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SWITZERLAND TREKKING ON THE VIA ALPINA

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking on the famous Swiss Via Alpina
- Viewing spectacular waterfalls from near and afar
- Hiking to different Swiss villages through wildflower filled trails
- Sampling local specialties, including Alpkase (mountain cheese) and chocolate
- Feeling the majesty of legendary Swiss Mountains: the Eiger and the Wetterhorn
- Taking advantage of the excellent Swiss transport system

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TRIP AT A GLANCE

Location:	Switzerland
Activities:	Hiking
Arrive:	Meet at 5PM. at our hotel in Zurich on Day 1.
Depart:	Our trip will end at the Zurich International Airport (ZRH) at 12:00 PM on the final day of the trip.

Trip Overview

The Via Alpina is a famous trekking route that traverses 8 different countries in the Alpine region of Europe. We will be trekking on the Switzerland portion of the trail. This route traverses wildflower meadows, up steep and rocky hiking trails, past rushing waterfalls. Every day will be filled with beauty and vistas as far as the eye can see. To be as eco-friendly and local as possible, we will take advantage of the Swiss transportation system to get to and from different trailheads. We will be rewarded for our long days on the trail with delicious Swiss meals at the end of each day, with options to try the famous fondue, raclette, and of course Swiss chocolate. This route is perfect for those who want a challenging and fun adventure. Maximum group size: 12

Rating

This trip is designed for women who enjoy hiking in the mountains and being surrounded by breathtaking scenery. We will be hiking 5-7 miles a day in hilly terrain with steep ascents and descents, along rocky and uneven terrain. Previous hiking experience is extremely useful, as is having a sense of adventure and a good level of physical fitness. There are no shorter options for any of the days (other than skipping the entire hiking day and arranging transportation to the next lodging when possible) and you must be able to complete the hiking days in recommended times. We will be in a high-altitude environment, ranging from 5,000 - 7,000 ft above sea level. A rating of 4 requires aerobic conditioning for at least 40-50 minutes 4-5 times a week. Additional endurance exercise (e.g. going for a 2-hour hike once a week) and/or strength training is appropriate. **Rating:** 1 2 3 **4** 5.

What's Included

- A local guide and an AGC guide
- All activities on the itinerary, including a kayak tour
- All breakfasts and dinners starting from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on the final day. You will be able to purchase lunch in town.
- Eight nights lodging in double occupancy rooms
- Transportation and luggage transfer during the trip, except the initial airport transfer

What's not included: Travel to and from Zurich, travel from the airport to the hotel at the start of the trip, lunches, beverages (other than water), guide gratuities, travel insurance and optional activities.

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Welcome to Switzerland! Arrive in Zurich by early afternoon. Once you arrive at the Zurich International Airport, follow signs for the Bahnhof (train station). Hop on one of the many trains that run from the airport to downtown Zurich (Zurich HB). A short walk away from the downtown train station is our hotel, The Swiss Chocolate Hotel. Check in to your room and relax a little before we meet at 5PM. Meet your guides and fellow participants in the lobby at 5PM for the welcome orientation and introductions. Afterwards, we will head to our first dinner together. We will use this time to get to know one another, and try some local Swiss delicacies.

Overnight: Zurich, Swiss Chocolate Hotel (D)

DAY 2

Today, we will wake up early to make the most of our day. We will hop on a train to take us to Engelberg. We will be hiking from town to town with just a day pack, but don't worry, we will have a luggage transfer to meet us at our hotel every night. A gondola takes us to the top of Jochpass, and to the beginning of our adventure! Once at Jochpass, we start to hike towards Engstlenalp, an idyllic area with a lake, a nostalgic hotel, and thousands of alpine roses. Here we will meet a local dairy farmer and sample some of the local cheeses. The trail continues through cow pastures in the beautiful Gental Valley. In the distance, we begin to see what is known as "The Trio" - The Eiger, the Monch, and the Jungfrau mountains. We will reach our end point, and take a bus to the town of Meiringen, where we meet our luggage and our hotel for the night.

Hiking: 3-4 hours, 5 miles. Elevation gain: 135 feet, elevation loss: 2,860 feet.

Overnight: Meiringen (B, D)

DAY 3

Our first morning in the heart of the Alps is a beautiful one! We start our day with a historic cog train to the thundering Reichenbach Falls. For those Sherlock Holmes fans, this is the waterfall where Holmes and Moriarty fought and soon vanished. Passing the falls, we soon fall under the spell of the mighty Wetterhorn mountain. Crossing underneath, we continue to trek up to Grosse Scheidegg on a panoramic trail. We soon come into the perfect view of the Eiger north face. Kick up your feet and relax as we take the gondola down into Grindelwald to our hotel.

Hiking: 5-6 hours, 6.1 miles. Elevation gain: 2590 feet, elevation loss: 550 feet
Overnight: Grindelwald (B, D)

DAY 4

We begin our day on the cog train up to Alpiglen. In front of us is the mighty Eiger, but don't forget to look behind as we climb out of the beautiful Grindelwald Valley. Climbing from Alpiglen under the north face of the Eiger is awe-inspiring. We will make our way on a short detour to Lauberhorn, where the view is spectacular. Lauberhorn is the starting point of one of the most impressive downhill skiing races, and athletes can reach the town of Wengen in only 2.5 minutes from this location! We will take a little longer to hike downhill to Wengen. On the way down, we pass by views of the royal Jungfrau before finishing the descent to Interlaken aboard the Jungfrau Railway. Our journey through the Lauterbrunnen Valley is impressive with vertical walls and spectacular waterfalls. We make our way to our hotel in Interlaken where we will spend the next two nights.

Hiking: 7-8 hours, 8 miles, Elevation gain: 2365 feet, elevation loss: 3485 feet
Overnight: Interlaken (B, D)

DAY 5

Take an easy day today to enjoy the charming town of Interlaken. The name means between two lakes, and you can visit both Lake Thun and Lake Brienz today. In the morning, we will paddle on the turquoise blue waters of Lake Brienz. This beginner friendly kayak tour will allow us to get closer to the cliffs along the shore and the Ringenberg castle; enjoying the perspective from the lake to the mountains. In the afternoon, the time is yours. You can choose to walk through town, rent a bike, or do an afternoon hike. In the evening, we will visit Mount Harder high above Interlaken for dinner.

Kayaking: 2 hours Overnight: Interlaken (B, D)

DAY 6

We bid adieu to Interlaken, and head to Adelboden by train and bus. Starting our hike from Adelboden, we ascend along the Gilsbach river and continue through fairytale forests and meadows leading up to Hahnenmoospass. We will enjoy our trail lunch with views of the picturesque village of Lenk. This mountain village is in the Hinteren Simmental area; a perfect backdrop of the Wildstrubel massif and more spectacular waterfalls.

Hiking: 5-6 hours 6.1 miles, Elevation gain: 1575 feet, elevation loss: 2,950 feet Overnight: Lenk (B, D)

DAY 7

After a traditional Swiss breakfast, we will slowly glide from Lenk up to Betelberg on a gondola ride. The panoramic hike to the bizarre crater landscape of Gryde is something to behold. The rain gradually dissolves the almost white, relatively soft gypsum rock. The water carves craters out of it, but water continues to flow underground, creating a system of gypsum karst with cavities. Continuing on our hike, we reach the beautiful Trütli pass. We will descend through wildflowers and fields of free-roaming cows to reach the glamorous Gstaad. We will enjoy one of the most beautiful train rides in all of Switzerland, as we hop on board the Montreux-Oberland Bahn. We will spend the next two nights in our hotel in Montreux

Hiking: 5-6 hours 6.5 miles, Elevation gain: 1000 feet, elevation loss: 3100 feet Overnight: Montreux (B, D)

DAY 8

We catch one last train up to Rochers de Naye. The view is impressive as Lake Geneva slowly makes its way into sight. On a clear day, we can see all the way to Mont Blanc and the 13,000ft peaks of the Valais region of Switzerland. Starting our hike for the day, we will enjoy "La Rambertia" a little paradise of alpine flora where we might be able to find some edelweiss. Edelweiss is the rare alpine flower that is the national symbol of Switzerland. The last mile of the Via Alpina leads you on a spectacular path back to Lake Geneva, where we will cross the finish line of our route. Congrats on finishing the Via Alpina! We will head back to our hotel to wash up for our Final Dinner, where we will share memories and laughs from the past week.

Hiking: 5-6 hours 6.2 miles, Elevation gain: 300 feet, elevation loss: 3200 feet Overnight: Montreux (B, D)

DAY 9

Today is the final day of our trip. After breakfast we will make our way back to Zurich via train. The journey takes about 3 hours, so please plan your flight home for after 3 PM

(B)

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

Many airlines fly into Zurich airport (ZRH). Once you have collected your luggage in the airport, follow the signs for the "Bahnhof" (train station). You will need to buy a ticket from Zurich Flughafen (the airport) to Zurich HB (downtown Zurich). Trains run approximately every 30 minutes. After arrival, walk approximately 5 minutes from the Zurich train station to our hotel. More details will be provided in the Pre-Departure Information.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exito charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fee of \$50 per passenger.

Accommodations

We'll be hiking a point-to-point trail, where we hike from one hotel to the next. We will be staying at a variety of hotels, from larger hotels in Zurich to small, locally run inns in Swiss villages. Each night, we will be in a different hotel, with two twin beds, and ensuite bathrooms. The only exception is when we stay two nights in Interlaken, and two nights in Montreux at the end of the trip. We will have luggage transfer in between hotel stays, so you can be light and free during the day!

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

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