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Cities.

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Zürich
Aarau
Solothurn
Zug
Biel/Bienne
Vaduz
La Chaux-de-Fonds
Lucerne
Neuchâtel
Bern
Chur
Riggisberg
Fribourg
Thun
Romont
Lausanne
Montreux-Vevey
Brig
Pollegio
Sierre
Bellinzona
Sion
Locarno
Geneva
Martigny
Lugano

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Welcome.



Welcome to Switzerland, where holidaymakers and conference guests can not only enjoy natural beauty, but find themselves charmed by city breaks too. Much here has barely changed for generations – the historic houses, the romantic alleyways, the way people simply love life. Other things are thrillingly fresh: the designer boutiques, the hip bars and clubs and the ground-breaking architecture. Swiss cities are compact, so it's easy to explore on foot. The museum you want to visit turns out to be right beside the lido; a historical attraction is just steps from fabulous shops. And if at some point you decide you'd like a break from the city, it's never more than a short hop into nature. In this brochure you'll find many such city experiences, as well as the best in art, architecture and design that Switzerland has to offer. And you'll discover much more when you come in person. We look forward to your visit! Jürg Schmid, Director Switzerland Tourism



Weekly market, Place de la Palud, Lausanne

Art, architecture & design.

Tempting tours for lovers of culture.

From world-class museums to designer hotels and masterpieces of modern architecture: Swiss cities have a wealth of attractions, old and new.



Pfalzkeller (former abbey wine cellar), St. Gallen



KKL Luzern (Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne)



L'heure bleue Theatre, La Chaux-de-Fonds

Living treasures.

A visit to a city is always a journey of discovery: a feast for the senses, and stimulation for the spirit. And wherever your first city stop is in Switzerland – at an art gallery in Winterthur, for example, a stylish sushi bar in Zürich, an open-air event in Ticino or a wine festival in Valais – you will see that every Swiss city and town has its unique culture. The range of such attractions and special events is staggering – and as a result, the quality of life here is extremely high.

The scale and variety of cultural activity is out of all proportion to Switzerland's size. The country's historical and artistic treasures are justly world-renowned; ground-breaking exhibitions regularly make waves on the international art scene; and much of our inspiring modern architecture is of international importance.

The influence of Swiss architects from Le Corbusier to Mario Botta and Herzog & de Meuron may be global, but they have created exceptional works on Swiss soil too. Top foreign architects have also been inspired by Switzerland's unique environment, to produce modern masterpieces of their own: Renzo Piano in Bern, Sir Norman Foster and Santiago Calatrava in Zürich, and Frank O. Gehry near Basel.

The country's unique and internationally important cultural heritage is highly accessible: Switzerland has a greater concentration of museums – 980 in all – than any other country. While its magnificent national museums, charming private collections and superb temporary exhibitions are an irresistible draw, Switzerland has another unique feature: nowhere else can you enjoy the best in art, architecture and design in a setting of such spectacular scenic beauty.



Fondation Beyeler, Basel

UNESCO World Heritage.

Some of the country's artistic and historical treasures are listed by the United Nations cultural organization UNESCO as globally significant: part of humanity's shared World Heritage, and accessible to all.

Bellinzona: The Three Castles – fine medieval military architecture.
St. Gallen: The abbey district and library – with its collection of precious books and manuscripts.
Bern: The Old Town – an intact medieval urban environment.
Visitors to each of these cities can explore the UNESCO sites on special tours.

Style and the city.

Urban life – with a Swiss flavour.

You'll enjoy the relaxed pace of life in our cities: laid-back, low on stress but high on thrills. Day or night, whatever your mood, you'll find pleasures to match.



Arthur's Terrace Rive Gauche, Geneva



Wahlen-Park, Neu-Oerlikon, Zürich



Schwellenmätteli, Bern

Built for pleasure.

Imagine: a mild summer's evening at a lakeside restaurant; a seductive sequence of gastronomic treats; the singing of crickets, and the sounds of the city at play carrying over on a warm breeze… What better place could there be to relax? By day, the city offers settings to suit every mood: quiet cafes with pavement tables, perfect for people-watching; live concerts; chic bars and hip clubs. Whether your taste is for high-octane buzz or leisurely lounging, one venue is never far from the next – thanks to the compact, easily manageable nature of Swiss towns and cities. Tune into the pulse of the city – and enjoy all that life has to offer here.

Hotels to fall in love with

Increasingly, guests want more than just a room to sleep in. They want to stay somewhere with distinctive design, somewhere original and special that they will remember for a long time to come – and of course, they want Swiss quality too.

Switzerland's Design & Lifestyle hotels offer just that. In fact, they go further, offering an all-round aesthetic experience, a source of inspiration for guests with a strong sense of style – and a passion for life. All this contributes to the fascination that these unusual hotels exert: an appeal that is not limited to a young, urbane clientele, but extends to anyone who is young at heart. The fact that Switzerland has Design & Lifestyle hotels of world class is also thanks to its traditional strengths: a mixture of warm hospitality, top quality and an ability to innovate.



Plan B, Winterthur

As well as unspoilt natural scenery and cities on a human scale, Switzerland offers highly distinctive places to stay. Let yourself be inspired by our Design & Lifestyle hotels, where a stay becomes an experience – thanks to innovative architecture and an infectious joie de vivre.

It is our pleasure to help plan your holiday: UK 00800 100 200 30 (freephone), USA 1 877 794 8037 or contact us via www.MySwitzerland.com



Culture à la carte.

Your taste – your choice.

Our cities may be packed with art and history, but they are also built on a wonderfully human scale: perfect, then, for doing as much or as little as you like.



Villa Flora, Winterthur



Place des Nations, Geneva



Aeschenplatz, Basel

Pick and mix – you decide.

Up on the tree-covered Lindenhof in Zürich, time seems to stand still. Your eyes are drawn over the roofs of the city, across to the university and down to the river Limmat; behind, in the square, people play chess on a giant board. Your thoughts come and go, with nothing to disturb them.

Every town and city has its secret squares, its peaceful but popular spots. Places for relaxing, or for a convivial get-together. Often a few steps are enough to bring you somewhere you can be entirely alone, where you can enjoy the sweet luxury of not having to do anything.

You need moments like this, because the wealth of things to do is vast – albeit set in an attractive space in a manageable way. Side by side in Swiss cities you will find monuments, architectural jewels, famous museums, exquisite galleries and trendy shops, as well as stylish bars and cosy restaurants.

The compactness of the cities makes them easy to explore on foot without tiring. Should you wish to travel further, the superbly organized public transport system will take you swiftly and simply, without any need to disappear underground. The same system will also bring you from one city to another within Switzerland, affording you the best possible views of the breathtaking scenery along the way.

After an eventful day, nothing can beat a refreshing dip. Almost every town and city can boast the most natural of all swimming pools: a lake or river, with water clean enough to drink. Just one aspect of the quality of life here – celebrated and enjoyed for many years.



Lakefront promenade, Zürich

www.swissinfo.ch

News and information about Switzerland

Do you want to know more about day-to-day life in Switzerland? Then visit www.swissinfo.ch, Switzerland's multimedia news and information platform in English (and eight other languages). Here you'll find the latest about Swiss politics and society, the economy, culture and science.

www.swissinfo.ch
Your direct link to Switzerland

swissinfo

Hunting grounds.

The shopping trail starts here.

Hoping to bag that perfect purchase? Whether you're on a relaxed shopping tour or a thrilling spending spree, our 26 cities have plenty of shops to explore.



Theaterplatz, Basel



Rue de Bourg, Lausanne



Alprausch, Zürich

More than just cheese.

Whichever city you visit – Zürich, Bern or Geneva, St. Gallen, Montreux or Chur – you will want to check out the shops. Of course, those wickedly expensive wristwatches may not be to everyone's taste; but you will also find trendy boutiques, shops selling cutting-edge design, and delicatessens packed with treats. From Locarno's Old Town to the colourful annual Zibelemärit, the largest market in Bern, and from Winterthur's Marktgasse to the picturesque heart of Thun, the temptations are endless. A shopping tour is also an excellent way to discover the special character of these towns and cities, whilst exploring the pedestrian-friendly streets and alleys of their traditional shopping quarters. En route, you might pause to drop into a gallery, or stop at a cosy cafe to review the pleasures and purchases of the day: and meanwhile, you will be getting a very special feel for the city.

Top tips for savvy shoppers.

The arcades of Bern. The covered arcades that run for kilometres in front of the baroque sandstone houses of the Old Town of Bern make up the world's most beautiful shopping centre.

Absinthe in La Chaux-de-Fonds. Once controversial and banned, now legal again: the wormwood-flavoured spirit from the Val-de-Travers.

Blondel in Lausanne. For 150 years, this shop has been a place of pilgrimage for chocolate lovers, offering more than 120 different creations.

Morand in Martigny. Exquisite spirits and liqueurs direct from the distillery.

Chuchilade in Solothurn. Shop packed with stylish and witty creations for the kitchen and home.

Hofkellerei in Vaduz. Taste and buy the Prince of Liechtenstein's wines direct from the vineyard.

Plattform in Winterthur. A former industrial quarter is now home to the hippest address for fashionable furniture.



Pfalzkeller (former abbey wine cellar), St. Gallen

"Vielfach", Design Shopping Centre.

"Vielfach" is a small shop full of surprises in Zürich's Seefeld district. It is packed full of display boxes, rented out to different designers; each contains a product, anything from picture frames and knives to Swiss-made originals, sophisticated accessories and shoes. The boxes are an excellent way for newcomers and small companies to present a product to a broad public for the first time.

Vielfach, Fröhlichstrasse 41, CH-8008 Zürich, www.vielfach.ch

Natural style.

Opening up to the life of the city.

Everyone knows about Switzerland's natural landscapes, but its urban ones are well worth discovering, too. Stroll around, soak up the sun – and relax.



Federal Parliament Building, Bern



n°9, La Chaux-de-Fonds



Schmiedgasse, St. Gallen

A better quality of life.

Every Swiss city has its favourite open-air meeting places, its cherished pockets of greenery. Bern has the lush banks along the river Aare, for example; Zürich, the botanical garden; and Basel, the leafy Pfalz. And if those outdoor playgrounds aren't big enough – well, it's never far from any Swiss city to reach the open countryside. To get you there swiftly and comfortably there is the well-thought-out public transport system, which extends to every corner of the country. In Switzerland, nature is never far away.

Each of the 26 Swiss cities has its own connection with the nature in and around it; each one has its own nature, its own unique quality of life, enjoyed by visitors as much as locals. Of course, for residents and guests alike, being natural also means being free to be oneself: a freedom of which the Swiss cities, in their safe, unassuming way, have long been proud.

In Switzerland, the worlds of art and nature complement each other in many ways. Whether you are strolling through a sculpture park, watching the beautiful people from the table of a pavement cafe, admiring a piece of public art in a piazza or just relaxing in the stylish setting of a city park, you will find yourself tuning in to the very Swiss love of all things natural – in every sense of the word.

In our cities, there's nothing more natural than finding nature and art side by side – alongside, of course, architecture, design and culture, in a characteristically relaxed Swiss manner. All are waiting to be discovered in the way that best inspires you, at your own pace – the one that comes naturally, in other words.



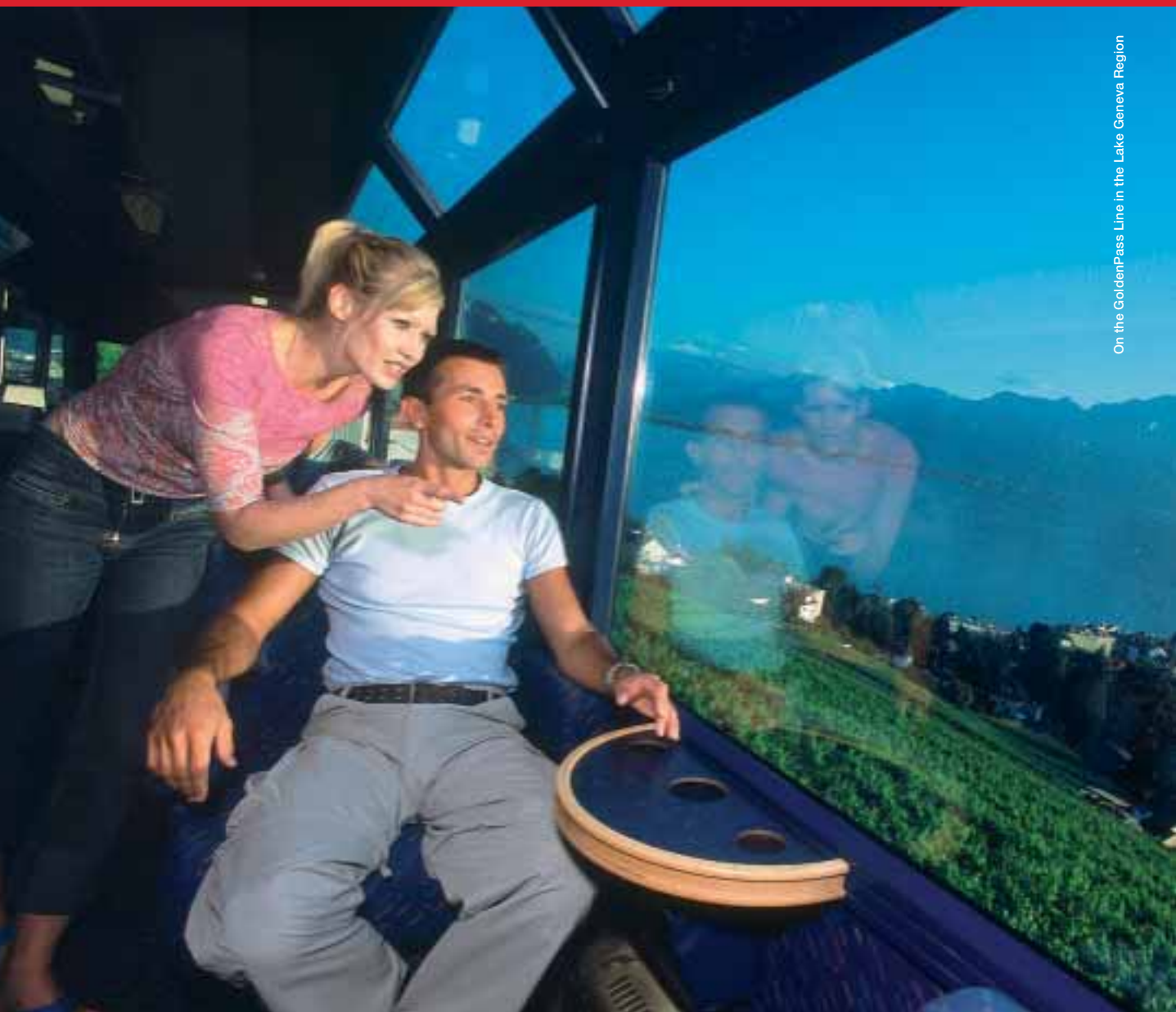
Piazza della Riforma, Lugano

A city for all.

Geneva is the most cosmopolitan of all Swiss cities. The presence of many international organizations has given the city a unique status and an unmistakable feel. Nowhere else do you encounter so many different cultures – and a flavour of cities from New York to Cape Town, Paris to Dubai. The best way to enjoy all this is simply to throw yourself into the colourful mix of locals, foreign residents, and international visitors. You can experience the special atmosphere throughout the city: in museums and art collections, in street cafes, on a stroll by the lake, at the theatre – or at the hottest new gourmet restaurant.

Upwardly mobile.

On the move in and between cities.
Among the many enviable features of the finest public transport system in the world are the frequent connections and the short changing times. Whether you are travelling within a city or hopping from one city to another on a cultural tour, you will find the journey itself becomes a big part of the adventure.



On the GoldenPass Line in the Lake Geneva Region

Perfectly connected.

By train, bus and boat, quickly, safely and comfortably:
welcome to the densest transport system in the world.



InterCity double-deck train

No other country has such a dense – and appealing – public transport system as that of Switzerland. The timetables of trains, buses and boats are all carefully coordinated, and the majority of cities are connected by services every half an hour.

From city to city, quickly and comfortably.

You can travel directly from Swiss airports to our attractive cities on comfortable InterCity trains – quickly, effortlessly, and often without having to change. Between cities, too, the quickest and easiest way to travel is by train. The Swiss rail network makes use of a variety of modern coaches fitted out in different ways: from the InterCity tilting trains (ICN), with plush leather seats and restaurant cars on all services, to the InterCity double-deck trains (IC 2000) of the SBB (Swiss Federal Railways), with comfortable seating accommodation in both first and second class, and plenty of storage space for luggage.

Tips.

Timetable information can be easily found on the Internet, at www.rail.ch

Non-smoking carriages are guaranteed: the entire Swiss public transport system is smoke-free.

Family coaches with play areas for children, located on the upper deck at the front or the back of InterCity double-deck trains, make family journeys into an adventure.

Dining facilities are available on many of our trains. Our restaurant cars, bistros and our Railbar trolley service offer a wide variety of hot and cold dishes and drinks.

Seat reservations are not necessary in Switzerland for individual travellers (except on our scenic routes).



S-Bahn (suburban) train of the BLS



"Star(c)kes Stück" designer carriage

Swiss Pass.

Unlimited travel by train, bus and boat in the whole of Switzerland.



Postbus in Morcote, Ticino

For guests from abroad staying in Switzerland, we recommend the various passes issued by the Swiss Travel System. For example, the Swiss Pass allows, for a chosen duration (from 3 days up to 1 month), unlimited travel by train, bus and boat, as well as journeys by public transport in the cities.

Free entry in museums.

The Swiss Pass is the perfect companion for visitors to Swiss cities. As well as granting free travel on most forms of public transport, a Swiss Pass also permits free entry to around 450 museums and exhibitions around the whole country. These include the majority of museums devoted to fine art, history or culture in all Swiss cities. You can find a full list of participating museums at www.museumspass.ch. Swiss Passes are available for either 1st or 2nd class travel over various periods of validity.

Tips.

Saver Pass and Youth Pass. Two or more people travelling together each receive a discount of 15 %. Young people under the age of 26 receive a discount of 25 %.

Children go free. Children up to the age of 16 travel for free when accompanied by at least one parent with a valid Swiss Travel System ticket.

Detailed information about the Swiss Pass and other tickets, as well as a list of sales points around the world, can be accessed at www.swisstravelsystem.ch

Permanent residents of Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein are not permitted to purchase Swiss Travel System tickets. We recommend the attractive range of tickets available from the SBB (www.rail.ch/leisure) and RailAway (www.railaway.ch).

At www.rail.ch/travel you can book online both your journey and your accommodation for your trip to Switzerland.



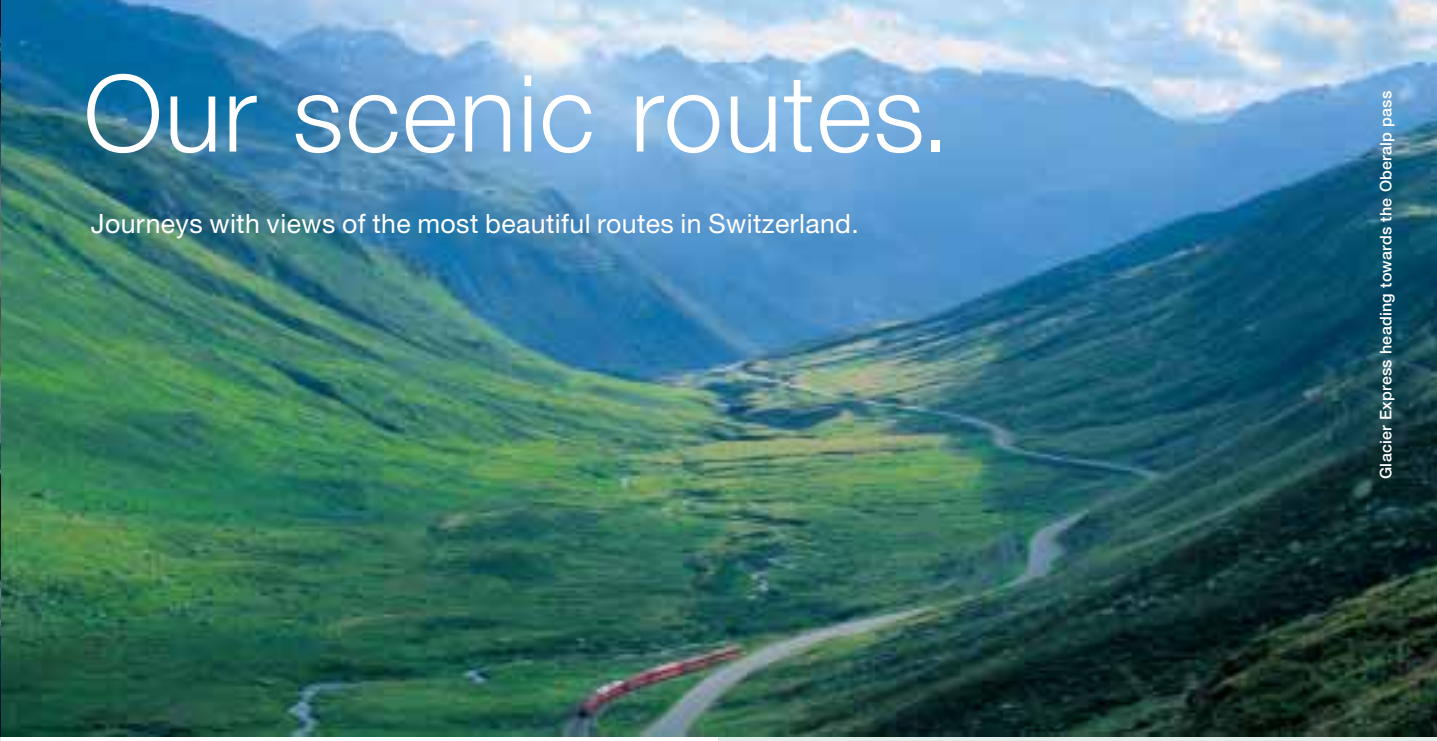
Lake Lucerne, Central Switzerland



Limmatquai, Zürich

Our scenic routes.

Journeys with views of the most beautiful routes in Switzerland.



Glacier Express heading towards the Oberalp pass

The highlight of any journey to Switzerland is a ride on one of our numerous scenic routes. Enjoy the breathtaking views through the panoramic windows of our trains and buses, and from the open deck of our boats, and experience Switzerland's unique natural beauty in comfort and style.

GoldenPass Line.

Combine your visit to Swiss cities with a journey on the GoldenPass Line scenic route. On this attractive and historic route, panoramic GoldenPass trains travel from Zürich and Lucerne or Bern to Lake Geneva (Montreux-Vevey, Lausanne, Geneva). From Lucerne, the route passes over the Brünig pass and along Lake Brienz to Interlaken; and from there along the Simmen valley and through the world-famous resort of Gstaad to the Mediterranean-like shores of Lake Geneva.
For detailed information, see www.goldenpass.ch

Tips.

The opening of the **Lötschberg base tunnel** in December 2007 brings the Valais closer to the rest of Switzerland. The new tunnel runs for 34.6 km from Frutigen in the Kander valley to Raron in the Rhone valley, and cuts up to 72 minutes off travel times. The journey from Bern to Zermatt, for example, now takes just 2 hours 8 minutes. To find out more, visit www.rail.ch/loetschberg. The older, scenic mountain line, meanwhile, is served by the new hourly BLS RegioExpress Lötschberg service.

The **Swiss Pass** allows unlimited free travel on all scenic routes. In some cases, a compulsory seat reservation (extra charge) is required. For detailed information on the Swiss Pass, and on all the scenic routes, visit www.swisstravelsystem.ch

50 % discount off mountaintop rides. Combine your visit to Swiss cities with an excursion by cog railway, funicular or cable car to one of our countless mountain peaks – and with the Swiss Pass, enjoy a discount of 50 %.



GoldenPass Line train in the Bernese Oberland



Wilhelm Tell Express in Ticino



There for your tomorrow.

SWISS POST

Swiss Post, official partner of Switzerland Tourism

City Wellness.

Rejuvenation in urban style.



Fairmont Le Montreux Palace, Montreux

It seems like a trick: the tension and stress of everyday life may have built up over a long time, but even a short stint in an urban wellness world can make them vanish. The moment you feel the soothing oils, the deft hands and the healing vapours work their magic, all the stress seems to be swept away. Body and soul recuperate, and the mind revives. And once you've enjoyed a soothing spell in a city spa, it never need be long until the next visit to one of these most urban of oases of wellness.

The business of pleasure

Always mix business with a dose of pleasure: This should almost be a mantra for modern life. City wellness hotels offer the perfect environment for doing just that. Their wellness facilities are geared up specifically to offer treatments that in a short time have a long-lasting effect – so that you are in top shape to tackle the challenges of the following day.

Shop, but don't drop

Many people would claim that there is no better wellness experience than an extended shopping trip. We would say: There is no better wellness experience than the one after a shopping trip. The thrill of the perfect purchase, followed by a massage or a beauty treatment, is the ideal prelude to a happy conclusion to the day – particularly when a special dinner is yet to come.

Wellness as art

What is good for the eyes and ears can also work wonders for body and soul. Swiss towns and cities have a wealth of world-class museums, art collections and special exhibitions, as well as theatres and concert halls that attract top international names. To make the pleasure all the sweeter, there's nothing better than reliving the experiences in one's mind – amid the soothing bliss of one of Switzerland's many day spas.

Order of brochures page 98.



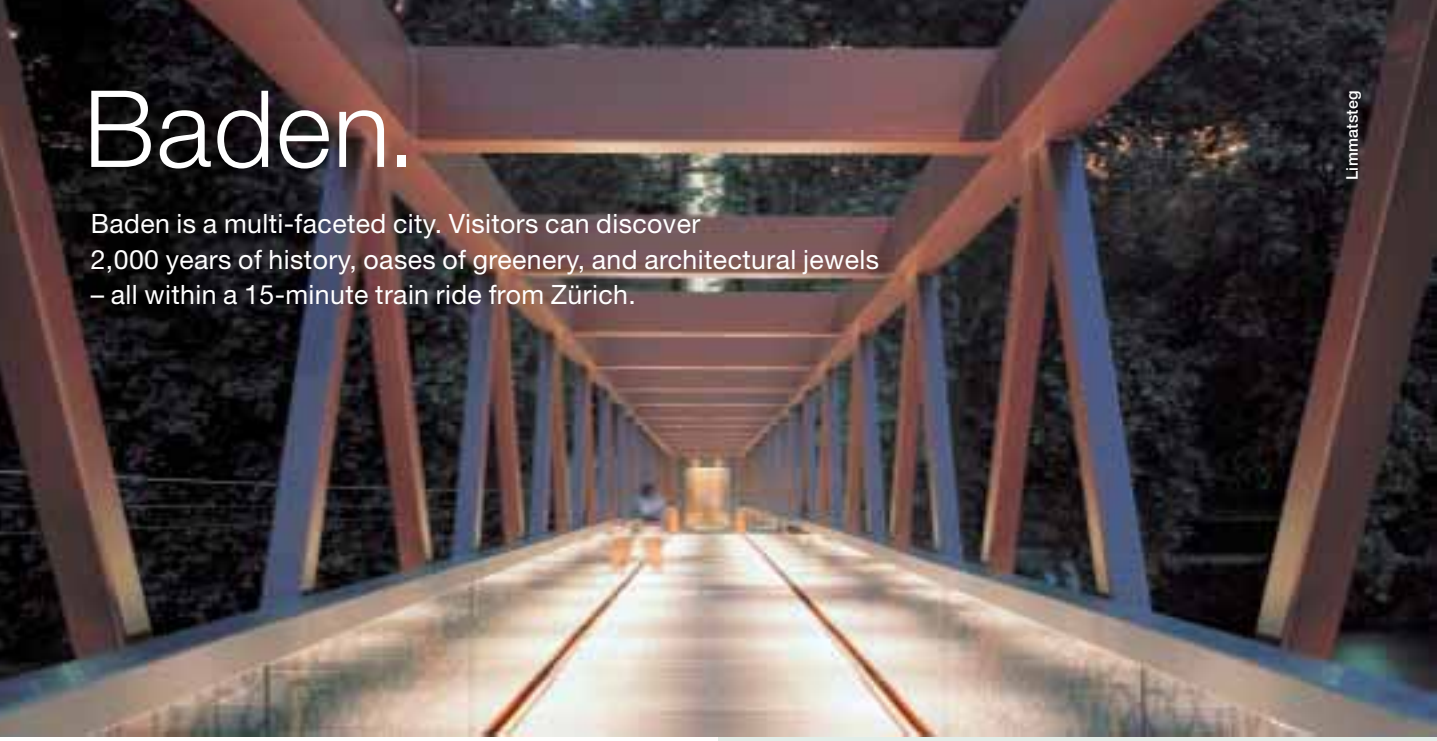
Fairmont Le Montreux Palace, Montreux



Fairmont Le Montreux Palace, Montreux

Baden.

Baden is a multi-faceted city. Visitors can discover 2,000 years of history, oases of greenery, and architectural jewels – all within a 15-minute train ride from Zürich.



Limmatsteg

Baden has long been famous for its thermal baths: more than 2,000 years ago, Roman legionaries were enjoying the healing power of its hot springs. Baden is also the home city of the multinational engineering firm ABB, and the city's industrialization has brought a stunning artistic legacy. Today, Baden is all about wellbeing for body, mind and soul.

Art, architecture, design.

Sidney and Jenny Brown-Sulzer were among the founders of ABB, and in 1901 they moved into the Villa Langmatt. In 1990 their private home, together with their extensive collection of impressionist paintings, opened to the public. Other villas from the founding period of the company are also architectural and cultural gems, set in glorious grounds.

An impressive example of modern architecture in a natural setting is the new Limmatsteg footbridge and lift. Spanning the River Limmat, it forms part of a pleasant walk along the Baden gorge, with direct access from the town centre.

Highlights.

Limmatsteg. This award-winning structure brings stylish modern architecture to a tranquil natural setting.

Langmatt Museum. The villa of the Brown-Sulzer industrialists, built in 1901, is home to a large collection of French impressionist paintings.

Stadtturm. The "city tower", built in 1441 and a protected national monument, is the emblem of the Old Town.

Zentrum Trafo. This former transformer building is now a cultural meeting point.

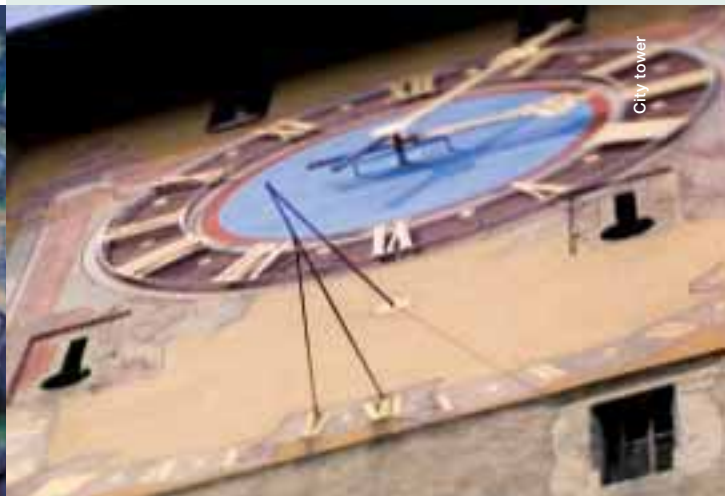
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Baden ist.
Leisure

Quality.
Our Passion.



Museum Langmatt, Paul Cézanne, "Baigneuses"



City tower

Aargauer Kunsthaus.



Aargauer Kunsthaus

Aargau's art gallery is located in the regional capital, Aarau, in a building expanded by the architects Herzog & de Meuron in 2003. It is home to one of the most beautiful and comprehensive public collections of Swiss art from the late 18th century to the present. Here, unlike anywhere else, Swiss art is on show in all its great variety: among the highlights in the older part are works by Caspar Wolf, Johann Heinrich Füssli and Arnold Böcklin, as well as landscape painting from the 19th century. In the newer part, the collection offers a representative overview of 20th-century art, from the early modern period to the abstractions of the post-war years, and from the explosion of creativity in the 1960s up to the present day. Attention is also lavished on the newest works; as a result, the Aargauer Kunsthaus is able to set the very latest developments in contemporary art in context.

Highlights.

The major solo exhibitions of 2008 will be devoted to contemporary art from both Switzerland and abroad, namely to Christine Streuli (Venice Biennale 2007) and the pair of artists Lutz/Guggisberg, followed by the Swiss artist Rolf Winnewisser, and finally Mark Wallinger – one of the most important British artists of his generation.

Please refer to our website for the latest information.

Aargauer Kunsthaus
Aargauerplatz
CH-5001 Aarau
Tel. +41 (0)62 835 23 30
www.aargauerkunsthaus.ch

AARGAUER
KUNST
HAUS

Opening hours
closed on Monday
Tuesday to Sunday 10am–5pm
(Thursday until 8pm)



Christine Streuli, "Ich lieb Dich, ich lieb Dich nicht …"



Ferdinand Hodler, "Niesen vom Heustrich aus"

Basel.

Basel is Switzerland's cultural capital, home to the country's richest concentration of fine art, as well as some impressive architecture.



Rhine lido with view of the cathedral

Basel is a thrilling city unlike any other in Switzerland, where proverbial Swiss quality meets a multicultural population in the border region close to France and Germany. All this makes the city unmistakably cosmopolitan, international and innovative.

You can experience its stylish savoir-vivre throughout the city: on the sunny banks of the Rhine, in the dreamy alleyways of one of Europe's best preserved Old Towns, and at the countless street and pavement cafes.

Basel's motto is "Culture Unlimited" – of which the diversity is breathtaking. With nearly 40 museums – home to spectacular special exhibitions, as well as important permanent collections – it is hardly surprising that Basel has gained a worldwide reputation as a city of art and culture.

Visitors encounter this richness not only in the many museums, but throughout Basel. The close proximity of grand, classical houses, medieval churches and world-renowned modern architecture makes for fascinating contrasts.


Schaulager


Town hall


Fondation Beyeler


Vitra Design Museum


Fine Art Museum

Art, architecture, design.

In architecture as in art, Basel combines the traditional and the modern at the very highest level.

The Art Museum Basel, for example, is home to the oldest public collection of art in the world. Quite different is the Schaulager, designed by the world-renowned Basel architects Herzog & de Meuron. When this thrilling fusion of museum, art warehouse and research facilities opened its doors in 2003, it was hailed as one of the pioneering institutions of contemporary art. The collections of the Emanuel Hoffman Foundation, stored at the Schaulager, can also be seen on display in temporary exhibitions at the Contemporary Art Museum, another institution that made art history: when it opened in 1980, it was the first of its kind in the world.

Many of the museums are housed in structures that are in themselves important works of art. The Tinguely Museum, for example, is a magnificent example of the distinctive work of the Swiss architect Mario Botta. Another must is a visit to the Swiss Architecture Museum, the only one in the country. The Vitra Design Museum – the first building in Europe by the world-renowned California architect Frank O. Gehry – lies in a vast architectural park, set among cherry trees. With the Fondation Beyeler, meanwhile, Renzo Piano created one of the most elegant and sophisticated museum buildings anywhere.

A visit to Basel is a trip into the past as much as a glimpse of the future. A visit to the collections of the History Museum, for example, takes in several buildings of the Old Town: the Gothic Barfüsserkirche, the classical Stadtpalais and the former prison of the Lohnhof. To travel even further back in time, visit the Roman city of Augusta Raurica: the most important archaeological excavation site in Switzerland.

Find further offers at MySwitzerland.com



Münster (cathedral) and ferry across the Rhine

Highlights.

Basel Museum of Ancient Art and Ludwig Collection. The only Swiss museum devoted to the art and culture of antiquity.

Münster and Münsterplatz. The medieval cathedral stands on a magnificent square in the heart of the Old Town.

Fondation Beyeler. Superb collection – and special temporary exhibitions – featuring highlights of the classical modern period.

Basel History Museum – Music Museum. The largest collection of musical instruments in Switzerland.

Kunstmuseum Basel. Fine arts: paintings and drawings by artists of the Upper Rhine, plus 19th- and 20th-century works.

Tinguely Museum. Collection of works by the Swiss artist Jean Tinguely, who died in 1991.

Schaulager. Ground-breaking building designed by Herzog & de Meuron that re-invents our relationship with contemporary art.

Augusta Raurica. The most significant architectural excavation site in Switzerland.

Vitra Design Museum. Museum of the furniture design company Vitra, showcasing highlights from the history of design.

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www.basel.com

Basel
Culture Unlimited.

Quality.
Our Passion.



Garden terrace of the Kunsthalle restaurant



St. Alban quarter

Bellinzona.

The fortifications of Bellinzona, built in the Middle Ages as a defensive barrier across the Ticino valley, are today the symbol of the city, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Bellinzona, capital of canton Ticino

Bellinzona's location at the convergence of the valleys that lead to the alpine passes of the Gotthard, Lukmanier and San Bernardino, along with its imposing fortress-topped hill, made it the ideal site for the construction of a barrier across the valley. Built in the 15th century by the Dukes of Milan in response to the advance of the Swiss from the north, this military complex is one of the most important examples of medieval defensive architecture in the whole of the Alps. The castles, walls and battlements, now superbly restored and integrated into the broader historical cityscape, impress visitors today more than ever.



Teatro Sociale

Highlights.

Castelgrande, Montebello and Sasso Corbaro. The three castle museums are devoted to local history, art and archaeology, and also stage temporary exhibitions.

Villa and Parco dei Cedri. The city's art gallery lies close to the Romanesque churches of San Biagio and Santa Maria delle Grazie.

Teatro Sociale. 150 years after its construction, this Neoclassical theatre – the only one of its kind in Switzerland – has been restored to its former glory.

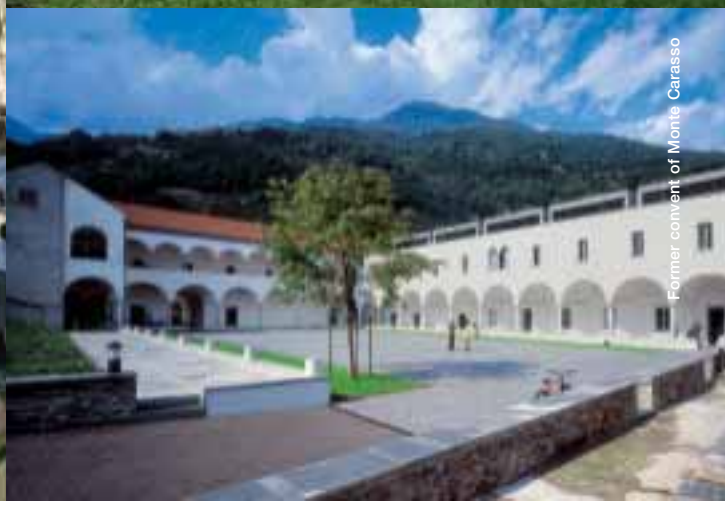
Art-Key. A city tour with an audio guide is an excellent way to find out all about the city and its world-famous castles.

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Saturday market


Castelgrande


Former convent of Monte Carasso

Art, architecture, design.

A walk around Bellinzona is a trip through time. For the monuments, artefacts and traces of the city's long history are not only to be seen in the castle museums and in the Villa dei Cedri; the most impressive way to experience them is in the form of a city walk. As well as taking in the cultural highlights of past centuries, the city walking tour also leads to outstanding examples of contemporary architecture and urban planning – as well as the villas and gardens of the residential areas outside the city walls, the green spaces along the Ticino river, and the school buildings and sports grounds. An overview of all this, and a complete view of the structure and architecture of Ticino's capital, can be seen from the castle of Sasso Corbaro.


Villa and Parco dei Cedri

Monte Carasso

The renovation of the convent complex of Monte Carasso and the regeneration of the village have been hailed as a model of contemporary planning – and show that the often-quoted claim: "Ticino is located at the periphery of Switzerland, but at the centre of Europe" is certainly true when it comes to architecture. From the former convent in the village centre, a small cable car (as well as a footpath through the chestnut forest) leads up to the recently restored medieval hamlet of Curzutt (now a family hostel) and on to Monte Mornera (1,347 m) and to the Albagno mountain hut (1,870 m).

A museum for the future

Deep beneath the Gotthard pass, engineers of the New Transalpine Railway (NEAT) are excavating the longest rail tunnel in the world, the Gotthard Base Tunnel. At the Pollegio site, near Biasca, a fascinating multimedia visitor centre explains the project.

Bern.

The Swiss capital once only attracted visitors in the know; now it is on the must-see list. Among the reasons for this change: the new Paul Klee Centre, and the city's Einstein exhibition.



View of Bern, a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Bern has everything that goes to make a capital city. Its unique cityscape – designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site – is an expression of the open-minded charm of this city. Alongside its exceptional medieval buildings – the cathedral, the Zytglogge clock tower, the covered arcades and the town hall – the city is home to world-class modern architecture and design. Leading examples of this are the Paul Klee Centre, opened in the summer of 2005, and the Swiss national stadium, or Stade de Suisse – as well as the largest exhibition in the world on the life and work of Albert Einstein. Exciting new projects in the pipeline, due to open from 2008, include the new WESTside shopping and leisure complex by the renowned international architect Daniel Libeskind, and the Kubus/Titan extension to the Historical Museum.

While Bern is part of our shared world heritage, it is also open to the world, embracing the future. That is the city's attraction: an ever-changing blend of traditional charm and modern flair.



Permanent exhibition on Albert Einstein in the Historical Museum of Bern



Paul Klee Centre



Zytglogge (medieval clock tower)



Kornhauskeller Restaurant



Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

Art, architecture, design.

Paul Klee Centre

The Paul Klee Centre is much more ambitious than a traditional art museum. Designed by the Italian architect Renzo Piano in the form of three undulating waves in a landscaped setting, it is more of a cultural centre: a place of encounter, reflecting Klee's interest in music and literature as well as art, and consequently also a platform for a younger generation. A promenade equipped with a multitude of communications installations is a place for visitors to stroll and interact. At the heart of the complex is the collection of more than 4,000 works by the artist, the most comprehensive in the world.

Gurten – Park im Grünen

The Gurten is Bern's local mountain, a green space on its doorstep with breathtaking views of the Alps. Opened in 1999, the park has become a popular outing for locals and visitors alike. Parts of the former Art Nouveau hotel have been restored; other areas have been replaced with a clean, contemporary architecture. The former barn is now a high-tech, environment-friendly cultural space.

Historical Museum of Bern,
permanent exhibition on Albert Einstein (1879–1955)

Following the great success of the special exhibition of 2005/06, Bern's historical museum is paying permanent tribute to its most famous resident, who formulated his Theory of Relativity while living and working in the city. The exhibition vividly presents the life of the genius, while illustrating the history of the 20th century with original documents and film clips. Einstein's theories of physics, meanwhile, are dramatically brought to life through computer animations in a series of themed rooms.

The museum was built in 1894 by the architect André Lambert. His influences – a variety of building forms of the 15th and 16th centuries, as well as a several historic castles – are easy to make out.

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Stadttheater Bern

Highlights.

Bundeshaus. Seat of the Federal Parliament. Built in 1902 to plans by the architect Hans Auer. The adjacent Bundesplatz was redesigned in 2004, and given 26 fountains.

Münster. Impressive late-Gothic cathedral, with three naves.

Kunstmuseum. Bern's Fine Arts Museum is housed in a classical building, with a collection of Swiss art, including works by Anker, Hodler and Amiet.

Kornhauskeller. The scale and proportions of the spaces in this charming popular restaurant give it a sacred feel.

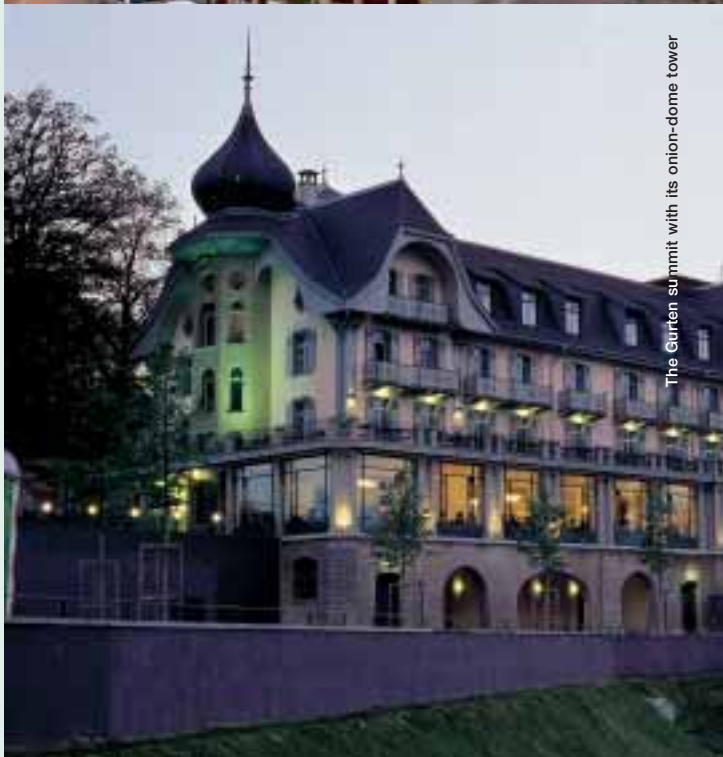
Meret Oppenheim Fountain. The 8-metre-high water tower by the Swiss artist is a symbol of growth and life.

Stadttheater. Bern's Neoclassical theatre hosts some 370 performances a season (drama, dance, music), including about 25 new productions.

Kursaal Bern. The light, bright architecture of this congress & culture centre and Grand Casino evokes the atmosphere of a luxury cruise ship that has just docked.



Architecture along the Grabenpromenade



The Gurten summit with its onion-dome tower

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bern capital impressions

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Biel/Bienne.

This bilingual city – known as Biel in German, and Bienne in French – is home to two languages and two cultures with equal rights: as a result it is unlike any other Swiss city.



Burgplatz, Old Town

The cradle of the watchmaking industry in Switzerland is also the nation's largest bilingual city, known as Biel to its German-speaking residents, and as Bienne to French speakers. The city has numerous cultural attractions, and every year stages international events. It also makes an ideal base for excursions into the "Three Lakes Region" and into the Jura mountains.

Art, architecture, design.

Old Town. With its splendid Gothic city church, its venerable guild houses and its fountain strewn with flowers, the Old Town is a delight to explore on foot.

Wakker Prize. In 2004 Biel/Bienne received the Swiss Heritage Society's coveted prize for its commitment to high-quality urban development. The commendable treatment of its 20th-century buildings is particularly apparent in the new town.

Cultural Quarter. Three museums in a leafy lakeside setting – Neuhaus Museum, Schwab Museum and Centre PasquArt – make up the city's "Museum Mile".

Highlights.

Ring. The former market place in the Old Town is where justice was once dispensed. The Ring was the heart of the city, and the base of the old guilds. The original buildings date from the 15th century.

Congress Centre. Designed by Max Schlup; when it opened in 1966, its suspended roof was the largest in Europe. Renovated in 2002.

Centre PasquArt. This museum of contemporary art was renovated in 2000, and extended into a new building by the Basel architects Diener & Diener.

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Centre PasquArt



Relaxing on the shore of Lake Biel

Abegg Foundation.



The Abegg Foundation, established in 1961, is a cultural institution that houses one of the most valuable collections of textiles in the world. Its museum, not far from Bern, displays fabrics and hand-crafted textiles from Europe, the Mediterranean region and the Near East, dating from antiquity up to the 18th century.

① **Bourgeois pride and princely splendour:** costumes from the 16th to the 18th century. This exhibition shows important historical costumes from the collections of the Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt and the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, both in Germany. Bourgeois fashion and the garb of the Elector Moritz of Saxony are displayed on special mannequins. Pictured is a detail from the collar of a man's upper garment with parchment lace, dating from 1660.

② **A highlight** of the collection is the 7-metre-long Dionysius wall hanging, which dates from the 4th century. It is astonishingly well preserved, and shows just how ambitious and magnificent textile wall hangings once were.

The Abegg Foundation.

Highlights of the collection initiated by Werner and Margaret Abegg are textiles, unrivalled in quality and significance, from the European Middle Ages and from the region of the Silk Route. Exhibited alongside are numerous works of applied art, dating from antiquity up to 1800. The former home of the founders, the Villa Abegg, with its charming Mirror Cabinet, is also open to the public.

Special exhibition 2008
Opening hours, 20 April to 2 November, daily 2–5.30pm

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Brig.

Visit the “Alpine Town 2008”, and discover a wealth of art, fascinating old buildings – and a seductive shopping area.



Stockalper Castle

Brig is the liveliest town in the Valais, and with the opening of the new Lötschberg base tunnel in December 2007, an hour quicker to reach. On the town’s doorstep are the Aletsch glacier and the Matterhorn – two more reasons why an international jury chose Brig to be the Alpine Town of the Year for 2008.

Art, architecture, design.

Brig is a town with history. The Celts lived here; the Romans marched this way; and the Alemannic tribes settled here. A spectacularly wealthy local merchant, Kaspar von Stockalper, built palaces, churches and monasteries; and Napoleon built the road over the Simplon, the most beautiful pass in the Alps.

A visit to the maverick merchant of the Alps

The Stockalper Castle, the personal residence of Kaspar von Stockalper, is the largest private 17th-century building in Switzerland. The streets around are full of history, and attractive architecture ranging from patrician houses to stylish modern buildings.

Highlights.

Stockalper Castle. The lavish Baroque palace from the 17th century is open to the public, as is its beautiful garden.

Museum of the Papal Guards. Opened in November 2006 in the former fortress of Naters, this museum tells the story of the Swiss Guard at the Vatican. Open daily.

Little Simplon Express. Since 2006, this tourist train has carried visitors around Brig during the summer months (in winter on request).

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Chur.

Chur, the “Gateway to Graubünden”, is proud of its 5,000-year history. The oldest city in Switzerland has charm and attractions in abundance.


Chur

Chur is the centre for art, architecture and design of the holiday region of Graubünden. It also boasts one of the highest average temperatures of all Swiss cities; its mild climate, and fresh air scented by the surrounding pine forests, stimulate mind and body – making this alpine city a pleasure to linger in.

Art, architecture, design.

The alleys of the Old Town, surrounded by historic buildings, are home to chic boutiques, modern galleries and furniture workshops, which all have their own individual take on contemporary design. Chur also has an outstanding bar scene – you’ll notice the many designer bars, reflecting the youthful energy of this attractive city.

Architectural gems

Modern highlights include the protective structures built over the archaeological excavations of a Roman settlement by the architect Peter Zumthor; and the striking roof construction over the postbus station.

Highlights.

Old Town. The car-free Old Town of Chur, with its weekly market and many boutiques, is a delightful place to stroll.

Cathedral. The city’s vast Romanesque cathedral reopened in 2007 after extensive restoration. Selected objects from the cathedral treasury are on display in the Rhaetian Museum nearby.

Bündner Kunstmuseum. The collection of the Graubünden Museum of Fine Arts houses works by famous Graubünden artists such as Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Alberto Giacometti and Giovanni Segantini.

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Chur

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Bishop’s Palace


Club Schall und Rauch

Vitromusée Romont.



Castle courtyard

The castle of Romont is home to an exceptional collection of stained glass from the Middle Ages to the present day. It also houses the only collection of its kind in the world that includes works – pictures, furniture, jewellery and other objects – made using the verre églomisé technique of glass gilding. In the workshop, where artists are often creating, visitors can learn about the processes involved; in addition, themed exhibitions are often staged, and creative activities laid on for children.

Romont and its region have an exceptionally strong tradition of stained-glass making, and visitors exploring the area have the opportunity to see numerous fine church windows in their architectural context.

The Gothic collegiate church of Notre-Dame de l'Assomption is richly decorated with stained-glass windows from the 15th to 19th centuries, complemented by modern works by Alexandre Cingria, Yoki and Sergio de Castro. Meanwhile in the Cistercian convent church of La Fille-Dieu, Brian Clarke has created a striking masterpiece of timeless sacred art.

Highlights.

Swiss Museum of Stained Glass and Glass Art. After extensive restoration and a redesign, the Swiss Museum of Stained Glass and Glass Arts now has two sections: the art of stained-glass making, in the medieval wing of Romont castle, and the art of glass gilding, in the Fribourg wing. A glass passage links the two exceptional collections.

Tours and trails. More than 20 villages, churches, chapels and other buildings containing masterpieces of stained-glass art by celebrated Swiss and foreign artists are linked by waymarked tours and trails, which may be followed on foot, by bicycle and by car.

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VITROMUSÉE ROMONT
SWISS MUSEUM OF STAINED GLASS AND GLASS ART



"Glass" by D. Stettler



Sergio de Castro, "Jesse's tree" (detail)

Fribourg.

With its protected houses, city wall and 14 towers, Fribourg is one of the largest preserved medieval cities in Europe. In 2007 the city celebrated the 850th anniversary of its founding.



View of the city of Fribourg, with the St-Nicolas Cathedral

The city marks the border between two cultures, the Latin and the Germanic. This special situation is reflected in the fact that Europe's only bilingual university is located here.

The picturesque Old Town is full of historical sights, but also shows many signs of a dynamic present and exciting future.

Highlights include the many Gothic façades, fine examples of Renaissance and Art Nouveau architecture, and thrilling contemporary buildings such as the university and the Banque Cantonale de Fribourg, designed by the Swiss architect Mario Botta.



Espace Nuithonie, Villars-sur-Glâne

Highlights.

St-Nicolas Cathedral. Magnificent Gothic cathedral with 76-metre-high tower, and windows by Mehoffer and Manessier.

Art and History Museum (Hôtel Ratzé). Large collection of sculpture from the first half of the 16th century.

Espace Jean Tinguely – Niki de Saint Phalle. Homage to the creativity of the Fribourg-born sculptor and his artist partner.

Fri-Art Center of Modern Art. Forum for contemporary art, and a variety of cultural activities. Awarded the European "Art Frankfurt Prize" in 2004.

Gourmet capital. Fribourg offers a high density of excellent restaurants unequalled in all Switzerland.

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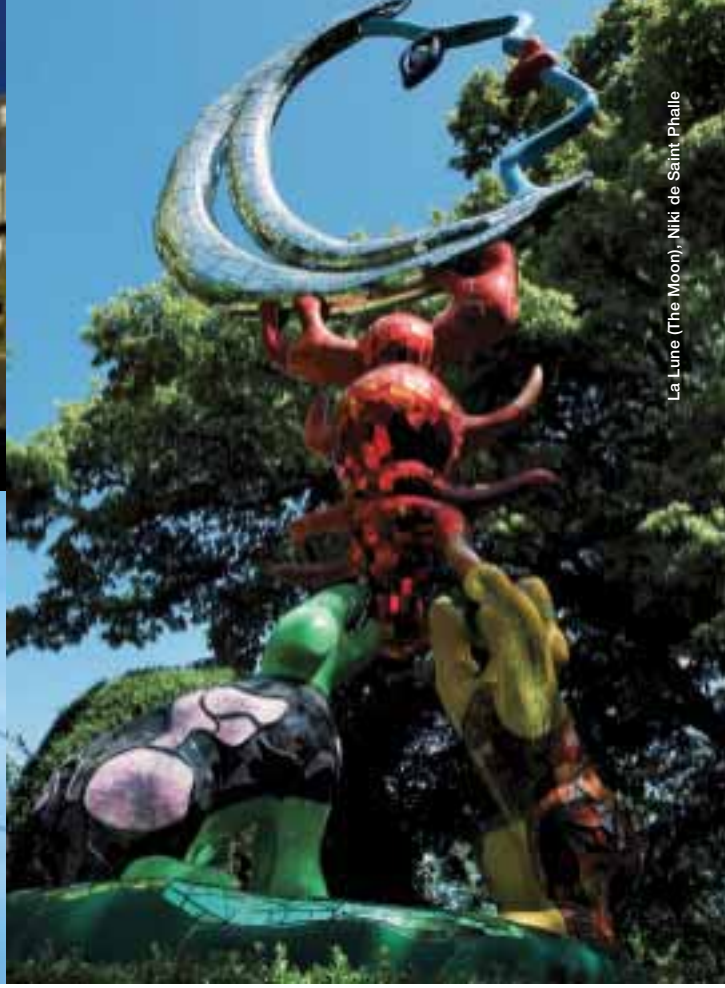
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Pérolles II University



Homage to the Vieux Pont du Gottéron



La Lune (The Moon), Niki de Saint Phalle

Art, architecture, design.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Polish painter Jozef Mehoffer created an important series of Art Nouveau stained-glass windows in Fribourg's St-Nicolas Cathedral. The buildings of the Miséricorde University are typical for the architecture of the years 1939–1941; they were designed by the architects Fernand Dumas and Denis Honegger. Meanwhile this well-preserved city of the arts continues to develop, with more contemporary contributions by artists and architects including Manessier, Tinguely, Botta and Nouvel.

Some of the city's many churches house organs that are unique for Switzerland – including instruments built by Sebald Manderscheidt in the 17th century, and by Aloys Mooser in the 19th. In their day, these attracted composers and performers of the Romantic period such as Liszt, Hugo and Bruckner. In 2005, Fribourg became the only Swiss member of the renowned association ECHO (European Cities of Historical Organs).



Organ in the St-Nicolas Cathedral

More than 15 bridges span the Sarine, and you can explore them on a pleasant riverside walk – from the old Romanesque Pont de Sainte-Apolline (1147), past the Pont St-Jean and the Pont du Milieu to the city's last covered wooden bridge, the Pont de Berne (1653), and the Pont de Grandfey, a metal construction by Gustave Eiffel.

A free pamphlet lists more than 40 sculptures, frescoes and reliefs from artists such as Serra, Tinguely, Niki de Saint Phalle and Luginbühl, which can be seen on a stroll through the city.

The company Villars Maître Chocolatier has been producing its traditional high-quality chocolate since 1901 in a typical industrial building, using only the best cocoa beans and Swiss milk.

Geneva.

With its unmistakable symbol – the Jet d'Eau fountain – this small city, big on culture, is the most cosmopolitan in the whole of Switzerland.



View from the cathedral over the city towards the lake and the Jet d'Eau

The city in which Henri Dunant founded the Red Cross in 1864 is today the seat of several large international organizations, including the European headquarters of the United Nations. Of particular architectural note is the headquarters of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), by Rino Brodbeck and Jacques Roulet. The impressive cathedral towers over the Old Town, around which are scattered many of the city's 40-odd museums.

For more than 2,000 years the city has been a meeting point of people and cultures. In the 5th century, Geneva was the capital of the Burgundian kingdom. In 1536, Jean Calvin fled here from Paris, and turned the city into a "Protestant Rome": a time of immense religious and social change began, which is documented in the International Museum of the Reformation.

Geneva is a prosperous city, as can be seen from its many banks, watch shops and institutions such as the Patek Philippe Museum. The Hotel Beau-Rivage, founded in 1865 by Jean-Jacques Mayer and still owned by the same family, is one of the city's most prestigious addresses.



St-Pierre Cathedral



Mamco, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art


Fondation Martin Bodmer


World Meteorological Organization (WMO)


Contemporary Art Centre

Art, architecture, design.

Geneva's architectural highlights stretch from the 15th century to the present day

The Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (Mamco) is housed in a former industrial building from the 1950s, and aims to stimulate a wide-ranging debate about contemporary art. The Fondation Martin Bodmer, meanwhile, is home to the library of the great humanist, who died in 1971, and contains many valuable and well-preserved original documents and manuscripts – an important cultural asset. The building was designed by the celebrated Ticinese architect Mario Botta.

In the bustling Eaux-Vives quarter stands a residential block by Le Corbusier and his cousin, Pierre Jeanneret: La Clarté, built in 1932 with light, clean lines.

One of the more interesting modern buildings is the headquarters of the World Meteorological Organization, an agency of the United Nations. It has a metal frame, shimmering glass façades, and a cafeteria on the top floor with fabulous views.

The Quartier des Grottes lies behind the main railway station, and is an attraction especially for fans of comic books. When the unconventional architects Frei, Hunziker and Berthoud were designing apartment blocks here in the 1980s, they took their inspiration from the world of the little blue Smurfs.

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Batiment des Forces Motrices (BFM) cultural centre

Highlights.

International Museum of the Reformation. Housed in an 18th-century building, the museum explores the history of the great religious upheaval that shook Europe in the 16th century.

Cathédrale et Espace St-Pierre. The cathedral's north tower has wonderful views over the city. In the basement of the cathedral is the largest archaeological excavation site north of the Alps.

Patek Philippe Museum. An important collection of watches and enamel work from the whole of Europe, dating from the 15th to 20th centuries.

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum. This unusual museum housed in a modern, symbolic building presents the history of the world's first humanitarian organization.

Ariana Museum. Collection of more than 20,000 ceramic pieces covering seven centuries, housed in a Neoclassical and neo-Baroque building from the 19th century.



International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum.



Patek Philippe Museum

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La Chaux-de-Fonds.

Lying at an altitude of one thousand metres above sea level in the gentle landscape of the Jura mountains is La Chaux-de-Fonds, the cradle of the international watch industry.



Both in terms of architecture and location, La Chaux-de-Fonds is unique. The highest-altitude city in Europe is the third-largest French-speaking city in Switzerland, and owes its existence to the art of watchmaking. With the expansion of this industry in the middle of the 19th century, La Chaux-de-Fonds developed in a grid pattern, the city's trademark feature; today, it ranks as an excellent example of 19th-century urban development. Another characteristic element of the local aesthetic is Art Nouveau, which found a unique expression here: the "Style sapin" ("pine tree style"). Almost at every street corner you can admire examples: windows, flights of steps, wrought-iron work and so on.

The hospitality of the residents, the closeness of nature and the broad range of cultural, sporting and outdoor activities on offer all make the city of watchmaking well worth a visit.



Le Petit Paris



Maison Blanche



Museum of Fine Arts



"Le Modulor" in the garden of the Villa Turque



Ancien Manège

Art, architecture, design.

Art Nouveau in the "Style sapin"

Art Nouveau was the pioneering style in the arts in the capital cities of Europe at the end of the 19th century, and in La Chaux-de-Fonds developed an expression all of its own. New buildings in the city were all richly ornamented in this style with windows, tiles, staircase decorations, stuccowork, joinery and wrought-iron work.

This style, developed by students at the art school under the influence of their teacher Charles L'Eplattenier, came to be known as the "Style sapin", or "pine tree style". The name shows clearly where these young artists – including the future Le Corbusier – found their inspiration: in nature. The young teacher avidly studied the local flora and fauna with his students; moving away from the "whiplash style" epitomized by the work of Victor Horta, they found movement instead in the poetic rhythm of the landscape of the Jura, with its many pine trees and gentian-filled meadows.

Le Corbusier

One of the most important architects of the 20th century, Le Corbusier was born in La Chaux-de-Fonds in 1887. The first house that he built as an independent architect – a home for his parents – is here: the Maison Blanche. This listed building has been restored, and at the end of 2005 was opened to the public. For Le Corbusier, it was a chance to experiment with form, structure and technique.

Other work by Le Corbusier can also be seen in La Chaux-de-Fonds; and experts acknowledge that it is impossible to understand fully the great architect's work without a visit here.

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Fontaine Monumentale

Highlights.

Museum of Fine Arts. Swiss and international art from the 19th to 21st centuries; works from Léopold Robert, Le Corbusier, Van Gogh, Derain, Rouault.

Maison Blanche. Le Corbusier's first building; a national monument.

Ancien Manège. One of the most extraordinary buildings in the city. Worth a visit just to see the inner courtyard, a former riding hall.

Crematorium. Inaugurated in 1910: a synthesis of the arts, and a symbol of the regional style of Art Nouveau.

L'heure bleue. Theatre built in 1837, fully restored in 2003. One of two preserved "Italian-style" theatres in the country, and a national monument.

Villa Turque. The best known and most remarkable building by Le Corbusier in his home city; completed in 1917.



Art Nouveau balconies



La Chaux-de-Fonds

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Lausanne.

The Olympic capital is also a lively city with a large student population, blessed with an exceptionally rich cultural scene.

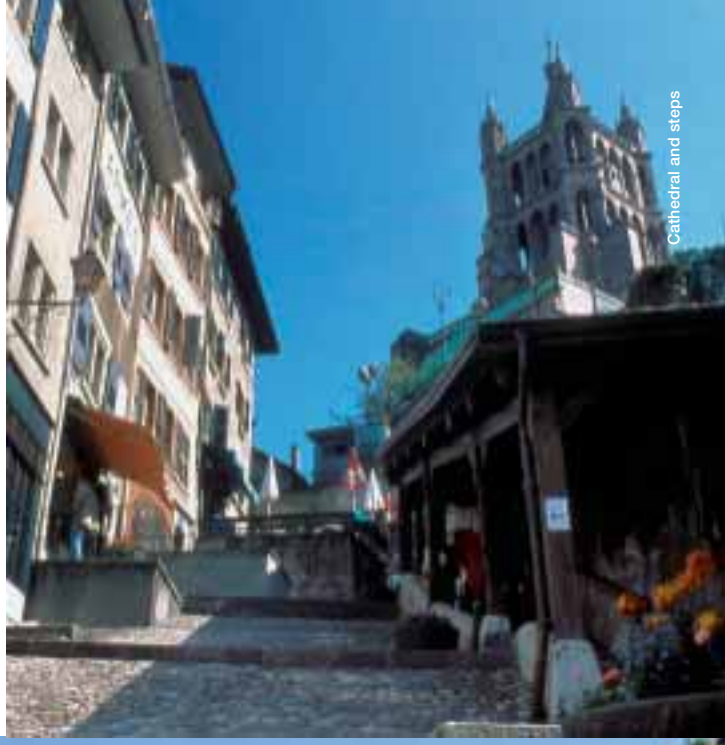


Flon district

Lausanne lies on the slopes above Lake Geneva, the blue waters of the lake at its feet, in a landscape of terraced vineyards that includes the Lavaux UNESCO World Heritage Site. A broad spectrum of facilities for visitors and an exceptionally rich cultural life make this a friendly and attractive destination, an intriguing blend of tradition and modernity.

The International Olympic Committee as well as some 30 national and international associations have their headquarters here, and the city regularly stages world-class sporting events.

Other notable features of the city include its lively and dynamic student population, a beautiful geographical setting that makes for an exceptionally high quality of life, legendary hospitality, and higher educational establishments with an international reputation. Cultural highlights are the Béjart Ballet Lausanne, as well as many museums and galleries. The buzzing city centre sees all manner of events staged for a highly diverse audience, top-class shopping, a very busy nightlife, and some of the best restaurants in Europe.



Cathedral and steps



Park of the Olympic Museum


Park


Star sculpture


Old Town

Art, architecture, design.

Lausanne's broad range of museums includes some highly distinctive collections. The Musée de l'Elysée, for example, contains more than 100,000 original images by the world's most famous photographers.

A world apart is a collection, bequeathed to the city by the artist Jean Dubuffet, of works of art by people on the fringes of society, including prison inmates and artists with mental disabilities. The Collection de l'Art Brut, incredibly rich in both colour and form, is on display in the Château de Beaulieu.

The Fondation de l'Hermitage, which lies in a magnificent park, organizes highly regarded exhibitions of painting and sculpture, with an emphasis on French Impressionism (1850–1920). Mudac (Musée de design et d'arts appliqués contemporains), meanwhile, stages exhibitions of works ranging from glass to textiles and graphic art.

In the past two years Lausanne has undertaken extensive urban redevelopment projects, in particular in the Flon district, where a large complex of warehouses has been transformed into a lively modern quarter with terraces, bars, night clubs and cinemas. The museums housed in the neo-Renaissance building of the Palais de Rumine cover various fields from fine arts to archaeology and natural history, with collections of artworks and objects from all over the world.

The history of the city is closely bound to that of its glorious Gothic cathedral, built in the 13th century. Its elaborately carved sculptures, flying buttresses, windows and pinnacles give its exterior an exuberance that contrasts dramatically with the Protestant austerity of the interior.

Find further offers at MySwitzerland.com



Cathedral at sunset

Highlights.

Cathédrale Notre-Damep Impressive late-Gothic cathedral completed in the 13th century.

Ouchy waterfrontp Beautiful lakeside promenade, with glorious views across Lake Geneva.

Olympic Museump The modern building stands in a large sculpture park, and displays highlights of the Games over the years.

Fondation de l'Hermitagep Patrician house with works of artists from canton Vaud and the rest of Switzerland.

Flon districtp Former industrial area, now a youthful, trendy quarter of the city.

Palais de Ruminep This impressive building from the year 1900 houses the canton's fine arts museum.

Musée de l'Elyséep Beautiful 18th-century building containing thousands of images that shaped the history of photography.

Collection de l'Art Brutp Legacy of the painter Jean Dubuffet. Drawings, sculptures and unusual works by people at the margins of society.



"Les Docks" live music venue



Béjart Ballet

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AlpTransit Infocentre

The new AlpTransit Infocentre is part of the impressive “project of the century”, the New Transalpine Railway (abbreviated in German to NEAT). Passing through 57 kilometres of rock under the Alps, this will be the longest railway tunnel in the world. While the colossal scheme represents a modernization of the public transport infrastructure, it specifically aims to redirect traffic – in particular, goods – onto the railway and away from roads, helping to protect the sensitive alpine environment. As a result, the project has the enthusiastic backing of the Swiss people.

The new Infocentre on the southern side of the Gotthard in the Ticino region makes for a fascinating outing. Audiovisual displays, models and original objects from the excavation bring the project to life, in an exhibition area covering more than 400 square metres. The visitor centre covers not only the science and engineering of the tunnel, but also the alpine environment, the culture, food and history of the Gotthard area, the economy of the valley, and touring possibilities in the region. Admission is free, but a charge is made for joining one of the guided tours of the work site.

Highlights.

Guided visits of the Bodio/Pollegio work site
Guided tours for groups of 10 to 50 persons (larger groups on request). After an introduction to the AlpTransit project, visitors are conducted by a professional guide onto the site and into a transport tunnel.

Tunnel visit at the multifunction work site in Faido
The visit begins at the Infocentre with an introductory talk about the AlpTransit project by a professional guide. Visitors are then provided with safety equipment for a trip into the tunnel, and taken by minibus to Faido and the multifunction work site, calling in at the multimedia exhibition. This tour is for groups of 8 to 24 persons; participants must be between the ages of 14 and 75, and in good health.

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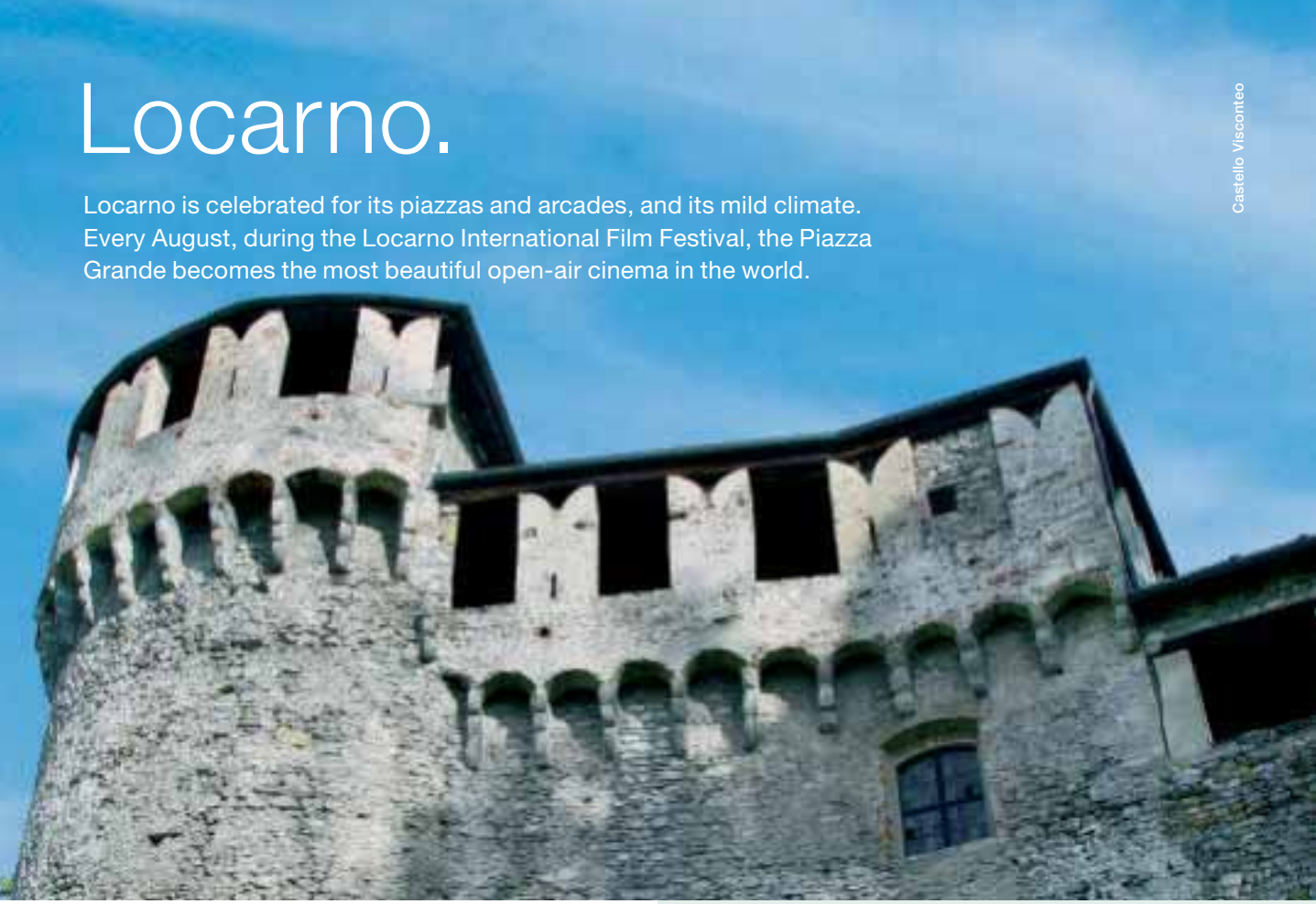
Alp Aelggi above Lungern, Central Switzerland



Aletsch glacier, Valais

Locarno.

Locarno is celebrated for its piazzas and arcades, and its mild climate. Every August, during the Locarno International Film Festival, the Piazza Grande becomes the most beautiful open-air cinema in the world.



Castello Visconteo

The Piazza Grande, setting for Locarno's annual film festival, is the heart of the town centre. In the upper town, patrician houses with concealed balconies bear witness to the supremacy of this once very wealthy town – as does the Castello Visconteo. The Casa Rusca gallery, housed in one of Locarno's most beautiful palazzi, contains work by Dadaist artists, including Jean Arp, among its large collection. Galleries, shops and cafes line the alleys of the town, which boasts the sunniest climate in Switzerland. Locarno's landmark is the pilgrimage church of Madonna del Sasso, with sublime views over the lake and mountains.



Locarno International Film Festival

Highlights.

Madonna del Sassop The sanctuary dedicated to the town's patron saint is the most important place of pilgrimage in Italian-speaking Switzerland.

Castello Visconteo and archaeological museump Collection of Roman glass drinking vessels and receptacles.

Cable car from Orselina to Cardadap The cable car, designed by Mario Botta, reaches the mountain plateau of Cardada in just a few minutes.

Municipal Museum of Modern Art, Asconap The museum is home to Ascona's fine art collection.

Ascona lakefrontp The "open-air salon" of the lakefront promenade is the perfect place to enjoy la dolce vita!

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Botta's church of San Giovanni Battista, Mogno



Madonna del Sasso, Orselina



Cardada

Art, architecture, design.

From Borromini to Botta

Ticino's architectural tradition dates back to the early Middle Ages. One of the most impressive legacies of Locarno's rich history is the imposing Castello Visconteo, a castle fortress built by the dukes of Milan as one of the most magnificent of the Lombard region.

The collection of the archaeological museum housed there includes numerous prehistoric finds from the vicinity, as well as rare drinking vessels and glass receptacles from the Roman period.



Lakefront, Ascona

Beside the castle stands the Rivellino, a defensive bastion. Historic documents and a series of recent studies suggest that it is the work of Leonardo da Vinci.

An impressive piece of modern architecture of great interest is the Orselina-Cardada cable car, designed by the celebrated Ticinese architect Mario Botta, which draws the eye up to the mountain above Locarno.

Beautiful churches

Locarno, and its region, boasts many fine sacred buildings. These include the convent church of San Francesco, with its illusionistic frescoes; the church of San Antonio, with its magnificent marble altars; the Chiesa Nuova, with its impressive statue of St. Christopher and its early Baroque stucco work; and the Romanesque church of San Vittore in Muralto.

Still something of a secret is the church of San Giovanni Battista, designed by Mario Botta, in the village of Mogno in the Maggia valley, 40 km from Locarno. Built in 1996 to replace an earlier building destroyed by an avalanche, the church has a wonderfully elegant interior of white marble from the village of Peccia, and black granite from the Maggia valley.

Lucerne.

A stunning setting, world-famous sights, richly endowed museums and some exciting modern architecture make Lucerne a thrilling city to visit.



Water Tower and Chapel Bridge with Mt. Pilatus

Lucerne – The CitypThe LakepThe Mountainsp
You could say that Lucerne is the essence of Switzerland – because the best that our country has to offer comes together here: city, lake and mountains. Whatever it is that you expect from a city, Lucerne is unlikely to disappoint.

Lucerne will, however, surprise you, time and again. Cutting-edge design – in the form, say, of the stunning KKL Luzern (Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne) designed by Jean Nouvel – fits in here just as well as the famous sights that have been around for hundreds of years. The museums, theatres and festivals combine the traditional with the modern, the established with the ground-breaking, to make Lucerne a cultural city like no other.

Savour for yourself the pleasures our city has to offer, enjoy the spectacular landscape, stroll along the waterfront, and don't be surprised if you find you don't want to leave. Lucerne's charm is legendary: welcome to our city.



Hotel Astoria



Lucerne Blues Festival, © Heinz Steimann



Lucerne Festival at the concert hall of the KKL Luzern



PALACE LUZERN



Rosengart Collection

Art, architecture, design.

An architectural tour of Lucerne

After the old Lucerne railway station burned down in 1971, the Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava designed a stylish replacement. The main portal of the former station, which survived the fire, now stands as an arch in the middle of the square in front of the new station. Next to the station stands the KKL Luzern (Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne). Under a gigantic roof of 12,000 square metres, the Parisian architect Jean Nouvel brought together a concert hall, a multipurpose hall, the convention centre and the city's museum of art.

Close by, where the River Reuss flows out of the lake, stands the covered wooden Chapel Bridge, built in the 14th century as part of the city fortifications. In the 17th century, a cycle of paintings was hung beneath the eaves. After the major fire in 1993, the bridge was rebuilt, true to the original. Also part of the city's fortifications was the octagonal Water Tower, built in the 13th century, and subsequently used as an archive, prison, and torture chamber.

On the left bank of the Reuss stands the Jesuit Church; built in 1699, it was the first large Baroque church in Switzerland. A little further downstream stands the Mill Bridge (Spreuerbrücke), decorated with a cycle of 67 pictures painted by Kaspar Megliger between 1626 and 1635, depicting the Dance of Death.

Overlooking the Old Town is the Musegg Wall with its nine towers. The three main squares in the Old Town – the Weinmarkt, Hirschenplatz and Kornmarkt – are surrounded by historical houses painted with colourful frescoes. The Town Hall on the Kornmarkt was built between 1602 and 1606. The Hofkirche is regarded as the most important Renaissance church in Switzerland; its lavish altar features a relief carved in 1500, depicting the Death of the Virgin.

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Highlights.

PALACE LUZERNp Right on the waterfront promenade of Lake Lucerne, the hotel offers turn-of-the-century opulence combined with the most up-to-date facilities. Relaxation and rejuvenation are promised at the in-house PALACE SPA.

Hotel Astoria/The Hotelp The annexe of the Astoria, a business and conference hotel, is by the leading architects Herzog & de Meuron. Meanwhile The Hotel, designed by the celebrated architect Jean Nouvel in 2000, combines spirituality and elegance with timeless design.

Grand Casino Luzernp This neo-Baroque palace built in 1882 takes its inspiration from the French Renaissance.

Rosengart Collectionp Housed in an imposing Neoclassical building, this gallery is known for its important collections of work by Paul Klee and Pablo Picasso, among others.

Hotel Schweizerhof Luzernp This five-star hotel located in Lucerne's Old Town offers breathtaking views over the lake and mountains. A beautifully restored architectural gem with a rich history, it offers all the facilities of a modern luxury hotel.

KKL Luzern (Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne)p The KKL Luzern on Europaplatz offers culture, conferences and cuisine at the highest level. The 1,840-seat concert hall is one of the finest in the world.

LUCERNE FESTIVALp One of the world's leading classical music festival cycles. Every year its three festivals – at Easter, in the summer, and a piano festival each autumn – attract some 120,000 visitors.

PilatuspAttractions on the 2,132-metre mountain on Lucerne's doorstep include the steepest cog railway in the world, two cable cars, hotels and restaurants, the largest suspension rope park in Central Switzerland, and the longest summer toboggan run in the country (1,350 m).

Radisson SAS Hotelp Close to the railway station, the KKL Luzern and the lake, the four-star-superior hotel offers everything a business traveller could need, with its 165 rooms, design restaurant, LUCE bar and wine lounge, and an event space covering 1,000 m².


Radisson SAS Hotel Luzern


Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern


Pilatus/Luzern



Grand Casino Luzern

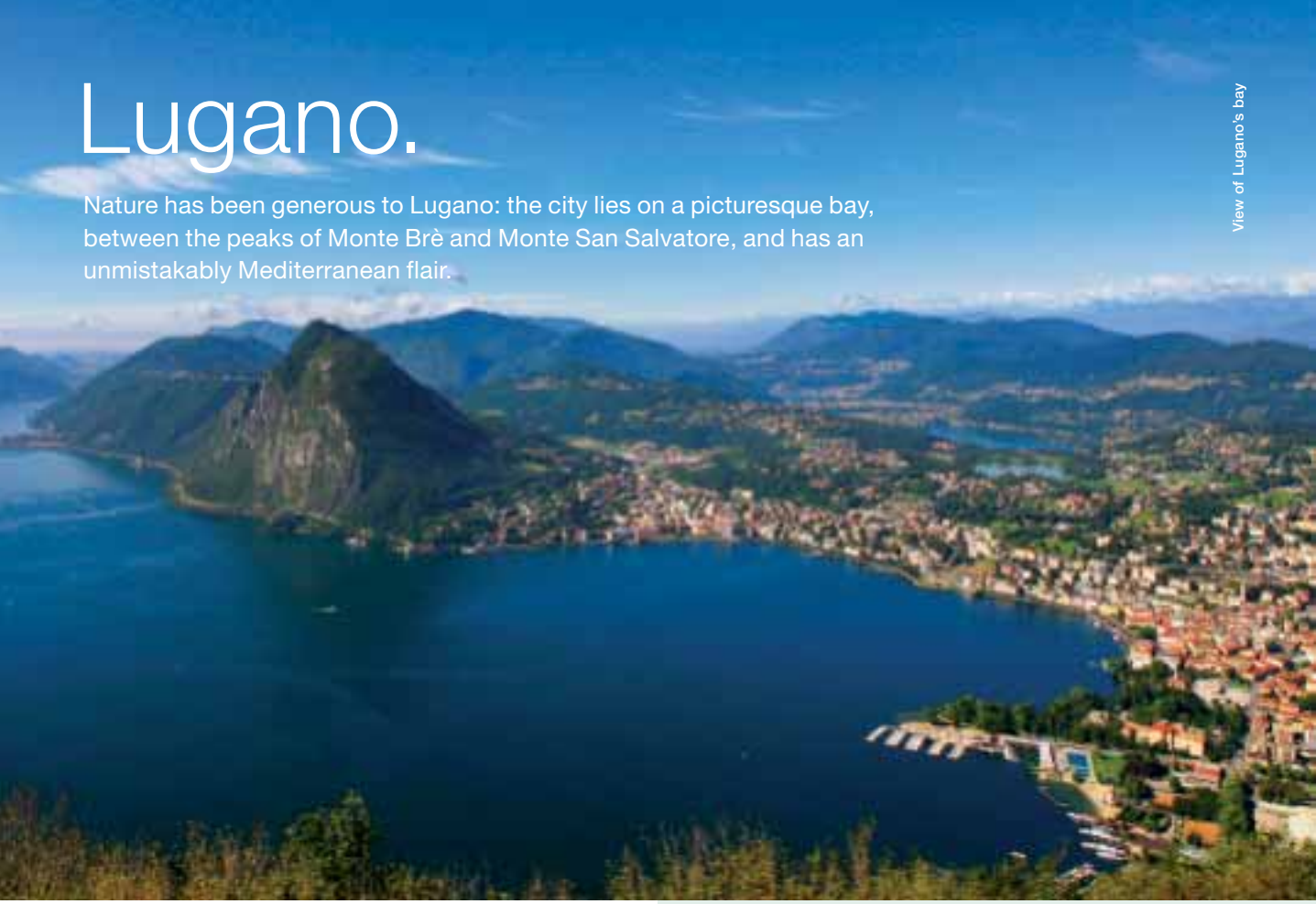
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Lugano.

Nature has been generous to Lugano: the city lies on a picturesque bay, between the peaks of Monte Brè and Monte San Salvatore, and has an unmistakably Mediterranean flair.



View of Lugano's bay

Lugano offers world-class culture and architecture in the setting of a charming small city. The climate is Mediterranean, giving rise to a lush vegetation; the character of the inhabitants is distinctly Latin; and the blend of Italian ease and Swiss efficiency, unique.

The city abounds with gentle temptations: stroll past the chic shop windows of the Via Nassa, perhaps, or amble along the lakefront promenade with an ice cream. Relax in one of the city parks and gardens, or stop for a drink in one of the stylish bars and cafes. Take a dip in the lake – or head up into the mountains of the pre-Alps, just a short hop away.



Piazza della Riforma

Highlights.

Piazza della Riformap The city's open-air living room is framed by magnificent palazzi and charming terrace cafes.

Parco Cianip The grounds of the Villa Ciani (home of the city's fine arts museum), stretching down to the lakeshore, have a seductively southern feel.

Cattedrale di San Lorenzop The city's cathedral stands on Roman foundations, and boasts a magnificent Renaissance façade and opulent frescoes in the interior.

Church of Santa Maria degli Angiolip The monumental fresco in the interior depicts the Passion of Christ, and was painted in 1529 by Bernardino Luini.

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Church of San Rocco



Palazzo Ransila



Piazza dell'Indipendenza, with sculpture by Igor Mitoraj

Art, architecture, design.

Lugano is home to a large number of museums and galleries, which display their wealthy collections with characteristic flair. Thanks also to a busy programme of top-class exhibitions, they enjoy a worldwide reputation.

The city has a very rich musical life as well. A cycle of festivals of all kinds takes place in the open air from spring through to autumn; while in the cooler months, the city's concert halls stage a lively programme of classical music concerts of international standard.



Lake promenade

The region as a whole is packed with artistic and historical gems, from local museums to churches built in all manner of styles. Last, but certainly not least, are the buildings that showcase the latest in modern Ticino architecture.

The most celebrated of the contemporary architects is without doubt Mario Botta. Among his works are the Banca del Gottardo building, the Biblioteca Salita dei Frati, and the Palazzo Ransila, all in Lugano, as well as the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli up on Monte Tamaro. All are fine examples of the exceptionally rich and creative Ticino School.

While Mario Botta may be the most famous in his field today, it is well worth seeing the work of those who prepared the way for the current generation of architects. Doyen of them all is Rino Tami, as his Biblioteca Cantonale (cantonal library) in the Parco Ciani shows (built in 1940, renovated in 2005). Other outstanding exponents have included Alberto Camenzind and Augusto Jäggli; Tita Carloni, who designed the Casa del Popolo and the Palazzo Garzoni; Peppo Brivio, who built the striking Albaironi apartment block in Massagno; and Carlo Ponti.

Martigny.

Surrounded by slopes covered in vineyards, the city that was capital of the Alps in Roman times has treasures in store both for wine lovers and history buffs.

View from the vineyards over Martigny

This sunny city in the Valais prides itself on its lively programme of art exhibitions; recent new attractions include a museum devoted to the St. Bernard dog, the star of the nearby Grand St. Bernard Pass route over the Alps into Italy. Trains of both the St. Bernard Express and the Mont Blanc Express begin their journey here in Martigny, offering unforgettable mountain excursions, among the best in the Valais.

Art, architecture, design.

As soon as you arrive, you'll see the oversized statues in the streets, inviting you to embark on a journey of discovery through the town's galleries and art exhibitions.

Fondation Pierre Gianadda
Built around the remains of the oldest Gallo-Roman temple in Switzerland, the Fondation Pierre Gianadda regularly serves as the venue for important exhibitions by artists of the rank of Picasso, Chagall and Balthus. It is also home to a Gallo-Roman Museum, an Automobile Museum, a sculpture park and a pavilion (open summer only) devoted to Leonardo da Vinci.

Highlights.

St. Bernard Museum. This museum, open all year, is devoted to the celebrated breed of dog – and also showcases the history of the Grand St. Bernard Pass and hospice.

Roman amphitheatre. During the summer months, the arena is the atmospheric setting for an open-air cinema. In autumn, cow fights are staged here.

Hamlet of Plan-Cerisier. Walk up through the vineyards to the Mazot-Musée, the smallest museum in Switzerland, housed in a tiny chalet.

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Fondation Pierre Gianadda



Dogs of the St. Bernard Museum



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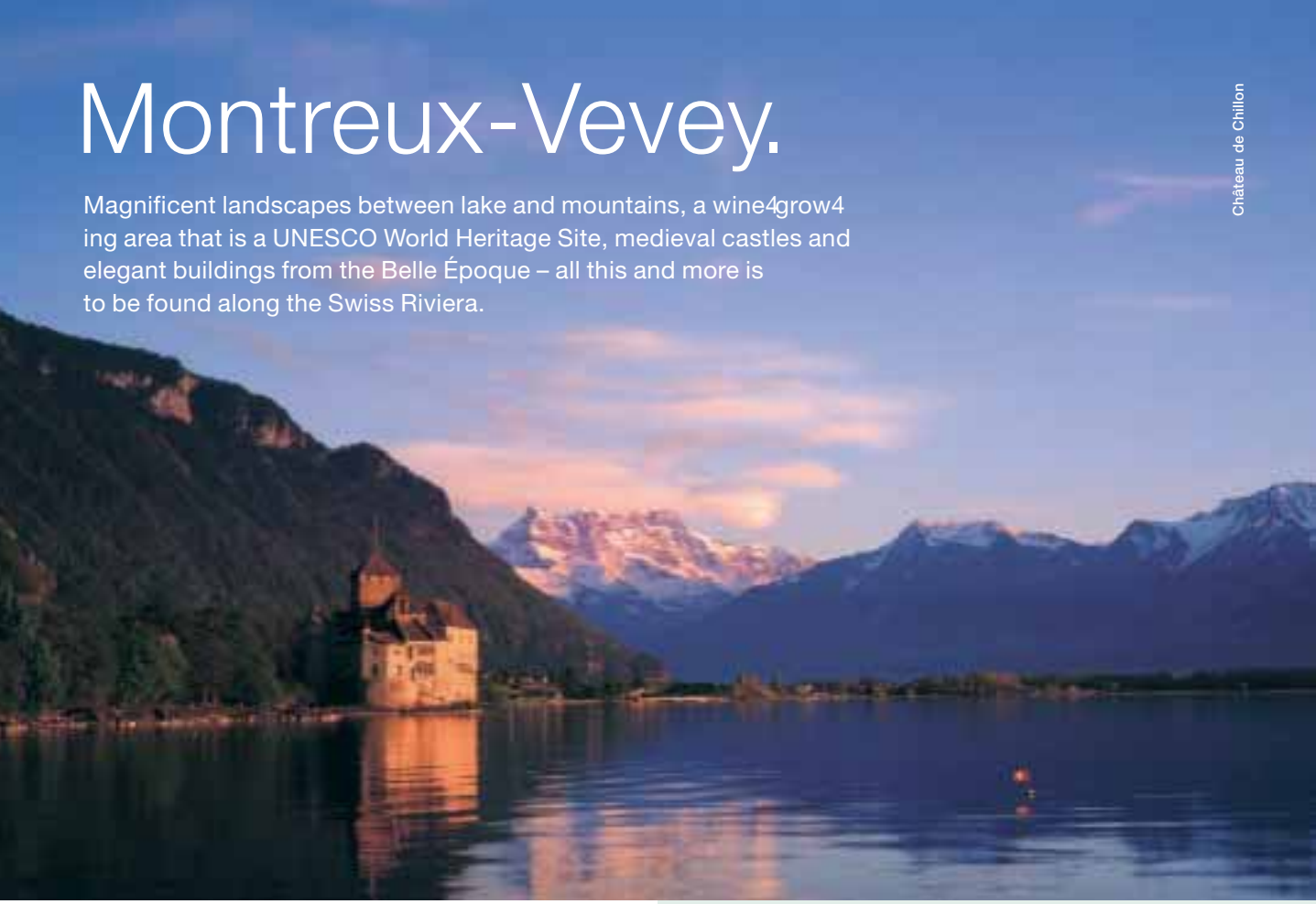
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Château de Chillon

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Market beside the Grenette building, Vevey

Highlights.

Montreux Jazz Festival: 4–19.7.2008
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www.montreuxjazz.com

Septembre Musical: 30.8.–14.9.2008
This festival of classical music has been staging top4level concerts for more than 60 years. www.septmus.ch

Montreux Noël: 27.11.–24.12.2008
This Christmas market has 120 delightfully decorated chalets and other attractions – including the chance to visit Santa Claus' house, 2,000 metres up. www.montreuxnoel.ch

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Montreux seen from the lake


Montreux Jazz Festival

Art, architecture, design.

Montreux

The music city of Montreux is a historic resort, full of elegant build4 ings from the Belle Époque, offering guests exceptional variety. The enchanting Belle Époque hotels have been tastefully restored and equipped to satisfy the most discerning guests. Health and wellbeing are a local speciality: at the wellness centres and clinics along the Swiss Riviera you can rest and revitalize both body and soul. Montreux4Vevey is also home to numerous private schools, frequented by students from all over the world.


Lavaux, UNESCO World Heritage Site

Vevey

Over the years a diverse cultural scene of the highest quality has evolved in Vevey. The “Town of Images” is home to many treasures of the visual arts, as well as museums such as the Vevey Historical Museum, the Jenisch Museum, the Alimen4 tarium (Food Museum) and the Swiss Camera Museum. The picturesque Old Town, with its boutiques and flower4lined lakeshore promenade, is a delightful place to stroll and shop.

Lavaux

The wonderfully scenic wine4growing region of the Lavaux, with its steep terraced vineyards and magnificent views over lake and mountains, was recently inscribed on UNESCO’s list of World Heritage Sites. The area’s fine wines, with their subtle flavours, are the perfect complement to the gastronomy of the Montreux4 Vevey region, which encompasses local specialities and the finest haute cuisine, world4renowned for its inventiveness as much its variety. In all, 17 of the region’s restaurants have been awarded coveted stars or chef’s hats; between them they have scored no less than 8 Michelin stars and 274 GaultMillau points.

Neuchâtel.

Neuchâtel lies between the lake of the same name and the lower slopes of the Jura mountains: a setting of magical charm.



Old Town and lake

Below the castle and the collegiate church spreads a labyrinth of car4free alleys. Many of the old houses are built of yellow sandstone, which led the novelist Alexandre Dumas to describe them as appearing “as if carved out of butter”. Recent years have seen some stylish modern buildings added to the list of sights.

Art, architecture, design.

At one end of the Old Town, the 12th4century castle and colle4giate church together form an Acropolis4like blend of the sacred and secular. Down on the lake, the Hôtel Palafitte, origin4ally built for the Swiss national exhibition Expo.02, is particu4larly noteworthy. The hotel’s high4tech pavilions are built on stilts and seem to float over the water, blending in beautifully with the lakeside setting. On the hillside above the town stands the Centre Dürrenmatt, designed by the architect Mario Botta. It celebrates the work of the Swiss novelist and playwright Friedrich Dürrenmatt, who lived in Neuchâtel until his death in 1990.

Highlights.

Old Town. At its heart are the castle, collegiate church, and the many 17th4 and 18th4century houses built of yellow sandstone.

Musée d’art et d’histoire de Neuchâtel. Work by Swiss artists, ceramics and porcelain, and the extraordinary automata built in the 1770s by local watchmaker Pierre Jaquet4Droz.

Laténium. Archaeological museum and park, home to 50,000 historic and prehistoric objects.

Centre Dürrenmatt. Mario Botta’s museum devoted to the novelist and playwright is a magnificent architectural monument.

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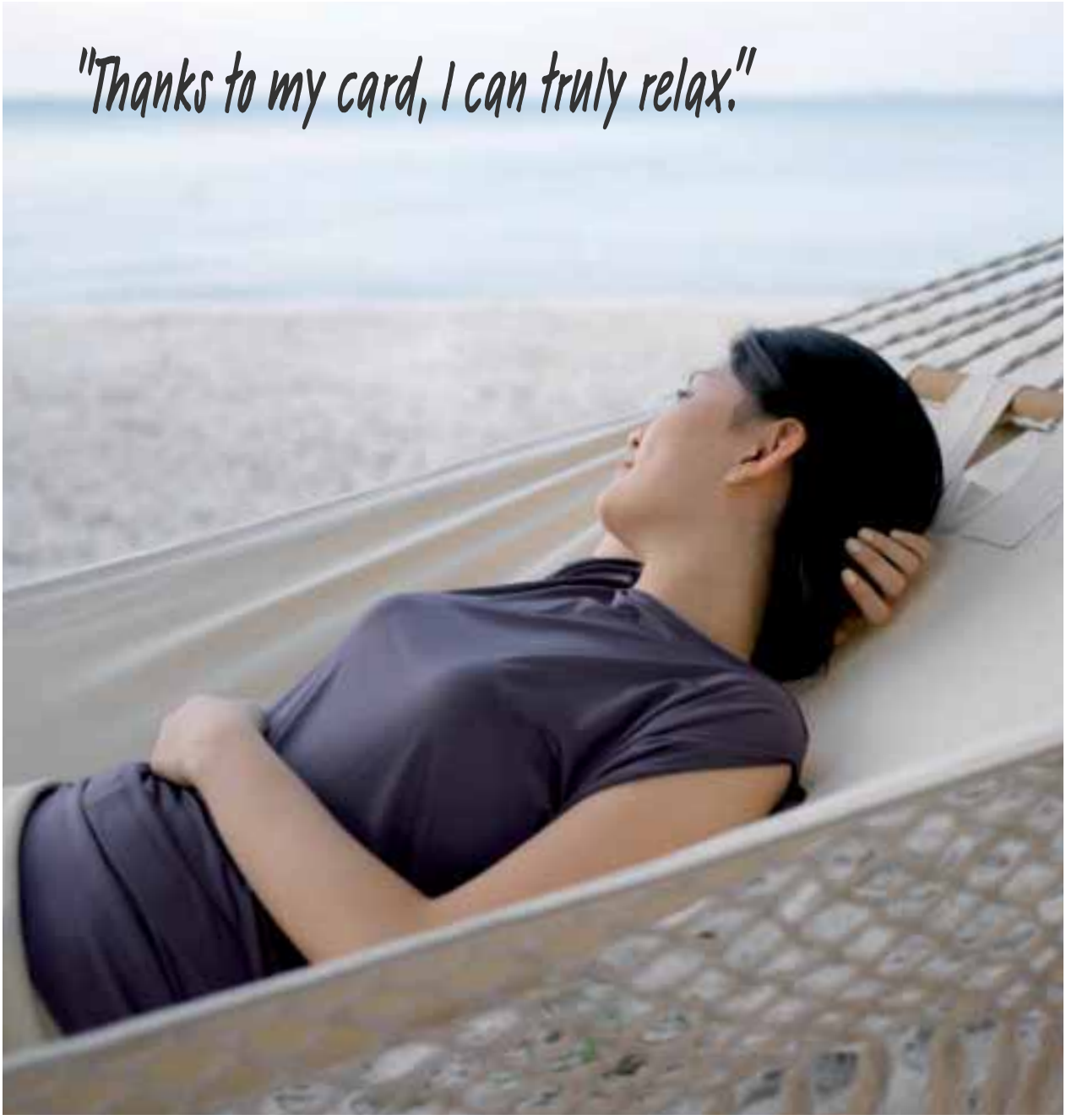
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Schaffhausen.

The mightiest waterfall in Europe, a city celebrated for its 171 oriel windows, the pretty town of Stein am Rhein and the Klettgau wine region: all are well worth a visit.

Boat ride at the Rhine Falls

Nature, culture, quality of life.

The Rhine Falls are an unforgettable sight. 150 metres wide and 23 metres high, with an average of 600 cubic metres of water plunging over the precipice every second, the Falls offer visitors a first4class natural spectacle that is both inspiring and refreshing. The largely car4free Old Town of Schaffhausen, meanwhile, has a well4preserved medieval heart of romantic alleys and spacious squares. The seductive charm of the past remains intact to this day: Schaffhausen's Old Town is above all a space for living, for shopping, culture and leisure.

Art, architecture, design.

The Hallen für Neue Kunst (Contemporary Art Spaces) is an impressive gallery showing major works by contemporary artists such as Joseph Beuys, Robert Mangold and Bruce Naumann. The Museum zu Allerheiligen, meanwhile, is home to paintings and sculptures from the late Middle Ages up to the present day.

Highlights.

A taste of wine culture. Greeting by a winegrowing expert; tour of the vineyards; aperitif and lunch at a beautiful location; and ride on a horse4drawn carriage through the vineyards.

Night-watchman tour through the Old Town. Explore the Old Town of Schaffhausen at nightfall, guided by a night watchman. On the way, you'll learn about the culture and history of the town, and hear the odd scary story – all brought vividly and thrillingly to life.

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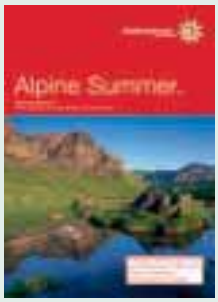
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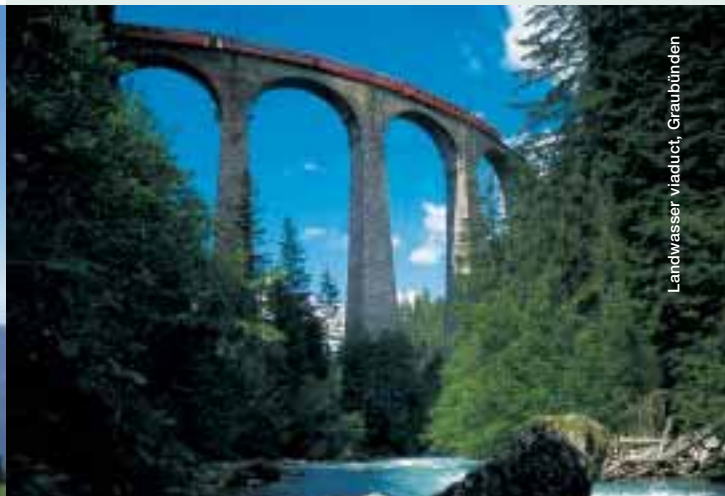
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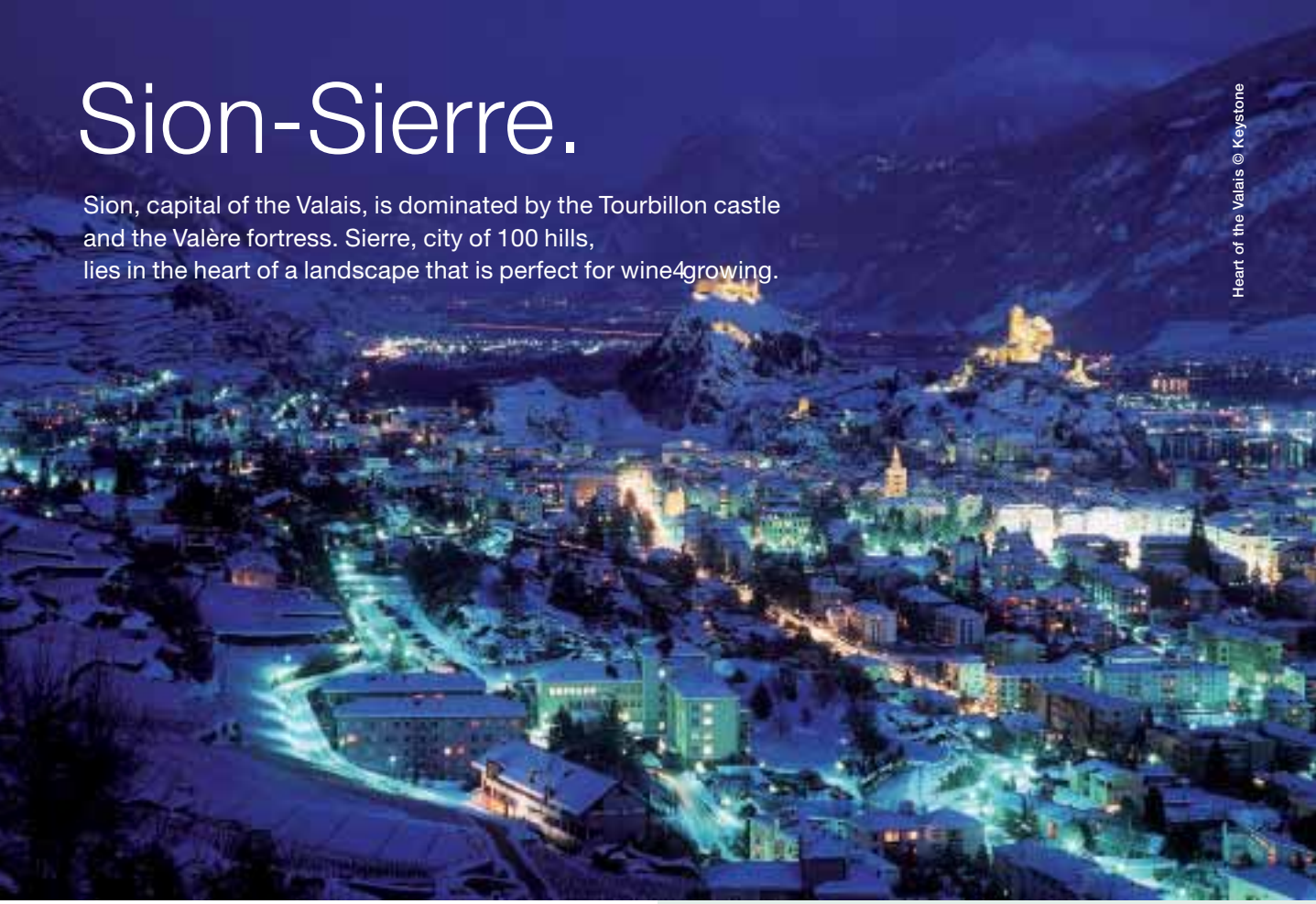
Hochalp, Appenzellerland, Eastern Switzerland



Landwasser viaduct, Graubünden

Sion-Sierre.

Sion, capital of the Valais, is dominated by the Tourbillon castle and the Valère fortress. Sierre, city of 100 hills, lies in the heart of a landscape that is perfect for wine4growing.



Heart of the Valais © Keystone

Already from far away you can make out the ruins of Tourbil4lon castle towering high over Sion, and, close by, the fortress of Valère. The Old Town and museums, in addition to the castles, bear witness to Sion's history of wealth and power. Sierre, meanwhile, set in a hilly landscape, marks the bound4ary between Lower and Upper Valais. This region is perfect for wine4growing; and the town, blessed with an exceptionally high number of sunshine days every year, is well known for its hospitality.

Highlights.

Fortress of Valère (11th century). The city's oldest church is here, a surprisingly harmonious blend of Gothic and Romanesque art. The church is also home to the oldest playable organ in the world.

Musée Valaisan de la Vigne et du Vin. This museum is divided between two sites, Sierre and Salgesch, linked by a Vineyard Walk winding between the vines. In the Château du Villa in Sierre, a permanent exhibition covers wine and the culture sur4rounding it; while the Zumofenhaus in Salgesch is dedicated to the work of the wine growers.



Light show, Sion

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Château du Villa


Town hall


The castles of Tourbillon and Valère in Sion

Art, architecture, design.

Maison Supersaxo: a Renaissance jewel

This house was built in the early 16th century; a Gothic staircase leads up to rooms that contain the finest woodwork of the late4 Gothic (“flamboyant”) style in Switzerland. The panelled ceiling was made and decorated by the artist Jacobinus de Malacrida.

Sion, city of lights

Throughout the year various son et lumière shows take place. These tours begin at the town hall in the heart of the Old Town, and lead to the foot of the Valère fortress, where an unforgettable spectacle unfolds, involving 300 spotlights and 40 loudspeakers.


Heart of the Valais

Caves de Courten

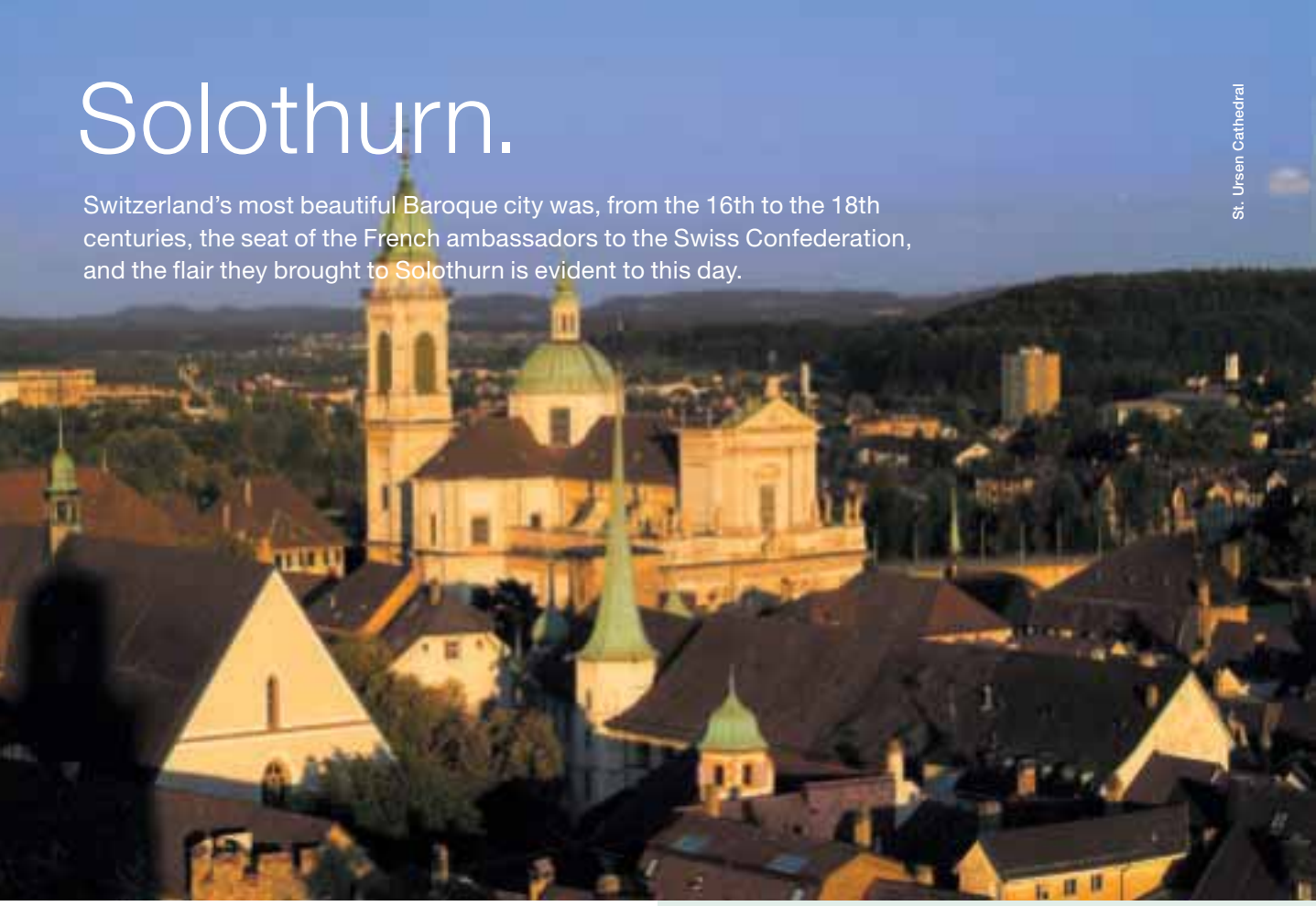
In 1997, a local association was set up to promote the use of the magnificent cellars of the Maison de Courten in Sierre for cultural purposes. The main events are theatre festivals which take place every spring and autumn; in addition, the venue stages two or three exhibitions every year.

Château du Villa

The foundation stone of this remarkable building was laid in the 16th century by a local patrician family. The octagonal tower, the main building and the east wing are the oldest parts of the château. Over the course of many generations, the owners made various improvements and changes; in the middle of the 20th century, the site passed into the public ownership of the city.

Solothurn.

Switzerland's most beautiful Baroque city was, from the 16th to the 18th centuries, the seat of the French ambassadors to the Swiss Confederation, and the flair they brought to Solothurn is evident to this day.



St. Ursen Cathedral

Solothurn is like a house that has many stylish rooms and a large garden. Throughout the Old Town you will stumble across magnificent sacred buildings, monumental fountains and ancient towers. It is easy to enjoy the city's pleasures: amble along the beautiful alleys, stroll around the atmospheric Saturday market, sit at a pavement table at a street cafe, or while away leisurely hours at one of the riverside bars; and to crown the day, indulge in the city's fabulous cuisine. To top it all, the city has a vibrant cultural life, with fascinating museums and a lively programme of festivals covering everything from film and litera4 ture to open4air classical music concerts.



Museum of Fine Arts

Highlights.

Old Town. A delightful blend of Italian grandeur, French charm – and long4standing Swiss4German tradition.

Jesuit Church. A jewel: Baroque stucco work of the very finest quality, in one of the most beautiful Baroque churches in Switzerland.

St. Ursen Cathedral. Built in an early Neoclassical style, the cathedral has eleven altars, eleven bells and a flight of steps divided into three sets of eleven: all examples of Solothurn's mystical fascination with the number eleven.

Clock Tower. With its astronomical clock and moving figures, the 13th4century clock tower is the city's oldest structure.

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Clock tower


Jesuit church


Zeughaus (old arsenal)

Art, architecture, design.

Kunstmuseum

The Museum of Fine Arts, a Neoclassical building of the Semper school, houses top-class Swiss art from the 19th and 20th centuries. Among the most important possessions are pictures by Giovanni Giacometti, Albert Trachsel, Félix Vallotton and Hans Berger, as well as an outstanding collection of paintings by Ferdinand Hodler. Particularly well represented are the Solothurn-born artists Otto Fröhlicher, Frank Buchser and Cuno Amiet, and also Max Gubler. Alongside representative works by the sculptors Jean Tinguely, Bernhard Luginbühl and Robert Müller, the museum has important pieces by Meret Oppenheim, Daniel Spoerri, Dieter Roth and Markus Raetz. In addition to all this, the museum is home to works by important foreign artists including Van Gogh, Klimt, Matisse, Degas, Cézanne and Léger.

Highlights of the small collection of Old Masters include the Madonna in the Strawberries (around 1425) by the Master of the Garden of Paradise, and the Solothurn Madonna (1522) by Hans Holbein the Younger.


Altes Spital (former convent hospital)

Completely natural.

Hermitage

Close to the city, the Verena gorge with its hermitage makes for a tranquil escape – and a romantic rendezvous.

Weissenstein

Solothurn's local mountain, 1,300 metres high, with enchanting views of the distant Alps.

Aare

Follow the Aare river by bike, on foot or in a boat. Swimming permitted – and highly recommended!

Naturmuseum

The attractive Natural History Museum has won international awards for its accessible, family-friendly, hands-on and high-quality exhibits.

St. Gallen – Lake Constance.

From World Heritage to contemporary art,
and from the twisting alleys of the Old Town to some stunning modern architecture, St. Gallen is full of thrilling contrasts.



Cathedral

A wonderful synthesis of tradition and progress is the defining feature of St. Gallen – a UNESCO World Heritage city. The Old Town is an expression of medieval civic pride, and reflects the growth of monastic power and splendour in St. Gallen. The boom in the embroidery industry at the end of the 1öth century sparked an enthusiasm for building to the highest artistic standards, and led to the construction of palatial factories, villas and museums, all in the Art Nouveau style. Alongside them, providing a contrasting contemporary touch, are buildings such as Santiago Calatrava's "Mussel", Herzog & de Meuron's imposing Helvetia building up on the Rosenberg, and work by Heinz Tesar.

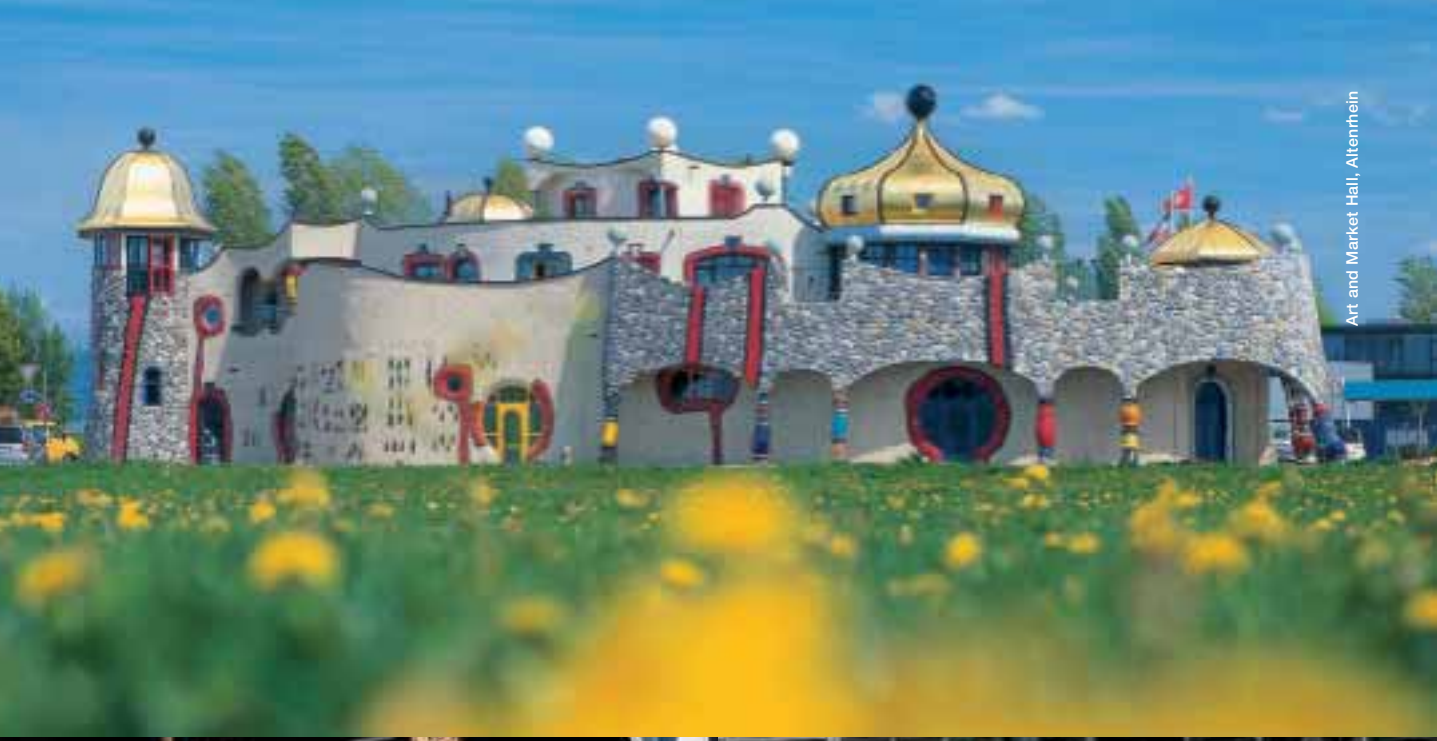
The entire abbey district, with its Baroque cathedral (1755–1767) and former monastery buildings, has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. One of the highlights is the abbey library; its two-storey reading room is a Rococo gem, housing priceless treasures.



Emergency services call centre



Abbey library



Art and Market Hall, Altenrhein



Oriel window



Gallusplatz

Art, architecture, design.

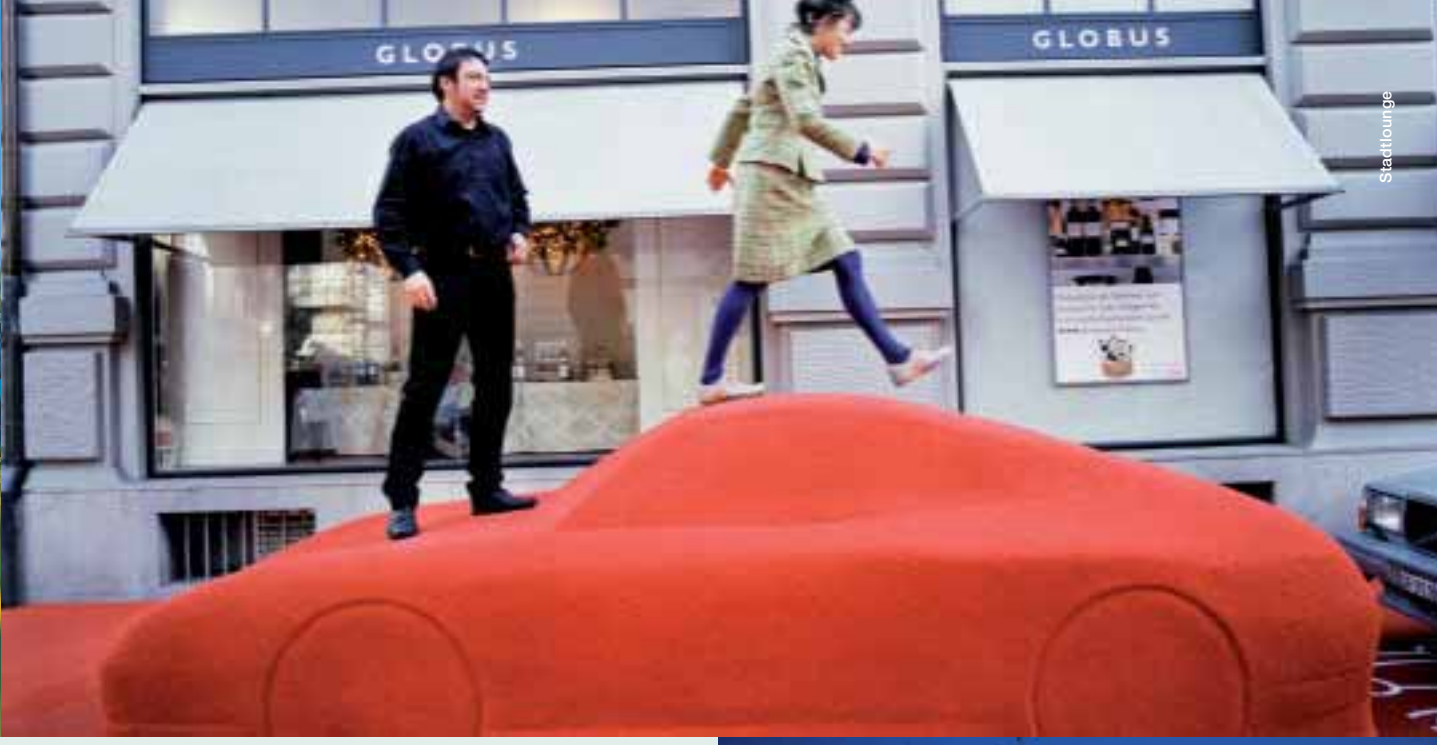
A treasure trove of a very different kind is the Textile Museum, which shows haute couture creations of leading designers alongside traditional embroidery from eastern Switzerland. Both this and the Kunstmuseum (Museum of Fine Arts) were built in classical style, in contrast to the modern Neue Kunst Halle, which is dedicated to the exploration and presentation of contemporary art.

Top-class works by Hans Arp, Joan Mirò and Gerhard Richter are all an integral part of the concept behind the university of St. Gallen (HSG): visual arts and architecture are brought together in a total artwork. Among the city's many charming features are the splendid oriel windows – 111 in all, with names such as "pelican" or "swan". Alongside these are the numerous fountains and sculptures: The Trunk by Richard Serra, the Gauklerbrunnen (storyteller fountain) by Max Oertli, and Roman Signer's Fass (barrel) are just three examples of top-class contemporary art in the public domain.

Stadtlounge – an art installation

The Stadtlounge – "city lounge" – is effectively the largest outdoor living room in Switzerland. The idea for this unusual public project came from the architect Carlos Martinez and the multimedia artist Pipilotti Rist: their creation turns the Bleicheli quarter of the city into a place of encounter and discovery. As if the outdoor space were a lounge, the surfaces are covered with a red carpet; above hang swinging lights, which in the evening create subtly changing effects.

Find further offers at MySwitzerland.com



Stadtlounge

Highlights.

Cathedral. The double-towered cathedral is the last late-Baroque structure to have been built in the Lake Constance region.

Abbey library. One of the oldest and most beautiful libraries in the world, with 150,000 books and 2,100 manuscripts.

History and Folklore Museum. Impressive Neoclassical building with fascinating permanent and temporary exhibitions.

Kunstmuseum. The Museum of Fine Arts houses paintings and sculpture from as far back as the Middle Ages.

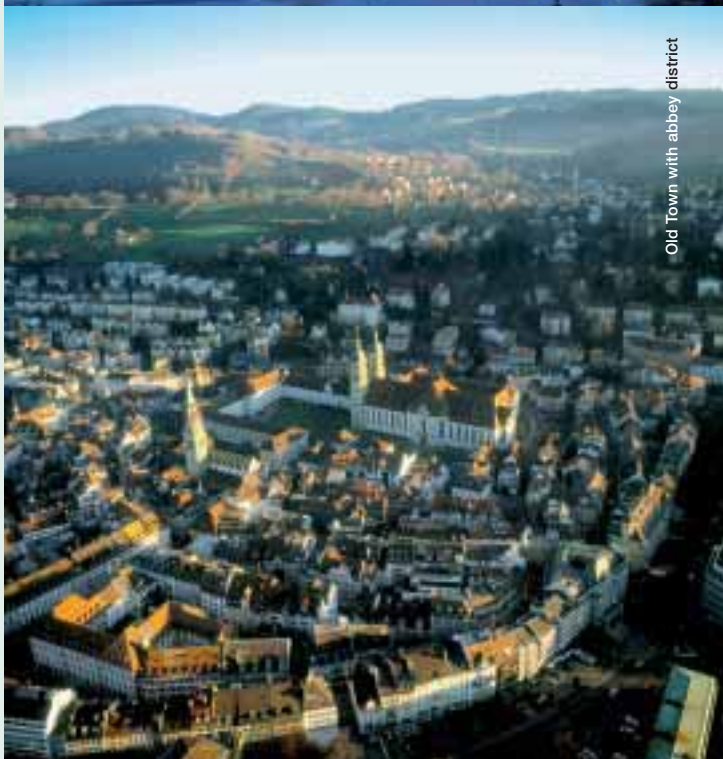
Neue Kunst Halle. Exhibition site for a lively modern art scene.

Textile Museum and Textile Library. Collection with a comprehensive survey of embroidery and design.

University of St. Gallen. Works by Arp, Mirò, Braques and Tapies are integrated into the overall architectural plan, along with creations by Disler, Richter and Cucchi.

Kunstgiesserei and Kesselhaus. The “art foundry” and “boiler house” are used both for casting artists’ sculptures, and for displaying work by Hans Josephsohn.


Cathedral in winter


Old Town with abbey district

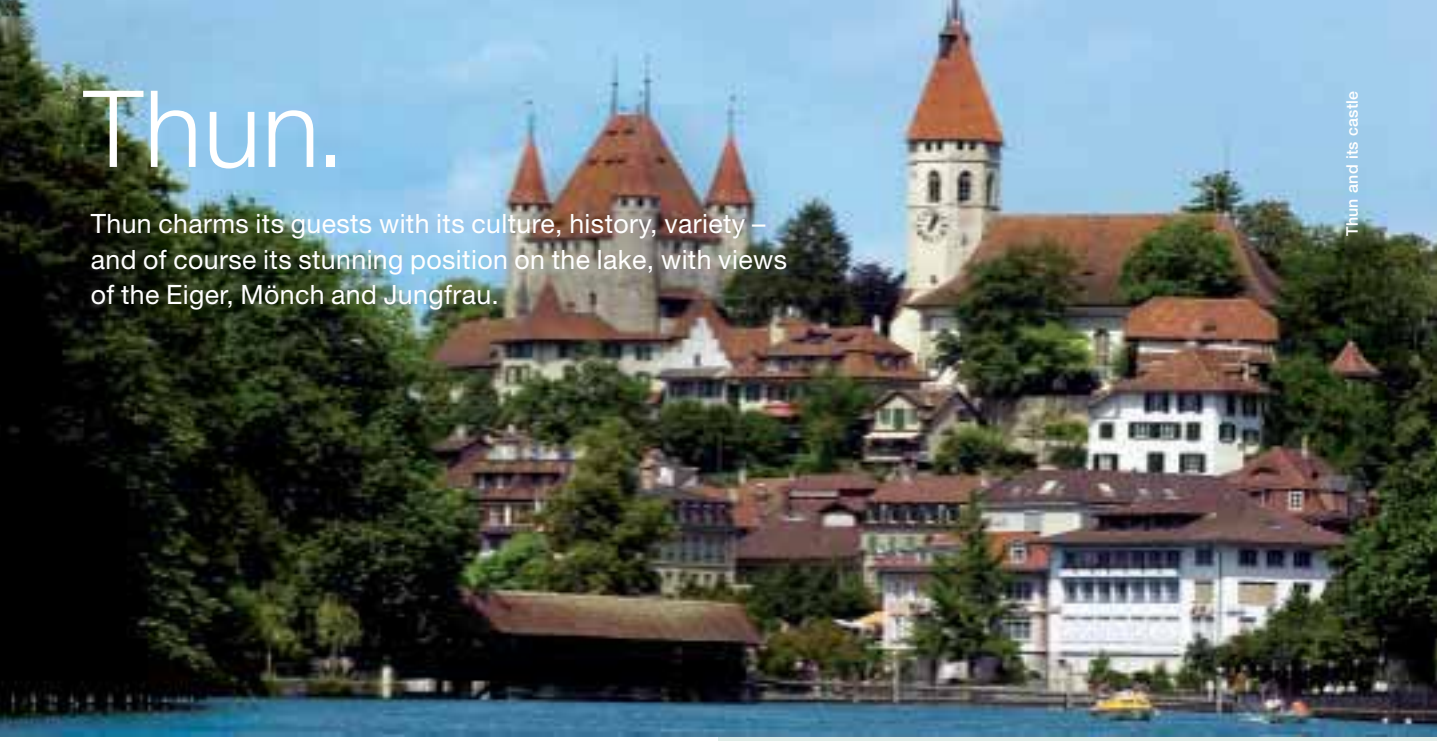
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Thun.

Thun charms its guests with its culture, history, variety – and of course its stunning position on the lake, with views of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau.



Thun and its castle

Both locals and visitors love Thun: life is so colourful here. The city's superb position on the lake, close to the mountains, makes it perfect for a host of activities and adventures. From shopping to sport, culture to haute cuisine, Thun has something for everyone.

Art, architecture, design.

Medieval might and the charm of the Belle Époque come together in Thun in a unique way.

The Kunstmuseum, an art museum housed in the former Grand Hotel, stages temporary exhibitions, mostly of contemporary art.

From the high castle there is a sweeping view over the picturesque Old Town, and over to the Scherzligkirche. This was first mentioned in the year 762, and is one of the twelve legendary 1,000-year-old churches around Lake Thun.

Highlights.

Tours of the town. Guided walks through town every Saturday from June to October.

Museums. Thun's cultural offering is greatly enriched by museums such as the Kunstmuseum, Museum of Gastronomy, Wocher Panorama and Vaporama.

Shopping. Thun's attractions include Switzerland's largest shopping island and the old town's elevated pavements.

"West Side Story" on Lake Thun. This musical on one of the world's loveliest lakeshore stages will play from 15.7.–30.8.2008.

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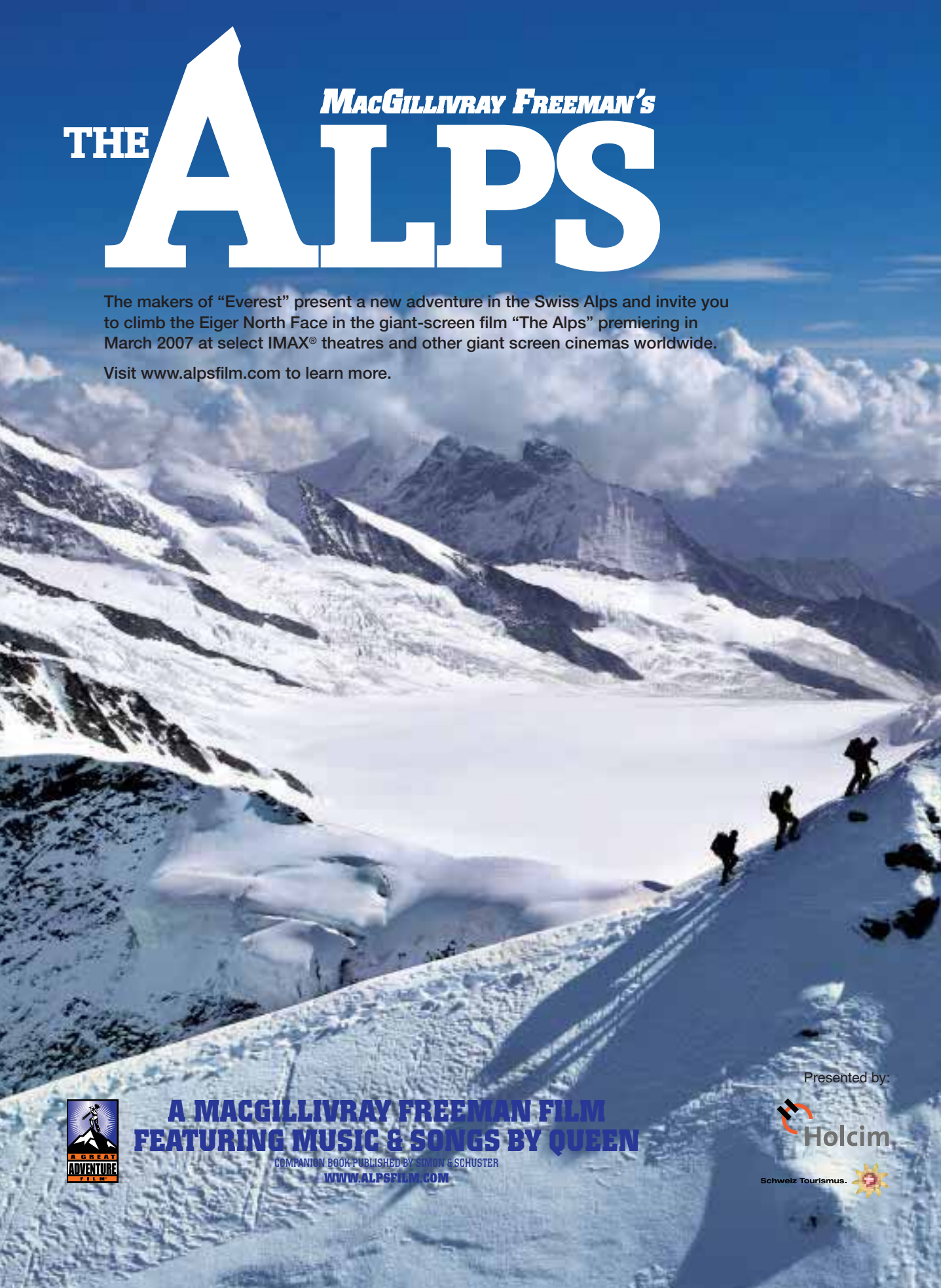
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Mühleplatz



Schadau Castle and the steamer Blümlisalp


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Vaduz.

The capital of the Principality of Liechtenstein offers top-class cultural attractions as well as relaxation in a gloriously unspoilt alpine setting.



Vaduz Castle – Liechtenstein's trademark

Vaduz Castle, the country's emblem, embodies the distinctive atmosphere of small but special Liechtenstein, and the fascinating history of its princely house. The principality's historical sites, fine architecture and wealth of art are set among vineyards and an enchanting mountain landscape.

Art, architecture, design.

Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein

The national Museum of Fine Arts is the outstanding cultural highlight of Vaduz. The building has gained international recognition in its own right, winning prizes and plaudits for exemplary design. The exhibits range from works by the Old Masters to contemporary art.

History, culture and natural spaces

The displays in the three unconventional buildings of the Liechtenstein National Museum bring cultural history, national history and natural history to life. Nature, meanwhile, and the principality's extensive hiking and mountain-biking, are just minutes away.

Highlights.

Vaduz Castle. The princely residence can be reached on a romantic woodland walk (it is not, however, open to the public).

"Visiting Vaduz with Goethe" theme trail. Discover 17 cultural, architectural and other attractions in and around Vaduz, following in the footsteps of the poet.

Princely winery. The Fürstliche Hofkellerei, beautifully located among the vineyards, attracts wine lovers from throughout the region.

Traditional houses. Many buildings in the middle and upper village are protected structures.

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Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein



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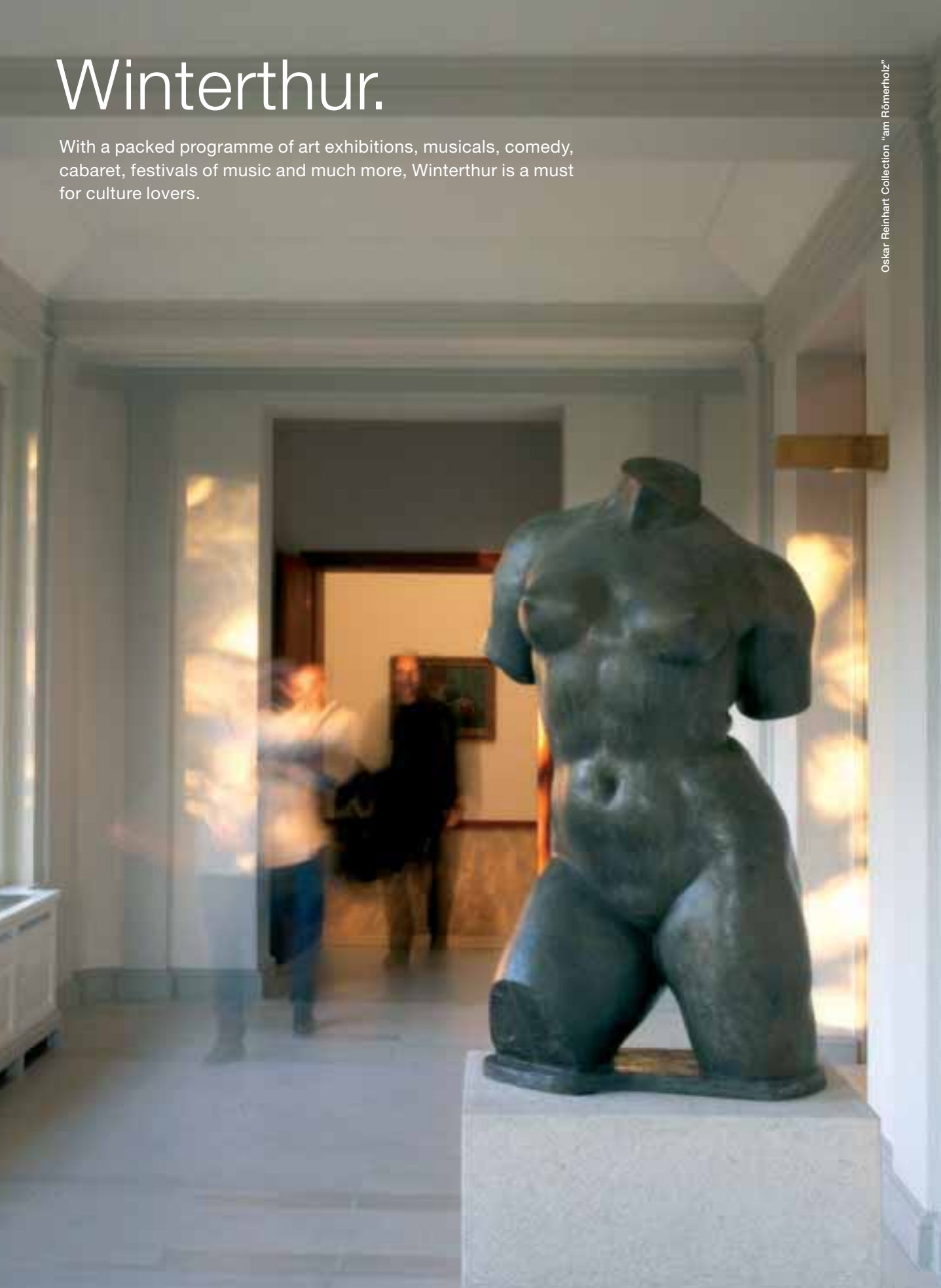
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Winterthur.

With a packed programme of art exhibitions, musicals, comedy, cabaret, festivals of music and much more, Winterthur is a must for culture lovers.



Oskar Reinhart Collection "am Römerholz"

The medieval heart of this city is buzzing at all times of day. Shops, restaurants, markets and festivals constantly bring new life into the historic centre.

The Casinotheater Winterthur, a platform for cabaret and comedy, has become something of a national institution. Through the Swiss Foundation of Photography and the Photo Museum, the city has become a major international centre for the medium. In all, Winterthur has 16 museums, displaying everything from old watches and rare coins to crafts and natural history. Among those with an international reputation are the Oskar Reinhart collections, as well as the Villa Flora and the Museum of Fine Arts.

For many years now musicals have been staged at the City Hall with great success. Top-quality classical music concerts are given by the orchestra of the Musikkollegium Winterthur, while big international names perform on the stages of the music clubs and other venues. A busy programme of festivals – such as the Afro-Pfingsten festival of African music – gives the city an atmosphere unlike any other in Switzerland.



Museum of Fine Arts Winterthur



Michael Lio: View from the Red Tower


Oskar Reinhart Museum “am Stadtgarten”


Oskar Reinhart Collection “am Römerholz”



Fotomuseum Winterthur

Art, architecture, design.

A world-class centre of the arts

In Winterthur visitors find themselves enjoying the city’s rich culture in unusual settings. The Oskar Reinhart Collection “am Römerholz”, for example, and the collection of French art by Hedy and Arthur Hahnloser, are on show in the original homes of their founders. More recently, the new Zentrum für Fotografie has created waves both here and on the international art scene. A must-see is the Kunstmuseum: the extension building is one of the most widely discussed new museum buildings by the architects Gigon & Guyer.

Fotomuseum and Fotostiftung

The Photo Museum Winterthur and the new Swiss Foundation of Photography occupy a former factory building. Together, they account for the largest centre for photography in Europe. Thirty bequests with more than 30,000 original prints by renowned photographers make up the foundation’s collection; around ten exhibitions every year cover all aspects of the art.

Oskar Reinhart Collection and Museum

The name of the art collector Oskar Reinhart is closely connected with Winterthur. In the private setting of his former home “am Römerholz”, the stylistic confidence of this lover of art shines through, over every period: Cranach, Holbein, Rubens, Manet, Renoir and Picasso are just some of the artists represented in this remarkable collection. Another building also carries his name: the Oskar Reinhart Museum “am Stadtgarten” shows around 600 paintings from three centuries. One of the highlights is Caspar David Friedrich’s “Chalk cliffs on Rügen” – one of the key works of German Romanticism.

Gottfried Semper

The Stadthaus (city hall) on the Stadtgarten was built in 1865 by the architect Gottfried Semper. Today the sandstone building with its impressive temple front and flight of steps is considered one of the most important buildings of the 19th century.

It is our pleasure to help plan your holiday. Call us: 00800 100 200 30 (freephone).



Museum of Fine Arts

Highlights.

Oskar Reinhart Museum “am Stadtgarten”. 600 works by German, Swiss and Austrian artists.

Fotomuseum and Fotostiftung. A converted factory is the home for the largest centre for photography in Europe.

Kunstmuseum Winterthur. Important collection of works from the Impressionist period through to the present day.

Katharina Sulzer Square. The former industrial area has been converted into a successful combination of living and working space.

Oskar Reinhart Collection “am Römerholz”. Famous private collection with 200 works from the Late Gothic up to the threshold of the classical modern period.

Villa Flora. The early-20th-century ambiance of the former home of the collectors is the perfect setting for this outstanding collection of Fauvist and Nabis works.

City church with twin towers. Winterthur’s landmark, at the centre of the Old Town, with a Baroque organ and cycle of wall paintings.



Old Town church tower



Katharina Sulzer Square

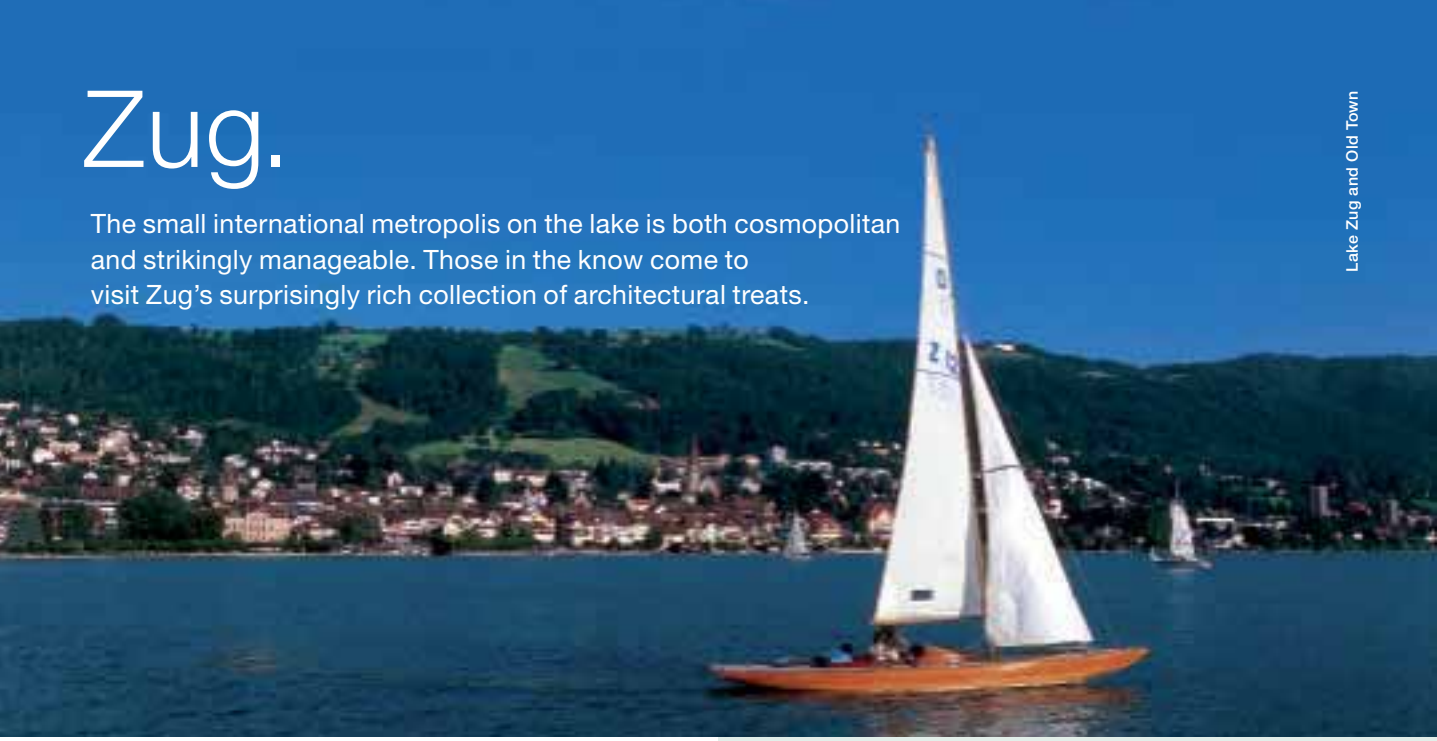
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Quality. Our Passion.

Zug.

The small international metropolis on the lake is both cosmopolitan and strikingly manageable. Those in the know come to visit Zug's surprisingly rich collection of architectural treats.



Lake Zug and Old Town

Zug is still something of an insider secret, but with its charming Old Town right beside the lake, its friendly inhabitants and the vicinity of the surrounding nature, it is well worth visiting. It has surprises in store, too: not least a rich culture, and some exciting modern architecture.

Art, architecture, design.

The highlight

Zug is home to some thrilling modern art. And right at its heart is the station, with light installations by James Turrell: at night, the building's sophisticated play of light turns it into a living work of art.

A special gem

Magnificent medieval houses decorated with coats of arms and a variety of motifs; impressive towers, castles and other historic buildings; and a host of excursions: all contribute to Zug's special charm.

Highlights.

Old Town. Among Zug's characteristic towers is its emblematic Zytturm (clock tower). Climb it for an impressive view of the city and its surroundings.

Culture. The Casino and Burgbachkeller theatres stage performances by national and international companies.

Kunsthaus Zug. The fine arts museum has a particularly important collection of works from the Viennese Modern Age.

Burg Zug. The castle is now home to the city's museum.

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Zürich.

Art in Zürich is not only to be found in the auction houses, galleries and museums: it is everywhere, in the very fabric of the city, in its secret spaces and public places.



View over Zürich

Zürich – the unique mix

Zürich has everything a city can offer, right in the heart of Switzerland: gastronomy, shopping, culture, art, nightlife, nature, sport and events. The choice is almost endless, the quality very high. In 2007/08, for the sixth time in a row, Zürich topped the world league of cities – ranked according to quality of life – drawn up by the consulting group Mercer. And Zürich, of course, is the cultural capital of Switzerland.

From Zürich-South to Zürich-North, up-and-coming new quarters are redefining the Zürich style, making fresh connections between the old and the new. In Zürich-West, gastronomy, art galleries and parties are the buzzwords. During the warmer months, open-air events – from the Street Parade to the Zürich Festival – get the pulse racing. In winter, the Christmas markets create a magical atmosphere, against the backdrop of the distant snow-capped Alps.



Masoala rainforest in Zürich Zoo



Schiffbau



Kunsthaus



Kunsthaus



Restaurant La Salle, in the Schiffbau

Art, architecture, design.

Galleries

Together with New York and London, Zürich belongs in the league of the world's top art-dealing cities, with a dense concentration of galleries. In the art district around Rämistrasse, the venues are minutes' walk apart; at the site of the former Löwenbräu brewery, galleries stand side by side.

Museums

Out of more than 50 museums in Zürich, around 14 are devoted to art. The building that houses the Swiss National Museum, more than 100 years old, is reminiscent of a fairytale castle – its inner courtyard, surrounded by towers, is a unique setting for exhibitions; behind the walls, history comes alive in a very special way. After three years of renovations, the Rietberg Museum, one of the main international centres for non-European art, has reopened its doors; the architecturally spectacular "emerald", as the new building is known, consists of a glass pavilion that fits in perfectly among the surrounding villas.

New arrivals

Great artists and architects such as Santiago Calatrava, Max Bill and Tilla Theus have all left their marks on Zürich. Currently, the world-renowned architect Norman Foster is adding new areas to one of the world's finest hotels, The Dolder Grand: a listed building, it will reopen its doors in 2008. In the former industrial quarter of Zürich-West, factory buildings have found a new lease of life as venues for cultural activities – the Schiffbau, for example, where once ships were built, is now a setting for jazz concerts, theatre productions and fine cuisine. On the site of a former paper factory, Sihlcity is a whole new urban quarter, which successfully blends modern and older architecture.

Find further offers at MySwitzerland.com



Grossmünster Cathedral

Highlights.

Kunsthaus Zürich. The city's fine art collection is one of the leading museums in Europe.

Blüemlihalle. The Giacometti Hall in the administrative building of the city police is delightfully colourful.

Opernhaus. Zürich's opera house stages more premières than any other in Europe.

Grossmünster Cathedral. The starting point for the Protestant Reformation in German-speaking Switzerland, with a Romanesque crypt, a tower with spectacular views, and the Museum of the Reformation.

Fraumünster Church. The church of a former convent for women of noble birth is now home to a series of celebrated stained-glass windows by Marc Chagall.

Masoala rainforest hall. This hall in Zürich Zoo is both a home for exotic animals as well as an intriguing piece of unpretentious architecture.

Nova. A three-dimensional colour display, the first of its kind in the world, which uses 25,000 lights to create a variety of effects.



Opera house



The former Löwenbräu brewery

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There are hotels that you never forget. They cast a spell over you, time and again. These enchanting properties have two key assets: innovative, exciting design twinned with Swiss hospitality and tradition; and an intoxicating joie de vivre. It is hardly surprising, then, that Switzerland's Design & Lifestyle hotels attract a young, urban clientele – and all those who are young at heart.

Breathtaking design

It is a committed, uncompromising and highly expressive approach to architectural design that gives the Design & Lifestyle hotels their distinctive feel. The perfect interplay of colours, forms, materials, space and light becomes a source of inspiration for all guests with a strong sense of style – and a passion for life.

An infectious joie de vivre

Interesting guests, an upbeat mood, plenty of space to be yourself, attractive meeting areas, gastronomic treats and fine wines from an extensive cellar: all these are also key features of the Design & Lifestyle hotels. And they all help to conjure up a stimulating atmosphere and uplifting sense of wellbeing that have to be experienced first-hand.

A fascinating mixture

With their thrilling mixture of innovative architecture and irrepressible joie de vivre, the Design & Lifestyle hotels offer guests an all-round experience that is unforgettable. Enviably located in charming towns and cities full of cultural attractions, they also boast their own oases of retreat, where you are free to make your own rules. There's certainly no shortage of space in which to dream – something that makes the Design & Lifestyle hotels so easy to fall in love with.

For details of how to order a brochure, turn to page ö8.



Hotel Jade, Geneva

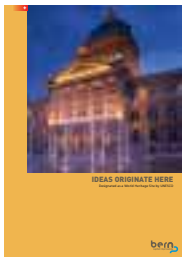


Hotel Allegro, Bern

For further information on the following cities, order a free brochure:



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Tax free/VAT refunds
Visitors from abroad are entitled to a refund of the 7.6% Swiss VAT on items purchased during their visit (min. purchase amount = CHF 400). To obtain the refund, please ask for form 114ö in the shop.

Opening times
The following opening times apply – please be aware of local and regional variations:

Banks and Bureaux de Change
Cities: Monday to Friday/8.30am to 4.30pm, closed on Saturdays. Rural areas: Monday to Friday/8.30am to 12am and 2 to 4.30/5.30pm, closed on Saturdays. In important business centres, the counter may remain open over midday. Currencies, travel and euro cheques can be exchanged at the Bureaux de Change desks found in airports and most stations (open from 6am to öpm and often until 11pm).

Local authorities and offices
Monday to Friday/8 to 12am and 2 to 5/6pm.

Shops
Shops are open daily from 8/8.30am until 6.30pm and on Saturdays until 4pm. Department stores and other shops often remain closed on Monday mornings in the cities. Late night shopping takes place once a week until öpm. In smaller towns and outside of the city centre, shops often close for 1 to 2 hours over midday. In most holiday destinations, the shops may remain open for longer, and are sometimes also open for a few hours on Sundays.

Motorway toll
A fee of CHF 40 per calendar year is charged for all vehicles (including rental cars) with a total weight of up to 3.5 tons (including trailers and caravans). This motorway sticker is valid for 14 months (i.e. from 1 December to 31 January).

Snow chains and studded tyres
Clear signs show when and on which mountain road snow chains and studded tyres must be used. Cars with studded tyres can only be used on ordinary roads between 1 November and 31 March. They may not be used on motorways (Autobahnen) or on national highways (Autostrassen), except in the Gotthard and the San Bernardino tunnels. Maximum speed is 80km/h.

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Seals of quality.

Dear guest, look out for the Q4
In the “Swiss Tourism Quality Seal” programme the leading tourism organizations and a total of 2,400 establishments are working towards a clearly defined level of service quality on behalf of the guests. The Category 1 Quality Seal underscores their determination to provide high-quality service. The Category 2 Quality Seal is awarded to establishments and organizations that have also been appraised by outside testers. The Category 3 Quality Seal is awarded to establishments that apply a comprehensive quality management system (QMS).

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Rate your hotel.

Your opinion is important. Take five minutes of your time. You rate, others find.
www.MySwitzerland.com/hotelrating

Hotel classification by hotelleriesuisse.

★ -Hotel = simple
★★ -Hotel = comfortable
★★★ -Hotel = good mid-class
★★★ˢ -Hotel = good mid-class superior
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★★★★ˢ -Hotel = first class superior
★★★★★ -Hotel = luxury
★★★★★ˢ -Hotel = luxury superior

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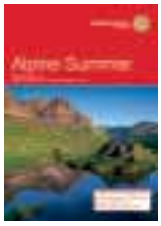


Design & Lifestyle hotels.

NEW: Style hotels
Classy, original, and uncompromisingly chic: the brochure for Design & Lifestyle hotels features properties that offer all-round style in a sophisticated setting for design-conscious guests with a passion for life.



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