

Tour de Chocolate and Truffle Hunting



DISCOVER THE WORLD OF SWISS CHOCOLATE

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. You should be in good physical condition and capable of walking 1 to 2 hours per day on well maintained and graded walking paths with a vertical elevation gain of up to 200 feet per day, at an elevation up to 5,000 feet above sea level.

Highlights

- Learn from a bean-to-bar artisan chocolate maker the steps in roasting, grinding, and conching chocolate beans into a silky confection
- Hunt for fragrant and rare forest truffles in the Jura mountains with an expert truffle hunter and dog

- Work side-by-side with an artisan chocolatier in his studio near the birthplace of chocolate to craft hand-dipped chocolate truffles
- Pamper yourself on the Lake Geneva Riviera in a 5-star hotel with Michelin-starred dining

Overview

Switzerland is the birthplace of fine chocolate. Smooth, creamy, dark, and delicious. Swiss chocolate makers and confectioners have been at the forefront of chocolate development for over 200 years. Now, on a small group tour, you can immerse yourself in the world of fine chocolate as you discover the time-honored traditions and cutting-edge techniques being used by the top chocolate artisans in Switzerland today.

Behind the scenes. Up-close and personal

This is an insider's dream tour where you'll not only learn about the making of hand-crafted chocolate and enjoy some of the world's most delectable chocolate creations, but you'll rub shoulders with world-renowned chocolate makers and chocolatiers—all in the scenic Swiss Alps.

Each day there is a special chocolate experience—workshops, tastings, visits, and demonstrations. You will create your own chocolate truffles, visit with a top-tier chocolate artisan, taste new flavor combinations, explore single-source chocolate from different locales, learn tempering technique, discover insider secrets, and relax in a chocolate café with a cup of the world's richest hot chocolate.

Swiss food at its finest

Your visit goes far beyond chocolate. You will taste Switzerland's artisan breads, distinctive cheeses, exquisite pastries, dried meats, fabulous fresh produce, and local wines. In addition, you will go on a mountain truffle hunt, visit the home of Gruyere cheese, and stop at a world-famous pastry shop. Major highlight: You will dine at a Michelin-starred restaurant and discover the depth and innovation of Swiss cuisine.

Scenic wonders of Switzerland

Interspersed between the chocolate events and food tastings, you will visit a medieval castle, ride a cog railway to a mountain summit, take a sunset cruise on Lake Lucerne, walk in a 150-year-old formal flower garden, and take a train ride along the shores of Lake Geneva. Bonus: Visit to "Chaplin's World"—the captivating and entertaining Charlie Chaplin manor home, Hollywood-style studio, and museum in Vevey.

Is this tour for you?

If you want to taste hand-crafted Swiss chocolates, dine at top Swiss restaurants, try hands-on chocolate workshops, and explore the scenic beauty of Switzerland with a small group of like-minded travelers, this is the ideal tour for you.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrive Zürich; transfer to Luzern | Cogwheel Mountaintop Excursion

Upon arrival in Luzern, your adventure begins. After a brief orientation, you begin by ascending to Mount Pilatus on the world's steepest cog railway. At the summit, enjoy walking along a mountain top trail with wildflowers and incredible views. You'll be introduced to your first artisan Swiss Chocolates as you stop to enjoy the scenery. Dinner in Luzern with traditional cuisine.

Day 2 – Lake Luzern | Swiss Knife Valley | Felchlin Chocolate Tasting | Sunset Cruise

Travel by train to the village of Ibach where Swiss Army Knives have been produced at the Victorinox Factory for over 100 years. Then make your way to world-famous chocolate maker, Felchlin. Where couverture is manufactured for almost every fine chocolatier in Switzerland. A wide variety of freshly made single source bars are available. Following the visit, you will be treated to a special chocolate tasting event. Then it's all aboard the Lake Luzern steamer for a sunset cruise and delicious dinner.

Day 3 – Scenic Railway Luzern to Montreux | Old Vevey, Birthplace of Chocolate | Alimentarium | Special dinner at Michelin-starred Restaurant

A scenic ride on the historic Goldenpass Scenic Railway takes you from Lake Lucern to Lac Lemman (Lake Geneva) and the Montreux Riviera. Vevey, the birthplace of Chocolate, and where the day begins. While on a walking and tasting tour of Vevey, you visit the site where Daniel Peter's most celebrated creation, milk chocolate, was conceived. Stop to nibble on some fabulous examples of milk chocolate artistry. A stop at the Alimentarium will give you new appreciation for food and your body. Check out the demonstration vegetable gardens that surround the museum. And be sure to snap a photo with the world's largest fork.

Day 4 – Truffle hunting in the Jura Mountains | Castle of Yverdon-les-Bains | Truffle hunting in a Chocolate Shop

If you love the subtle and unmistakable taste of fresh truffles, the excursion into the Jura Mountains will be unforgettable. Assisted by a forest ranger and a truffle-hunting dog, our small group will search the soil for these totally hidden treasures. Following the hunt, we gather at the Maison de Terroir du Grandson and taste some of the locally made products. A short drive takes us to Yverdon-les-Bains, where a castle was turned into school and houses one of the oldest museums in Switzerland. A visit to a chocolate artisan caps off the afternoon with hand-crafted ice creams and sorbet. For the evening, you will be enjoy an exquisite dinner at a Michelin-starred restaurant.

Day 5 – Maison Gruyère | Maison Cailler | Gruyères Castle and Village | Chocolaterie de Gruyères

A train ride to Gruyères, takes us to a medieval village. We start the morning at Maison Gruyère with an introduction to the art of cheese making—a 900-year-old tradition in Gruyères—with a walk through the cheese dairy and a tasting of Gruyère Cheese. Then you experience with all your senses the secrets surrounding the origins and manufacturing of fine chocolate at Maison Cailler. At their Atelier du Chocolat, you meet with Cailler’s master chocolatier Thomas Mair, a member of the Swiss Culinary National Team, to discover Cailler’s latest techniques and innovations in the creating of their chocolate products. After a visit to the Gruyères Castle and the walled village, you meet with Richard Uldry, of Chocolaterie de Gruyères, Switzerland’s smallest bean-to-bar chocolate maker. He uses traditional methods to replicate chocolate as was created in the 1850s. A sensory experience, you taste raw beans, fermented beans, and roasted beans. Finally, you explore the processes and ingredients for making dark chocolate, milk chocolate, and white chocolate. The day concludes with a fondue made of the locally crafted Gruyere cheese.

Day 6 – Chaplin’s World | Läderach Chocolate Workshop | Farewell Dinner

A visit to the home of Vevey’s most beloved resident—Charlie Chaplin. The museum, Chaplain’s World, is a delightful journey into the history of cinema and the genius of Charlie Chaplin. We visit the studio of Master Chocolatier Blaise Poyet in Vevey, which is now part of the Läderach Experience. In addition to sampling his signature creations, we will be hosted in his studio for a private chocolate workshop. Poyet’s wealth of knowledge and engaging personality has made him a local legend. Farewell dinner at one of the Michelin-starred restaurants in Vevey.

Day 7 – Depart

After breakfast at the hotel, we depart for our return to Zurich or onward travel destination. If you want to extend your stay we're happy to assist with pre- and post-tour travel plans including one of our food tours in the Italian-speaking region or German-speaking region of Switzerland. Also consider including a final day in Zurich for the Sweet Zurich Chocolate Shop Tour. You'll taste single origin chocolates and unique flavored truffles and bars, while of course learning about the history of and trends in chocolate in Zürich. You'll visit the famous chocolatiers like Sprüngli, Teuscher and Läderach, and sweet spots that aren't in the guidebooks – the ones that pass under the radar, yet are not to be missed. A special treat will be waiting for you at each address.

Included

The services of an expert trip leader, all accommodations (6 nights hotel), meals as shown (B=breakfast, S=snack, D=dinner), all cooking classes, excursions, 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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