötschberg. The natural warmth of the water is used for the sustainable production of exotic fruit, caviar and, eventually, some 60,000 sturgeon. Not to be missed.

[tropenhaus-frutigen.ch](http://tropenhaus-frutigen.ch)





# Lausanne

Switzerland

Deep in the Swiss Riviera is the hilly lakeside city of Lausanne. Lake Geneva spreads out below, with vineyard-covered slopes all around. What might seem like a quaint, medieval locale – it's largely car-free, and given to peaceful walks along the water – in fact brims with life. The nation's highest court is based here, as is the International Olympic Committee and a mishmash of cafes, boutiques and university-centric nightlife. Rising impressively from the opposing French lakeshore are the Savoy Alps, and some of the best skiing in the world.

[lausanne-tourisme.ch](http://lausanne-tourisme.ch)

## EAT

In the heart of the medieval village, **Le Cerf** has acquired a reputation around the world, thanks largely to chef Carlo Crisci. From crawfish to frog legs, Crisci's dishes never fail to impress. Suspended above the shores of Lake Geneva, the terrace-lounge **Le Deck** offers one of the most beautiful panoramas in the world – as well as market-fresh cuisine and inventive recipes.

[lecerf-carlocrisci.ch](http://lecerf-carlocrisci.ch), [barontavernier.ch](http://barontavernier.ch)



Bird's eye view over Lausanne and Lake Geneva © swiss-image.ch



A dessert creation at the restaurant Le Cerf © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

For the past century, the grand, Art Nouveau-style **Lausanne Palace & Spa** has offered its exclusive clientele a mix of luxury and magnificent lake views. Its four first-class restaurants provide a culinary tour from France to Japan. Located in the Ouchy district, the **Château d'Ouchy** was originally a medieval castle built by the Bishop of Lausanne in the 12th century. Today the magnificent structure, rebuilt in the neo-gothic style, represents an important landmark on the shores of Lake Geneva.

[lausanne-palace.com](http://lausanne-palace.com), [chateaudouchy.ch](http://chateaudouchy.ch)



The Olympic Museum © swiss-image.ch

## DO

Ready to experience the Olympics at close quarters? To feel the Olympic spirit the way the athletes feel it, to study the history of the games from antiquity to today? In Lausanne it's possible, thanks to the **Olympic Museum** and its array of high-tech exhibits. Originally opened in 1993 in Ouchy, the landmark movingly reflects the unifying spirit of the games, too.

[olympic.org](http://olympic.org)



# Zermatt

Switzerland

Zermatt lies at the foot of the Matterhorn, perhaps the world's most famous mountain. Once a quiet agricultural community, this small town became an acclaimed destination for its skiing and mountaineering offerings. The car-free vacation destination has preserved its original character and offers an unlimited array of excursions. Walking, cycling, climbing and high-Alpine tours are popular throughout summer and autumn, while winter guarantees an unmatched ski region: 360 km of pistes in three varied ski areas -- the Sunnegga-Rothorn, Gornergrat-Stockhorn, Schwarzsee and Matterhorn glacier paradise. For such an active place, the quiet and calm is staggering.

[zermatt.ch](http://zermatt.ch)



Raclette: famous cheese specialty of the Valais Region © swiss-image.ch

## EAT

At the **Le Corbeau d'Or**, Alain Kuster's gourmet cuisine will transport you to the peaks of pleasure. He lovingly tends his herb and vegetable garden and makes delicious dishes with the fresh produce. At **The Omnia** Executive Chef Patrick Weber has a reputation for pure, authentic flavors in his seasonal dishes. At **Chez Heini**, dine in a rustic ambience, spellbound by the flavors emanating from the open fire.

[hotel-mirabeau.ch](http://hotel-mirabeau.ch), [the-omnia.com](http://the-omnia.com), [Chez Heini](http://ChezHeini.ch)



Zermatt with the Matterhorn in the background © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

With its regal facade and dramatic mountain backdrop, the **Grand Hotel Zermatterhof** blends with cheerful informality and warm hospitality. The luxurious **Hotel Firefly** is known for its attention to detail, and all 15 individual suites have a balcony – and many an open fireplace. Experience innovative design at the **Hotel Matthiol**, an oasis of tranquility amidst the breathtaking Alpine landscape.

[zermatterhof.ch](http://zermatterhof.ch), [firefly-zermatt.ch](http://firefly-zermatt.ch), [matthiol.ch](http://matthiol.ch)

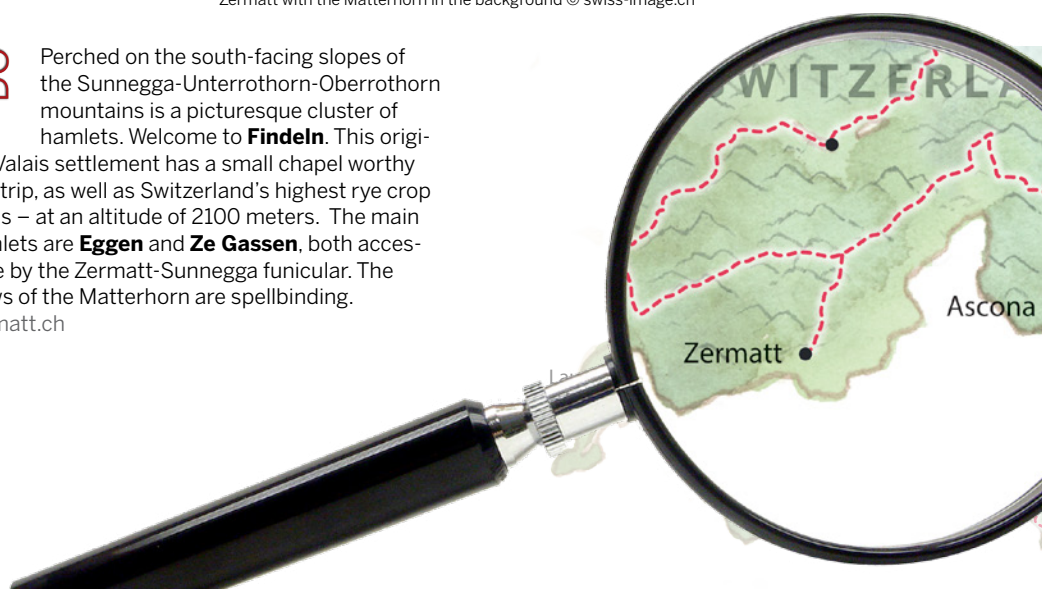


Outdoor dining in Findeln © swiss-image.ch

## DO

Perched on the south-facing slopes of the Sunnegga-Unterrothorn-Oberrothorn mountains is a picturesque cluster of hamlets. Welcome to **Findeln**. This original Valais settlement has a small chapel worthy of a trip, as well as Switzerland's highest rye crop fields – at an altitude of 2100 meters. The main hamlets are **Eggen** and **Ze Gassen**, both accessible by the Zermatt-Sunnegga funicular. The views of the Matterhorn are spellbinding.

[zermatt.ch](http://zermatt.ch)





# Ascona

Switzerland

Considered the “Pearl of Lake Maggiore,” the colorful southern town of Ascona is known for its cultural heritage as well as its broad appeal to travelers. With a variety of landscapes and a striking Mediterranean climate – yes, those are palm trees – the lakeside gem has become a favorite holiday resort. The choice of hotels (including a dozen luxury class) is as wide as the culinary choices.

[ascona-locarno.com](http://ascona-locarno.com)

## EAT

The **SEVEN** exists to awaken the senses, a place for pleasures of the palate, and of unforgettable encounters. Eclectic cuisine, a great wine list, superb architecture, ambience and sound design – and of course the unique location on the lake – create an extraordinary experience. Just a short stroll from the **Piazza Grande**, the restaurant **Da Valentino** is ideal for a romantic meal or a relaxed evening in front of a roaring fire.

[seven-ascona.ch](http://seven-ascona.ch), [ticino.ch](http://ticino.ch)



Hotel Eden Roc overlooking the Lago Maggiore © swiss-image.ch



The mediterranean charm of Ascona at the Lago Maggiore © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

The **Hotel Eden Roc** has long been famous for its heavenly elements: the absolute peace and quiet, the private beach, the panoramic landing stage for boats, the luxury rooms and a veritable Garden of Eden. **Ascona's picturesque piazza** is just minutes away on foot. The intimate first-class Boutique-**Hotel La Rocca** has its own unique view over the Brissago Islands. Experience expert traditional Mediterranean cuisine, skillfully prepared with seasonal, local ingredients.

[edenroc.ch](http://edenroc.ch), [la-rocca.ch](http://la-rocca.ch)



Traveling on the Centovalli Railway © swiss-image.ch

## DO

The Centovalli Railway connects the Ticino and the Valais via the shortest possible route – but it's hardly just a means of transportation. This two-hour excursion takes visitors through **the magnificent landscapes of Centovalli and Valle Vigezzo**. Passengers journey through the picturesque “One Hundred Valleys,” over deep gorges and crevices with glittering cascading waterfalls, across verdant alpine meadows, over breathtaking bridges and through vineyards and forests of chestnut trees.

[centovalli.ch](http://centovalli.ch)



# St. Moritz

Switzerland

Situated on the southern side of the Swiss Alps, Engadin St. Moritz is known throughout the world as the “festival hall of the Alps.” With its bright, sunny days, its mineral springs and a pleasant climate, the resort town is a favorite among the Swiss and international travelers alike. Piz Bernina is the only four-thousander in the eastern Alps (4,049 m. altitude). But it's not just mountains here. Engadin St. Moritz has a fascinating cultural heritage: Romansch is the official main language, but German is also spoken, as is Italian in the neighboring valleys, French at the Club Med, and English at the Cresta Run. The result is a cultural hodgepodge that can't help but result in a memorable trip.

[stmoritz.ch](http://stmoritz.ch)



Dining with a view at the Muottas Muragl © swiss-image.ch

## EAT

At dusk, enjoy a truly “magic hour” high above the expansive Upper Engadin, followed by mountain dining at its most delightful – a romantic candlelight dinner at the **Panorama Restaurant Muottas Muragl**. The **Restaurant Lej da Staz** lies adjacent to the idyllic Lake Staz, between St. Moritz, Celerina and Pontresina. It's pure Alpine Chic – authenticity, hospitality, nature and peace dovetail seamlessly here – and one of Engadine's most bewitching spots.

[lejdistaz.ch](http://lejdistaz.ch), [muottasmuragl.ch](http://muottasmuragl.ch)



Badrutt's Palace Hotel in St. Moritz © swiss-image.ch

## STAY

As you'd expect of a five-star luxury hotel in the heart of the Swiss Alps, **Badrutt's Palace Hotel** offers every conceivable service. The comfort of each guest is paramount, as has been the case across its great lineage. **The Hotel Misani** fuses modernity and warm hospitality with great, accessible adventure – in a unique environment.

[badruttspalace.com](http://badruttspalace.com), [hotelmisani.ch](http://hotelmisani.ch)



Ricola Herb Garden near Pontresina © swiss-image.ch

## DO

**The Ricola Herb Garden** is a short walk from the center of Pontresina, towards the Roseg valley. Behold the 13 herbs used in the original Ricola herb cough drops. Company founder Emil Richterich created the recipe in the summer of 1940, and it is still in use today. Small displays tell the surprisingly interesting story of those Ricola herb drops in your medicine cabinet.

[Ricola-Herb-Gardens](http://Ricola-Herb-Gardens)





# Bregenz

Austria

On the eastern shores of one of Europe's largest lakes lies the friendly and inviting city of Bregenz, capital of Vorarlberg. Bordering Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, the region is known for its blend of first-class culture and jaw-dropping mountainous landscape. Start the day at a café on Kornmarktplatz, the city's (newly renovated) heart, then pop over to the exhibitions at the Kunsthaus Bregenz, home to an electrifying collection of contemporary art; later, learn about the region's deep history at the new Vorarlberg Museum (its roots go back to Roman times). Both the Bregenz bay on Lake Constance and Pfänder mountain are postcard-worthy sites. Take a cruise on Lake Constance and touch Swiss, German and Austrian shorelines.

bregenz.travel

## EAT

**Bregenz** may be limited to a three-country triangle, but gastronomically it casts a wide net. Fresh trout from Lake Constance is common, as are game meats from the Pfänderstock and traditional cheeses from the nearby Alps. Some favorite restaurants for these regional delicacies: **The Wirtshaus am See** (situated directly at the lake's shore with fantastic views), the locally beloved **Zum Kornmesser**, and the grand dame of them all, the Gourmet **Restaurant Deuring Schlössle**.  
wirtshausamsee.at, kornmesser.at, deuring-schloessle.at



Outdoor view of the Hotel Schwärzler © Hotel Schwärzler



View of Bregenz © Österreich Werbung / Mallaun

## STAY

Elegant or rustic, romantic or relaxed: Accommodation in Bregenz is as varied as its guests' tastes. The **Seehotel Am Kaiserstrand**, newly-opened in 2010, reveals not only one of Bregenz's most glamorous pasts, it also occupies the prime spot in town: directly at the shore of Lake Constance. The **Hotel Schwärzler** is beloved – plus convenient to the Old Town and its diverse culture and shopping opportunities. For a more historic surrounding, the **Gourmethotel Deuring Schlössle** is located in an ivy-covered old castle.  
seehotel-kaiserstrand.com, schwaerzler.s-hotels.com, deuring-schloessle.at



Bregenz Festival © Bregenzer Festspiele Anja Köhler

## DO

At the internationally acclaimed **Bregenz Festival**, held every year in July and August, an evening of opera begins well before the conductor lifts his baton; guests are brought by boat directly to a floating stage – and thus become part of the spectacle themselves. For four weeks audiences experience monumental productions under open skies. Orchestral concerts and theater troupes round out the festival. Its reputation for bold, edgy productions is no mystery.  
bregenzerfestspiele.com



# Bregenzerwald

Austria

In the westernmost tip of Austria lies the Bregenz Forest, or Bregenzerwald. “Forest” tells only part of the story: mountains, pastures, 22 picturesque villages, a premiere skiing location, 30,000 inhabitants and almost as many cows. UNESCO has recognized the cultural significance of the region, and its farming and cheese production traditions remain largely intact. (Don’t miss the “alpine cheese.”) But age-old knowledge and skills also offer a solid foundation for innovation here – case in point, Bregenzerwald’s award-winning architecture and craftsmanship. The region is also home to the village of Schwarzenberg, whose well-preserved center – the old “Hof” – boasts a harmonic interplay of historic buildings, charming streets and quaint squares. The Baroque church, the dancing house (a former courthouse) and 16 other historic houses have been well-preserved.

[bregenzerwald.at](http://bregenzerwald.at), [tourismus.schwarzenberg.at](http://tourismus.schwarzenberg.at)



Hotel Gasthof Hirschen in Schwarzenberg © Hirschen Schwarzenberg

## EAT

In the Bregenzerwald the term “MundArt” refers both to the special dialect of the region and to the creativity displayed in local kitchens. Eight cozy Bregenzerwald restaurants and inns have embraced “MundArt” in their very mottos: **Gasthof**

**Adler** and the **Hotel Gasthof Hirschen** in Schwarzenberg, **Gasthof Gams** and the **Hotel Post** in Bezau, **Hotel Gasthof Krone** and the **Hotel Das Schiff** in Hittisau, **s'Schulhus** restaurant in Krumbach, **Hotel Krone in Au**. All are within 15 minutes of Schwarzenberg.

[bregenzerwald.at](http://bregenzerwald.at)



Hotel Gasthof Hirschen in Schwarzenberg © Hirschen Schwarzenberg

## STAY

The wood industry is central to Bregenzerwald, and its hotels reflect this fact in their architecture and their handcrafted structures. Some of the most appealing: the **Gasthof Hirschen Schwarzenberg**, with its 250-year history; the **Hotel Post in Bezau**, which was awarded second place in the category of “Wellness Hotels” in 2012; the **Hotel-Gasthof Krone** in Hittisau, which cooperated with craftsmen from the Bregenzerwald Werkraum; and the **Hotel Krone in Au**, which reflects the style of modern Vorarlberg wooden architecture.

[hotel-hirschen-bregenzerwald.at](http://hotel-hirschen-bregenzerwald.at), [hotelpostbezau.com](http://hotelpostbezau.com)

[krone-hittisau.at](http://krone-hittisau.at), [krone-au.at](http://krone-au.at)



Angelika Kauffmann Hall © Schubertiade Schwarzenberg

## DO

**Angelika Kauffmann's Legacy.** Angelika Kauffmann (1741-1807) was an Austrian Neoclassical painter who had a successful career in London and Rome. She grew up in the village of Schwarzenberg, the daughter of Joseph Johann Kauffmann, a relatively poor man but a skilled painter. Joseph taught his precocious daughter to paint, and by 12 she was already known for her talent. Schwarzenberg honors her legacy today with both the Angelika-Kauffmann Museum and the Angelika-Kauffmann Hall – home to the acclaimed classical music festival **Schubertiade Schwarzenberg**.

[angelika-kauffmann.com](http://angelika-kauffmann.com), [schubertiade.at](http://schubertiade.at)





# Lech

Austria

The Arlberg is a majestic Alpine mountain massif and one of the world's best ski areas, as well as a great resort in summer. It consists of five charming villages: luxurious Lech, sophisticated Zürs, cozy Stuben, exclusive St. Christoph and cosmopolitan St. Anton. Lech is the shining star of the bunch, having transformed from alpine farming community into international travel destination without losing its distinctive Walser character. Energy efficiency has been an important issue for decades and is a firmly established local value – Lech is a pioneer in this field. This great respect for nature pays dividends for the visiting tourist, as it's earned Lech the “Most Beautiful Village in Europe” award in the 2004 “Entente Florale” competition.

[lechzuers.com](http://lechzuers.com)

## EAT

There's just something about a wonderful meal at 4,750 feet. Lech has become a phenomenal success in the international gourmet scene, thanks in part to restaurants like the **Grig-geler Stuba** and its sophisticated use of local herbs. And don't miss the restaurant at the **Arlberg Hospiz Hotel** in St. Christoph, outside of Lech. This culinary temple not only serves the best in regional Austrian cuisine, but boasts the world's largest private collection of magnum bottles of Bordeaux and Burgundy wines.

[burgvitalresort.com](http://burgvitalresort.com), [arlberghospiz.at](http://arlberghospiz.at)



Gasthof Post © Gasthof Post GmbH & CoKG



Hospiz Alm Restaurant © Arlberg Hospiz Hotel

## STAY

Lech has some of the most charming accommodations in the world – starting with the **Relais & Châteaux Hotel Gasthof Post**, in the center of the village. This five-star, family-owned property is one of the most exclusive addresses on the Arlberg mountain. A newer option is the deluxe Ski and Spa Hotel **Aurelio Lech** with its individually designed rooms and suites. Another gem: the artsy **Kristiania Lech**, a small luxury ski hotel with 29 artfully appointed rooms and suites.

[postlech.com](http://postlech.com), [aureوليوlech.com](http://aureوليوlech.com), [kristiania.at](http://kristiania.at)



Lege Artis Festival © Lech Zuers Tourismus Maria Muxel

## DO

**Lech's Summer of Culture.** Lech is well-known as an Alpine paradise – but it's also popular among travelers with an eye toward culture. Imagine listening to an outstanding orchestra at an outdoor cafe while gazing at a sunset over a distant peak – that's the Lech Summer of Culture in a nutshell. From the traditional Lech Village Festival to Lech Classical Music Festival, the Lech Alpine summer of 2014 represents a cultural explosion, amidst the heavenly mountain scenery of the Arlberg.

[lechzuers.com](http://lechzuers.com)



# Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Germany

An hour south of Munich lies the valley resort town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, surrounded dramatically by the majestic Alps. The town is a perfect destination for any Alpine vacation – in winter with perfect snow from November to May, or summer, with its bounty of adventure. Travelers find no shortage of arts, culture, history, sports, wellness and nature. Locals, meanwhile, still live and celebrate their Alpine traditions in everyday life. Shop for your own Dirndl dress and Lederhosen leather pants, or celebrate “Heimatwochen” (local weeks) in July and August by mingling in colorful tents and tasting local delicacies. Join the crowds to watch costumed processions, see Bavarian folk dance performances and hit the dance floor yourself. Only 15 miles away is the Zugspitze – at 9,718 feet, Germany’s highest peak – a popular hiking and winter sport destination with unforgettable views over the Alps.

gapa.de



Dinner at restaurant Vaun © Restaurant Vaun

## EAT

Indulge in **traditional German cuisine** – with a twist. Koch’s restaurant and Vaun have won accolades for their innovative approach to sustainable and organic cuisine. Ingredients are purchased locally, have no additives and change with the seasons. The open kitchen allows diners to watch the food be prepared – to magnificent effect.

restaurant-vaun.de, kochs-garmisch.de



Reindls © Reindls Partenkirchner Hof

## STAY

In town choose family-owned five-star hotel **Reindl's Partenkirchner Hof** for charming hospitality and Bavarian tradition. Alternatively, the four-star Grand Hotel Sonnenbichl boasts a relaxing spa and four quality restaurants. Ten miles outside Garmisch-Partenkirchen the four-star Kranzbach Hotel is an oasis of peace and quiet, surrounded by mountain vistas. The old English-style country mansion contrasts successfully with the modern glass and wood design. Spa treatments abound.

reindls.de, sonnenbichl.net, daskranzbach.de



Schwangau, Neuschwanstein Castle with Lake Alpsee © GNTB

## DO

**Neuschwanstein Castle**, 1 hour and 40 minutes south of Munich, is Germany’s most famous castle. King Ludwig II built it as his retreat and homage to Richard Wagner. It was later copied by Walt Disney, making it famous throughout the world. Being surrounded by the Alps – nearly engulfed – only adds to its beauty. A visit is a key experience in the region.

neuschwanstein.com





# Innsbruck

Austria

Innsbruck is where rugged Alpine nature meets modern urban lifestyle. The capital of the Alps may be 800 years old and boast one of the most beautiful baroque and gothic centers in Europe, but it is also young and vibrant. Nowhere else can you shop in an historic medieval city center and, 20 minutes later, be in a mountain restaurant 6,500 feet high. The charming city is also the only site to have hosted Olympic Winter Games three times! Don't miss to attend one of the summer festival events, from the baroque music of the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music to the more beautiful waltz melodies Imperial Palace concerts. Breathtaking views, cutting-edge architecture, a redesigned Maria-Theresien-Strasse, numerous museums, cultural events and countless culinary delights, sum it pretty much up.

[innsbruck.info](http://innsbruck.info)

## EAT

A traditional Tirolean tavern, a gourmet restaurant or a laid-back bar? Our tips include the **Ottoburg** restaurant, which inhabits one of Innsbruck's oldest buildings, a Gothic residential tower dating from 1494. Meanwhile the award-winning **Europa Stüberl** charms diners with its wooden Tirolean Stuben, or parlors. For great views of the mountains and fine dining after a day of shopping and touring the city, head to the glassy and memorable restaurant **Lichtblick**.  
[ottoburg.at](http://ottoburg.at), [grandhoteleuropa.a](http://grandhoteleuropa.a), [restaurant-lichtblick.at](http://restaurant-lichtblick.at)



Romantic Hotel Schwarzer Adler © Innsbruck Tourismus



Restaurant Ottoburg © Innsbruck Tourismus

## STAY

Some of Innsbruck's lodging features beautiful traditional Alpine design, while some is trendy and modern. The city's most starred hotel is the **Grand Hotel Europa**, featuring direct underground access to the railway station. Another highlight is the **Romantic Hotel Schwarzer Adler** and its five centuries of history. Looking for luxury apartments with Alpine flair? Try the **Alpine Lodges Kühtai**, located on a sunny slope of the magnificent Tirolean mountains, in the village of Kühtai.  
[grandhoteleuropa.at](http://grandhoteleuropa.at), [deradler.com](http://deradler.com), [alpinlodges.com](http://alpinlodges.com)



## DO

**Daring Design in midst the Alps.** Zip from Innsbruck's Old Town to the top of the Nordkette mountain range via funicular and cable car designed by star architect Zaha Hadid! In a country renowned for architectural daring, these biomorphic, futuristic creations rise above – literally. After a scenic ride, the top makes a perfect starting point for hikes. On Fridays the Nordketten funiculars stay open longer – enjoy a romantic dinner with great views -- while the Seegrube restaurant offers a great jazz brunch on Sundays in July and August.  
[nordkette.com](http://nordkette.com)



Nordketten Cable Cars © Innsbruck Tourismus



# Kitzbühel

Austria

Lifestyle meets tradition meets the mountain - this is Kitzbühel. Uniquely situated in the “airport triangle” of Munich, Salzburg and Innsbruck, this elegant town in the lap of the Alps is easy to reach. The synergy of old and new plays throughout its hotels, restaurants and infrastructure. The historic section of town is 700 years old -- ideal for strolling Tirol’s most beautiful outdoor shopping center and enjoying the traditional cozy Austrian coffee houses. The picturesque inner town has a great selection of international and local boutiques, and the density of top hotels and award-winning restaurants make “Kitz” a favorite destination for those who seek out the finer things in life.

[kitzbuehel.com](http://kitzbuehel.com)



Hotel Restaurant Rosengarten © Relais & Châteaux Rosengarten

## EAT

Kitzbühel has no shortage of glorious venues for staying and eating, but a few rise above the rest – such as **Relais & Châteaux Rosengarten** in Kirchberg/Tirol, owned and managed by Simon Taxacher, one of Austria’s most lauded chefs. Also recommended: the **Petit Tirolia** at the Grand Tirolia Kitzbühel, where a young and modern cuisine merges with high-quality regional ingredients.

[rosengarten-taxacher.com](http://rosengarten-taxacher.com), [grand-tirolia.com](http://grand-tirolia.com)



Outdoor view © Hotel zur Tenne

## STAY

Kitzbühel’s hospitality knows no equal. The best in town: the **Relais & Châteaux Hotel Tennerhof**, a centuries-old farmhouse whose rooms feature wonderful Austrian décor. (Don’t miss the Michelin starred and Gault-Millau 16-point dining experience.) Then there’s the **Weisses Rössl Kitzbühel**, with its stylish, Alpine luxury. A boutique hotel in the mold of an old Tirolean inn is the **Hotel Schwarzer Adler**; the award-winning spa features an outdoor pool with underwater sound system, counter-current swimming and a rooftop bar.

[hotelzurtenne.com](http://hotelzurtenne.com), [adlerkitz.at](http://adlerkitz.at), [roesslkitz.at](http://roesslkitz.at)



Horn Gipfel Breakfast © Bergbahn AG Kitzbühel

## DO

**Horn Gipfel Breakfast.** Kitzbühel’s Hornbahn cable cars offer departures as early as 4:30 a.m., allowing you to summit the Kitzbüheler Horn Mountain before sunrise for a contemplative morning service, a hearty mountain breakfast and a romantic walk through the Alpine flower garden. You’ll observe the sunrise alongside local woodwind melodies. Early summiteers then take a guided walk around the Horn. A ticket for the cable car ride, breakfast and guided hike is just 34 Euro. Be sure to register the day before.

[bergbahn-kitzbuehel.at](http://bergbahn-kitzbuehel.at)





# Zell am See

Austria

From bluer-than-blue Lake Zell to the snow-white peaks of the Hohe Tauern mountains to its charming village center, Zell am See is made for the active traveler. In summer, dive into the lake, cycle the picturesque shores or search out the best mountain views. Later, indulge in Zell am See's renowned spa and wellness facilities and its innovative organic culinary movement. The towering Schmittenhöhe boasts perhaps the most beautiful vista of any Austrian mountain, with views of 30 different 10,000-foot peaks, plus the lake, the river basin and the entire Saalach Valley. The new cable car from Porsche Design zips to the top, where a high-altitude promenade awaits. Sculptures dot the paths -- one of Europe's largest art spaces, covering more than 450 acres across the mountain.

[zellamsee-kaprun.com](http://zellamsee-kaprun.com)

## EAT

The Salzburgerland region is an organic food pioneer. Nowhere in Europe is the proportion of organic farmers higher and Salzburgerland has more outstanding gourmet restaurants than anywhere else in Austria. A local favorite is **Schloss Kammer** in Maishofen, a family-run castle hotel and restaurant specializing on local delicacies. The gourmet temples are **Mayer's Schloss Prielau** and the **Salzburgerhof**, but don't miss **Obauer** in Werfen, **Hubertus** in Filzmoos and **Döllerer's Genusswelten** in Golling – all within an hour of Zell am See. [schlosskammer.com](http://schlosskammer.com), [schloss-prielau.at](http://schloss-prielau.at), [salzburgerhof.at](http://salzburgerhof.at), [obauer.com](http://obauer.com), [johannamaier.at](http://johannamaier.at), [doellerer.at](http://doellerer.at)



Schloss Kammer © Hotel & Landgasthof Schloss Kammer

## STAY

A century ago Zell am See was a tiny market village. In time the village grew, becoming a city in 1928. Today the lovely spot has grown to almost 10,000 inhabitants and offers a wide variety of entertainments, events and local festivities.

Staying at the **Salzburgerhof** or the **Romantikhof Zell am See** puts it all within striking distance. Just outside of Zell am See lies the picturesque castle **Schloss Prielau**, with stunning views over the lake and the mountains.

[salzburgerhof.at](http://salzburgerhof.at), [romantik-hotel.at](http://romantik-hotel.at), [schloss-prielau.at](http://schloss-prielau.at)



Wellness-Gartensuite © Hotel Salzburgerhof Zell am See

## DO

### National Park Hohe Tauern by Train.

The narrow-gauge Pinzgau train, vintage 1898, offers a romantic trip through the gorgeous Upper Pinzgau landscape – and a gateway to the stunning Hohe Tauern National Park, the largest in Austria. Start in Zell am See and train to Mittersill, and to the popular National Park Center, with its top-notch exhibits. Or take a leisurely day hike with a ranger. Thirty hikes, ranging from easy to difficult, are available in summer, and the National Park Center is open daily. [nationalpark.at](http://nationalpark.at)



Pinzgauer Train © Pinzgauer Lokalbahn



# Salzburg

Austria

“Salzburg is the heart of the heart of Europe,” the poet Hofmannsthal declared, and a few steps in this beloved arts center reveals why. From legendary composers to today’s cutting-edge Walk of Modern Art, from top-shelf music festivals to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg, the city breathes culture. Mozart’s Birthhouse & Residence offers a glimpse of the composer’s life, plus Salzburg of the mid-1700s. Meanwhile it was through “The Sound Of Music” that the Pegasus sculpture and the hedge maze reached worldwide fame, but the gardens of Mirabell Palace have dazzled strollers for centuries. Salzburg Festival Mozart Week, Easter Festival and Whitsun Festival are all cherished – but with over 250 performances in 45 days, the summer Salzburg Festival is unrivaled.

salzburg.info



Kapitelplatz Salzburg © Salzburg Tourismus

## EAT

Shady beer gardens, traditional coffeehouses, gourmet restaurants, trendy bars and cozy inns invite epicures to wine and dine in Salzburg. The rich diversity of restaurants in the city caters to the palate of gourmets, those with a sweet tooth and night owls alike. Our personal tips include the award-winning restaurants **Riedenburg** and **Esszimmer**, the locally beloved **Auerhahn** and Salzburg’s culinary temple with a revolving chef residency, the **Hangar-7**.

salzburg.info



Deluxe Double © Hotel Sacher

## STAY

Ancient wooden floors or walls of modern art. Rustic furniture or baroque design. Whether you prefer a five-star hotel on the banks of the Salzach, a charming boutique hotel in the Old City or a comfortable farm on the outskirts, you’ll find the perfect accommodations in Salzburg. Three top choices:

the family-run **Sacher Hotel** with stunning views over the Old Town, the traditional yet Alpine-chic Hotel **Goldener Hirsch** and the **Blaue Gans**, whose 600-year-old walls boast a wonderful art collection.

sacher.com, goldenerhirsch.com, hotel-blaue-gans-salzburg.at



Inside the cathedral © Dommuseum zu Salzburg, Josef Kral

## DO

**Gallery Walk in Salzburg’s Cathedral District.** For centuries Salzburg was governed by mighty prince-archbishops, the spiritual and worldly rulers of the city. Their influence on the city’s culture and economy knew no bounds. Today, you can explore the former center of their power, the DomQuartier Salzburg. For the first time in 200 years, the entire complex is accessible to the public. Tour the private and public spaces that testify to the prince-archbishop’s vast influence. Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. domquartier.at





# Regensburg

Germany

Because it has been maintained almost in its original form since the 8th century, the Old Town of Regensburg has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2006. The fourth largest city of Bavaria and best preserved medieval city in Germany, 80 miles northwest of Munich, is not to be missed. Here legendary Bavarian hospitality meets spectacular historic buildings from the Middle Ages. St. Peter's Cathedral dates back to 700 AD and is the only example of French Gothic architecture in Bavaria. The 11th century Stone Bridge across the Regnitz river is the only preserved arch-bridge of its kind in Germany.

[regensburg.de](http://regensburg.de)

## EAT

Dine face-to-face with the Regensburg Cathedral at the historical **Haus Heuport**. Here you can relish a fusion of Bavarian, European and Asian cuisines, all made with local produce; the wine and beer pairings are terrific. Or try Bavarian cuisine sight unseen: The Regensburger Ratskeller makes use of its historic setting for a dining-in-the-dark experience. Rely exclusively on your taste buds!

[heuport.de](http://heuport.de), [regensburger-ratskeller.de](http://regensburger-ratskeller.de)



Grand Hotel © Hotel Orphee



Regensburg Beer Garden with View of Cathedral © Regensburg Tourismus

## STAY

Hotel Goliath sits in the heart of Regensburg's Old Town. Each of the four-star rooms has a distinct design - you can even choose your favorite color. Breakfast and snacks are served all day, and the historic restaurant Bischofshof is just next door. Four-star **Hotel Orphee**, a three-minute walk from the cathedral and the Stone Bridge, occupies three locations, one of them an old warehouse for salt storage. Each building offers uniquely furnished rooms in baroque and antique styles.

[hotel-goliath.de](http://hotel-goliath.de), [hotel-orphee.de](http://hotel-orphee.de)

## DO

The princess of Thurn and Taxis founded the first large-scale postal service, back in the 15th century. She had built a magnificent castle, the Thurn und Taxis Palace, which has more rooms than the Buckingham Palace. Gawk at the palace's ornate ballroom and marble staircase, as well as the treasure chamber and the carriage museum. Located in the picturesque green belt that surrounds the **Old Town of Regensburg**.

[thurnundtaxis.de](http://thurnundtaxis.de)



Regensburg Stone Bridge and cathedral © Regensburg Tourismus



# Nuremberg

Germany

Founded circa 1050, Nuremberg is one of the oldest cities in Germany and offers wonderful exploring to the amateur history buff. Contemporary Nuremberg has a population of 500,000 and is easily accessible by airplane, car or high-speed trains. Its Old Town and exhibition grounds make it an abiding draw for tourists. The old town, with the churches of St. Lawrence and St. Sebald, is divided in two by the Pegnitz river. The Dürer Haus is northern Europe's only remaining home of a Renaissance artist. Between 1509 and 1528 the great Albrecht Dürer created his artwork here. Nuremberg is also home to the most famous German Christmas market, the Christkindlesmarkt: a truly memorable holiday shopping experience.

[tourismus.nuernberg.de](http://tourismus.nuernberg.de)



Nuremberg Gingerbread © Congress & Tourismus Zentrale Nürnberg, Steffen Oliver Riese

## EAT

Besides the **Nuremberg bratwurst**, the city is famous for its tasty **gingerbread**. This traditional baked delicacy is made with honey, cloves, cinnamon, anise and ginger – a sweet-and-spicy treat best enjoyed at the Christkindlesmarkt. It comes plain or chocolate-coated. For year-round enjoyment visit the Nuremberg gingerbread factory in the city's southeast. [lebkuchen-schmidt.com](http://lebkuchen-schmidt.com)



Nuremberg Christmas Market © GNTB, Andrew Cowin

## STAY

The five-star Sheraton Carlton Hotel Nuremberg is located in the heart of the city center, the old town and the **market square** just steps away. The recently renovated Bayerischer Hof Erlangen dates back to 1894, when it was a theater and restaurant. The hotel's current restaurant, Rosmarin, was awarded 15 points by Gault Millau and puts local produce to use in its regional and Mediterranean cuisine.

[sheratonnuernberg.com](http://sheratonnuernberg.com), [bayerischer-hof-erlangen.de](http://bayerischer-hof-erlangen.de)



Courtroom 600 © Stadtarchiv Nürnberg

## DO

Nuremberg is, of course, home to the Palace of Justice, famous for the war crime trials after WWII. In 2013, a special documentation was created for the famed **Courtroom 600**, detailing the significance of the palace and these trials in detail. Unforgettable even for those who don't consider themselves history lovers.

[memorium-nuernberg.de](http://memorium-nuernberg.de)





# Bamberg

Germany

With its narrow alleys, medieval and baroque buildings and picture-perfect sights, Bamberg is one of the most beautiful places in Bavaria. The Old Town is Europe's largest and oldest intact city center, having been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993; the history of this town goes back to the 9th century. Meanwhile, just as appealing to some is Bamberg's beer culture. With nine breweries, it wasn't long before the nickname "beer city" was born. Never fear, wine lovers: A fine glass of something regional isn't hard to find here, and enjoyed over an exquisite dinner at one of the numerous small cafes and bars within the Old Town. Bamberg is located in the north of Bavaria, only 150 miles from Munich.

[bamberg.info](http://bamberg.info)

## EAT

The **Das Eckerts** prepares their delicacies strictly with produce from within a 60 mile radius. This ensures fresh, local and seasonal food. The interior is thoroughly modern – local oak wood, leather, limestone and sandstone – and designed to reflect the characteristics of the surrounding Franconian region. A highlight: the cooking classes, which teach the preparation of seasonal Franconian dishes.

[das-eckerts.de](http://das-eckerts.de)



Welcome Hotel Residenzschloss Bamberg © Welcome Hotel Residenzschloss Bamberg



Bamberg Beer cellar © Bamberg Tourism Marketing

## STAY

The Romantikhôtel Messerschmitt's wine tradition dates to 1422, when a local sailor brought a barrel of wine and established a wine house. Today, a whiff of that history can be found in the wine cellar of the family hotel, founded by airplane pioneer Willy Messerschmitt. Or stay at four-star **Welcome Hotel Residenzschloss**, on the bank of the river Regnitz, just a short walk to the historic Old Town. Built in 1787, the hotel now blends baroque and modern design.

[hotel-messerschmitt.de](http://hotel-messerschmitt.de), [welcome-hotels.com](http://welcome-hotels.com)

## DO

The **Old Town** is the central highlight of Bamberg, having been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993. Warp back to the ninth century via old cobblestone lanes and a wealth of historic buildings. A beer at one of the local breweries offers the perfect respite for reflecting on all that has and hasn't changed.

[bamberg.info](http://bamberg.info)



Bamberg Fall Colors © Bamberg Tourism Marketing





# Rothenburg

Germany

Rothenburg ob der Tauber is located 130 miles north-west from Munich and is situated at the scenic crossing of the Romantic Road and the Castle Road. Founded in 1142 AD, it's been a free imperial city since 1274, and its location and rampart made it the most important town of the Middle Ages. The town lies between the two international airports of Frankfurt and Munich, making it relatively easy to get here. Rothenburg is one of Bavaria's hotspots for tradition, medieval history – and Christmas. The famous Käthe Wohlfahrt Christmas Village and the Christmas museum are must-sees at this beautiful German town. The richness of the old medieval buildings and museums make it even more memorable.

[tourismus.rothenburg.de](http://tourismus.rothenburg.de)



Hotel & Brauereigasthof Landwehr © Hotel & Brauereigasthof Landwehr-Bräu

## EAT

The **Landwehr** brewery has been brewing beer atop the Taubertal Valley since 1755. The owner shares with his guests not just his beloved brews, but his love for antiques and his attention to detail. The restaurant is known for its hospitality, friendliness and award-winning cuisine. Homemade beer and Franconian wines are both paired with the seasonal and locally sourced meals.

[landwehr-braeu.com](http://landwehr-braeu.com)



Room at Hotel Eisenhut © Hotel Eisenhut

## STAY

Enjoy the four-star Vital Hotel Meiser, a family hotel outside of Rothenburg with impeccable attention to detail – and a terrific spa. Villa Mittermeier, right in Rothenburg, is one of Bavaria's Sightsleeping Hotels that brings old traditions to a contemporary setting. And nestled in the picturesque center of town is the four-star **Hotel Eisenhut**, which often hosts royals, celebrities and politicians, and offers exquisite views of Rothenburg and the Tauber valley.

[vitalhotel-meiser.de](http://vitalhotel-meiser.de), [villamittermeier.de](http://villamittermeier.de), [eisenhut.com](http://eisenhut.com)



Rothenburg night watchman © Rothenburg Tourismus Service

## DO

Roam the historic Old Town of Rothenburg and the medieval buildings at its center. The St. Jakobs Church is the tallest building there, its construction dating to 1311 and continuing until 1485. Stroll along the ramparts and see the 42 defense towers surrounding the city. A guided walk with the night watchman around town will transport you right back to the **Middle Ages**.

[nightwatchman.de](http://nightwatchman.de)





# Augsburg

Germany

Augsburg, located on the Romantic Road 30 minutes northwest of Munich, was founded by the Romans in 15 BC. There the oldest social housing complex, the Fuggerei, became home to the needy citizens of Augsburg. Founded by the wealthy Fugger family in 1516 it is still in use today. The Cathedral and Renaissance City Hall with the Golden Hall deserves a visit – famed for its murals, it's one of the most important cultural monuments of the German Renaissance. Today the hall is frequently used for receptions and concerts. The city isn't without its historic celebrity connections - Mozart and Brecht, notably. Today Augsburg is home to many technical colleges, bringing a vibrant student life into the Renaissance town.

[augsburg-tourismus.de](http://augsburg-tourismus.de)

## EAT

**Feinkost Kahn** offers gourmet meals and other local ingredients – partly via its restaurant and partly through its café and bistro, where you can get everything from a snack to a whole dinner. **Restaurant Die Ecke** brings a Mediterranean touch to its Bavarian-Swabian meals. They feature aromas, spices and recipes from all over the world - but only the freshest local organic ingredients.

[feinkost-kahn.de](http://feinkost-kahn.de), [restaurant-die-ecke.de](http://restaurant-die-ecke.de)



Augsburg, Town hall and cathedral by night © Regio Augsburg Tourismus GmbH



Restaurant die Ecke © Restaurant die Ecke

## STAY

Hotel Schempp combines classical design with functionality in its four-star establishment. Also combined: European and Asian cuisine, in their exceptional restaurant. The four-star hotel **Steigenberger Drei Mohren** has a 500-year history, and a location convenient to the best sights. Its 2011 renovation features contemporary design throughout its spacious rooms and suites, and the restaurant and bar have become popular among Augsburg residents.

[hotel-schempp.de](http://hotel-schempp.de), [steigenberger.com](http://steigenberger.com)

## DO

At the **Fuggerei**, a remarkable history of the world's oldest social housing complex unfolds. Explore how residents lived half a millennium ago, and how residents live there now. The current inhabitants are happy to talk with visitors about life there. For many, the Fuggerei area is a recovery haven in the city. During your tour a stop in the Fuggerei Stube is highly recommended.

[fugger.de](http://fugger.de)



Fountain © Fuggersche Stiftungs-Admin., Eckhart Matthäus





# Munich

Germany

Munich – and its modern international airport – are the gateway to the German Alps. Over the centuries this cosmopolitan city has retained its beautiful Bavarian charm and traditions. You can experience top-notch shopping at Maximilianstrasse, one of the most exclusive areas in Munich. Planned by King Ludwig I, it's home to the Bavarian Parliament, Maximilianeum, the National Theater and the Bavarian State Opera. Discover the BMW World, museum and factory for an in-depth take on the BMW brand and history. Munich is also considered the beer metropolis of the world, thanks to the Oktoberfest, the airport brewery and the array of iconic beer gardens. The city's also home to no less than 12 Michelin-starred restaurants, featuring both Bavarian and international cuisine you won't soon forget.

[muenchen.de](http://muenchen.de)



Beergarden © München Tourismus, L. Gervasi

## EAT

Given all the **beer** it's no surprise how popular Munich's pretzels, sausages and chicken are. These traditional Bavarian delicacies represent one side of the culinary continuum, while the palate-spoiling haute cuisine scattered throughout town represent the other. From traditional Bavarian to Mediterranean, from French to Asian, the variety is matched only by the quality.

[muenchen.de](http://muenchen.de)



The Charles Hotel SPA © The Charles Hotel

## STAY

Munich's finest hotels range from internationally renowned chains to local luxury hotels. The central **Charles Hotel** provides outstanding service, a rejuvenating spa and views of Munich's old town and botanical gardens. The **Mandarin Oriental Munich** features a restaurant whose French-inspired Asian cuisine earned it a Michelin star. The restaurant Atelier, at five-star Hotel Bayerischer Hof, also boasts a Michelin star. Experience haute cuisine with an inspired wine list.

[bayerischerhof.de](http://bayerischerhof.de), [thecharleshotel.com](http://thecharleshotel.com), [mandarinoriental.com](http://mandarinoriental.com)



Passion Plays © Marketing Garmisch Partenkirchen

## DO

**Oberammergau**, an hour south of Munich, is world-famous for its "Passion Plays," which take place every ten years. Depicting the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, the performances have been ongoing since 1634. During the years in between, you can nevertheless get a taste with a backstage tour of the theater. For a more permanent sense of local art, note the gorgeous frescoes on house walls, called "Lüftmalerei." Their origins date back to the Baroque epoch.

[ammergauer-alpen.de](http://ammergauer-alpen.de)

