

## SWISS BLISS

by Linda Hill Josh  
Josh Travel

It was a beautiful sunny day in April when I set off on a wonderful adventure to Switzerland along with a group of twenty. Swissair's check-in was friendly, and most efficient. The departure was right on schedule, we sat back, relaxed and enjoyed the wonderful food, and service. Upon arrival we found the Zurich airport to be one of the most modern and sophisticated in the world. Before we knew it we had cleared customs and our luggage was transported to the train, waiting nearby to whisk us off to our first stop; Lucerne, only a short express train ride away.

Upon my arrival in beautiful Lucerne, I checked into the Carlton-Trivoli, about a half mile east of the town center, at the

quiet end of the hotel strip, and right across from the lake. The hotel's accommodations were cheerful, bright and modern.

The city tour the next day included the Chapel Bridge, which dates back to 1333, and offers an imposing display of medieval art and architecture. We also viewed the "Dying Lion of Lucerne", one of the world's most famous monuments. Hewn out of natural rock, it commemorates the heroic death of the Swiss mercenaries at the Tuileries in 1792. Mark Twain described the Lion as the "saddest and most poignant piece of rock in the world."

Mt. Pilatus with its 7000 ft. summit overlooks the city, and can be reached by aerial lifts or railway (on the world's steepest cogwheel railroad). Our group used the aerial lifts and enjoyed a delicious lunch on top, as we took in the overwhelming panoramic view. We ended our stay in

Lucerne by taking in a Swiss Folklore Show complete with yodeling, flagthrowing, and alphorn-blowing. The next day we were ready to board our train for sunny St. Moritz.

The Steffani Hotel, at St. Moritz, open year round, located near the center is very well run and constantly updated. We found this family-owned hotel impeccably maintained, and very comfortable; some of us enjoyed lunch on the attached sidewalk cafe, in the bright sunshine indicative of this area on the south side of the alps, with an average of 322 days of sunshine per year. The scenery is unique and magical with mountains, forests, lakes, and glaciers. Romansch is spoken here in the Engadine Valley, and is the fourth official language of Switzerland and the Italian-speaking neighboring valleys.

Europe's four famous Alpine express routes have St. Moritz in the center. One of which, The Glacier Express, was next on this wonderful journey and we were ready bright and early for this next adventure.

After much picture taking we were off on the Glacier Express to Zermatt, from the Piz Bernina to the Matterhorn. This is a trip lasting 7-1/2 hours through the alpine heartland of Switzerland. Our lunch reservations were made in advance (this is a must) and timed just perfectly to coincide with the memorable Oberalp pass. We were experiencing tranquil alpine pastures, untouched mountain valleys, and foaming mountain torrents when we entered a seemingly endless tunnel. Then, suddenly we were emerged as if into another world! We were completely surrounded by glaciers, everything was pure white everywhere and you felt on top of the world. Off in the distance you would notice a humble mountain abode, or a cross perched high, but mostly it was glistening and magnificent snow, and you felt at peace with this beautiful creation.

Our hotel, The Schweizerhof, in Zermatt

is located in the center of town. Our accommodations were deluxe: fabric walls and rich woods to make us feel quite cozy. Again we all felt welcome as the sun continued to shine and smile on us.

In Zermatt often the foreigners outnumber the locals four to one and somehow they manage to blend in. We viewed the Matterhorn and basked in the unbelievable sunshine. We enjoyed the most delicious fondue. We tried to capture every aroma, every taste, every feeling as there was no getting away from the fact that our journey was almost to an end.

All aboard for Geneva! Our next stop and again the train ride was magnificent. The closer we came, the more you could see the French influence in the homes and yards. In Geneva, our hotel and Beau Rivage, was a wonderful deluxe hotel with a prime location. The staff and service were wonderful, and the dinner they hosted for our group on our last evening was complete with their finest china, silver, and crystal; and, of course, the food and wine were presented superbly.

We had our tour of Geneva and visited several sites including the location where more than 7000 agreements are made each year. The building was very plain, not denoting any particular influence in architecture. The building is not very tall and they say the reason for this design is so people will walk more, meet each other and talk through the long hallways. Communication is certainly necessary for peace.

We left the next day headed for JFK and found the service in business class superior. We were grateful for the extra room to stretch out and thankful for a most perfect trip.


For more information on trips to Switzerland and Europe call Linda at Josh Travel: 544-4922. We're located at 380 E. Ridge Road in Rochester, near Seneca Ave.

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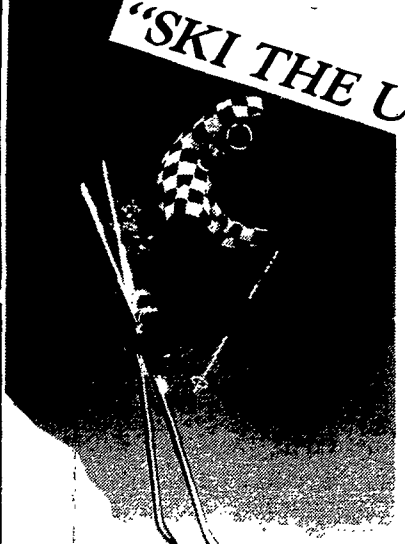
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