Snowshoeing high above the Engadin lake plateau. © Filip Zuan

For more inspiration and specific information, see: MySwitzerland.com
Welcome to the mountains! We mountain hares just love winter. It’s our favourite time of year because there’s nothing we like better than diving headfirst into the powdery snow, our white coats disappearing against the pristine white background.

To give you an idea of what my Swiss winter is like, I have tracked down some stories for you and put them down on paper in this magazine. You come to play in the mountains, but also in wonderful peaceful refuges, where you can immerse your feet in warm water and relax after a long day in the snow. For those who prefer to stay warm indoors, I’ve also visited a number of spectacular buildings and watched some of my friends as they busy themselves in their workshops. I hope you will get a good impression of the country surrounding my burrow. Who knows, maybe we’ll see each other soon – perhaps after a fondue, a rösti or a glass of mulled wine under the stars? I’d really like that!

See you soon!

Peter
When the Alps wrap up for winter, covering their slopes in a bright white coat, the time has come to make your mark in the fresh powder snow.
Face to face with giants: on the way to Gitzialpetllücke high above Andermatt.
Summiteer

Steep, long and extreme: professional mountaineer Caro North likes a challenge. She’s at home in the mountains in summer or winter and is happy to share her enthusiasm with others.

She is young and impetuous, and her cheerful enthusiasm is quite infectious. When you meet Caro North for the first time, there’s just one thing you’ll want to do: join her in climbing the next peak. The 29-year-old seems to have stored up all the energy that the mountains provide inside her.

She spent a lot of time with her parents in La Tzoumaz, a small village in the Valais, took her first ski tour at the age of 12, climbed almost to the top of the highest mountain in South America at 16 and completed the ascent of the north face of the Eiger before her 23rd birthday. One of her greatest adventures, however, was when she climbed Cerro Torre in Patagonia as part of the first all-female team to make the ascent, opening up 55 previously unknown climbing routes in this part of South America.

Caro North now travels the world as a member of the Mammut pro team of athletes. She always returns to Switzerland in the winter months. Last season, Andermatt became her home, where she climbed through the snow-covered landscape on numerous tours with skiers to “play with nature”. Her playground is certainly big enough: the Alps account for 60% of the country’s territory, with 48 impressive 4,000-metre peaks and over 1,000 official ski and snowboard tours. Caro loves Switzerland for its easy access to the Alpine terrain and its perfect mix of snow, ice and rock: “You can take an easy ski tour on the south side and then climb a north face on the other.” Although she is a lot better at climbing than skiing, things wouldn’t be half as exciting without winter. That’s when magical moments happen, like when she was recently making an ascent from Andermatt, doggedly placing one ski in front of the other through an impenetrable wall of fog, while thousands of snowflakes fell from the sky. Suddenly the fog cleared. Before her stood the summit peak and a glistening wall of rock just waiting for her to climb it. “That was just incredible,” she admits.

Caro prefers to share these moments with other touring companions – she rarely ventures into the mountains on her own, partly for safety reasons. Just over a year ago, she was inducted into the male-dominated Swiss Mountain Guide Association as a certified mountain guide. This was a major achievement for Caro, whose goal in life is not to climb as many mountains as possible alone, but to pass on her passion and knowledge.

But there is one adventure still on her bucket list: the Marinelli Couloir on the Dufourspitze. This mountain in the Monte Rosa massif is the highest peak in Switzerland at 4,634 metres, and the descent to Macugnaga with a gradient of up to 50 degrees never seems to end – 2,420 vertical metres through the highest rock face in the Swiss Alps. It’s just the kind of thing Caro loves. △

Here’s a selection of ski tours to suit every level. →
“I’m not interested in dominating nature – I want to play with it. Conquering mountains is not a term in my mountaineering vocabulary.”

Caro North, mountain guide
Nothing is ever steep enough: Caro North loves a challenge, even in the familiar mountains of Andermatt.
Girls on top

It wasn’t all that long ago that women were not permitted to climb mountains, and female climbers are still in the minority today. Here’s a short history lesson with a few anecdotes.

Italian Félicité Carrel would have made it into the mountaineering hall of fame if her skirt hadn’t got in the way: in 1867, she would have been the first woman to make it to the top of the Matterhorn. In those days, women were forbidden from wearing trousers, and those who didn’t stick to the rules faced trouble from the police. Thus Félicité Carrel’s skirt repeatedly got in the way because of the wind when climbing the Matterhorn and almost tore her off the mountain. She was forced to cut her climb short. British climber Lucy Walker had better luck and faced less wind in 1871. Despite her skirt she became the first woman to make it to the top.

Female mountaineers were regarded with disapproval by many at the time. After all, their days should have been filled with work. They shouldn’t have had time for leisure activities, and certainly not for such a manly sport. Nonetheless, there were always women who ignored the nay-sayers and who made a place for themselves in the annals of mountaineering.

Elizabeth Main was one of these. From the 1880s onwards, she mainly spent the winter months in the Engadin. Early each morning she would steal out of her hotel to climb the snowy peaks. She also took part in several first winter ascents, such as the ascent of the two peaks of Piz Palù, which, by the way, she also climbed later one summer with an all-female team. Even a message from her great-aunt to say “Stop her climbing mountains, she is scandalising all London and looks like a Red Indian” wasn’t enough to dissuade from her fascination with the sport. Finally, in 1907, she founded the first mountaineering club for women in London.

Eleven years after this club was established, women also became active in Switzerland, and the Swiss Women’s Alpine Club was founded. The women actually wanted to join the men in the SAC, but their overtures were rejected. It took until 1980 before the SAC members changed their minds. It would take another six years before Nicole Niquille became the first woman in Switzerland to become a certified mountain guide. And that was only because she registered as a man. These days, the Swiss Mountain Guide Association numbers 1,300 male guides and 38 female guides, one of whom is Caro North.

Mammut Alpine School

In 2008, Mammut became the first and only outdoor sports company to found its own mountaineering school. It offers a wide range of training courses and tours in Switzerland and the Alps. The focus is on the transfer of knowledge.
Who invented skiing? The Swiss of course! But who exactly? Father Johann Josef Imseg. At least according to the locals around Saas-Fee. When the priest received a call for help in the winter of 1849, he did not hesitate for long, putting on his hiking boots and tying them to two wooden slats before setting off for Saas-Grund. He thus went down in Swiss history as the inventor of skiing. The people of Saas-Fee didn’t know that the Scandinavians could already look back on a thousand years of skiing history back then – after all, even the Norwegians were in the dark about this. Around 1800, they thought they had created something entirely new with the Telemark ski. However, evidence of the first skiers can be traced as far back as the Stone Age. The oldest remains were found in bogs in Scandinavia, such as the Kalvtråsk ski in Sweden, which dates back to 3200 BC.

Although the parish priest of Saas-Fee did not invent skiing, he certainly brought tourism to the village. He hosted tourists in his rectory and acted as a mountain guide, taking them on hiking tours. Later he even campaigned for the construction of the first hotels in the valley.

As tourism took hold in Saas-Fee, the success story of Swiss skiing slowly picked up speed. In 1888, Norwegian polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen crossed Greenland on a pair of skis. Christoph Iselin from Glarus read the report of his adventure with interest and then organised a race at the Pragel Pass. He wanted to present the Telemark skis and show that the wooden slats used by the Swiss could not be beaten. A short time later, he founded the first ski club, the Ski Club Glarus, and organised Switzerland’s first ski race in 1902. The Swiss Ski Association was founded 11 years later. Today the association bears the name “Swiss-Ski” and has trained several world and Olympic champions. The Swiss may not have invented skiing, but they certainly know how to win medals with it.

The very first skier

You can still go skiing using vintage equipment at least once a year.
Skiing like in days gone by

Skiing has changed, skis have become faster, and ski suits have become sportier. If you find yourself longing for times gone by, you will find there are a few places that allow you to relive historic ski practices.

He's one of the best skiers of all time: Didier Cuche. He proved this with his 21 victories, five of them in Kitzbühel, on the hardest World Cup course in the world. It was not surprising, then, that the King of Kitzbühel, as he was called, chose this descent as his last. However, he did not complete his last descent in the usual close-fitting ski suit and with well-polished and waxed skis, but instead chose a chic nostalgic outfit. Clad in a cap, jacket, mountain boots and wooden skis, he made his way to the start line and negotiated the last steep finishing slope, including a ski somersault, even if his legs were shaky and not quite as fast as usual. Hats off to him, because, as we know, you have to be a great skier to manage old-fashioned wooden skis. If you'd like to try this out for yourself, you'll find that Switzerland has a whole host of nostalgic races on offer.

The nostalgia junkies of Kandersteg
Kandersteg has dedicated not just a nostalgic ski race, but also a whole week to the Belle Époque. The village turns back the clock to 1913, with a nostalgic atmosphere and activities from days gone by.

All-rounders in Toggenburg
It is becoming an established tradition that each spring those with a taste for wistful nostalgia slip into old ski equipment, strap venerable skis onto their feet and launch themselves from the Wol zenalp in the hope of staying more or less upright until they reach the valley below. The stopovers in the ski huts — where darts are played and nails are hammered into logs — really pack a punch.

The well-dressed ski instructors in Bellwald
The end of the ski season in Bellwald is marked in quite an unusual way. Every Easter Saturday, the ski instructors dust off their best 19th-century costumes, strap old wooden skis to their hiking boots and ski down the hill in their usual expert manner. Some time ago, guests decided to leave the old-fashioned skis to the instructors, preferring instead to enjoy the spectacle from the sides of the slope, where they can enjoy a great view of the show.

Endurance athletes in Davos
One of the first descents discovered by skiers was from the peak of the Weissfluh down to Küblis. The nostalgic descent follows this 12-kilometre route. Information panels are provided along the entire route, offering an insight into the history of skiing in Davos.

Barrel stave races are held all over Switzerland every winter.

Conquering the slopes on barrel staves
Barrel stave races are held all over Switzerland every winter.

A stiff upright stance is not an option on the Pizol
The choice of whether to use a crooked wooden stick or two old ski poles is entirely up to you. The competition is divided into various categories on the Pizol: telemark, cable tie attachment, with or without plastic coating.

80s forever in Arosa
People don't delve so far into the past in Arosa, and some of them find themselves stuck in the 1980s. It still makes for a colour-ful sight for spectators and adds to the fun for those taking part. The one rule is that everyone has to use wooden skis, even if their costume isn't necessarily ideal for skiing.

Wooden ski aficionados in Adelboden
Every year, skiers gather on the Engstligenalp in historical costumes and with old wooden skis for the Hickorywedeln event. Hickory is a North American nut tree whose wood was used in the manufacture of skis until well into the 20th century and lends its name to this fun event.

Stem turns allowed in Andermatt
Lace-up leather shoes and wooden skis without a steel edge are not for everyone; only experienced skiers make it down the piste in Andermatt without a stem turn.

80s forever in Arosa
People don't delve so far into the past in Arosa, and some of them find themselves stuck in the 1980s. It still makes for a colour-ful sight for spectators and adds to the fun for those taking part. The one rule is that everyone has to use wooden skis, even if their costume isn't necessarily ideal for skiing.

Combining skiing and sledding in Grächen
The nostalgic race on the Hannigalp above Grächen is a two-person affair: one on a sled and the other on old skis. The clock stops once both competitors have crossed the finishing line.

Hunting for the past in Obwalden
The locals in Obwalden like to remember the glories of the past too. On the Mörlialp near Giswil, men and women try to cross the finish line still on both skis — which is easier said than done.

Bringing artistry to the slopes in Lenk
Sometimes shaky, sometimes backwards, sometimes on their bottoms and, occasionally, at great speed, the racers on their wooden skis descend the Hasler slope on Lenk's dedicated wooden ski days. A tip from a seasoned participant: bend your knees, then you won't have any problems.
The Swiss Snow Playground is the ideal environment for developing a feel for winter sports in a playful and relaxed way. Based on an originally American model, the success rate for newcomers – no matter whether adults or children – is remarkably high. And, what’s more, the focus is on fun: the play area is flat, divided off from the main slope and features a variety of snow elements, providing a safe place to try out new tricks. This season, there will be a Swiss Snow Playground at 17 different Swiss ski schools. Why not pay us a visit?

swiss-ski-school.ch/en
Davos has always attracted free spirits. The famous wooden sled was born here, the world’s first T-bar lift went into operation here in 1934 and, in the 1980s, freestylers found a new home in Davos. At the time, the Jakobshorn was the only mountain on which they were allowed to use the lifts. These days, beginners and professionals alike gather in the Jatzpark to practice their tricks. The mountain village is one big playground for up-and-coming talents in particular. For example, the children from the Iceripper Snowboard Club in Zurich come to the youth hostel in Davos, which, like its counterparts in Grindelwald, St. Moritz and Laax, has the ideal infrastructure for sports camps. The club has been encouraging new young talent in the lowlands since the 1980s. Down in the basement of the youth hostel, the kids will find plenty of room to wax their snowboards in preparation for the snow, while food is served on the ground floor to keep their strength up and the upper floors contain warm beds where they can rest and recover for the next day and dream about their sporting idols.

Where the best-known freestylers learned their skills

Drop-in: find out more about the young freestylers and the youth hostel.
After a long day in the soft snow and having filled their lungs with fresh mountain air, those in the know will relax in a bath of warm water drawn from the depths of the Swiss mountains.
Take the waters 19th century-style at the Grand Resort Bad Ragaz.
In secluded spots, hidden away from the prying eyes of the authorities, young people would meet in small bathhouses in the 19th century, where they savoured the good life. Life in the spa resorts was truly vibrant. Many marriage proposals took place here, as did heated political debate. The canton of Basel-Landschaft is said to have been born in the pleasant thermal spring waters of Bad Bubendorf.

While the burgeoning small bathing resorts were a thorn in the side of the church, things were more relaxed in the higher-profile spa towns. Only the upper classes could afford a three- to five-week course of treatment here. In search of a restorative regime, they travelled from all over Europe, bringing parts of their household and even their pets with them. During this heyday, which would last until the 20th century, the thermal baths became spas, each one offering a specific treatment for a particular disease, even tuberculosis.

But people had discovered the healing powers of thermal baths long before this. Roman legionnaires came across hot springs around 2,000 years ago in modern-day Baden, which is how the Roman settlement of Aquae Helveticae came into being. Hot springs also surfaced in other areas of what is now Switzerland, but the source in Baden is one of the most important and, something the Romans did not know then, one of the hottest and most mineral-rich of Switzerland’s thermal springs.

The First World War brought an abrupt end to the thriving spa culture: the spa resorts were repurposed to accommodate troops or as internment camps for prisoners of war. Spa culture was never really the same after this, and the social aspect disappeared, while swimming became a mass sport. Medical spas managed to survive, however. Today, spas are enjoying a revival. Thermal baths, like those in Baden, where a whole spa quarter is currently growing, look set to become meeting places once again. We are witnessing a return to the times when young people would meet, and marriage proposals and political discussion were the order of the day here.
Bathing fashions

in the Roman Empire
in the Middle Ages
at the end of the 19th century
around 1900
around 1920
around 1930
from 1946 onwards
*The rediscovery of the bikini*
around 1980
around 2020
Water – nature’s miracle

A warm bath on an icy winter’s day is a blessing for the soul and a miracle cure for the body: it relaxes muscles and joints, lowers blood pressure and relieves agitation and exhaustion. Because the water creates buoyancy, you feel light as a feather and pain subsides. When minerals are added to the mix, the magic remedy for a variety of ailments reaches perfection.

Saltwater baths: regulate the vegetative nervous system and are prescribed for skin rashes, rheumatism, allergies, and respiratory and joint disorders.

Sulphur baths: relieve pain in degenerative joint disorders and chronic polyarthritis, but also inhibit skin diseases such as acne, neurodermatitis or psoriasis.

Cold baths: reduce blood flow to the skin by withdrawing heat, and inhibit pain, for example at the joints; often used in combination with subsequent physiotherapy.

Carbon dioxide baths: stimulate the blood supply to the skin, which widens the blood vessels, relieves stress on the heart and is good for the kidneys.

Physiotherapy baths: effective cardio, circulatory and breath training, because the water pressure pushes the diaphragm upwards; the water resistance also trains the muscles and relieves the joints at the same time; used for arthritis and osteoporosis.

Oxygen baths / whirlpool baths: increase tactile sensory perceptions by stimulating the skin; relaxes, invigorates and stimulates blood circulation.

Radon baths: reduce inflammation and pain in rheumatic disorders.

Alternating hot and cold baths: restore vegetative balance in situations of stress and overload, and stimulate the cardiovascular system.

Hot baths: improve insulin resistance (at least 12 minutes at 39°C); circulatory resistance decreases, heart rate increases.

Peat baths: have a soothing effect on inflammations of the skin.

There’s one ingredient in the magic formula of hot water and minerals that shouldn’t be forgotten: the special atmosphere. Treatment takes place far from home in an unfamiliar climate and setting, giving rise to new contacts and making some stays all the happier. It was already recognised back in the 19th century that taking time out for treatment frees you from everyday cares: the aim is that patients should recover both physically and mentally.
Bathing like the Romans
While the excavators are still working away on the construction site to restore the spa landscape in Baden, there are many places where the thermal waters are already flowing. At Hotel Blume, the hotel’s own thermal spring water arrives from the depths practised since 1836. The thermal bench on the banks of the River Limmat is a place where young and old meet to dip their feet in the warm thermal water after a long walk or a Saturday visit to the market. 
Incidentally: in the old days, the trip to Baden to take the waters was known by the name “Badenfahrt”. This custom is still celebrated in style in Baden every five to ten years.

From wooden barrels to the rooftop
During the Reformation, puritanical spiritual leader Zwingli rejected thermal baths in Zurich, which is why people travelled to Baden to relax. The mineral water from the Aqui source was only used many years later, and today you can bathe in the huge wooden barrels of the former Hürlimann brewery in Zurich, then climb to the roof to enjoy a fabulous view of the city.

A quartzite thermal temple
At a temperature of 30 degrees and containing a large proportion of calcium and magnesium, half of the water from St. Peter’s spring flows into the 7132 Thermal Baths and Spa in Vals. The other half is used to produce Vals mineral water. It’s not just the thermal waters that pervade body and soul, but also the monolithic building made of blocks of Vals quartzite stone.

Relaxation in a warm thermal bath
The Romans showed us the way, relaxing in the thermal springs. They definitely would have felt at home in today’s spas – especially given the wide selection on offer.
Mineral bath
More than 20 mineral springs conjoin in Bogn Engiadina in Scuol. The Luzius spring is one of these and is the only alkaline sodium sulphate spring in the Alpine region. The baths are not a thermal bath, but a mineral bath, since the water is no warmer than 20 degrees.

Conditions like the Dead Sea
The hot spring was discovered by accident in Zurzach in 1914 while sinking an exploratory well, but was promptly capped again as the miners were in search of other mineral resources. It was not until 1955 that people bathed in the first hut. These days, you can float on the intensive salt waters in Bad Zurzach just like in the Dead Sea.

The grand old lady
The Grand Resort Bad Ragaz feeds its thermal baths from the nearby Tamina Gorge. As early as the 16th century, renowned physician Paracelsus enthused about the curative properties of the water emerging from the spring at a temperature of 36.5 degrees. The venerable 19th-century Helena Bath is just the place to forget the cares of the day.

Curative granite bathtubs
The Craveggia baths are located on the border between Italy and Switzerland. The former sanatorium has been restored as part of the “Frontiera di acqua e di pace” cross-border project. Now you can step into one of the two new granite tubs and enjoy nature’s healing powers, just like the aristocrats who came here in their carriages and were carried along the last rough section by the mountain farmers of the Valle Onsernone.

A village wellness refuge
Although Gstaad does not have any thermal springs, the village in the Bernese Oberland has become a centre of wellness. The various hotels offer their own wellness programmes. Caesar could only have dreamt of the possibilities on offer in the hotel The Alpina Gstaad.

The origins of spa tourism
When renowned physician Paracelsus investigated the spring in St. Moritz in the 16th century and recommended that people should bathe in it and drink Valtellina wine, other doctors and scholars, as well as the sick and infirm, also began to make their way to the Engadin. When the first sanatorium was built in 1864, spa tourism blossomed in St. Moritz and throughout the Engadin. When you take the waters in the Ovavera baths, you will find yourself diving into the past, in your mind at least.

A long trip
The natural mineral content in Leukerbad is high, as the water takes at least 40 years to reach the surface here. The calcium sulphate concentration is particularly good for relieving rheumatic conditions.

Salt of the earth
The salt water found in Rheinfelden is one of the strongest natural saline sources in Europe. Rising from a depth of around 200 metres, it is pumped into the Riburg salt works near Rheinfelden and piped directly to the Rheinfelden resort, where it provides relaxation as a cascade or whirlpool.

Bask in a cask
Instead of the tin or ceramic baths used from the 19th century onwards, people can now bathe in wooden casks again, for example in the Yeti Alpine huts in Grindelwald. Although this used to be a solitary experience, most barrels are big enough for two. The scent of wet wood ensures an even more intense sensory journey.

The best spas in Switzerland – an overview.
If you’ve lived in the wild mountains for thousands of years, you’ll learn how to make yourself comfortable in winter. That’s why spending the winter in our timber houses is a cosy pleasure with a wealth of tales to tell. Let the summer wait another few weeks.
Zuort: a hamlet at the end of Val Sinestra.
Welcome refuge

This is the story of Hof Zuort, where authenticity, modesty and peacefulness are not just part of life, but actively celebrated. A story of people and their longings, for refuge and for homecoming.

When you step into the clearing at the end of Val Sinestra for the first time you'll find yourself rubbing your eyes in astonishment. There, under the snowy peaks of the Lower Engadin and surrounded by the dense spruce and larch forest, you'll find a Bavarian-style inn, a spacious chalet and a small wooden chapel that wouldn't look out of place in Norway. Zuort is the name of the homestead above the village of Vnà, at 1,700 metres above sea level. A place that enchants you almost as soon as you first set foot in the fresh snow. A place that radiates an incredible sense of peace and contentedness. And a place that many people seeking refuge have fallen in love with. The same is true of Peter Berry.

Or, to use his full name, Peter Robert Berry IV, the doctor from St. Moritz who not only followed in his father's, grandfather's and great-grandfather's professional footsteps, but, like his ancestors, happily exchanged his white coat for the apron of an artist or, in his case, a host. An advertisement reading “Hunting lodge for sale in an enchanted valley” sparked his curiosity ten years ago. He was rewarded with “a little piece of the Engadin that my grandfather and great-grandfather would still recognise”. In contrast to the material luxury of St. Moritz, Peter Berry found the seclusion of Zuort offered a unique calmness, mindfulness and simplicity. This may not have been the contrast he was looking for, but it was certainly what his soul needed. “Come and visit us. We’ve got nothing.” This is a saying Dr Berry frequently uses.

Mengelberg also fell in love with the place over 100 years ago. Starting in 1910, he had the chalet and chapel built next to the farm and turned the place into a summer residence for himself and his musicians. After the Second World War, Zuort became his permanent residence, where he enjoyed music, good cigars and the joys of life in good company until his death in 1951. If you spend the night in the chalet today, you cannot help but immerse yourself in Mengelberg’s world. You’ll find his books in the library. His sheet music can be found in the living room. And Mengelberg’s personal conductor’s tailcoat still hangs in the closet.

Owner Peter Berry is keen to maintain this idyllic balance between idealism and reality, so that the Hof Zuort remains what it used to be: a place of refuge.
Design in snow and ice

This is a transient work of art that is built from scratch in Saanersloch every year: Gstaad’s Igloo Village. The rough shaping of the shell is followed by a great deal of precision work during the interior design stage. All in all, a very special kind of designer dwelling.

All 13 rooms are individually designed – some of them ornately embellished, others featuring clean geometric lines. The one thing that all the rooms have in common is that each bed is built on ice. Several layers of insulation ensure that sleepers stay cozy and the beds themselves do not melt away. The room temperature is around the freezing point, but you won’t feel this while snuggled up in your thick sleeping bags. When it comes to comfort, this igloo village has little in common with genuine Inuit dwellings. Every igloo has an electric light and even a USB socket as standard.

The romantic suite takes things even further. It offers direct access to a 40-degree jacuzzi, also housed in an igloo. This is able to withstand the rising steam since most of the heat is allowed to escape through a hole in the ceiling. Guests in the other room categories can also get a taste of this luxury; since there is another jacuzzi, this one available to all, in the open air. Against the panoramic backdrop of the Alps, the sky constantly ignites in an impressive firework of colour. The igloos are always on the move, as are the staff members. The entire building sinks by up to 1.5 metres during a season, which is why the installations constantly have to be checked and adjusted. The light switches have to be constantly repositioned to keep them within easy reach. The wooden door frames also need to be adjusted to the changing conditions and are anchored in vertical slots to keep pace with the dynamic movement of the igloo. Toilet bowls have to be repositioned again and again and, so that it remains possible to walk upright, the caretakers regularly reshape the ceilings.

These idiosyncratic buildings only stop moving late in spring. That’s when thousands of hours of work melt away and become one with the blooming alpine meadows. But only for a few months, because in November it will be that time of year once again. Winter 2020/21 should be a special one, since the Igloo Village Gstaad is celebrating its 15th birthday. Warm beds, cold drinks: everything is covered.
Star map
Just as a big city is divided into districts, so the starry sky is divided into star fields with 88 constellations. Some of the actual constellations themselves have been handed down from antiquity and even then helped people to navigate by the stars and thus keep their bearings here on Earth.

A house in the snow
Saanerslochgrat mountain station
There’s no need to take a picture of the night sky, as it’s something you’re unlikely to forget.

Stay up top as the mountains light up in the evening.

Stay up top as the mountains light up in the evening.

Good night: cuddle up in your double-room igloo just for two.

Dive deeper into this fascinating story.
The world was in turmoil when the Irish monk Gallus arrived in a forested area near Lake Constance in 612. The people had enough of war and battle. All they wanted was peace and a little happiness. During this time, Gallus built a small monastic settlement in the middle of what was then a wilderness, but which soon grew into one of the most important cultural centres in Europe, the city of St. Gallen.

To capture their ideas for happiness and eternal life, the monks spent hours in the library, the “apothecary for the soul”, as is still written in Greek lettering above the entrance to the Abbey Library of St. Gallen today. A number of creative monks from this place of healing for the soul went down in cultural history. For example, the poet Notker Balbulus, who is comparable to the Bob Dylan of our time. While Dylan is one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century, Balbulus of Toggenburg is one of the most important spiritual poets of mediaeval Latin literature. His songs were sung all over Europe, and he played his part in making music more and more important. His works, along with 2,000 other original manuscripts and 170,000 printed books, are guarded by the Abbey Library as precious treasures, the oldest of their kind in Switzerland.

When you pass through the great door into the baroque hall and take a few steps across the creaking wooden floor, you will immediately understand why this library, together with the entire abbey precinct, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1983. It is a total work of art from floor to ceiling. You can smell history hanging in the air among the old parchments and bindings. Nowhere else is the period from 700 to 1100 AD as thoroughly documented as in the Abbey Library and archive in St. Gallen.

You can imagine how Notker, in a demonstration of great patience and care, put each letter down on his parchment in order to record his thoughts for posterity. These thoughts covered concepts and desires, such as justice and charity, that are still relevant today.

Apothecary for the soul
An insight into the treasure trove
A SELECTION OF OBJECTS

Abrogans
This is considered the oldest extant book in the German language. The glossary contains approximately 3,670 Old High German words and was named after the first entry “abrogans”, which means “modest or humble”. The final pages contain the oldest version of the Lord’s Prayer in German. Swiss author Franz Hohler dedicated a story to this manuscript entitled “Das Päckchen” (The Parcel).

Plan of the monastery
Around 820 AD, the decision was made to rebuild the monastery, using the Plan of St. Gallen as a basis. The plan should be understood more as a kind of concept for living at the time. It is a valuable contemporary testament that shows how society, the monastery and farming all worked. It is even possible to see exactly which plants people grew at the time. The precious original can be seen in the new exhibition hall in the abbey precinct.

Wooden floors
Felt slippers are as much part of the fabric of the library as the books themselves. The reason: the ornate parquet floor made from spruce, walnut and cherry wood from the St. Gallen region has already been around for 252 years, and the intention is that it should remain there for many more years to come. That’s why no one enters the baroque hall without a pair of slippers.

The St. Gallen Globe
A globe is like a three-dimensional book. Made shortly after 1571, the St. Gallen Globe also has its own stories to tell. For example, it can provide an insight into the time it was made and the way people viewed the world back then. A map of the sky was drawn on the globe, so that the stars and planets can be seen as well as the continents. For example, in the Pacific Ocean you can see the constellation of the serpent-bearer. Historical events like the sea battle of Lepanto are shown, as well as fearsome monsters and masterly portraits of scholars and astronomers. Then there’s the story of how the globe was transported to Zurich during the second battle of Villmergen in 1712. St. Gallen and Zurich argued from 1996 to 2006 over the return of the precious object, before finally reaching an agreement: the original was to remain in Zurich, while an exact replica was produced for St. Gallen.

Curiosities
All kinds of curiosities were gathered together in the library. The collection includes Schepenese, a female mummy from ancient Egypt, and the travel diary of Alsatian world traveller Georg Franz Müller (1646–1723). His beautiful illustrations of pineapples, cannibals and Chinese people offer an insight into the globalised world at the time.

Stylus
The handwritten books are often collaborative works, which is why the writing is formalised and reveals little about the authors. However, it is not uncommon for manuscripts to be enriched with annotations and comments. When the stylus is used to scratch a message directly into the parchment, it gives the text a personal touch.

The most important manuscript
The Nibelungen manuscript dates back to the 13th century and is the most important manuscript in German mediaeval literature. Extremely well preserved, it offers a unique collection of Middle High German epic poems of heroes and knights, and, in addition to the Nibelungenlied, also includes Wolfram von Eschenbach’s “Parzival” and “Willehalm” and Stricker’s “Charlemagne”.

The most beautiful manuscript
The Folchart Psalter is a masterpiece of late Carolingian illuminated initial art, which involved the embellishment of the initial letters of a page or chapter.

The librarian
Cornel Dora is the abbey’s librarian and is as integral to the collection as the manuscripts and curiosities themselves. His benign spirit pervades the entire library, and he can be relied upon to answer any question. Under his guidance, a tour becomes a journey through time itself.
People animate the ever-changing landscape with lively culture, delicious cuisine and ancient traditions that have been carefully handed down to us.
Time is made in Geneva and given the city’s seal of approval.
Time takes time

It takes enormous sensitivity to bring tiny cogwheels to life in a mechanical timepiece that can capture something as transient as time itself. A craft that is deeply rooted in Geneva’s soul.

The water leaps towards the sky and greets the morning with its freshness. The Jet d’Eau is switched on every morning at 9 a.m. on the dot (or at 10 a.m. in the winter months). The fountain was put into operation at the end of the 19th century to relieve the overpressure in the system of the Coulouvrenière hydroelectric power station. The plant was built in response to the growing demand for electricity – in the watch industry, for example. The pressure became too great when the machines were turned off in the evening. This problem was eventually resolved by technical means. However, the Jet d’Eau remained. It became a city landmark and, due to its history, a symbol of the watchmaking industry at the same time.

Geneva is still synonymous with Swiss precision and is the home of many renowned watch brands. It is hardly surprising that the city is also home to the watchmaking school, where the traditional craft is passed on to the next generation. During their four years of training, students are immersed in the magical world of mechanical timepieces – tiny miracles that measure time, while also defying it with their own timelessness. One of the students here is Besarta Murti. She is in her third year of training and was named best student at the Geneva watchmaking school at the 2017 Grand Prix d’Horlogerie de Genève. “Watch mechanisms with all their cogs and wheels have always fascinated me,” she explains. “There is something quite magical about capturing something so transient.”

A glance at the trainees’ schedule shows just how much sensitivity and precision is needed when putting a timepiece together. They spend the first year of their training making the instruments that they will subsequently use throughout their apprenticeship when crafting their ‘school watch’. Symbolically, it shows that time seems to pass more slowly for master watchmakers. After all: it takes time to make time.

That Geneva has become the capital of watchmaking is due to the famous religious reformer Calvin and the fact that necessity is the mother of invention. Geneva was a magnet for goldsmiths in the 16th century. However, when Calvin rejected riches in the form of gold and precious stones, they had to find a new line of business and henceforth devoted themselves to watchmaking.

The Geneva Seal dates back to roughly the same time as the Jet d’Eau. The small but extremely significant embossed insignia on the back of the timepiece is now awarded by the Timelab foundation. The seal means that the timepiece has not only been manufactured entirely in Geneva, but also meets strict quality requirements. “The Geneva Seal guarantees that every single component in a timepiece is absolutely unique,” explains Besarta Murti, adding, “That is a beautiful thought.”

Geneva from the point of view of a young watchmaker.
Swathed in legend, the Great St. Bernhard Pass and the surrounding mountains dominate local life. The same is true for mountain guide and joiner Justin Marquis, who spends around 200 days of each year on his skis. His passion for skiing led him to develop his own skis: just1ski. He produces these with a great deal of care and attention by hand and tailors each pair to their future owner.

Each ski is quite unique and is adjusted to the skiing style of the individual skier.
Justin, how did your passion for making skis come about?
I am a mountain guide and joiner and when I needed new skis to train as a mountain guide, I went into my workshop and came up with a concept for what the perfect ski should look like. It took more than 200 hours of hard graft before I was satisfied and held the first pair of just1skis in my hands.

How many hours do you need to make a pair of skis these days?
Naturally the process has become much leaner, but it still takes around 20 hours to produce a pair of skis.

What part of the handcrafting process do you like best?
Working with wood and gluing the laminate layers. The wooden core is like the soul of the ski, a living, sensuous entity. Around this we glue different layers of material, all of which have a particular function, depending on the ski. I really get a kick out of the precision assembly of the individual skis.

What materials are key for your skis?
The composite materials made from fibreglass, carbon and flax are key components in the ski’s interior. Then there’s the coating, which plays a vital role when it comes to speed: our skis have a P-tex 5920 coating that enables them to glide perfectly with an occasional application of wax.

Can you describe the character of your skis?
just1ski can best be described as a freeride touring ski. But every skier is different and needs a ski that suits them, their skiing style and their body. That’s why our customers first try out a few moves on a standardised test ski. Based on the feedback we receive and the measurements of the skiers, we then determine the design adjustments we need to make, giving each pair their own unique character.
A day’s skiing in Val de Bagnes

La Barmasse ➔ Cabane Brunet

Adventures in the powder snow

The secured route from La Barmasse to Cabane Brunet is part of the well-known “Intégrale du Rogneux” ski touring race and is quite challenging. From the La Barmasse car park, follow the snowy road towards the Brunet hut to the first crossroads, then step off to the left here and into the forest. This first ascent offers views of beautiful landscapes – the eye is inevitably drawn to imposing Mont Pleureur at the end of Val de Bagnes – and will make you break out in a sweat. After crossing the forest, you’ll find yourself back on the road, where a final, slightly gentler ascent to the hut awaits. From here you can already see the hut flag beckoning to you in the wind. Weary adventurers will receive a warm welcome from the Corthay family and can expect to enjoy hearty cooking and fresh apple pie just like granny used to make. Surrounded by a breathtakingly beautiful Alpine environment, you can relax and enjoy the sunshine. On the return leg of the journey, simply follow the road back to the car park.

8:00 a.m.

Breakfast at the La Vallée hotel

The family-run hotel in Lourtier ensures relaxing nights in anticipation of adventurous days in the snow.

9:00 a.m.

An adventure on skis

Starting from La Barmasse, you can reach Cabane Brunet in around two and a half hours on a route that is as picturesque as it is challenging.

11:30 a.m.

Lunch at Cabane Brunet

In the cozy mountain hut, ski tourers can fortify themselves with spicy dishes in preparation for the descent into the valley.

4:00 p.m.

Farinet après-ski in Verbier

Live music creates a relaxed atmosphere in the bar of the Le Farinet hotel.

or

Relax in Lourtier

And if you’d prefer to end the day with pampering and wellness rather than après-ski, you can return to the La Vallée hotel.

Ski hire

The Montagne Show shop in Le Châble hires out all the equipment you could possibly need for an adventurous ski tour and safe passage through the powder snow.

The best ideas for an unforgettable winter holiday in Valais.
Childhood friends **Ben and Léo** discovered their shared passion for cooking at an early age and put this to the test during their student days – Léo studied business and Ben politics – by entering cookery contests. Encouraged by their successes, they decided to stake everything on their cooking: they learned from the masters of their industry, Bocuse and Ducasse, got their own show on national television and opened their first restaurant to great fanfare in 2016.
Cheese from Switzerland is quality.
Because you can always depend on us.
8:00 a.m.
Le Point Commun
Breakfast with fine sourdough bread and good coffee in the lovingly run restaurant on Place Jean-Tinguely.

9:00 a.m.
A stroll through the city
Climb through the streets of the old town as far as the Loreto Chapel, then pay a visit to the Cathedral of St. Nicholas.

12:00 p.m.
Kumo
A fortifying meal that excitingly unites Japanese cuisine with local tastes.

2:00 p.m.
An afternoon in the company of great design
Admire the exhibits in the Kunsthalle, then browse the delights on sale at the Bottega Ethica.

7:00 p.m.
Café de la Fonderie
Dine in style at the restaurant run by Ben and Léo.

10:00 p.m.
Auberge aux 4 Vents
Just one more delicious drink in Jo-Bar, then it’s time for bed in one of the legendary rooms at the Auberge aux 4 Vents, where a good night’s sleep is practically guaranteed.

New tastes
THE KITCHEN KINGS
The famous Café de la Fonderie run by Ben and Léo straddles the cultural border between east and west, hidden away in a former foundry in Fribourg’s industrial district. The restaurant’s inspiring neighbors include Fri-Son, the coolest club in western Switzerland, various small shops and hip design studios. Following the overwhelming success of the restaurant and television show, the two friends did not rest on their laurels for long. Instead, they have helped to bring the city’s culinary image up to date with the Japanese-inspired “Kumo”, the experimental Jo-Bar and various takeaway and home delivery initiatives. Here are some of their tips.

Take a bite
Pastabate
The pasta workshop pours a great deal of care and expertise into exploring the characteristics of older and newer varieties of organic grains from the region when used in making the highest-quality pasta.
Passage du Cardinal 1
1700 Fribourg

Fromagerie Sciboz
For 63 years, this very special cheese shop has been offering the best varieties from the famous Fribourg regional cheesemakers and select cheeses from all over the world.
Boulevard de Pérolles 18a
1700 Fribourg

Tannacker Organic Farm
The small organic vegan shop turns the vegetables, berries, herbs, spices, nuts, fruit and various wild plants growing on the farm into tasty treasures. The sourdough bread, syrups and jellies are sinful treats – available from the market or from the farm shop itself.
Goma 8, 1718 Rechthalten

Drink up
Fri-Mousse
Speciality beers have been brewed in the small brasserie since 1993 and are best tasted in the bar itself.
Rue de la Samaritaine 19
1700 Fribourg

Le Petit Château
The Simonet family has been tending the vines in the best location in the region for 200 years. The whole venture is completely biodynamic, and the wines are a dream.
Route du Lac 134, 1787 Môtier

Kitchen miracles
Moitié-moitié
The region’s world-famous fondue mixture.

Gâteau bullois
A cake made from nuts with cream from the La Gruyère region and chocolate.

Cuchaule AOP
Sweet corn bread is married with the incomparable Moutarde de Bénichon.
Recommended by Switzerland Tourism:
→ MySwitzerland.com/strategicpartners

![HotellerieSuisse](image)
The trade association of the Swiss hotel industry
hotelleriesuisse.ch

![Swiss Travel System](image)
Switzerland by train, bus and boat
mystsnet.com

![American Express in Switzerland](image)
avericanexpress.ch

![ZURICH AIRPORT](image)
zuerich-airport.com

![SWISS](image)

![GASTRO SUISSE](image)
gastrosuisse.ch

![VALENCIA](image)

![VICTORINOX](image)

 ![Coop](image)
Retail and wholesale trade
coop.ch

![Kambly](image)
Exquisite Swiss biscuit specialties
kambly.ch

![Europcar](image)
Car rental
europcar.ch

![Switzerland Cheese Marketing](image)
cheesesfromswitzerland.com

---

**Strategic partners**

- [MySwitzerland.com/strategicpartners](https://www.myswitzerland.com/strategicpartners)

**Official partners**

- [MySwitzerland.com](https://www.myswitzerland.com)
- [Transhelvetica](https://www.transhelvetica.ch)
- [Passaport](https://www.passaport.ch)
- [Swissinfo.ch](https://www.swissinfo.ch)
- [Swisseducation.com](https://www.swisseducation.com)
- [Swissrent.com](https://www.swissrent.com)
- [Swicah.ch](https://www.swicah.ch)
- [Swiss-rent.com](https://www.swiss-rent.com)
- [BMC-Switzerland.com](https://www.bmc-switzerland.com)
- [Kirchhofer.ch](https://www.kirchhofer.ch)
- [Swisstravelcenter.ch](https://www.swisstravelcenter.ch)
- [Mammut.com](https://www.mammut.com)
- [Swissinfo.ch](https://www.swissinfo.ch)
- [Swiss-ski-school.ch](https://www.swiss-ski-school.ch)

**Imprint & partners**

- Publisher: Switzerland Tourism
- Morgätenstraße 5a
- 8004 Zurich
- Switzerland

---

**Publisher**

Switzerland Tourism
Morgätenstraße 5a
8004 Zurich
Switzerland

**Concept / Text / Editing / Layout**

Transhelvetica, Passaport AG:
Jon & Pia Bollmann | Stephanie Elmer
Seraina Fels | Michèle Fröhlich | Anna Herbst
Laura Meier | Anna Sarcletti

⇒ passport.ch
⇒ transhelvetica.ch

**Switzerland Tourism:**
Anouk Blum | Mara Duttweiler
Hans Estermann | Sarah Haslebacher
Florian Frey | Franziska Lüthi
Flavia Klink | Sarah Krauer
Anja Mosmann | Oliver Nystreiner
Felix Pal | Christine Peter
Florian Rötheli | Nina Vanoli
Stéphanie Weber | Samuel Wille
Jasmin Wyrsch | Christoph Zwaan

⇒ MySwitzerland.com

**Images**

Photo p. 5, 8–10, © Martin Fiala
Photo p. 12, © Achim Fassbender
(Belle Epoque week, Kandersteg)
Photo p. 14, © Christiana Sutter (bildremise)
Photo p. 17, © David Birri
Photo p. 23, © Alicia Bock (Stocksy)
Photo p. 24, © The Alpina Gstaad
(Michael Sinclair)
Photo p. 53, © stellarium.org
Photo p. 48–49, © Tina Sturzenegger
Photo p. 54, © Andrea Badrutt
Photo p. 54, © Diemtigtal Nature Park
Photo p. 59, © Silvano Zeiter

All other images provided by Switzerland Tourism
and partners.

**Illustration**

Silvan Borer
⇒ silvanborer.com

**Copyright**

Switzerland Tourism, all rights reserved.

**Print run**

361,000

**Languages**

dei | fr | it | en | nl | es

**Printer**

Stämpfli AG, Bern
⇒ staempfli.com

printed in switzerland
Bernese Oberland
Lombachalp
This snowshoe hike takes you through an untouched winter landscape surrounded by the Hohgant and Augstmatthorn.

The concierge understands exactly what you want and has all the information you need for a perfect holiday.
Winter activities
From cross-country skiing or snowshoeing to winter hiking, sledding or ice skating – Switzerland is the original location for winter holidays all in white. The tips from Switzerland Tourism and its partners will help you enjoy your winter holiday to the fullest. More inspiration can be found on the last page.

**Snowshoe hiking**

- **Valais**
  - **North Face Trail**
  This eight-kilometre snowshoe hike begins at Schwarzsee, crosses the beautiful Stafelalp and ends after about four hours below the rugged north face of the Matterhorn.

- **Ticino**
  - **Percorso Passo San Bernardino**
  Crossing the rounded humps formed by the glacier, the ten-kilometre snowshoe tour can prove challenging as it ascends to the San Bernardino Pass.

**Winter hiking**

- **Eastern Switzerland / Liechtenstein**
  - **Rosenboden Panoramic Trail**
  Enthroned on the Chäserrugg, the impressive wooden structure designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron serves as the start and end of a short hike. This one-hour circular hike offers a unique view of six countries and 500 peaks.

- **Bernese Oberland**
  - **Springenboden**
  This circular winter hike over seven kilometres passes through fields and forests and, after a gentle ascent, rewards you with a spectacular view of the Dientigtal and Simmental valleys.

**Tobogganing**

- **Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region**
  - **Rigi Kulm**
  The first highlight is the cog railway from Vitznau to Rigi Kulm. Opened in 1871, it was the first mountain railway in Europe. The second highlight is the view from Rigi Kulm, the highest peak of the Rigi massif at 1,797 metres. The third highlight is the Rigi Kulm–Klösterli toboggan run: the steep gradient ensures thrilling speeds.

- **Graubünden**
  - **Preda–Bergün**
  The little municipality of Preda at the north portal of the Albula railway tunnel marks the start of the winding, high-speed toboggan run, which passes under world-famous railway viaducts and follows the Albula river, ending in Bergün in a gentle winter landscape.

- **Lake Geneva Region**
  - **Les Diablerets**
  Affording a wonderful view of the mountain range of the same name, the toboggan run zigzags from the Les Mazots station through forests and down to Les Diablerets. This is one of the longest tobogganing runs in Switzerland.

- **Graubünden**
  - **Muottas Muragl**
  Tobogganing fans can expect a total of 20 bends on the descent down to the Punt Muragl valley station. As well as the narrow hairpin bends, the 718-metre height differential makes for an exciting trip down. It is with good reason that this toboggan run has the reputation of being the fastest in the Engadin.

**Ice skating**

- **Fribourg Region**
  - **Lake Schwarzeize**
  Enjoy a unique experience on the frozen mountain lake, surrounded by a dreamlike panorama, where you can practice your pirouettes. Once the ice is thick enough, the lake is officially opened up for games of hockey, ice skating, walking, Bavarian curling, or simply relaxing.

- **Graubünden**
  - **Alp Raguta, Feldis**
  The natural ice field of Alp Raguta lies at an impressive 1,952 metres above sea level, just five minutes’ walk from the upper station of the Feldis–Mutta chair lift. The fabulous views of the valley into the Domleschg and Piz Beverin beyond make ice skating here quite unforgettable.

- **Bernese Oberland**
  - **Interlaken magic**
  Top of Europe Ice Magic in Interlaken encompasses six different ice fields, which are linked by winding ice tracks. In the evenings, a coloured light display and music create a unique atmosphere.

- **Lake Geneva Region**
  - **Lac de Joux**
  During the cold season, the 9.5 square kilometres of the Lac de Joux are transformed into a huge natural ice rink. Plenty of skating fun for all the family is guaranteed in the magical idyllic setting of the Vallée de Joux.

---

**SwitzerlandMobility**
The free platform offered by SwitzerlandMobility is ideal for planning an active leisure programme. It offers a network of uniformly signposted routes throughout the country that are perfectly coordinated with public transport.

- SwitzerlandMobility app
- switzerlandmobility.ch

**Rental car**

Winding through snow-covered mountains in the crystal-clear air – winter road trips are particularly picturesque. Hertz and Europcar offer a large selection of rental cars to suit every need throughout Switzerland, so that you can easily plan your solo trip in advance. Expert advice for a safe trip through the snow is also included.
Enjoy more than 160 shops and restaurants at Zurich Airport
Winter activities

Cross-country skiing

→ Valais
FIS trail in Goms
Ambitious athletes can experience racing conditions here: the almost five-kilometre-long FIS cross-country ski track near Ulrichen will make you feel like a professional cross-country skier. But be careful: if you take the trail too fast, you can soon find yourself going astray on this challenging route with its multiple changes of direction.

→ Graubünden
Engadin ski marathon trail
Glide along the most well-known 42 kilometres of skiing trails in Switzerland without the stress of competition: the Engadin ski marathon trail will be open to everyone from around the end of January. The views and wide open spaces of the Upper Engadin make this one of the most beautiful trails imaginable.

World Cup trail in Davos
Every year, the cross-country skiing elite flock here for the Davos Nordic event. The highlight of this seven-kilometre World Cup trail is the steep “Cologna-Stutz”, named after Switzerland’s most successful cross-country skier.

La Pala cross-country ski track
For experienced and technically skilled cross-country skiers, the La Pala racetrack on the Lenzerheide can be a real test of their mettle. On a trail measuring a good four kilometres, they can experience an idyllic landscape while enjoying a sporting challenge at the same time. The section along or across the Lake Heidsee is particularly beautiful.

→ Jura
Piste du Cernil
The challenging trail between La Brévine and Les Cernets is very varied from a scenic and topographical perspective. After starting in La Brévine, you quickly find yourself in the forested pastures typical of the Jura region. The 32-kilometre trail occasionally passes a farm, but for the most part you’ll find yourself in the heart of nature.
Zermatt → St. Moritz

The slowest express train
The Glacier Express will thrill travellers with scenic charms and astonishing feats of engineering. Its fully glazed carriages offer passengers unimpeded views of the unique surroundings.
Zermatt
Zermatt is especially famous for its view of the Matterhorn and, for freeriders at least, for its powder snow. This is also the starting point for Silvano, Gray and Fredi in their film “Glacier Express – A freeride journey by train through Switzerland”, which explores the best deep snow slopes.

Aletsch
The view of the Aletsch Glacier, the largest glacier in the Alps, is particularly impressive from the Eggishorn. The three freeriders ride splitboards down the steep but exhilarating Chälli couloir towards Talegga.

Andermatt
The Gemsstock is surrounded by a certain aura that makes every freerider’s heart beat faster. This is regarded as one of the best freeride spots in the Alps. There’s hardly an inch of flat ground here. The lines and entry points around the Gemsstock are therefore not for the faint-hearted.

St. Moritz
As the three freeriders traverse the first powder slope on the Corviglia, they quickly realise: it’s the perfect powder day. Side-hits, sprays, butters, lines and airs. Part two plays out on the Corvatsch. They reach this mountain opposite by bus in order to descend the couloir to Furtschellas.
Switzerland’s panoramic trains are unique in the Alpine region and wind their way through breathtaking mountain scenery, past glaciers and frozen lakes, through traditional villages and idyllic valleys. Passengers can enjoy the impressive combination of engineering feats and natural beauty from the comfort of the glazed panorama carriages.

Chur → Tirano (IT)

**Bernina Express**

*Spectacular Alpine crossing*

The bright red train takes every gradient in its stride: as it travels between Chur and Tirano, the Bernina Express copes with an altitude differential of at least 1,500 metres. A masterpiece of engineering, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage in 2008.

Zweisimmen → Montreux

**GoldenPass Panoramic**

*Picture-perfect panoramas*

When the train window becomes your personal cinema screen: the GoldenPass Panoramic meanders at a stately pace through the snow-covered, hilly landscape towards Lake Geneva. It crosses the French-German linguistic border, linking two distinct worlds.

Lucerne → Interlaken

**Lucerne – Interlaken Express**

*From city to city*

The journey is the reward. The journey on the Lucerne–Interlaken Express links two well-known destinations. The impressive mountain panorama and glistening winter landscape in the heart of Switzerland will make the traveller wish he hadn’t yet arrived at his destination.

Grand Train Tour of Switzerland

All panoramic stretches on one route – even in winter. Discover the highlights of the cold season on the “Winter Magic” Tour.

GrandTrainTour.com/ wintermagic
Matterhorn Glacier Paradise

*Longest descent on the continent*

C The highest point of the Zermatt ski area is 3,820 metres above sea level. In addition to the Matterhorn, six kilometres away, another 37 four-thousand-metre peaks can be seen. This is where the longest ski descent on the European continent begins.

Schilthorn

*An adrenaline-filled peak*

D This mountain is all about “view, thrill and chill”: unforgettable views, plenty of thrills and pure relaxation in the pristine mountain world. Take the train and bus to the Stechelberg valley station. From there, a cable car will take you up to the Schilthorn peak at 2,970 metres above sea level.

Rigi

*The queen of the mountains*

Winter hiking, sledding, skiing, cross-country skiing or simply enjoying the 360-degree panoramic view: this mountain offers a real wealth of experience. In the heart of Central Switzerland, the Rigi lies between Lake Lucerne and Lake Zug. It is easy to reach from all directions.
SNOW SPORTS HOTELS

Riffelhaus 1853
What wonderful mountain air! Anyone travelling up to the Riffelberg station by cog railway cannot help but take a deep breath in once they get there. Here, at over 2,500 metres above sea level, the air is cool and clear, and the snow glistens in the sunlight.

An idyllic location right by the ski slopes makes Hotel Riffelhaus the ideal base for snow sports enthusiasts. The stone façade of the guest house might appear rustic, but inside awaits an incredibly comfortable hotel that was completely renovated lately, including a whirlpool with a view of mighty Matterhorn.

After a day of adventures in the snow, on a ski tour, freeriding or heliskiing, you can sit down for a well-earned après-ski experience on the sunny terrace of the Riffelhaus 1853 and simply take a moment to breathe in the fresh mountain air.

For winter sports enthusiasts
Ticketing, ski school bookings and equipment hire can be handled through the Snow Sports Hotels directly. Everything in these hotels is geared towards the needs of guests, from a place where you can wax your own skis to packed lunches for a ski tour.

This is the ideal choice for winter sports fans.
SWISS DELUXE HOTELS
Elegant architecture, state-of-the-art facilities and top-notch service: Swiss Deluxe Hotels offer surprising extras such as the hotel’s own snow sports schools or ski butlers. Private cable cars round off the luxury experience.

LeCrans Hotel & Spa B
Crans-Montana

Park Hotel Vitznau H
Vitznau

TYPICALLY SWISS HOTELS
Regional building style, traditional decor or a menu of Swiss specialities: the Typically Swiss Hotels – from aristocratic townhouses to country inns – are sure to please any fan of Switzerland.

Storchen Zurich E
Zurich

Hotel Gletschergarten F
Grindelwald

INSPIRING MEETING HOTELS
Host meetings against a beautiful mountain panorama, in a former monastery or in a luxurious high-tech tent: inspiring Meeting Hotels help promote successful meetings with their unusual locations and their exceptional support programmes.

Gstaad Palace A
Gstaad

DESIGN & LIFESTYLE HOTELS
High creative standards, a distinct design and carefully selected materials: with their inspiring architecture, a stay at one of Switzerland’s Design & Lifestyle Hotels will be a lifestyle experience for guests with a sense of style.

Hotel W Verbier G
Verbier

SPA & VITALITY HOTELS
Sauna, medical treatment or outdoor pool: guests of the Spa & Vitality Hotels will enjoy the facilities at these superior wellness hotels in some of Switzerland’s most unique natural settings. The perfect choice for health-conscious travellers.

Hotel 7132 C
Vals

SWISS FAMILY HOTELS & LODGINGS
Crèches, storytelling, children’s spas, cinemas or adventure playgrounds. In Swiss Family Hotels & Lodgings, families will find adventure, fun and games, with the focus on the needs of the little ones.

rocksresort I
Laax

SWISS HISTORIC HOTELS
Whether they choose a grand hotel from the Belle Époque or a baroque inn, guests at Swiss Historic Hotels sleep within walls that are steeped in history and can enjoy the atmosphere of a bygone era and hospitality that has developed over generations.

KurhausBergün D
Bergün
Find the right hotel for your next trip.
When did you last do something new? Winter is coming – but with a difference.

→ MySwitzerland.com

**SOMETHING NEW**

**Try**

---

**St-Luc**

*Catch the sun*

The funicular railway gets going at 5 a.m. each morning. Once you’ve covered the last few metres on foot, *Bella Tola* promises a top-class winter sunrise.

---

**Lago Maggiore**

*Experience the highs and the lows*

From the vantage point of the *Gridone*, you can see from the highest point in Switzerland to the lowest: from the heights of the *Dufourspitze* to the shores of glittering *Lago Maggiore*.

---

**Gstaad**

*Relax in a jacuzzi in the Igloo Hotel*

Treat yourself to a little rest and relaxation in the Igloo Hotel. The indoor pool is exclusively for those with suites, while the outdoor pool is available to all guests.

---

**Lenk**

*Enjoy a moonlight flight*

Take the most scenic route down into the valley: as the sun goes down, you make your way to the *Metschstand* for dinner, followed by a return journey in the moonlight by paraglider.

---

**Les Bois**

*Howl with huskies*

Have a wonderful time slip-sliding away on the snow-covered heights of *Franches-Montagnes*: climb aboard the dig sled and get going.

---

**St. Moritz**

*Hurtle through the ice channel*

Thunder through the horse shoe of the Olympic bob run and experience what a g-force of 4 feels like.

---

**Charmey**

*Whizz from tree to tree*

No prior knowledge is required in order to whizz along the steel cables from one treetop to the next in *Charmey*, just the ability to cope with being ten metres off the ground.

---

**Muotatal**

*Enjoy delicious raclette in a cave*

Measuring more than 200 kilometres in total, the Hölöch cave network is one of the longest in Europe. So there’s plenty of room for an unusual raclette dining experience.

---

**Family Destinations**

*Spend time with the family*

25 locations with facilities, experiences and services designed with the family in mind.

→ MySwitzerland.com/family

---

**St. Moritz**

*Relax in a jacuzzi in the Igloo Hotel*
**High above the clouds**

**How to pack**

**Without having to worry about creases**

How to stop your clothes getting creased when travelling: roll up each garment neatly and bundle them all tightly.

1. Jumper should be laid flat with both sleeves folded inwards.
2. Fold the collar and shoulders of the jumper down.
3. Roll it up from top to bottom like a sleeping bag.

**Check-in**

**E-boarding pass**

SWISS sends boarding cards by e-mail or text message 20 hours before departure. Online check-in is available at swiss.com/webcheckin 24 hours before departure.

**No more than 198 cm tall**

– a requirement for pilots with SWISS.

**And so to bed**

**Jetlag**

Sunlight during the day and darkness at night are the key elements in regulating our “internal clock”. Jetlag happens when this clock is disturbed because several time zones are crossed in quick succession.

Here are a few tips to help you prevent this:

» On shorter trips, don’t allow your body clock to reset itself.

Otherwise:

» Adjust to the new time before you travel: depending on the direction of your flight, go to bed one hour earlier or later on each of the three days leading up to the departure date.

» Set your watch to the new time as soon as the plane takes off.

» Eat at the appropriate mealtimes for your destination.

» Don’t go to bed until the sun goes down.

» Spend as much time as possible outdoors.

**Taste**

**A new level of sensitivity**

Our sense of taste at an altitude of several thousand metres is not the same as on the ground. This is because of the conditions being different in the airplane: with respect to humidity, vibrations and cabin pressure. It’s not just food that tastes different on board – wine can taste different too.

**A tip from our pilots**

While there may be a great entertainment programme available on board, don’t let it distract you so much that you miss out on the night sky or the silhouettes of the mountains in the moonlight.

**Airbus**

**10 elephants can fit into the Airbus A220.**

**Mobility**

**The world is your oyster**

Public transport is highly reliable and will take passengers to even the most remote valley – quickly, in comfort and right on time. The Swiss Travel Pass offers international visitors unlimited travel using the Swiss public transport network practically around the clock.

**Arrival with SWISS**

Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS) is the airline of Switzerland. It serves Switzerland’s Zurich and Geneva airports from numerous destinations worldwide.

Find tickets and book: swiss.com

**Holidays in Switzerland**

We’ll be happy to help you plan your best possible holidays in Switzerland.

Call us free on*: 00800 100 200 30

*Local charges may apply
Grand Train Tour
The most beautiful panoramic routes in Switzerland

Border
Road
Rail
Mountain
Water
House

10 out of more than 250 ski resorts in Switzerland

1. St. Moritz
   Where winter was invented

2. Arosa-Lenzerheide
   Enormous area covering several peaks

3. Davos
   Playground of the business elite

4. Laax
   A paradise for snowboarders

5. Zermatt
   At the foot of the Matterhorn

6. Engelberg
   A paradise for thrill-seeking freeriders

Geneva
Lausanne
Bern
Lucerne
Zürich
Winterthur
Basel

FRANCE

Switzerland

St. Moritz
Arosa-Lenzerheide
Davos
Laax
Zermatt
Engelberg

10 out of more than 250 ski resorts in Switzerland