

Christmas in Switzerland



ALPS SIGHTSEEING AND CHARMING SWISS VILLAGES IN THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Activity Level

Alpenwild Adventures are designed for people who are energetic, active and filled with a spirit of adventure. We rate this trip as easy. You should be capable of walking about two to four miles per day. On one day, a mountain railway will take you to an elevation of 11,300 feet.

Overview

Enjoy authentic Switzerland at its holiday best. With the snow-capped Swiss Alps as your backdrop, you'll experience one of the treasured traditions of Europe as you explore Switzerland's glistening Switzerland during the Christmas season.

Visit the Best of Switzerland's Christmas Markets

In local Christmas markets you'll find one-of-a-kind treasures in winter settings as charming as any Christmas card. You'll be on hand for the music, lights, and wonderful traditions that make Christmas in Switzerland so memorable.

Discover Cherished Traditions

You'll discover the origins of many of our most cherished Christmas traditions—Christmas trees, nutcrackers, twinkling lights, and gingerbread. Discover the magic in the Swiss Alps with this perfect start to your holiday season.

We visit German, French, and Italian regions so you'll experience more of Switzerland than you ever thought possible. You'll discover the varied traditions, holiday foods, music, and other festivities in culturally vibrant and charming Alpine towns.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrival in Zürich, off to Luzern

On arrival in Zürich, take off on a short train ride to Luzern. After checking into the hotel we will spend the afternoon exploring one of Lucerne's six Christmas markets and taking an excursion to Mt Rigi to experience one of the many Alpine panoramas waiting for you in Switzerland. Then it's off to a cheese fondue dinner in a private home to provide an authentic introduction into Swiss life. D

Day 2 – Luzern through Ticino and back to Luzern

We head south through the Gotthard Tunnel, built in 1882 and making the shortest link between northern and southern Europe, and enter Switzerland's Italian-speaking region. We visit the 14th-century Bellinzona Castles, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a lively Saturday market, before continuing on to Locarno on the northern tip of Lago Maggiore. Locarno's Piazza Grande becomes an ice rink in the winter and the medieval city center is decked with lights. We ride to the cableway to the summit of Cimetta with commanding views of the lake, and the Swiss and Italian Alps. Return to Luzern for the evening BD

Day 3 – Luzern to Bern

A morning train ride takes us to the capital city of Switzerland in Bern. This 12th century UNESCO World Heritage Site city retains all its charm from years past. We visit Einstein's home, now a museum, where he developed the theory of relativity, and stroll the limestone covered walkways which create the longest covered shopping arcade in all of Europe. With its two Christmas markets and rich history this city will surely take your breath away. BD

Day 4 – Bern to Basel and onto Interlaken

Dynamic Basel awaits. With the Rhine River flowing through it, Basel has a rich history. It's a center of European art and was a seat of learning and a focal point of the Northern Renaissance. The three borders of Switzerland, France and Germany come together here and we'll have fine view of each country from the Munster. Basel is also home to Switzerland's oldest most popular Christmas Market where you'll meet the locals and learn of life in Basel. Evening in Interlaken. BD

Day 5 – Interlaken to Montreux

From Interlaken we take the scenic Goldenpass Railway through lush pre-Alpine valleys to the French-speaking region of Switzerland and the lakeside resort of Montreux. Here we visit the lovely lakeside Marché de Noël and the 12th-century Castle of Chillon which inspired Lord Byron, Victor Hugo, and Rousseau. It will surely inspire you. BD

Day 6 – Montreux to Zermatt

No visit to Switzerland is complete without an excursion to car-free Zermatt to see the majestic Matterhorn. We'll have time for strolling the charming town before taking the historic cogwheel railway to the Gornergrat summit for breathtaking views of Switzerland's highest peaks set in a glacial paradise. BD

Day 7 – Zermatt to Grindelwald

Always a highlight of our Christmas in Switzerland tour--and of any trip to the Swiss Alps--is an ascent of the Jungfrauoch, on a cogwheel railway tunneling through the Eiger to the highest railway station in Europe. Overlooking Europe's longest glacier, you'll think you're on top of the world. BD

Day 8 – Grindelwald to St. Gallen and onto Zürich

Our concluding day in Switzerland takes us to St Gallen with its Christmas Market set in the medieval town center. We visit the astounding Abbey and Library, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and arguably the most beautiful church in Switzerland. The Library is one of the oldest monastic libraries in the world with 2,100 manuscripts dating back to the 8th through the 15th centuries. Returning to Zurich we visit Europe's largest indoor Christmas Market and see children's choirs singing Christmas songs in a living Christmas tree. We have our final dinner together to reflect on the many wonderful memories we have created. Evening at the Radisson Blu Zürich. BD

Day 9 – Onward departure

We say our goodbyes and hopefully Auf Wiedersehen as we head off to our early morning departure from Zurich to catch our flights home. B

Included

The services of a native English-speaking expert Swiss guide throughout, all accommodations (8 nights hotel), all meals as shown (B=breakfast, D=dinner), ground transportation including trams and mountain railways, admissions.

Not Included

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

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