Tour Code
XSW

ADVENTURESABROAD

SWITZERLAND-ON-FOOT

Featuring Walking Tours & Day Hikes

13 days

Created on: 17 Nov, 2026

Day 1 Arrival in Zurich

Welcome to Switzerland! Today we arrive in Zurich and make our way to our hotel in the city centre. This evening we gather with fellow travellers for our first meal together.

Overnight in Zurich.

Included Meal(s): Dinner

Day 2 Zurich: City Walking Tour

This morning we explore Zurich's Old Town on foot. The walking tour takes us along the Bahnhofstrasse, one of Europe's most famous shopping streets, and through the Augustinergasse, where medieval buildings feature colourfully painted oriel windows jutting from their facades. We visit the twin-towered Grossmünster church, a Romanesque landmark that played a central role in the Swiss Reformation, and St. Peter's Church, whose clock face—at 8.7 m (28.5 ft) in diameter—is Europe's largest.

From the Lindenhof, a raised plaza on the site of a Roman customs post, we have fine views across the red-tiled rooftops of the Old Town to the Limmat River below.

Tomorrow begins our first rail journey of many. Most of our longer travels use Switzerland's efficient public rail network, which means managing your own luggage at stations and walking short distances between platforms and nearby hotels. This is an active tour with frequent train connections—please come prepared for independent luggage handling.

Overnight in Zurich.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 Zurich - Train to St. Moritz

After breakfast, we travel by train to St. Moritz, one of the world's most celebrated mountain resorts. The journey takes us through varied Swiss landscapes, from the industrial centres of the northern plateau through increasingly dramatic alpine terrain as we climb toward the Engadine valley.

Located at 1856 m (6,089 ft) above sea level in the Upper Engadine, St. Moritz sits on a natural terrace overlooking a chain of glacial lakes with the peaks of the Bernina massif rising to the south. The town has drawn visitors since ancient times—Bronze Age settlements and Roman baths testify to the area's long history as a destination.

Modern St. Moritz emerged in the 1860s when hotelier Johannes Badrutt famously bet skeptical British summer guests that the winter sun would be so pleasant they could sit outdoors in shirtsleeves. They returned that December, loved it, and winter tourism was born. The town has since hosted two Winter Olympics and maintains its reputation for combining outdoor pursuits with sophisticated resort amenities.

St. Moritz enjoys an unusually dry, sunny microclimate—an average of 322 days of sunshine annually—a phenomenon locals call "champagne climate" for its crisp, sparkling quality.

We have the evening free to explore the town and its lakeside setting.

Overnight in St. Moritz.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 Walking in the Engadine Valley

A funicular takes us from St. Moritz to Muottas Muragl at 2456 m (8,058 ft), where we begin today's walk along the panorama trail to Alp Languard. The 7-kilometre (4.3-mile) route undulates gently through high alpine meadows at elevations between 2200 and 2700 m, with views extending across the Engadine valley to the glaciated peaks of the Bernina massif. The Piz Palü, Piz Bernina (the Eastern Alps' highest peak at 4049 m/13,284 ft), and Piz Morteratsch form the dramatic southern horizon.

The trail passes through terrain that supports a remarkable concentration of alpine wildlife. Marmots are common in the boulder fields, their distinctive whistles echoing across the slopes. Ibex—the wild mountain goats whose curved horns can grow to a metre in length—frequent the higher elevations, while alpine choughs and golden eagles patrol the ridges. Our guide will help us identify these species and explain their adaptations to this harsh environment.

Midway along the trail, we stop at the Munt da la Bes-cha mountain restaurant, situated at a natural saddle with panoramic views. From here the path continues to Alp Languard, where the restaurant terrace looks directly across to the Bernina peaks. We descend by cable car to Pontresina, a traditional Engadine village at 1774 m (5,820 ft).

Some group members may prefer to extend today's walk by hiking the additional descent from Alp Languard to Pontresina rather than taking the cable car—this adds approximately 1.5 hours and 400 m (1,312 ft) of elevation loss. We reconvene in Pontresina and return to St. Moritz by local bus.

Today's main hike covers approximately 7 kilometres over 3 hours, mostly level with one short uphill section near the end.

Overnight in St. Moritz.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 St Moritz - Glacier Express Train - Zermatt

Today we board the Glacier Express for one of Europe's most scenic rail journeys. The route from St. Moritz to Zermatt crosses 291 bridges and passes through 91 tunnels over its eight-hour course, climbing and descending through the Alps via rack-and-pinion railway on the steeper gradients. The train—famously slow by design, taking eight hours to cover 291 km (181 mi)—allows passengers to absorb the constantly changing Alpine landscapes.

Much of the route passes through the Albula and Bernina valleys, designated as UNESCO World Heritage landscapes for their railway engineering. The line climbs to the Oberalp Pass at 2,33 m (6,670 ft), crosses the watershed between the Rhine and Rhône river systems, and descends through the Goms valley into canton Valais. We pass mountain villages where traditional wooden chalets cluster around baroque churches, alpine pastures where cattle graze beneath high peaks, and gorges where glacial rivers have carved deep channels through the rock.

The train's large panoramic windows frame the scenery as it unfolds. Lunch is served on board—a practical arrangement given the journey's length and the remote nature of much of the route.

By late afternoon we arrive in Zermatt, a car-free village at 1620 m (5,315 ft) at the head of the Mattertal valley. The Matterhorn's distinctive pyramid rises directly to the south. Dinner is on your own this evening.

Overnight in Zermatt.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 6 Hiking at the foot of Matterhorn

This morning we take the Gornergrat cog railway from Zermatt, ascending through forests and across bridges to the station at 3089 metres (10,135 ft). From here we look out across 29 peaks over 4000 m (13,123 ft) high, including the Dufourspitze (Monte Rosa), Switzerland's highest summit at 4634 m (15,203 ft), and the Gorner Glacier, the third-largest in the Alps. The Matterhorn's distinctive pyramid dominates the western horizon.

We spend several hours walking the signposted trails around Gornergrat before descending by railway to Zermatt. The descent is mostly downhill—approximately 4 hours—and walking poles are recommended to ease the strain on knees.

This afternoon is free to explore additional trails around Zermatt. A popular option is the path through larch forests to Furi at 1865 m (6,119 ft), with a cable car return, or the trail to Schwarzsee, a small lake beneath the Matterhorn's east face.

Overnight in Zermatt.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Zermatt - Train to Interlaken & Grindelwald

Leaving Zermatt, we travel by train down the Mattertal valley to Visp, where the valley opens into the broader Rhône corridor. From Visp we turn north through the Lötschberg Base Tunnel—at 34.6 km (21.5 mi), one of the world's longest railway tunnels—emerging on the northern side of the Alps. The landscape shifts dramatically from the dry, south-facing Valais slopes to the lusher, wetter climate of the Bernese Oberland.

We continue along the shore of Lake Thun to Spiez, where the castle's medieval tower overlooks the turquoise waters, then proceed to Interlaken. This resort town occupies a narrow plain between Lake Thun and Lake Brienz, with the Jungfrau massif rising directly to the south. The town's name literally means "between lakes," and its strategic position has made it a tourism centre since the early 19th century, when British visitors began arriving to explore the surrounding mountains.

We pause here for a break before continuing to Grindelwald. This traditional alpine village lies in a broad valley beneath the north face of the Eiger, surrounded by the peaks of the Bernese Alps. Grindelwald sits at 1034 m (3,392 f) and has served as a base for mountaineers and walkers since the golden age of Alpine exploration in the mid-19th century.

Time and weather permitting, we may visit the Trümmelbach Falls this afternoon—a series of ten glacier-fed waterfalls inside the mountain, accessed by tunnel lift. The falls carry the meltwater from the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau glaciers, moving up to 20,000 litres of water per second during summer.

Overnight in Grindelwald.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8 Walking the Bernese Alps

A cable car carries us from Grindelwald to First, where we begin our walk to Bachalpsee, a glacial lake at 2,265 metres (7,431 feet). The Eiger's north face rises directly across the valley, with the Wetterhorn and Schreckhorn visible to the south. From the lake we follow an undulating trail through alpine meadows and past the Mühlebach River to Waldspitz.

The meadows in early summer display gentians, primulas, and alpine anemones; by mid-summer, alpine roses cover the slopes in brilliant red. From Waldspitz we continue past the Mühlebach waterfall to Bort, where we have the option of descending by cable car or continuing on foot to Grindelwald.

Today's hike covers approximately 7 km (4.3 mi) over 4 hours, mostly downhill. Walking the full descent to Grindelwald adds 3 hours and 700 m (2,297 ft) of elevation loss on steep terrain.

Overnight in Grindelwald.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9 Grindelwald: Mannlichen, Kleine Scheidegg & Jungfraujoch

We travel to Mannlichen at 2222 m/7,300 ft. by cable car and then follow an easy trail in a southerly direction to the east side of the

Tschuggen Ridge to reach Honegg. The trail now coils around the slopes of the Lauberhorn and eventually ends at the Rotstocki, from where the Kleine Scheidegg at 2061 m/ 6,760 ft. is within easy reach. The Kleine Scheidegg is the terminus station of the Wengernalp Railway and at the same time, the starting point for ride to Jungfraujoch on the famous Jungfrau Railway.

After a break at Kleine Scheidegg, we board the train for the fantastic ride that takes us to Jungfraujoch or 'Top of Europe', the highest railway station in Europe at 3454m / 11,330 ft. and with views of the Aletsch glacier, the longest in the Alps glacier, also a UNESCO heritage site. All of this adds up to a truly memorable day.

NOTE: In the event of bad weather and poor visibility, we may choose to skip the Jungfraujoch train and spend more in and around Kleine Scheidegg or even in and around Grindelwald. This is not really a hiking day per se, and the difficulty comes mostly from the high elevation. Due to the fullness of our day and likely evening arrival back in Grindevald, we include lunch instead of dinner today.

Hiking time approx. 1.5 hours.

Overnight in Grindelwald.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 10 Grindewald - Train to Lucerne

This morning we travel by train to Lucerne, descending from the high Alps to the gentler landscape of central Switzerland. Our route takes us through Interlaken and along the shores of several lakes, with views across the water to the mountains beyond.

Upon arrival we begin a guided walking tour of Lucerne's Old Town. The Kapellbrücke, a covered wooden bridge dating to 1333, spans the Reuss River where it flows from Lake Lucerne. The bridge's distinctive octagonal water tower—originally part of the city's 13th-century fortifications—has become one of Switzerland's most recognized landmarks. Much of the bridge was destroyed by fire in 1993 but has been carefully reconstructed. Inside, triangular panels painted in the 17th century depict scenes from Swiss and Lucerne history.

The nearby Spreuerbrücke, built in 1408, features 67 painted panels from the 17th century depicting the Dance of Death—a medieval allegory showing death claiming people from all walks of life. This macabre but fascinating artwork reflects the plague years' impact on European consciousness.

Lucerne's medieval defences remain largely intact along the hillside north of the river. Nine towers of the Museggmauer wall still stand, built between 1350 and 1408 as part of the city's fortifications. Three of these towers are open to visitors and offer elevated views across the lake and mountains.

The city played a central role in Switzerland's founding. The representatives of the original three cantons—Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden—met in this region in 1291 to swear their mutual defence pact, the act that began Switzerland's journey toward confederation. Lucerne itself joined the confederation in 1332.

Overnight in Lucerne.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11 Lucerne & Bern

We travel by train to Bern, Switzerland's capital since 1848. The city's medieval core, built on a prominent bend of the Aare River, has been preserved largely intact and designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. The layout dates to the city's founding in 1191, though most visible buildings are from later centuries.

Our walking tour takes us through the sandstone arcades—over 6 km (3.7 mi) of covered walkways locally called Lauben—that shelter Bern's shops and cafes. We see the Renaissance fountains with their painted figures, the cathedral with its 100 m (328 ft) tower, and the Zytglogge, the ornate 13th-century clock tower whose astronomical clock still performs its mechanical display each hour.

The Rose Garden above the Bear Park offers views across the red-tiled rooftops to the river and Alps beyond.

We return to Lucerne by train this afternoon.

Overnight in Lucerne.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Lucerne & Mt Rigi

A boat takes us across Lake Lucerne to Vitznau, where we board Europe's first mountain cog railway. Swiss engineer Niklaus Riggenbach developed the rack-and-pinion system in the early 1860s, seeking a way to safely transport passengers up steep mountain grades. His design used a toothed rail and a cogwheel on the locomotive to provide traction on slopes too steep for conventional trains. The Vitznau-Rigi Railway, completed in 1871, proved the concept and revolutionized mountain tourism across the Alps.

The railway ascends through meadows and forests to the summit of Mt. Rigi at 1798 m (5,899 ft). Known since the 16th century as the "Queen of the Mountains" for its panoramic position, Rigi became one of Europe's first tourist mountains, attracting visitors including Victor Hugo, Mark Twain, and Queen Victoria long before the railway was built.

From the summit we look out across 13 lakes and the entire sweep of the Swiss Mittelland to the Alps extending from the Jura ranges in the west to the peaks of central Switzerland and into Germany and France beyond. After lunch we walk along the ridge trail to Rigi Kaltbad, approximately 2 hours with continuous views across the landscape. The path undulates gently, passing through alpine meadows and occasional forest sections. From Kaltbad we descend by cable car to Weggis and return to Lucerne by boat.

Overnight in Lucerne.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13 Lucerne - Train to Zurich & Departure

We travel by train to Zurich Airport to connect with homeward flights. The journey takes approximately one hour.

NOTE: Trains to the airport begin running at 5:00 am. Departure flights from Zurich should be no earlier than 10:00 am to allow sufficient time for the journey and check-in. Your Tour Leader can assist with arranging the appropriate train connection, which is included in the tour price.

Bon voyage! Auf Wiedersehen!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast