



Gotthard base tunnel boring machine, displayed at the Lucerne transport museum

Switzerland Base Tunnels and Mountain Passes 27 July to 08 August 2018

Our visit to Switzerland will be different in 2018, in addition to the favourite Swiss trains and towns we will explore the base tunnels and the mountain passes that they have replaced.

Highlights

*Travel through the recently opened Gotthard Base Tunnel
Bellinzona and its three UNESCO-listed castles
The city of Lucerne with the Chapel Bridge and its beautiful lake
Travel on the GoldenPass line and the Bernina Express line
A ride on the Furka Steam train between Oberwald and Realp*

Good three and four star hotels are used and your luggage will be transferred between hotels for a relaxed holiday.

Geoff Cooke will host the tour which will run with no more than 16 guests.

All aboard for an outstanding exploration of Switzerland by train with a small group of new found friends!

Friday, 27th July 2018. Arrive in Switzerland

Upon arrival in Zurich Airport, make your way by rail to the main railway station in downtown Zurich (about SFr 3.40). Your hotel is conveniently located within walking distance from the station. The rest of

the day will be at leisure, your centrally located hotel making an exploration of the city and lake easy. Meet this evening for an included dinner at the hotel.
Hotel Glockenhof, Zurich. Dinner included.

Saturday, 28th July 2018. Zurich - Lugano – Bellinzona

Take a train to Lugano through the recently opened Gotthard base tunnel. This is the longest and deepest railway tunnel in the world, replacing the Gotthard Pass line that we will travel over later. Take the funicular railway from Lugano Station to the city and a short walk to the waterfront. The Lugano Citta Stazione funicular has an upper station within the main railway station of Lugano, and the lower station is on Piazza Cioccaro in the historic city centre below. It is one of the busiest funicular lines in Switzerland. After a break for lunch, join a boat trip on Lake Lugano to Gandria, a pretty town that has remained unchanged for a hundred years. Later this afternoon, return by train to Bellinzona. For your convenience, your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Zurich to your hotel in Bellinzona. Hotel Internazionale, Bellinzona. Breakfast and dinner included

Sunday, 29th July 2018. Follow the route of the Gotthard Panorama Express

Travel by rail from Bellinzona to Lucerne by the old railway route over the Gotthard Pass to Fluelen, where you will join a lake steamer to continue your journey to the transport museum in Lucerne. Later this afternoon, continue by boat or bus to your hotel in central Lucerne with time to relax before dinner. Your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Bellinzona to your hotel in Lucerne. Hotel Astoria, Lucerne. Breakfast and dinner included.

Monday, 30th July 2018. Excursion to Mount Pilatus

Our destination today is Mount Pilatus, accessible by the world's steepest cog railway after a boat trip across Lake Lucerne. There will be time to take in the wonderful views and have lunch (not included), before we make the journey back to Lucerne by cable car, gondola and bus. The rest of the day is at leisure for you to explore Lucerne at your own pace. Hotel Astoria, Lucerne. Breakfast and dinner included.

Tuesday, 31st July 2018. Lucerne to Interlaken and the Brienz Rothorn

Today we travel from Lucerne to Interlaken, breaking our journey at Brienz for a trip up the Brienz Rothorn railway. Your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Lucerne to your hotel in Interlaken. Enjoy time at the summit to admire the breath-taking views over the high peaks of the Bernese Oberland and the two lakes below, have lunch and enjoy a walk around, before travelling back down to Brienz and on to Interlaken by paddle steamer. Hotel Interlaken, Interlaken. Breakfast and dinner included.

Wednesday, 1st August 2018. Schynige Platte, Lauterbrunnen, Grutschalp and Murren

An exciting day awaits as we travel on mountain trains and cable cars through some of the prettiest places in the Bernese Oberland, enjoying incredible scenery on the way. Ride an historic rack railway to Schynige Platte before continuing to Lauterbrunnen. After a break for lunch in Lauterbrunnen, ride to Grutschalp by cable car to join the narrow-gauge railway to the dramatically located town of Murren. Return to Interlaken for the night. Hotel Interlaken, Interlaken. Breakfast and dinner included.

Thursday, 2nd August 2018. GoldenPass line to Montreux - Chateau de Chillon

Today we travel on the scenic GoldenPass line to Montreux, a pretty town on the shores of Lake Geneva. Your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Interlaken to your hotel in Montreux.

Upon arrival in Montreux, enjoy some time at leisure to have lunch before we travel to Chateau de Chillon. Join a 50-minute guided tour of the chateau before we return to Montreux by paddle steamer. Grand Hotel Suisse Majestic, Montreux. Breakfast and dinner included.

Friday, 3rd August 2018. Chocolate Train

Board an exciting Chocolate Train, which will give you an insight into two of the best Swiss products: cheese and chocolate. Start your exploration on the Belle Epoque or Panoramic train from Montreux to Gruyeres. Upon arrival, visit the Maison du Gruyere to find out how cheese is produced. Enjoy some free time in the medieval town of Gruyeres with its impressive 13th century castle before a bus transfer to Broc to visit Maison Cailler, the famous chocolate factory to taste some delicious chocolates. End your day with a train to Montreux.

Grand Hotel Suisse Majestic, Montreux. Breakfast and dinner included.

Saturday, 4th August 2018. Montreux to Zermatt and the Gornergrat

Travel by train from Montreux to Brig where you will change trains to ride over the original Lotschberg alpine pass to Spiez. The Lotschberg line connects Spiez in the canton of Bern with Brig in the canton of Valais. It crosses the Bernese Alps through the Lotschberg Tunnel. Together with the Simplon Tunnel south of Brig, it constitutes one of the major railways through the Alps and an important north-south axis in Europe. The line is famous for its double loop of spiral tunnels in the Kander Valley on its northern approach to the Lotschberg Tunnel and the climb out of the Rhone Valley on a steep mountainside through numerous tunnels and viaducts on the southern approach. Its culminating point is 1,240 metres above sea level, making it the highest line of the main Swiss railway network.

Enjoy a short break in Spiez before returning to Visp through the lower Lotschberg Base Tunnel and continue to the car free resort town of Zermatt. Your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Montreux to your hotel in Zermatt.

This afternoon, take the mountain train to the Gornergrat, which offers incomparable views of the famous Matterhorn. On return to Zermatt, your hotel is a short walk from the station.

Hotel Butterfly, Zermatt. Breakfast and dinner included.

Sunday, 5th August 2018. Furka steam train to Realp and Chur

Take a train to Oberwald to board a steam train on the Furka Railway bound for Realp. The original railway, now replaced by a tunnel, is preserved with steam trains running through a scenic gorge. From Realp, join Regio local trains for the scenic journey to Chur. Your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Zermatt to your hotel in Chur.

Romantik Hotel Stern, Chur. Breakfast and dinner included.

Monday, 6th August 2018. Chur to St Moritz via Filisur, Bergun and Preda

Travel by train from Chur to St. Moritz, breaking our journey at Filisur, Bergun and Preda. The first stop at Filisur will be to visit the famous Landwasserr Viaduct, a short walk from the station. After photographing trains on the viaduct, return to the station for an onward connection to Burgen where we will visit the museum for the Albula line. Our last stop will be at Preda, the northern portal for a new tunnel and location of a small museum explaining the project. Your luggage will be transported from your hotel in Chur to your hotel in St Moritz. This afternoon, there will be time to explore St Moritz before your included dinner.

Hotel Laudinella, St Moritz. Breakfast and dinner included.

Tuesday, 7th August 2018. Bernina Express line to Tirano

Ride the famous Bernina Express to Tirano in Italy over the dramatic Bernina, one of only three railways awarded World Heritage status. The railway includes some dramatic scenery and impressive engineering and the arrival in Tirano includes a section of rare street running as the train passes the Basilica Madonna di Tirano. After time to look around the attractive Italian town and enjoy lunch, return by train to St. Moritz.

Hotel Laudinella, St Moritz. Breakfast and dinner included.

Wednesday, 8th August 2018. End of the tour

The tour finishes after breakfast today, but you can still make use of your 14-day First Class Swiss Travel Pass today and up until Friday 10th August.

Prices:

£3,595. Per person sharing a twin or double room.

£545. Supplement for a single room.

Your tour includes:

Accommodation

- 1 night at the Hotel Glockenhof (Zurich) in standard room including portorage
- 1 night at the Hotel Internazionale (Bellinzona) in standard room including portorage
- 2 nights at the Hotel Astoria (Lucerne) in standard room including portorage
- 2 nights at the Hotel Interlaken (Interlaken) in standard room including portorage
- 2 nights at the Grand Hotel Suisse Majestic (Montreux) in standard room including portorage
- 1 night at the Hotel Butterfly (Zermatt) in standard room including portorage
- 1 night at the Romantik Hotel Stern (Chur) in standard room including portorage
- 2 nights at the Hotel Laudinella (St Moritz) in standard room including portorage

Meals

Breakfast daily (x13)

Dinner daily (x13)

Transport

1st class rail/boat within Switzerland (where available)

Seat reservations throughout

Luggage transfer

(1 piece per person) from Zurich to Bellinzona, from Bellinzona to Lucerne, from Lucerne to Interlaken, from Interlaken to Montreux, from Montreux to Zermatt, from Zermatt to Chur and from Chur to St Moritz

Excursions

Boat trips on Lake Lugano, Lake Lucerne, Lake Brienz, Lake Geneva

Mount Pilatus by boat, cog railway, cable car and gondola

Brienzer Rothorn railway

GoldenPass line from Zweisimmen to Montreux

Guided tour of Chateau de Chillon

Chocolate train

Excursion to the Gornergrat

Furka steam train from Oberwald to Realp

Albula Railway Museum

Bernina Express line from St Moritz to Tirano and back

Your tour does not include:

Air travel.

Meals not mentioned or any drinks with meals.

Gratuities.

Items of a personal nature such as phone calls, internet access (except where complimentary) and laundry.

Important information:

Disabilities: When you book this tour it is accepted that you are able to walk at a reasonable pace between hotels and railway stations, this may take up to 15 minutes. If you are uncertain about the suitability of the tour, please discuss this with us when you book.

Dress: Smart casual dress is appropriate. The weather in Switzerland in August in the villages and towns and up the mountains should be warm, rain is possible, a jersey and light raincoat are recommended.

Meals: A continental breakfast and a set menu dinner are included on all days. Any diet requirements must be advised at the time of booking, they will be listed on your invoice and all service suppliers will be advised.

Gratuities and portage: There is no need to tip for service in Switzerland as a service charge is added to all bills. It is normal to tip a porter (recommended US\$1 or UD\$2 per bag). Detailed information will be sent to all participants about two weeks prior to the start date.

Hotels: All of our hotels have been selected for easy access from railway stations, they are all 3 and 4 star standard.

Because of their location, you may experience some street noise in city centre hotels.

All hotels are subject to change for an equivalent or better one.

Where portage is included in Swiss hotels, it may be only as far as the lobby. Portage to rooms may be extra.

Luggage: Your luggage will be transferred between hotels during the holiday. This is limited to one suitcase per person. Please keep this in mind when you pack, making sure that you can deal with your own suitcase for short distances, and that your day bag is not too large for you to comfortably carry.

Train travel: We use first class when available. We will have reserved space on our trains (providing there are 10 or more travelling together).

Maximum number of participants: 16.

Minimum number of participants needed to confirm the tour: 10.