



## 40 Reasons to visit Switzerland: The Cities – The Transportation – The Culture – The Nature

### 1. The Federal Capital (Bern)

Bern is Switzerland's romantic political capital, the city of the bear pits, flowers, fountains and museums, and the unique medieval Old Town (UNESCO World Cultural Heritage). The Bernese Old Town is situated on a peninsula of the River Aare. Founded in the 12th century on a hill site surrounded by the Aare River, Bern developed over the centuries in line with an exceptionally coherent planning concept. The buildings in the Old City, dating from a variety of periods, include 15th-century arcades and 16th-century fountains. Most of the medieval town was restored in the 18th century but it has retained its original character.

[www.berninfo.com](http://www.berninfo.com)

### 2. Rhaetian Railway in the Albula / Bernina Landscapes

New on the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage, it brings together two historic railway lines that cross the Swiss Alps through two passes. Opened in 1904, the Albula line in the northwestern part of the property is 67 km long. It features an impressive set of structures including 42 tunnels and covered galleries and 144 viaducts and bridges. The 61 km Bernina pass line features 13 tunnels and galleries and 52 viaducts and bridges. The property is exemplary of the use of the railway to overcome the isolation of settlements in the Central Alps early in the 20th century, with a major and lasting socio-economic impact on life in the mountains. It constitutes an outstanding technical, architectural and environmental ensemble and embodies architectural and civil engineering achievements, in harmony with the landscapes through which they pass.

<http://www.rhb.ch/index.php?id=891?&L=4>

### 3. Castle of Bellinzona. Three Castles, Defensive Wall and Ramparts of the Market Town of Bellinzona

The Bellinzona site consists of a group of fortifications grouped around the castle of Castelgrande, which stands on a rocky peak looking out over the entire Ticino valley. Running from the castle, a series of fortified walls protect the ancient town and block the passage through the valley. A second castle (Montebello) forms an integral part of the fortifications, while a third but separate castle (Sasso Corbaro) was built on an isolated rocky promontory southeast of the other fortifications.

[www.bellinzonaunesco.ch/castelliunesco/en/](http://www.bellinzonaunesco.ch/castelliunesco/en/)

### 4. Aletsch Glacier

With a length of 23 km, the Aletsch is the longest glacier in the Alps. It is surrounded by the Aletsch Forest, which, at an altitude of 2,200 meters is one of the highest stone pine forests in Europe. The extension of the natural World Heritage property of Jungfrau - Aletsch - Bietschhorn (first inscribed in 2001) expands the site to the east and west, bringing its surface area up to 82,400 ha. Up from 53,900. The site provides an outstanding example of the formation of the High Alps, including the most glaciated part of the mountain range and the largest glacier in Eurasia. It features a wide diversity of ecosystems, including successional stages due particularly to the retreat of glaciers resulting from climate change. The site is of outstanding universal value both for its beauty and for the wealth

### 5. Abbey Library (St. Gallen)

The Abbey of St. Gallen figures on the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage. The Convent of St Gall, a perfect example of a great Carolingian monastery, was, from the 8th century to its secularization in 1805, one of the most important in Europe. Its library is one of the richest and oldest in the world and contains precious manuscripts such as the earliest-known architectural plan drawn on parchment. From 1755 to 1768, the conventual area was rebuilt in Baroque style. The cathedral and the library are the main features of this remarkable architectural complex, reflecting 12 centuries of continuous activity. The spirit of the Benedictine Monks is still perceptible in the Abbey Library, which is said to be the most beautiful secular Rococo hall in Switzerland.

[www.stiftsbibliothek.ch](http://www.stiftsbibliothek.ch) / [www.stgallen-bodensee.ch](http://www.stgallen-bodensee.ch)

## **6. Swiss National Park (Zernez)**

The oldest Central European and Alpine national park is famous for its great variety of Alpine fauna and flora and its virtually intact natural landscape. The Alpine landscape of the National Park extends from an altitude of 1,400 to 3200 meters above sea level. The Swiss National Park, opened in 1914 and still the only national park in the country, is an important attraction for Zernez and the Engadine St. Moritz region. Visitors obtain useful information at the National Park Centre in Zernez, where the park headquarters is also located. The centre is open daily from the beginning of June until the end of October.

The Swiss National Park offers a fascinating wilderness with an intact plant and animal world, which can be viewed from an 80km network of walking trails.

[www.engadin.stmoritz.ch/zernez](http://www.engadin.stmoritz.ch/zernez)

## **7. Baroque Abbey (Einsiedeln)**

Einsiedeln has been one of the most important places of pilgrimage ever since the Middle Ages. In the newly restored Benedictine Abbey you will find the Lady Chapel with the Black Madonna.

[http://www.myswitzerland.com/en.cfm/about\\_switzerland/topattractions/offer-About%5FTopAttractions-A%5FCulture-8763.html](http://www.myswitzerland.com/en.cfm/about_switzerland/topattractions/offer-About%5FTopAttractions-A%5FCulture-8763.html)

## **8. Castle (Gruyère)**

Dominating the small city surrounded by walls where counts once lived, Gruyere Castle presents an interesting opportunity to find out about five centuries of history, and to see remarkable supernatural art exhibitions. At the foot of the Pre-Alps, you will be enchanted by the charm and picturesque architecture of the medieval town of Gruyères. The town has given its name to the area and to its delicious cheese. Come and explore a little town that's been unaffected by the passage of time, built in a superb setting

[www.gruyeres.ch](http://www.gruyeres.ch)

## **9. Madonna del Sasso (Locarno)**

A walk through the old town leads to the Piazza Grande, a square surrounded by picturesque houses and arcades. Each year in August, the square turns into a large open-air cinema to host the famous international film festival at Locarno.

[www.maggiore.ch](http://www.maggiore.ch)

## **10. Old town/Bridge (Lucerne)**

The medieval city, the lake, the mountains, an unmistakable composition of natural and man-made beauty, time-tested over the centuries and carefully nurtured. Luzerne, the lively capital of Central Switzerland, is a city to fall in love with!

[www.luzern.com](http://www.luzern.com)

## **11. Benedictine Convent of St John at Müstair**

The Convent of Müstair, which stands in a valley in the Grisons, is a good example of Christian monastic renovation during the Carolingian period. It has Switzerland's greatest series of figurative murals, painted c. A.D. 800, along with Romanesque frescoes and stuccoes.

[http://www.myswitzerland.com/en.cfm/destinations/top\\_attractions/offer-About\\_TopAttractions-A\\_Culture-8923.html](http://www.myswitzerland.com/en.cfm/destinations/top_attractions/offer-About_TopAttractions-A_Culture-8923.html)

## **12. Swiss Alpine Museum (Bern)**

The only museum dedicated to the Swiss Alps introduces the visitors to cultural and natural peculiarities of the alpine world.

<http://www.alpinesmuseum.ch>

## **13. Papiliorama (Kerzers)**

The Papiliorama is a fascinating exotic world, where various diurnal species fly around a tropical forest environment in total freedom. Nocturama lets visitors observe nocturnal wildlife that has been brought here from the forests of Southern and Central America.

[www.papiliorama.ch](http://www.papiliorama.ch)

## **14. Reichenbach Falls (Meiringen)**

The beauty of the mighty waterfall - height of drop 100 m - and the scenic charms of the surroundings have been described since tourism began. A Sherlock Holmes commemorative plaque by the cable railway reminds the visitor that Conan Doyle was so deeply impressed by the wild beauty of this waterfall

that he decided to let his world-famous detective, Sherlock Holmes, fall to his death in the Reichenbach Falls after a fight with his archenemy Prof. Moriarty.

[www.reichenbachfall.ch](http://www.reichenbachfall.ch)

#### **15. St. Peter's Isle (Lake Biel)**

It was here on St. Peter's Isle in Lake Biel that the famous philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his own words "spent the happiest time of his life"! Nowadays his former residence, a monastery, houses the well-known restaurant and hotel St. Petersinsel.

[www.bielersee.ch](http://www.bielersee.ch)

**16. The Lavaux Vineyard Terraces**, stretching for about 30 km along the south-facing northern shores of Lake Geneva from the Chateau de Chillon to the eastern outskirts of Lausanne in the Vaud region, cover the lower slopes of the mountainside between the villages and the lake. Although there is some evidence that vines were grown in the area in Roman times, the present vine terraces can be traced back to the 11th century, when Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries controlled the area. It is an outstanding example of a centuries-long interaction between people and their environment, developed to optimize local resources so as to produce a highly valued wine that has always been important to the economy.

[www.lake-geneva-region.ch](http://www.lake-geneva-region.ch)

#### **17. Isole di Brissago (Brissago)**

The botanical garden has a collection of plants from all over the world. Around 1,500 species, most of them from the southern hemisphere, as well as from the Mediterranean and the Far East: the Himalayas, China, and Japan.

[www.isolebrissago.ch](http://www.isolebrissago.ch)

#### **18. Rhine Falls (Neuhausen)**

The Rhine Falls, the largest falls in Europe, offer a spectacular showpiece to visitors. With an average flow of 25'000 cubic ft / sec (700 m<sup>3</sup> / sec) the water cascades down the cataracts, which are 450 ft (150 m) wide and 75 ft (23 m) high. Taking a boat trip into the basin below the cataracts you can feel the great power of the rushing water.

[www.rheinfall.ch](http://www.rheinfall.ch)

#### **19. Travers Valley (Creux-du-Van)**

A breathtakingly beautiful natural rock cirque. Creux-du-Van is a paradise for ibex, birds of prey, marmots, deer, and of course for nature lovers.

[www.neuchateltourisme.ch](http://www.neuchateltourisme.ch)

#### **20. Olympic Museum (Lausanne)**

A unique, lively and interactive exhibition, the Olympic Museum is the world's largest information centre relating to the Olympic games.

[www.museum.olympic.org](http://www.museum.olympic.org)

#### **21. Tinguely Museum (Basel)**

The architect Mario Botta designed the Museum Jean Tinguely. It is devoted to the life and work of this major sculptor in iron.

[www.basel.com](http://www.basel.com)

#### **22. Swiss chocolate factory Maestrani (Flawil)**

During the Schoggiland opening hours and without prior appointment, individual visitors can witness from an 80-meter high visitors gallery how chocolate is produced and taste the delicious Munz and Minor specialties.

[www.schoggi-land.ch](http://www.schoggi-land.ch)

#### **23. Watch Museum (Le Locle)**

Not far from Le Locle, a late 18th century manor house is home to a magnificent collection of clocks and watches.

[www.mhl-monts.ch](http://www.mhl-monts.ch)

#### **24. Swiss Museum of Transport & Communication (Lucerne)**

The Swiss transport museum is a theme park that reveals the history of all forms of transportation and communication in a fascinating show.

[www.verkehrshaus.ch](http://www.verkehrshaus.ch)

### **25. Swiss Miniatures (Melide)**

Swiss miniatures shows you the most picturesque features of Switzerland - towns, villages, monuments, transportation, all at a scale of 1:25.

[www.swissminiatur.ch](http://www.swissminiatur.ch)

### **26. Vines and Wine Museum (Aigle)**

The Château d'Aigle, surrounded by Chablais vineyards, houses the Vine, Wine and Etiquette museums: the ideal place to preserve and exhibit almost 2,000 years of history and heritage!

[www.chateauaigle.ch](http://www.chateauaigle.ch)

### **27. Alpamare (Pfäffikon)**

The largest covered aquatic parc in Europe is great fun, from activities to wellness in and near the water - a pleasure for the whole family.

[www.alpamare.ch](http://www.alpamare.ch)

### **28. Thermal Spa (Yverdon-les-Bains)**

Yverdon-les-Bains Thermal Spa offers peace and relaxation. Yverdon-les-Bains has been making use of its thermal waters since Roman times. Its healing waters, which go back more than 15 centuries, are rich in minerals thanks to the type of soil in the area.

[www.cty.ch](http://www.cty.ch)

### **29. Skater Park (Sattel)**

7000 m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor skating fun in Europe's largest open-air skating park! - With an inline school and a rental shop. For years now, this has been the venue of everyone who owns anything in the nature of a skateboard or roller skates; the Sattel free-time and sports park is open to bladers, snake- and skateboarders, roller skaters and BMX bikers of all ages and levels of skill.

[www.rollerpark.ch](http://www.rollerpark.ch)

### **30. Verzasca Valley (Verzasca)**

A hiking trail for art lovers along works of art.

The "sentierone" begins in Mergoscia and leads through the entire Verzasca valley to Sonogno along the river on the opposite bank to the cantonal road.

[www.maggiore.ch](http://www.maggiore.ch)

### **31. Swiss Holiday Park (Morschach)**

The Swiss Holiday Park with its a wide range of leisure and wellness offerings leaves nothing to be desired. On 44 acres this leisure and holiday park presents a plethora of sports activities and games for visitors of all age groups.

[www.swissholidaypark.ch](http://www.swissholidaypark.ch)

### **32. Pilatus**

So close to Lucerne and so easy to reach by public transport, Mount Pilatus (2132 m altitude) is the perfect peak for everyone, large or small. 2 aerial cableways, 2 hotels, 7 restaurants, the world's steepest cogwheel railway and Central Switzerland's biggest suspension rope park guarantee exciting excursions. All kinds of sports fans meet here to hike, climb, toboggan sledge, bike and sledge (6 km sledge run).

Plus: events, attractions and fun galore!

<http://www.pilatus.ch>

### **34. Schilthorn (Mürren)**

Enjoy the magnificent mountain world of the Bernese Oberland by following in James Bond's footsteps on the 3000 m high Schilthorn.

[www.schilthorn.ch](http://www.schilthorn.ch)

### **35. Monte Brè (Lugano)**

A cable car from Cassarate climbs to the peak. A unique opportunity to see not only the magnificent vista extending far across the Swiss-Italian border, but also the view over Lugano and its vicinity.

[www.montebre.ch](http://www.montebre.ch)

### **36. Titlis Rotair (Engelberg)**

The journey is made by 3 aerial cable cars through many changes of scenery, from the green valley up into the high alpine glacier region, in only 45 minutes. The summit station at 3,020 meters (10,000 feet) has snow and ice the whole year. Engelberg-Titlis is the biggest ski resort in Central Switzerland with sledding, cross-country skiing, winter hiking, glacier skiing snowboarding and much more.

[www.titlis.ch](http://www.titlis.ch)

### **37. Schwägalp (Säntis)**

The view from the Säntis, at an altitude of 2502 m, extends over a magnificent mountain panorama with the peaks and valleys of six Alpine countries.

[www.saentisbahn.ch](http://www.saentisbahn.ch)

### **38. Brienz Rothorn (Brienz)**

Ever since 1892, the summer months in Brienz have witnessed a hissing, huffing and puffing that are nonetheless pleasing to the ear, eye and nose. It comes from the Brienz Rothorn Railway, whose locomotives have for three generations climbed the 1,678 meters to the summit of the Brienz Rothorn without ever running short of puff.

[www.brienz-rothorn-bahn.ch](http://www.brienz-rothorn-bahn.ch)

### **39. United Nations (Geneva)**

When you pass through the gate of the Palais des Nations, you are entering international land. A land without frontiers that welcomes 20,000 delegates from these nations every year, a place where 3,000 civil servants work towards the same goal: achieving peace, security and dignity for all mankind.

[www.geneve-tourisme.ch](http://www.geneve-tourisme.ch)

### **40. The Swiss people.**

“As you are official representatives for Switzerland, I have to share an experience from my trip which speaks volumes about Swiss people.

We were running to grab a couple of sausages at the Zurich train station (Very tasty). However, I needed to drop off our luggage cart first. In doing so, I mistakenly forgot to grab my laptop. After Paul ate 4 sausages (3 minutes) it occurred to me that I forgot my laptop. I went back to retrieve it and the cart was gone and so was my laptop. I figured that ..... was on a train to Romania. Anyway, Paul suggested we visit the lost and found office. The office was closed and they said any articles received that day would be sent to Bern. I went online and submitted my claim. The next day I received an email notifying me that there was a match. I called them up and was informed that my laptop was returned to them. They will be sending to me in the next few days.

Can you believe that? Can you imagine that ever happening in a NYC subway Station?

What a country. What nice people. “