Tour Code
SW1

ADVENTURESABROAD

SWITZERLAND

An In-depth Adventure by Rail

14 days

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Day 1 Arrive in Zurich

Welcome to Switzerland, a nation where precision meets alpine grandeur, and where three cultures—German, French, and Italian—converge in harmonious confederation. Zurich, your gateway to this remarkable journey, stands as Switzerland's largest city and economic heart, yet retains the charm of a medieval town centre along the shores of pristine Lake Zurich.

Transfer independently to your hotel and settle into this cosmopolitan city where banking prowess coexists with vibrant cultural life. The cobblestone streets of the Altstadt whisper stories of guilds and merchants, while the gleaming Bahnhofstrasse represents modern Swiss efficiency.

This evening, gather with your fellow travellers for our first meal together, beginning what promises to be an extraordinary exploration of Switzerland's most treasured landscapes and cultural gems.

Overnight in Zurich.

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

Day 2 Zurich: City tour - Train to Bern

This morning we step into the spiritual heart of Zurich at Fraumünster Cathedral, where Marc Chagall's luminous stained glass windows transform sunlight into poetry of colour. These five magnificent windows, created in 1970, each tell biblical stories through Chagall's distinctive palette—azure blues dancing with golden yellows in a symphony of light that has captivated visitors for decades. The cathedral itself rises from the foundations of a Benedictine abbey established in AD 853, its slender blue spire a beacon over the Limmat River.

We then board Switzerland's legendary rail system for our journey to Bern, the nation's capital since 1848. This UNESCO World Heritage medieval town centre, dating to 1191, unfolds like a living museum along the serpentine curves of the Aare River. As we walk through arcaded streets lined with Renaissance fountains depicting colourful figures, limestone buildings reveal stories of centuries past.

Bern holds special significance as the birthplace of Einstein's theory of relativity—conceived while he worked at the patent office—and as the cradle of Toblerone chocolate, that iconic triangular treat inspired by the Matterhorn's peak.

PLEASE NOTE: Most longer journeys use Switzerland's extensive and efficient public rail service. While not strenuous, this ambitious trip requires managing your own luggage at stations and walking to nearby hotels.

Overnight in Bern.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 Bern - Train to Solothurn & Montreux

Our morning train carries us to Solothurn, Switzerland's finest Baroque jewel, where Italian grandeur marries French elegance with German precision. From the 16th to 18th centuries, this Catholic enclave served as residence for French ambassadors, their influence evident in every ornate façade and graceful fountain. Eleven churches and chapels mirror eleven fountains and towers—a numerical harmony that speaks to the town's meticulous planning.

The magnificent St. Urs Cathedral commands attention with its façade donated by Louis XIV himself, while an Italian-style staircase sweeps dramatically to its entrance. Inside, Baroque stuccos create an atmosphere of celestial beauty. The intact town walls, built according to military engineer Vauban's principles, remind us of turbulent times when beauty required protection.

We then journey toward Lake Geneva, leaving German-speaking Switzerland for the French cultural sphere—a transition as dramatic as crossing between countries. The landscape transforms from snow-capped peaks to Mediterranean climate, earning this region the nickname

"Swiss Riviera." Montreux's palm-studded lakefront boulevards welcome rock stars and jazz enthusiasts alike, hosting one of the world's most prestigious jazz festivals annually.

The flower-bordered promenade linking Vevey to Montreux and onwards to Chillon Castle beckons for evening strolls, where the lake mirrors Alpine peaks in its crystalline waters.

Overnight in Montreux.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 Montreux: Gruyeres & Lausanne

We begin with a railway journey to Lausanne, where Lake Geneva's shores have inspired countless poets and writers from Wordsworth to T.S. Eliot. This artistic heritage lives on in the Palais de Beaulieu and Theatre Municipal, which continue hosting world-class performances. The Place de la Palud, lined with Renaissance façades and graced by the charming 17th-century Fountain of Justice, forms the beating heart of this intellectual city.

The 12th-century Cathedral stands as one of Switzerland's finest Gothic achievements, while the 15th-century Castle St-Marie now houses local government. As home to the International Olympic Committee, Lausanne maintains its sporting legacy through the Olympic Museum, which we visit after connecting with our bus transport.

Our afternoon unfolds in the picturesque town of Gruyères, Canton Fribourg, where cobblestones slope toward the town fountain before rising toward the imposing castle. Twin-windowed houses with wide eaves line the main street, their 15th and 17th-century architecture creating a perfectly preserved medieval tableau.

The 15th-century castle, former seat of the Counts of Gruyères, commands breathtaking views across wooded slopes to jagged mountain peaks. After touring these historic chambers and enjoying free time to explore local museums, we dine in Gruyères before returning to Montreux's lakeside elegance.

Overnight in Montreux.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 Montreux - Train to Fribourg: Walking Tour - Train to Interlaken

From Montreux, we journey to Fribourg, dramatically perched on a rocky promontory and embraced on three sides by the meandering Saane River. This remarkably preserved medieval town represents one of Uechtland's largest historical treasures, where over 200 unique Gothic façades from the 15th century create an enchanting streetscape.

Ramparts stretching over two kilometres once protected this strategic settlement, while the Cathedral of Fribourg rises as the crown jewel with its extraordinarily beautiful stained-glass windows. Construction began in 1283 and continued through several stages, ultimately creating a monument to St. Nicholas crowned by a 74-metre tower offering panoramic vistas across the surrounding countryside.

Our relaxed walking tour reveals why Fribourg ranks among Switzerland's most "walkable" towns, where every corner unveils architectural treasures and historical narratives spanning seven centuries.

We continue by train to Interlaken, whose very name reveals its geographical poetry—"between the lakes"—as it nestles between Lake Thun and Lake Brienz. Here, crystal-clear mountain streams and cascading waterfalls create a symphony of moving water, feeding the pristine lakes that mirror the surrounding peaks. This location serves as our base for exploring the Bernese Oberland's most spectacular alpine scenery.

Overnight in Interlaken.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Interlaken: Excursion to Jungfraujoch

Today we embark on one of Switzerland's most celebrated railway journeys, ascending to Jungfraujoch—the "Top of Europe"—via train and cogwheel railway. At 3454 metres (11,330 feet), this represents Europe's highest railway station, where the Aletsch Glacier stretches before us as the longest glacier in the Alps and a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Our route passes beneath the legendary Eiger Mountain, whose north face has challenged mountaineers for generations, before entering a 6-kilometre tunnel carved through solid rock. When we emerge at Jungfraujoch, the world unfolds in breathtaking panorama—the immense Aletsch Glacier flowing like a frozen river in one direction, while the entire Interlaken valley spreads below us like a detailed map.

On clear days, the vista encompasses peaks stretching to horizons that seem to touch eternity itself. The engineering marvel that brought us here—completed in 1912 after 16 years of construction—represents Swiss determination to make the impossible accessible.

Our circular return route via Wengen provides different perspectives on this alpine amphitheatre, where villages cling to mountainsides and meadows carpet the valleys in emerald perfection. As we return to Interlaken, the contrast between the glacier's eternal ice and the valley's human warmth creates lasting memories of Switzerland's dramatic geography.

Overnight in Interlaken.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Interlaken: Train Excursion to Lucerne

We journey by train to Lucerne, where the 600-year-old covered Kapellbrücke bridge has become Switzerland's most recognised symbol, drawing travellers from every corner of the globe. Yet Lucerne's significance transcends tourism—this region cradles the very soul of Switzerland, for here in 1291, representatives of three cantons swore the oath that founded the Swiss Confederation.

The city straddles the Reuss River where it exits Lake Lucerne, creating a natural amphitheatre of water and mountains that inspired countless artists and writers. The old town enchants with narrow cobblestone streets and buildings representing architectural styles from multiple centuries, while the famous covered wooden bridges tell stories both ancient and enduring.

The restored Kapellbrücke, with its distinctive water tower landmark, has witnessed nearly seven centuries of Swiss history. Meanwhile, the intact Spreuerbrücke features painted panels illustrating "The Dance of Death"—medieval artwork that reminds viewers of life's precious fragility while celebrating its beauty.

After exploring Lucerne's medieval quarters and perhaps taking refreshment at one of the charming lakeside cafés, we return by train to Interlaken. The evening remains free to wander this Alpine village, where traditional Swiss architecture frames views of the Jungfrau massif, and where the gentle sound of cowbells drifts down from high pastures.

Overnight in Interlaken.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8 Interlaken - Train to Zermatt

This morning our train climbs into the heart of the Swiss Alps toward Zermatt, a remarkable mountain resort where no cars disturb the alpine tranquility—only electric taxis glide silently through streets that have welcomed mountaineers and nature lovers for over a century. The village exists in the shadow of the Matterhorn, that iconic 4,478-metre (14,692-foot) pyramid of rock and ice whose jagged silhouette has become synonymous with Alpine grandeur.

We board the famous Gornergrat cog railway, an engineering marvel that carries us across stunning bridges, through mountain galleries and tunnels, past idyllic forests and crystalline mountain lakes, with the Matterhorn maintaining constant vigil in our field of vision. The railway climbs to Gornergrat at 3,089 metres, where we find ourselves surrounded by 29 four-thousand-metre peaks in a mountainscape so overwhelming it defies description.

From this elevated perspective, the Gorner Glacier—the Alps' third-largest ice field—flows like a frozen highway between peaks, while Monte

Rosa (known locally as Dufourspitz) claims the title of Switzerland's highest summit. The panorama encompasses geological forces that shaped these mountains over millions of years, creating cathedral spires of stone that pierce the sky with sublime authority.

The thin air at this altitude sharpens every sensation, making colours more vivid and silence more profound.

Overnight in Zermatt.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9 Zermatt & The Matterhorn

For those seeking closer communion with the Matterhorn's majesty, we embark on a cable car journey to the mountain's base, ascending through multiple stages that reveal different perspectives on this geological masterpiece. The first cable car carries us to Furi at 1,865 metres (6,119 feet), where the alpine landscape begins to unfold in earnest.

A second cable car lifts us to Furgg at 2,434 metres (7,985 feet), where the Theodul Glacier and surrounding Alpine peaks create an awe-inspiring panorama that speaks to forces beyond human comprehension. The final cable car ascends to the plateau beneath the Matterhorn itself, where the small lake called Schwarzsee reflects the mountain's imposing face like a natural mirror.

Here, in this flat sanctuary surrounded by vertical grandeur, we walk gentle paths around the lake, breathing mountain air so pure it seems to cleanse the soul. An old chapel by the lake provides a perfect spot for quiet contemplation, where generations of climbers have paused to respect the mountain's power before attempting its summit.

Please note that weather conditions may require alternative sightseeing arrangements.

Those preferring to remain in Zermatt can enjoy the village's mountain panorama and pristine alpine atmosphere, where traditional chalets frame views of the Matterhorn and the gentle sound of streams creates a peaceful soundtrack to mountain contemplation.

Overnight in Zermatt.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Zermatt - Glacier Express Train - St Moritz

Today we board the legendary Glacier Express for one of the world's most spectacular train journeys. This remarkable railway, paradoxically famous as "the slowest express train in the world," transforms travel into an eight-hour meditation on Alpine beauty. Round every curve, mountains reveal new faces—small villages cling to impossible slopes, cows with traditional bells graze emerald meadows, ancient glaciers carve valleys, and azure lakes reflect towering peaks.

The engineering achievement astounds: 291 bridges carry us over gorges and valleys, while 91 tunnels bore through mountain hearts. Much of our route passes through the UNESCO World Heritage Rhaetian Railway landscapes in the Albula and Bernina regions, where railway construction in the early 1900s represented triumph over seemingly insurmountable geographical challenges.

This metre-gauge railway employs rack-and-pinion systems to ascend steep grades and control descents, allowing us to traverse terrain that would challenge mountain climbers. The train's panoramic windows frame an ever-changing gallery of Switzerland's most pristine wilderness, where rushing rivers carve valleys and ancient geological forces have sculpted landscapes of breathtaking beauty.

We arrive in St Moritz late afternoon, transferring to our hotel in this legendary resort that has attracted the elite since the 19th century. Lunch aboard the train is included in lieu of dinner today.

Overnight in St Moritz.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 11 St Moritz Area

St Moritz occupies a privileged position among the world's most exclusive mountain resorts, perched at 1,856 metres (6,089 feet) beside Lake St Moritz and surrounded by peaks like Piz Nair rising to 3,057 metres (10,027 feet). This rarefied destination has attracted royalty, celebrities, and discerning travellers since the 1860s, drawn not only by spectacular Alpine scenery but also by the healing properties of the region's mineral springs.

Our road journey today allows exploration of villages that showcase Upper Engadine's remarkable cultural heritage. We pause in Zuoz, where imposing palatial houses bear witness to turbulent centuries when this village played crucial roles on political and cultural stages. Until the 19th century, Zuoz commanded regional influence, and today it remains one of the Upper Engadine's best-preserved settlements.

We continue to Zernez for museum exploration and lunch, understanding how this gateway community has connected mountain valleys for generations. Weather permitting, September tours may include ascension via gondola to Diavolezza at approximately 3,000 metres elevation, where the high-altitude perspective reveals the Engadine's geological complexity.

Returning to St Moritz, we walk through the village where winter tourism was literally born—this resort hosted the world's first winter Olympic Games in 1928 and again in 1948. The village's elegant boutiques and grand hotels maintain traditions of luxury hospitality while respecting the dramatic natural setting that creates its enduring appeal.

Overnight in St Moritz.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 St Mortiz - Liechtenstein - Appenzell - St Gallen (By road)

We journey by bus to the Principality of Liechtenstein, one of Europe's smallest sovereign states yet boasting one of the world's highest per capita incomes. This 160-square-kilometre (61-square-mile) nation nestled between Switzerland and Austria houses fewer than 40,000 residents, one-third of whom are international citizens drawn by unique economic opportunities.

Liechtenstein's relationship with Switzerland creates fascinating paradoxes: while maintaining independent monarchy and issuing collectible postage stamps, the principality uses Swiss currency, postal and telephone systems, and relies on Swiss diplomats for international representation. No border formalities separate the countries, though passport stamps provide treasured souvenirs of this diplomatic curiosity.

In Vaduz, the capital built around its medieval castle, we explore narrow streets and visit the National Museum, understanding how this Alpine microstate balances tradition with modern financial innovation.

Continuing to Appenzell, we discover one of Switzerland's most traditional towns, where folk arts flourish and house facades display whimsical paintings that tell stories of rural life. With approximately 7,000 inhabitants, Appenzell serves as cultural heart of Switzerland's smallest canton, Appenzell Innerrhoden. The car-free village enchants with pretty lanes, artisan boutiques, and buildings decorated with colorful frescoes. The Appenzell Museum, housed in the town hall, presents fascinating cross-sections of regional history and culture, including traditional crafts that continue thriving today.

Overnight in St Gallen.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13 St Gallen - Train to Zurich

This morning we explore St Gallen's Old Town, where prosperity from 16th, 17th, and 18th-century linen industry created remarkable architectural heritage. Streets radiating from Marktplatz showcase handsome houses reflecting centuries of commercial success, their elaborate façades testament to merchant families who built fortunes through textile innovation.

St Gallen's cathedral complex represents the town's most treasured attraction, with sections dating to the 10th century creating spiritual continuity across a millennium. Inside, colorful ceiling paintings create heavenly visions, while the adjacent library houses one of the world's most significant collections of medieval manuscripts. This UNESCO World Heritage site preserves over 170,000 volumes, including precious

documents from the 8th century that illuminate European intellectual development.

The baroque library hall, with its intricate wooden galleries and painted ceiling, creates an atmosphere where scholarship and artistry merge in perfect harmony. Visitors traditionally wear special slippers to protect ancient floors while exploring this temple of learning.

From St Gallen, we board our final train to Zurich, Switzerland's largest city and our journey's conclusion. The afternoon provides free time to explore Zurich's sophisticated blend of medieval charm and modern efficiency—perhaps strolling along Lake Zurich's promenades or discovering treasures in the Altstadt's winding lanes.

This evening we gather for our farewell dinner, celebrating two weeks of extraordinary discoveries across Switzerland's diverse landscapes and cultures.

Overnight in Zurich.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 14 Departure

Our Swiss odyssey concludes where it began, in Zurich's cosmopolitan embrace. As you prepare for departure, carry with you memories of pristine lakes reflecting Alpine peaks, medieval towns where history lives in every cobblestone, and mountain railways that transform engineering into poetry. Switzerland has revealed its treasures—from Chagall's luminous windows to the Matterhorn's sublime majesty, from Glacier Express panoramas to St Gallen's ancient manuscripts.

These experiences become part of your personal geography, landscapes of memory that will inspire future wanderings. Thank you for sharing this remarkable journey through the heart of Europe's most beautiful nation.

Auf Wiedersehen and Bon Voyage!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast