

Swiss Bliss



HIKES AND WALKS IN SCENIC LUCERNE, GRINDELWALD, GRUYÈRES AND ZERMATT

Discover the scenic splendor of the Alps in its most picturesque corners Zermatt, Gruyères, and the Jungfrau.

Trip Highlights

- Make artisan alpine cheese over a crackling open fire followed by hearty farm breakfast
- Ascend to a summit above Zermatt aboard a cogwheel train for breathtaking views of the Gorner Glacier and the legendary Matterhorn.
- Recapture life in Medieval Europe as you stay on the hilltop walled village of Gruyere to explore its castle and cobblestone streets.
- Ascend snowy Jungfrau by cog railway to Europe's highest railway station and overlooking the Alps' longest glacier.

Activity Level

Alpenwild trips are designed for people who are energetic, active, and filled with a spirit of adventure. We rate this trip as easy, but also easily adaptable to those who want harder hikes. You should be capable of walking 3 to 5 hours per day on well-groomed and graded walking paths at an elevation up to 9,000 feet above sea level. On one day a mountain railway takes you to an elevation of 11,400 feet.

Overview

Discover the scenic splendor of the Alps in its most picturesque corners: Zermatt, Gruyères, and the Jungfrau. Zermatt lies at the base of the Matterhorn, the most recognizable peak in the world. Gruyères is synonymous with superb cheese, and it's also the birthplace of Swiss chocolate. The Jungfrau region, with the highest concentration of glaciers in the Alps, is dominated by the North Face of the Eiger, one of the most spectacular and formidable mountain landscapes on earth.

Unexpected Highlights in Charming Alpine Settings

Explore underground waterfalls, take trams and gondolas to high alpine lakes, cross glacier gorges on heart pounding (but very safe) footbridges, and visit the undiscovered places most tourists never see. You'll participate in traditional cheesemaking, alpine farming, and learn the art of making fine chocolate. Immerse yourself in the rich culture and cuisine of both German and French-speaking Switzerland.

Enjoy the Alps in Comfort

We've thought of every detail to make this a perfect trip. You'll stay in charming local inns, dine on scrumptious meals, and enjoy the services of an expert guide throughout.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Zürich to Lucerne

After your arrival in Switzerland, you will travel by train to Lucerne. The group will meet in the early afternoon for an excursion where you will ascend to the top of the 7000 ft. Mt. Pilatus via the cable car in Kriens. At the top you will enjoy the beautiful Central Swiss Alps panorama and Lake Lucerne below you. You will then descend via the world's steepest cogwheel train and return to Lucerne. Then it's a group orientation and dinner Overnight in Lucerne at a historic hotel near the train station. D

Day 2 – Lucerne to Grindelwald

We will travel by train from Lucerne to Grindelwald. From Grindelwald we take a gondola to First, which leads to the reflective alpine lake of Bachalpsee—the perfect setting for our picnic lunch—with a backdrop of the snowcapped peaks and glaciers of the Jungfrau region. Descend by gondola, zipline, scooter, or on foot. BSD

Day 3 – Grindelwald --Jungfrauoch and the Eiger

The Jungfrau railway takes you to the Alpine crossroads of Kleine Scheidegg. From here, a dramatic cog-wheel climb takes you into a tunnel through the Eiger on an ascent to the Jungfrauoch, the highest railway station in Europe, before descending the Eiger Trail where you find yourself face-to-face with the legendary Nordwand—the North Face of the Eiger. BSD

Day 4 – Grindelwald and on to Gruyères

This morning we experience cheesemaking over an open fire in an authentic and traditional alpine farm. You'll enjoy a farm fresh breakfast and assist with making the cheese. After breakfast we transfer directly to the medieval town of Gruyères where we stay at the Hotel de Gruyères, just outside the castle walls, with rooms that overlook the castle. We will have time this afternoon to visit a local chocolatier in Gruyères and enjoy a fondue dinner. BSD

Day 5 – Maison Cailler Chocolatier and Gruyères Castle

While in Gruyeres we can't resist a morning walk to Broc and a visit to Maison Cailler, where all of your senses can be wrapped up in the wonderful world of Cailler Chocolate, Switzerland's oldest chocolate brand. Upon returning to Gruyeres, eight centuries of architecture, history, and culture unfold as we explore the Gruyères Castle. BSD

Day 6 – Gruyères , Vevey - Chaplin World, and on to Zermatt

This morning we will travel to the lakeside town of Vevey to embark on an extraordinary adventure through the magical world of Charlie Chaplin. "Chaplin's World" is located on the property where Chaplin resided for the last 25 years of his life in Switzerland. This is a unique interactive museum that includes a Hollywood-style film studio where you can enjoy many of his famous sketches. In the afternoon we will ride through the terraced vineyards of Lake Geneva and the Rhone Valley on our way to Zermatt at the base of the Matterhorn. BSD

Day 7 – Zermatt and the Matterhorn

Zermatt is cradled in stunning mountain scenery and shadowed by more 4000 meter peaks than any place in the Alps. Ascend by cog-wheel railway to Riffelalp, a high meadow with lakes that perfectly reflect the Matterhorn. Further up the Gornergrat ridge we overlook the Monte Rosa, the highest peak in Switzerland, with its glaciers and icefalls. BSD

Day 8 – Zermatt, Bern, Zürich

The morning is ours for exploring quaint hamlets in the hills above Zermatt and crossing high above the glacier gorge on a 100-meter long suspension bridge. We can also explore the nearby Gorner Schlucht, a deep canyon waterfall on a thrilling network of stairways and bridges. After departing Zermatt, we visit Bern, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with a historic city center that reflects its gothic, baroque, and romantic past before continuing on to Zürich for the evening. BSD

Day 9 – Zürich departure

An onward departure from Zürich.

Included

The services of an expert trip leader, all accommodations (8 nights hotel), all meals as shown (B=breakfast, S=snack, D=dinner), ground transportation including trams and mountain railways, admissions and luggage transfers.

Not Included

Beverages (beer, wine) with meals, items of a personal nature (laundry, phone calls, room service)

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