

PICTURE PERFECT

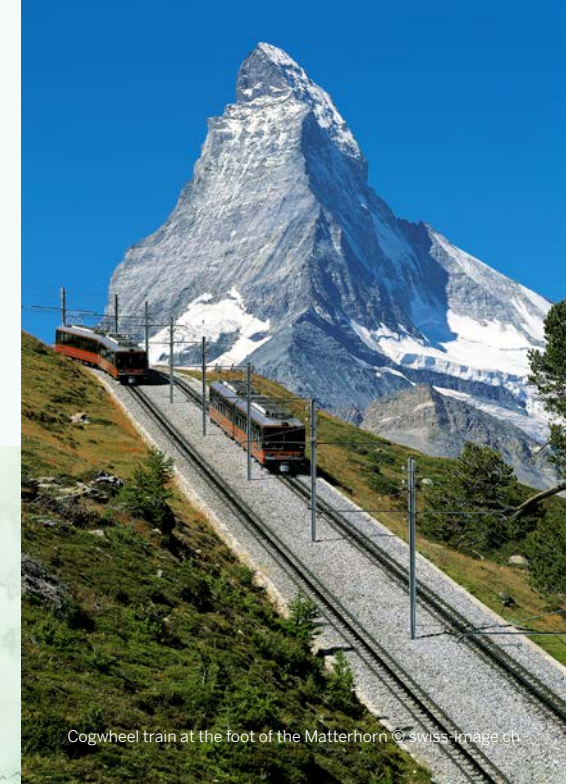
An Alpine Car and Train Journey



Lackental in Tirol in Austria © Österreich Werbung



Island Mainau, Lake Constance © FMainau GmbH



Cogwheel train at the foot of the Matterhorn © swiss-image.ch

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Picture Perfect

From the distinctive hut villages of the GÖriach Valley to the awe-inspiring Matterhorn and the fairy-tale Arlberg mountains, a drive through Austria, Switzerland and Germany delivers one breathtaking sight after another – all in under two weeks. Or leave the driving to someone else and discover the Alps conveniently by train. For gorgeous scenery and unforgettable experiences, these Alpine countries are entirely unparalleled and entirely unique.

Good to know...

Driving the "Picture Perfect" itinerary is uncomplicated and offers the greatest flexibility and freedom: you explore at your own pace. Public transportation on the other hand enables stress-free traveling in the Alpine region,



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

Prior on entering Austria's and Switzerland's motorways and highways, toll stickers are required on all vehicles! Stickers can be obtained from the gasoline stations as well as post offices and newsstands.

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 gas stations are closed at night, but self-service stations usually 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 are open Mon - Fri from 9 am to 6.30 pm, Sat 4pm to 5pm (some may close for lunch.)

Useful Websites

Austria.info, Germany.travel, mysitzerland.com

Getting around

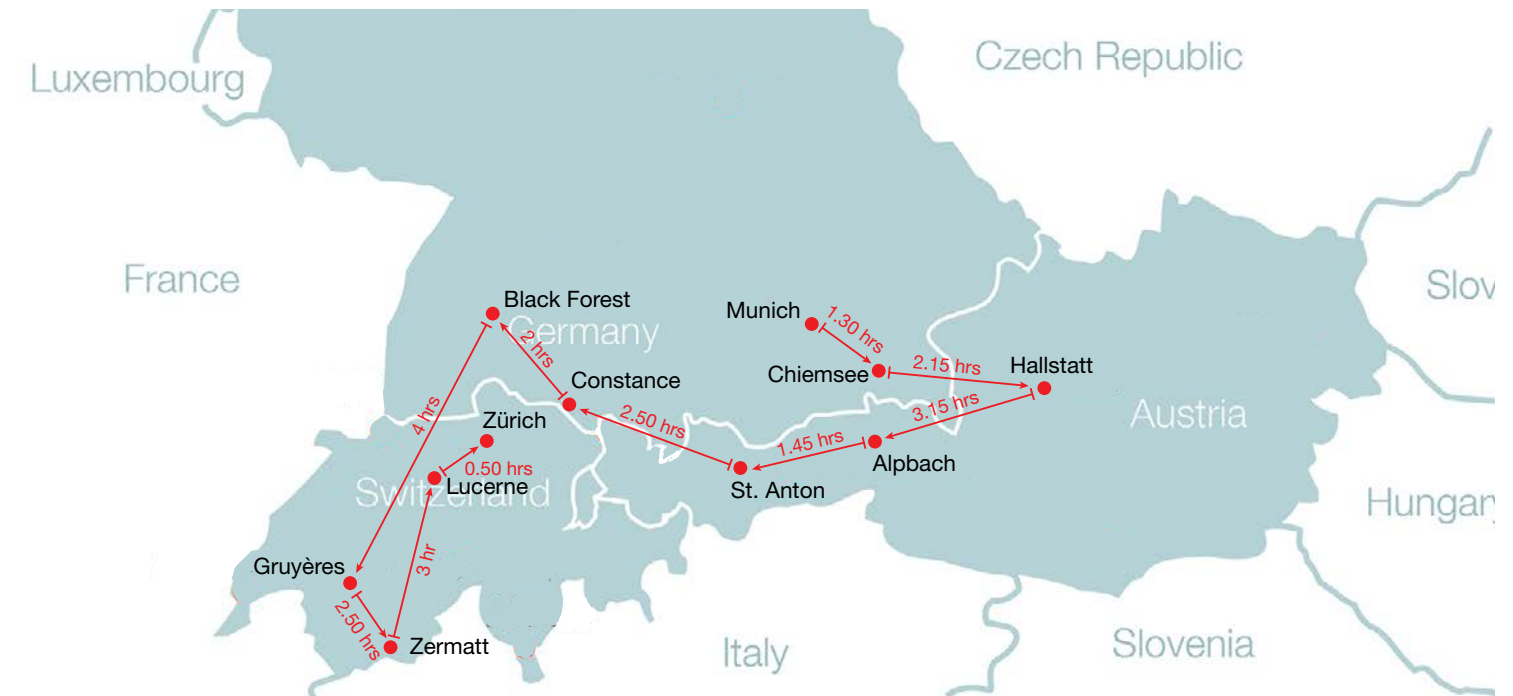
Meanwhile, the train offers one of the most hassle-free ways of touring the Alps. Crisscrossing the region is a popular small-gauge railway, letting travelers experience the most scenic vistas in the most relaxing manner.



The Glacier Express at the Oberalp Pass © swiss-image.ch

Driving times for the "Picture Perfect" journey

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)
March (Easter Celebrations)



Nuremberg timber-framed houses © GNTB, Andrew Cowin



Snow-clad fir trees, couple on a snowshoe walk © GNTB, Daniel Geiger

Lake Chiemsee

Germany

Lake Chiemsee, Germany's second-largest inland lake, is nestled in the Chiemsee-Alpenland region, one of Bavaria's most diverse landscapes, and just an hour from Munich. Known as the "Bavarian Sea," Lake Chiemsee is among the most beautiful lakes in the Bavarian Alpine foothills. Two of the main islands in the lake are Herrenchiemsee and Frauenchiemsee, also called Herreninsel (gentlemen's island) and Fraueninsel (ladies' island). The third main island, Krautinsel (cabbage island), is the smallest. An impressively clean lake, it is ideal for swimming and boating. The architecture of Prien on Lake Chiemsee is extremely picturesque and many of the shops and houses are decorated in the traditional style of Upper Bavaria. The health resort is the only Kneipp Health Cure Center in Upper Bavaria.

chiemsee-alpenland.de



Candlelight Dinner Seehaus © Hotel Gut Ising

EAT

For charming and romantic dining, celebrate at the terrific **Gut Ising** on Lake Chiemsee, where three restaurants offer delicious, adventurous variety. Enjoy local, traditional cuisine at **Zum Goldenen Pflug** Restaurant. The cozy **Klause** beer garden offers awe-inspiring views of the Alps and a small but tasty menu. The offerings at **USINGA Gourmet Restaurant** include impressive Alpine cuisine along with modern, seasonal and international favorites.

en.gut-ising.de



View of Kampenwand © Residenz Heinz Winkler

STAY

The beautiful, four-star **Yachthotel Chiemsee** sits on the lake's western shore in the Chiemgau region. Herrenchiemsee Island is seen easily from the hotel. The **Residenz Heinz Winkler** is located in a late medieval building, called the Hotel Post for centuries. Each suite has its own distinctive character. A beautiful ambiance, culinary delicacies and seasonal arrangements invite you to relax and enjoy. The cuisine has been awarded three Michelin stars more than 20 times.

yachthotel.de, residenz-heinz-winkler.de

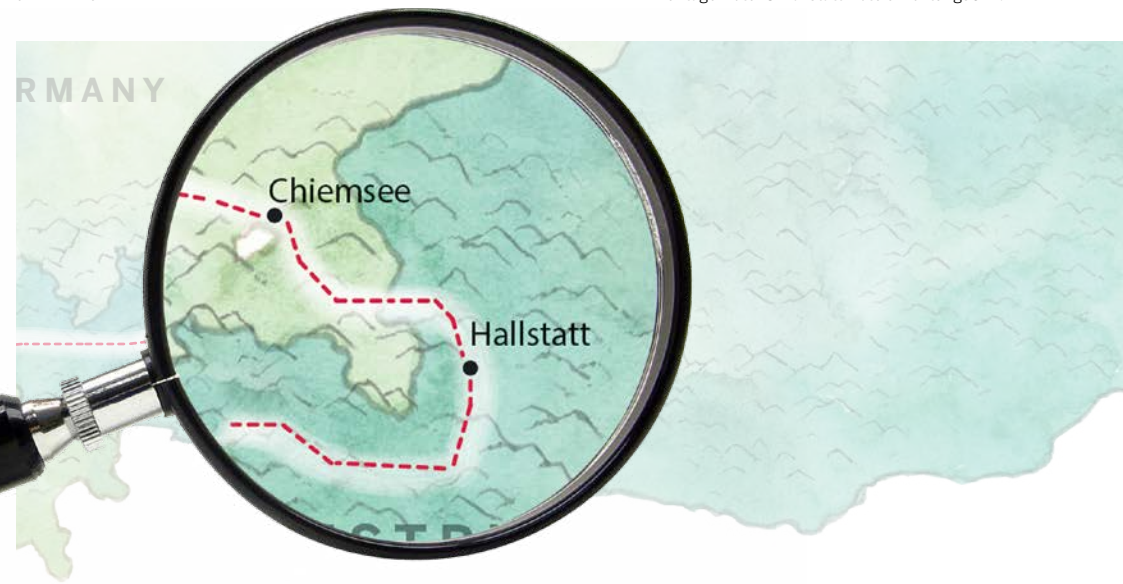


Island of Women, Chiemgauer Mountains © GNTB, Fritz Mader

DO

The breathtaking landscape of the Chiemgau region and the Upper Bavarian Alps offer abundant outdoor and cultural activities. Consider visiting **Herrenchiemsee Palace**, inspired by King Ludwig XIV, a fairytale showpiece that attracts millions yearly. For over a millennium, **Altötting** has been Bavaria's spiritual center, and for five centuries has served as Germany's principle Marian pilgrimage site – for the one million pilgrims and visitors who come each year to see the "Black Madonna" in the octagonal Chapel of Grace.

herrenchiemsee.de, altoetting.de



Hallstatt

Austria

Between Hallstätter See and the awe-inspiring Dachstein Mountains lies the pristine Salzkammergut Lake District. A mystical aura suffuses the region, with its otherworldly peaks and vast history. Centuries-old traditions remain intact here, and the Dirndl – the local traditional costume – is still part of every woman's wardrobe. Hallstatt is the oldest village in the **Salzkammergut** – and in fact in Austria – dating back 7,000 years. This UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site can be reached only by foot or boat, and evidence suggests this isolated village rose to prominence through a thriving salt trade as early as the 8th century B.C. So spectacular is it that the Chinese have created an elaborate replica of the ancient salt mining village. But only in the original will you discover what makes it truly unique and deeply Austrian.

hallstatt.net

EAT

The Salzkammergut Lake District is a magnet to fish junkies, who love the local trout, char and European whitefish. For some of the finest fish, try Hallstatt's **Seewirt Zauner** at the historic market square and the **Bräugasthof Lobisser**, with its lake terrace and cozy traditional restaurant. Or head to **Gasthaus Fürberg** in St. Gilgen, at the neighboring Lake Fuschl, and enjoy mouthwatering specialties from the local fishery.

zauner.hallstatt.net, brauhaus-lobisser.com, fuerberg.com



Heritage Hotel © Hallstatt HotelerrichtungsGmbH



Hallstatt © Österreich Werbung Pigneter

STAY

Between the mountains and the lake, it's hard to find lodging without breathtaking views in Hallstatt. Particularly recommended are the **Hotel Grüner Baum**, at the romantic market square, and the **Heritage Hotel**, in which three historic houses merge to form a luxury hotel. Another gem: **Schloss Fuschl**, the legendary castle hotel just 50 minutes from Hallstatt, and 30 minutes from Salzburg.

hotel-hallstatt.com, gruenerbaum.cc, schlossfuschlsalzburg.com

DO

The best way to experience the beauty of this famous location? A traditional **salt boat ride** on the Hallstätter Lake. These unique boats, called "Fuhren," once transported salt all the way to the Danube. For an even more intimate glimpse of Hallstatt's 7,000-year history, visit the incredible **Hallstatt Mines** and descend into the world's oldest salt mines. Finally, channel your inner Maria von Trapp and rent your own Dirndl at the **Dirndl To Go shop**.

hallstatt.net, salzwellten.at



Salzkammergut Dirndl © Kraft

Alpbach

Austria

Austria's third-largest province, Tirol, is in the heart of the Alps, surrounded by majestic mountains, rolling meadows and picturesque valleys. Its villages, such as **Alpbach** (likely a permanent settlement for more than 1,000 years), are filled with rustic Alpine architecture – handsomely crafted buildings made of bold, natural wood and stone that easily withstand the rugged environment and its weather, and blend beautifully into the landscape. Geraniums and other flowers surround the area's charming, cozy homes. Not surprisingly, Alpbach has been named "Austria's Most Beautiful Village" and also "Europe's most beautiful flower village." A visit to this quaint and exquisite village, with lovely views in every direction, should be one of your top priorities when you come to Austria. alpbachtal.at



Tirolean Knoedel © Tirol Werbung

EAT Enjoy the legendary hospitality of the Tirolean Alps. The "Tiroler Wirtshaus" seal of approval assures that an inn's products offer the finest quality, feature locally sourced ingredients and a generous helping of Gemütlichkeit. In Alpbach, both the **Hotel Wiedersbergerhorn** and the **Hotel zur Post** (all food grown sustainably and organically) are proud recipients of the seal and our favorite local recommendation. post-alpbach.at, wiedersbergerhorn.com



Alpbach Village © Alpbach Seenland Tourismus

STAY Wake up with an Alpine sunrise and a spectacular panoramic terrace view in this lovely Tirolean village. You are ensconced in the **Alpbacherhof**, a four-star superior hotel where traditional wooden style and delightful, contemporary design blend in perfect harmony. Another favorite choice is the romantic **Böglerhof**, a four-star superior hotel, parts of which date back to the 14th century – charming in every way, every day. alpbacherhof.at, boeglerhof.at



Alpbach Center © Alpbach Seenland Tourismus

DO Upon arrival in Alpbach, stroll the village and enjoy the abundant flower displays. You won't stop taking photos in such a beautiful spot, and during the summer there are numerous cultural events. Start your visit with a **guided tour**, focused on Alpbach's fascinating history and architecture. Don't miss the July **Village Fest's** great music and fine food. In September, the **cattle are brought down from the Alpine meadows** – another not-to-be-missed traditional event, which includes a charming hand-craft and farmer's market. alpbachtal.at



St. Anton

Austria

The Arlberg is a majestic Alpine mountain massif in western Austria, spanning the provinces of Tirol and Vorarlberg. An old trading route brought precious salt on a narrow trail across the Arlberg Pass for centuries, and valley farmers grazed their cattle in the high pastures. Over time, five charming villages grew as centers of agriculture, commerce and stopovers for those crossing the dangerous pass. In the 19th century, tourism's rapid growth helped the villages develop into deluxe retreats. Today, luxurious Lech, sophisticated Zürs, cozy Stuben, exclusive St. Christoph and cosmopolitan **St. Anton** are superb summer and among the world's best ski resorts. St. Anton am Arlberg is famous as the Cradle of Alpine Skiing, thanks to the Arlberg Ski Club (founded in 1901) and local boy Hannes Schneider, renowned skiing pioneer. stantonamarlberg.com

EAT The **Hospiz** in St. Christoph am Arlberg was founded in 1386 to shelter Arlberg Pass travelers. More than 620 years later, it's a five-star castle hotel serving award-winning Austrian cuisine, with a wine cellar dating back to the 14th century. The **Hotel Alte Post** in St. Anton is another jewel with exceptional flavors, a vast selection of wines, historic architecture and rustic Alpine hospitality. And for exquisite traditional dishes crafted by landlady Mrs. Kometer stop by the **Hotel Sonnbichl** in St. Anton. arlberghospiz.at, sonnbichl.cc, hotel-alte-post.at



St. Anton am Arlberg © Tourismusverband St. Anton am Arlberg



Arlberg Hospiz Hotel © Arlberg Hospiz Hotel

STAY At 4,300 feet, cosmopolitan St. Anton is an extraordinary experience. Its five-star **Hotel Raffl's St. Antonerhof** combines traditional values with refined comfort and a sophisticated ambiance. The cozy, four-star **Hotel Galzig** is beautifully situated at the Galzigbahn station, and surrounded by the majestic Arlberg Mountains. The four-star boutique **Hotel Himmlhof**, once an old farm house, is now a heavenly country hotel, presided over by friendly young owners, Herr and Frau Penz. The saunas, steam room and plunge pool work miracles. antonerhof.at, skihotelgalzig.at, himmlhof.com



Galzigbahn © Arlberger Bergbahnen

DO St. Anton am Arlberg, dripping with history, is iconic as the place Alpine skiing was invented, a topic you'll learn much more about when visiting the outstanding **Museum St. Anton am Arlberg**. Afterward, get on the prize-winning, state-of-the-art **Galzigbahn** cable car and two other cable cars, which rise 9,222 feet to **Valluga Mountain**, the highest peak in the Arlberg. You'll feel nature's power and on a sunny day easily see the peaks in Italy, Switzerland and Germany. museum-stanton.com, skiarlberg.at

Lake Constance

Germany

Three countries, one lake: **Lake Constance**, at the northern foot of the Alps in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, is Central Europe's third-largest lake. It features three major islands: Mainau is the garden island, with flowers overlooking the lake, a tropical greenhouse and thousands of butterflies; Reichenau Island is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, home to the Abbey of Reichenau monastery; Lindau is famous for its rich, old town houses and intriguing buildings. One can cross the lake on car ferries to reach three countries – going from Romanshorn to Friedrichshafen, or Constance to Meersburg. Constance is a university city and home to prehistoric stilt house settlements that are part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, and an oasis of natural beauty, harmony and relaxation. constance-lake-constance.com



Romantik Hotel Residenz am See © Romantik Hotel Residenz am See

EAT The **Romantik Hotel Residenz** am See has two restaurants: the gourmet **Casala** and the **Residenz**, a favorite among locals throughout the Lake Constance region, striking a perfect balance between traditional recipes and innovative new culinary directions. In the gourmet **Restaurant Ophelia**, in the five-star **Riva Hotel** Konstanz, you experience classical cuisine with a modern interpretation. The chef has been awarded 17 Gault Millau points and two Michelin stars. Later, you may indulge in the Finnish sauna, gym and beauty treatments. hotel-residenz-meersburg.com, hotel-riva.de



Villino Restaurant © Hotel Villino, C. Duepper

STAY The Relais & Châteaux **Hotel VILLINO** at Lindau, Lake Constance, is an exquisite country house hotel with award-winning cuisine and a fairytale garden, which invites you to stroll and relax. The **Steigenberger Inselhotel** in Constance, a former Dominican monastery, is situated lakeside. From the five-star hotel, it is only a few minutes to the old town and the center of Constance with its countless historical buildings. villino.com, steigenberger.com



Island Mainau Lake Constance © Mainau GmbH

DO There are so many reasons to visit Lake Constance: Stunning views, the historical old quarters and the exquisite Flower Island of Mainau, to name a few. Constance, the largest town on the lake, features the unique **Zeppelin Museum** Friedrichshafen. It houses the world's largest aviation collection, and is the only museum in Germany combining technology and art. In 1900, the first Zeppelin rose into the air from the Lake. Experience your choice of sight-seeing flights with the Zeppelin at Friedrichshafen Airport. zeppelinflug.de, zeppelin-nt.de



Black Forest

Germany

When it comes to diversity, the **Black Forest** is a rarity, featuring mountain peaks, breathtaking views, deep lakes and charming valleys. The area offers everything you could want for the perfect photos and the perfect vacation. Unspoiled landscapes adorn the region, with virtually the entire Black Forest designated as the largest nature park in Germany. The area offers an array of health and spa resorts, thermal baths – such as Badenweiler or Bad Wildbad – delicious regional food and towns filled with historic architectural treasures. Popular tourist destinations include Freiburg, the Feldberg mountains, Titisee Lake and Triberg Waterfall. blackforest-tourism.com

EAT This region's 17 Michelin-starred restaurants make it a first choice among diners. The **Restaurant Bareiss**, ranked in the Michelin Guide's top ten for German gastronomy, is a culinary experience that transports diners beyond the everyday. Its deservedly high praise include two Michelin stars and numerous other awards for excellence and originality. The meals at **Restaurant Schlossberg** also exude great creativity, ranging from salad with pumpkin seed dressing to what may be the nation's finest schnitzel. bareiss.com, hotel-sackmann.de



3-star Gourmet Restaurant Bareiss © Hotel Bareiss



Parkhotel Adler © Parkhotel Adler

STAY **Traube Tonbach** is nestled in the romantic Tonbach Valley, a luxurious area with tall trees and gently rolling hills. The Black Forest hotel, owned and operated by the same family for more than 200 years, is known for hospitality, flawless accommodations and its wellness center. **Parkhotel Adler**, a family-owned, five-star hotel in Hinterzarten, Lake Titisee, is rich in tradition and highly recommended for its beauty and massage services, treatment rooms, jacuzzi, and Earth-Fire sauna. traube-tonbach.de, parkhoteladler.de



Hiking Tonbach Valley © Hotel Traube Tonbach

DO **Black Forest** vacations offer outdoor activities from hiking and biking, to sailing, skiing and climbing. And if you are a lover of art and architecture, you will find the region's museums of the highest caliber. For hikers, the three main long-distance trails are the Westweg, Mittelweg and the Ostweg. Freiburg offers evocative old quarters, and its characteristic bächle – narrow channels of water that parallel the road. The **Schwarzwaldhochstrasse** makes for a spectacular route from Baden-Baden to Freudenstadt. blackforest-tourism.com

Gruyères

Switzerland

World-famous Gruyères cheese comes from the quaint medieval town of Gruyères, perched atop a small hill, surrounded by rolling green landscape and the peaks of the Fribourg Pre-Alps. The chocolate train, with its modern panorama cars, offers stunning views of the vineyards surrounding Montreux which is just an hour car ride from Gruyères. Specialties such as cheese fondue, raclette and desserts made with the excellent local double cream are all available – and appreciated by the picturesque town’s visitors. For those with sweets on the brain, a tour of **Cailler chocolate factory** is essential. For cultural history, the famous Gruyères Castle, dating to the 13th century, has been made into a museum featuring 800 years of regional architecture, history and culture.
la-gruyere.ch



Maison Cailler - Chocolate Factory © mysitzerland.com

EAT For complete immersion in the brand, history and products of the **Cailler Chocolate** factory, choose the interactive audiovisual tour that entertainingly focuses on various phases of Cailler chocolate production. For the ultimate treat, you'll get the opportunity to produce your own creations in the chocolate workshop under the guidance of a Cailler chocolate maker. Still hungry? **Le Chalet de Gruyères** invites you to sample their classic, local Gruyères cheese fondue followed by a sweet meringue with double cream.
cailler.ch, gruyeres-hotels.ch



Fairmont Le Montreux Palace © mysitzerland.com

STAY The easy-to-find **Hotel de Gruyères** has a fantastic view of the medieval town and the Moléson. Each room features a warm, rustic décor, and provides a serene view of the mountains. The five-star **Fairmont Palace Montreux Hotel** is one of the "Leading Hotels of the World" and "Swiss Deluxe Hotels." Built in 1906, this jewel of Belle-Époque architecture features 235 suites, all luxuriously appointed and equipped with state-of-the-art technology.
gruyeres-hotels.ch, fairmont.com



Castle in Gruyères © mysitzerland.com

DO **The Gruyères Castle** – one of the most impressive in Switzerland – towers above the medieval town. The castle tour offers a walk through eight centuries of architecture, history and culture. Built in the 13th century, it was home to a long succession of Gruyères counts. Discover the Castle's permanent historical displays and its many temporary exhibitions. Enjoy the multimedia show "Gruyères," an enchanting blend of high-definition images, music, light and sound.
chateau-gruyeres.ch

Zermatt

Switzerland

Amazing and car-free Zermatt rests at the foot of the **Matterhorn** in the middle of an extraordinary hiking and skiing region. It is one of the world's most attractive vacation villages. Its ski region encompasses 63 mountain railways and over 220 miles of slopes. In particular, the "Matterhorn glacier paradise" is Europe's largest and highest summer skiing region, with numerous national ski teams training here. The area is legendary among mountaineers for its lacework of 250 miles of hiking trails, snaking throughout the Matter Valley. The cog railway operates between Zermatt and the 10,000-foot-high Gornergrat, offering spectacular views of the Matterhorn and glaciers from the summit.
zermatt.ch

EAT Why not stop by the **Spycher Restaurant** in Zermatt to savor a flambé, Crepes Suzette or Stroganov? Devotees of Swiss cuisine will love this rustic, quintessentially grill and flambé restaurant, with a wine cellar "de prestige" featuring more than 150 fine wines. Meanwhile, **Chez Vrony** pampers you with lovingly prepared dishes and carefully selected wines – traditional recipes and classic cuisine.
aristella-zermatt.ch, chezvrony.ch



Restaurant Spycher © Restaurant Spycher



Hotel Zermatterhof © Hotel Zermatterhof

STAY The traditional **Hotel Monte Rosa** is located in the center of Zermatt's car-free zone. Zermatt's oldest hotel was the mountaineering headquarters of Edward Whymper, the first to ascend the Matterhorn. Guests enjoy free access to the Mont Cervin Palace wellness area. Another choice, set in a park in the heart of Zermatt, is the five-star property **Grand Hotel Zermatterhof**, with 78 guestrooms and suites for the most discerning guests. It features a terrace, indoor pool, sauna, steam room and nine-hole golf course.
monterosa.ch, zermatterhof.ch



Stellisee with view of the Matterhorn © swiss-image_ch

DO The stunning reflections of the Matterhorn on the glassy surface of Lake **Stellisee** are seen in pictures all around the world. The lake is a 20-minute walk from the Blauherd summit station, which is about 45 minutes from Zermatt. The cable car carries visitors to the summit of the **Rothorn**, in summer the starting point for various hikes. At Europe's highest vantage point, accessible by cable car, a fascinating panoramic vista of the Matterhorn awaits. Bring your camera!
zermatt.ch

Lucerne

Switzerland

Lucerne is the ideal starting point for many excursions throughout Central Switzerland. A trip to one of its regional mountains, Mt. Pilatus or Mt. Rigi – the queen of mountains – is essential. But treks to the Stanserhorn, the Bürgenstock or a steamship cruise on Lake Lucerne are no less rewarding. The covered medieval Chapel Bridge, replete with gable paintings, is the centerpiece of Lucerne. It is one of the oldest covered wooden bridges in Europe. With its picturesque lakeside setting and impressive mountain backdrop, Lucerne is known as “the Essence of Switzerland.” Tradition and modernity stand side-by-side in Lucerne, where innovative design is just one of the city’s attractions.

lucerne.com



Château Gütsch © myswitzerland.com

EAT With panoramic views of the city, mountains and lake, the **Restaurant Château Gütsch** has been a magnet for visitors for over 120 years. The restaurant offers the most spectacular dining experience in Lucerne, offering everything from Châteaubriand to fine cheese plates. Nearby, restaurant **Sauvage** at Hotel Wilden Mann, with its 14 Gault Millau points, is a jewel, celebrating traditional cuisine while embracing new international cooking, too. chateau-guetsch.ch, wilden-mann.ch



Palace Luzern © myswitzerland.com

STAY

Palace Lucerne's perfect service evokes the finest of the Swiss hotel industry's legendary hospitality. It is only a few minutes' walk to Old Town. Imbued with tradition, this five-star hotel offers 129 individually designed, luxuriously appointed rooms and suites. Also in town, **Hotel Montana** has unparalleled panoramic views of Mt. Pilatus, the Chapel Bridge and the city of Lucerne. It offers 66 art deco rooms and suites, and has been a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World since 2004. palace-luzern.ch, hotel-montana.ch



Pilatus cogwheel train © swiss-image.ch

DO Ride the steamship from Lucerne to Alpnachstadt, where the world's steepest cogwheel train pulls you up to Pilatus Kulm (7,000 feet). Take in the remarkable view of the lake, the mountains and the city of Lucerne. Then stroll through the rock gallery or hike to the Tomlishorn for a delicious snack in the restaurant. A spectacular ride by aerial cable car and gondola down to Kriens/Lucerne concludes this phenomenal day trip of the **Golden Round Trip**. pilatus.ch



Wishing you a great journey through the Austrian, Swiss and German Alps!



austria.info



germany.travel



Switzerland.
get natural.

MySwitzerland.com