Scenic Swiss Alps



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Switzerland	5 & 8	354kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

With invigorating Alpine air, dramatic scenery, and nothing but the sound of tinkling cowbells for company, Switzerland is perfect for those looking for a memorable mountain holiday. The Bernese Oberland region boasts walking opportunities through gentle alpine hills and beneath the snow-capped peaks of the Engstligen Valley, plus the chance to walk across one of the longest suspension bridges in Europe. There'll also be a gondola ride to the beautiful Oeschinen Lake and an ascent up the 2,341-metre summit of Elsighorn.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Walking the balcony paths above Oeschinen Lake
- Taking a gondola ride to the lake
- The Alpine scenery of Engstligenalp
- Taking in views from almost 2,000 metres above sea level
- Walking between high peaks on the Hahnenmoos Pass
- Exploring the Kander Valley

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)
- HF Holidays Tour manager
- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- 7 nights' accommodation in Adelboden
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival day**

Welcome to Hotel Steinmattli. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 **Above Adelboden**

These walks venture onto the high meadows of Tschentenalp above Adelboden, and both walks offer excellent views of the Engstligen valley, with Adelboden far below and the surrounding mountains, where many of the walks to be enjoyed later in the week, can be identified.

Option 1 - The Hörnliweg and Alpine Garden

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 1,443 feet (440m)

Total descent: 1,423 feet (434m)

In summary: We take the Tschenten gondola to the upper slopes and, after soaking up the panoramic views, with a chance to try the 'Giant Swing', we return to Adelboden ascending gradually through meadows to Hörnli Alpine Garden with its rich array of wild flowers. From here we traverse above the village through woodland before descending to follow the mighty Allenbach river back to the hotel in time for afternoon refreshments.

Highlight: Panoramic views above the Engstligen valley.

Option 2 - The Hörnliweg, Schwandfeldspitz and Schermtanne

Distance: 9 miles (14½km)

Total ascent: 2,400 feet (720m)

In summary: From the hotel we ascend through woodland before picking up the route of the easier group as we traverse above Adelboden to the Hörnli Alpine Garden, to enjoy the beautiful array of flowers. We'll pause at the viewpoint, with chance to enjoy the 'Giant Swing', then ascend through meadows to the Tschenten restaurant, enjoying views of the Tschentenalps, Zigzag our way onwards to the summit of Schwadfelspitz at 2025m, for superb panoramas, then the great views continue as we make our descent into Adelboden.

Highlight: Reach the summit of Schwandfeldspitz, an impressive spur with views in all directions.

Day 3 **The Hahnenmoos Pass**

From Adelboden we take a long gondola ride of 3 miles to the upper station and restaurant at Sillerebühl, situated at an altitude of just under 2,000 metres. Now called the Vogellisi, or 'Bird Lady Mountain', from here we follow the famous flower trails to Hahnenmoos.

The broad grassy saddle at the Hahnenmoos pass is the historic route between Adelboden and the village of Lenk. The pass was once the site of a local festival where villagers from the two valleys met for trade and athletic contests.

Option 1 - Sillerenbühl, Flower Trail, Hahnenmoos Pass and Luegli

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 920 feet (280m)

Total descent: 2,260 feet (690m)

In summary: From Sillernbühl we follow a wonderful floral trail to the Hahnenmoos Pass where we will spot some of the locals flying model gliders. We continue on the trail to descend to Berglager and our gondola back to Adelboden.

Highlight: Discover the profusion of wild flowers, under the watch of Vogellisi and Luegli mountains.

Option 2 - Hahnenmoos Pass, Ridges Above Geils

Distance: 10 miles (15½km)

Total ascent: 2,360 feet (720m)

Total descent: 3,870 feet (1,180m)

In summary: We ascend to Vogellisi and Luegli mountains. We follow a track towards the Pommern and bypass the prominent peaks. We then follow a spectacular ridge down and then on to Tronegg for more great views over to Engstilgen Falls before starting our descent to Berglager and gondola back to Adelboden.

Highlight: The path across the narrow ridge to Huendersaedel with the precipice views to the right.

Day 4 Kandertal and Oeschinensee

Kandertal is the adjacent valley to Adelboden, just a few miles away as the crow flies. Both walks take a gondola and head to Oeschinensee, a picture-postcard mountain lake setting that changes colour from azure to emerald depending on the cloud cover. Today we will be surrounded by majestic mountains including Bluemlisalp, Fruenderhorn and Doldenhorn.

Option 1 - Kandertal and Oeschinensee

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 810 feet (380m)

Total descent: 2,880 feet (880m)

In summary: Our route leads us to the Senn Hutte overlooking the beautiful Oeschinensee before heading around the northern side of the lake up to a lovely mountain hut at Unterbargli where we can enjoy a spot of lunch. We retrace our steps to the lake shore and continue to the Berghotel, a popular tourist spot, before descending down the valley to Kandersteg and well-earned refreshments.

Highlight: Enjoy lunch at a typical mountain hut.

Option 2 - Kandersteg, Oeschinensee and High Mountain Alps

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,250 feet (380m)

Total descent: 2,890 feet (880m)

In summary: The harder route takes us along a spectacular path, traversing high above the lake to the huts perched on a hanging valley. From here we descend to the hut at Unterbargli and on to the Berghotel where we follow a path to Kandersteg for refreshments.

Highlight: Spectacular views Heuberg and Oberbaergli.

Day 5 Free day

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. You may wish to use the efficient Swiss transport system to visit the attractive lakeside resorts of Interlaken, Thun or Spiez. Alternatively, you could hire a bike in Adelboden and cycle in the local area.

Day 6 Engstligen valley and Waterfall

The impressive Engstligen Waterfall is one of the area's most impressive sights and is clearly visible from the hotel balcony. The falls drop around 600 metres making them the second highest in Switzerland. Above the waterfalls is the Engstligenalp, a vast expanse of alpine flowers and pastures that was once an ancient glacial lake. The lofty summits and glaciers of the Wildstrubel surround this impressive hanging valley.

Option 1 - Engstligen Valley, Engstligenalp and Falls

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 650 feet (200m)

Total descent: 1070 feet (325m)

In summary: Today we take the cable car to ascend to Engstligenalp. We take a leisurely walk in the hanging valley, taking time to admire the scenery and Alpine flowers. After lunch, we descend using the cable car and continue our walk through woodland to the lower falls where we can appreciate their power. We continue on the path to the bus stop to catch the return bus to Adelboden.

Highlight: View the impressive Engstligen waterfalls.

Option 2 - Engstligen Valley, Hinterberg, Engstligenalp and Falls

Distance: 9 miles (14½km)

Total ascent: 2,600 feet (780m)

In summary: We ascend through the dramatic Hinterberg corrie over a spur to the beautiful pastures of Engstligenalp. We spend some time walking on the high valley before descending, then we cross the foot of the upper falls continuing to the mighty lower falls and our bus back to Adelboden.

Highlight: Enjoy the alpine ascent to Hinterberg, with chance to spot local wildlife, such as marmots.

Day 7 On the slopes of the Elsighorn

The Elsighorn is the northernmost significant summit on the high ridge that separates the Engstligen and Kander Valleys. We go to Elsigbach by minibus and take a cable car to the slopes above.

Option 1 - Elsigsee, Brandsee and Adelboden Panoramas

Distance: 7.5 miles (12km)

Total ascent: 910ft (280m)

Total descent: 2,440ft (745m)

In summary: This morning we travel by bus to the base of Elsigbach Gondola Station, then take the scenic gondola ride to Elsigalp. We'll see picturesque views of mountains, as well as Elsigsee and Brandsee, then enjoy the scenic view at Hoechst before our return.

Highlight: Majestic lake and mountain views

Option 2 - Elsighorn, Golitschenpass and Stand

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 2,880 feet (880m)

Total descent: 2870 feet (875m)

In summary: We ascend to the summit of Elsighorn, at 2,341m the highest point of the week, which goes on to the Golitschenpass and another summit, Stand, with spectacular views all the way. On a clear day, our wonderful 360 degree view, could include sights of Eiger Moench and Jungfrau. The descent is via Elsigsee and the friendly Elsighutte taking the cable car part way down, before walking a little further down to catch the bus back.

Highlight: Spectacular views from the summit of Elsighorn, Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau.

Day 8 Departure day

We hope to see you again soon.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Moderate walking grade 5

Some walking experience needed. Full day walks which may include some short but steep ascents and descents throughout the day, and varied terrain. Regular stops. Typically, 8-9 miles (13-15km) with around 1,300ft (400m) of ascent.



Challenging walking grade 8

Challenging walks for fit, experienced walkers. Expect rugged or mountainous terrain, or some longer distances than typical for this grade. Typically, 12-13 miles (19-21km) with around 2,300ft (700m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Steinmattli - Bernese Oberland

The 4-star Hotel Steinmattli is a modern chalet-style property located in a peaceful part of this charming village. All 63 comfortable bedrooms offer a balcony or terrace, en-suite bathroom and beautiful views. A delicious evening meal is served each day in the hotel's Alpen Chic Restaurant. The shops and bars of Adelboden are just a short walk away.

Your evenings

The friendly atmosphere of our guided walking holidays continues into the evening.

Enjoy a glass of wine or local beer whilst listening to our leaders outlining the next days walks. After dinner you can take a stroll into the village to sample the local bars or just have a coffee and relax in the bar with your fellow guests.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining at the Hotel Steinmattli

Our holidays in the Bernese Oberland are half-board including breakfast and dinner each day.

Breakfast

Breakfast is an extensive buffet with hot and cold options served in the main restaurant. The coffee is excellent.

Lunch (payable locally)

The hotel offers picnic lunches at a small charge that can be made up at breakfast time. Alternatively, ingredients can be purchased from the local shops and on certain days it maybe possible to eat out at a local café or hut. Your leaders will advise you of the best options each day.

Evening meal

The restaurant Alpen Chic produces food of an exceptionally high standard; a range of red and white wines are available to accompany your meal. There is the option of cheese rather than a sweet dessert each night.

The hotel has signed up to a new initiative in Switzerland that aims to reduce food waste and pride themselves on wasting nearly nothing at all. For this reason portions are kept fairly modest but you are welcome to request a larger portion when you order or even ask to be served the same course twice if you are very hungry. This will be explained to you by the hotel team on arrival.

ROOMS

Your room at the Hotel Steinmattli

- Private balcony or terrace
- Television with a range of English channels
- Free Wi-Fi
- Room safe
- Hairdryer
- Toiletries

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Facilities at the Hotel Steinmattli

The hotel features:

- Wellness centre with sauna and whirlpool
- Fully stocked bar with large comfortable seating area
- Restaurant Alpen Chic with stunning mountain views
- Free bike hire

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Hotel Steinmattli
Risetenstrassli 10
3715 Adelboden
Switzerland

Tel: 0041 33673 3939

TRIP INFORMATION

EU Walking Safety

We are committed to running our Guided Walking holidays in a safe manner and your co-operation with this is much appreciated. No outdoor activity can be 100% risk free; however, if you take sensible precautions and adhere to your leaders' instructions, your holiday will be both safe and enjoyable. On the first evening of your holiday (dependent on arrival time), the leaders will give a short talk about safety on the walks – we would ask everyone to attend.

Walking as a group: Our leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and will show more caution over potential risks (such as bad or exceptionally hot weather) than an individual or couple might make on a private outing. Walks may be modified or cancelled following the leaders' assessment of the day-to-day situation. Your leaders will refuse to accept any guest whose clothing, equipment, behaviour or walking ability is considered unsuitable, and where it could affect the safety and enjoyment of other guests on the proposed walk. It is your responsibility to follow the leader's guidelines, for the benefit and safety of the group as a whole. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. For safety reasons, we stipulate a minimum party size of two guests in addition to the leader. First aid: In line with current practice, each leader carries a group first aid kit but is not able to supply any 'medication', including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream.

Hydration: In warm weather it is very important to keep hydrated. You will need to carry a minimum of two litres of water with you on walks, more during hot weather or on more demanding walks. One good way of hydrating is to use a two litre hydration pack which allows drinking without constant stopping. This can then be filled up from additional water sources as required. Your leader will inform you of the possibilities for replenishing your water during the walks.

Your health: It is essential that you describe on your guest registration form any health condition or disability you may have. The leaders will treat this confidentially and may be able to take it into account on the walks; for example, by not delaying lunch if they know they have someone with diabetes in their party.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Passport & Visa

Passport Requirements

In Switzerland there is a need to carry ID at all times in (passport or copy of passport) - You may be requested to present this by local authorities and it is also required to confirm ID for travel passes.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Ticks information

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/

Language Information for Bernese Oberland

Swiss and German (most people speak English but German is the language used by locals).

Telephone Code for Bernese Oberland

If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.
To dial a UK number 0044
To dial a Swiss number 0041

LOCAL CURRENCY

Local currency for Bernese Oberland

The local currency is the Swiss Franc.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity information for Bernese Oberland

220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Bernese Oberland

There is an ATM machine in Adelboden where you can obtain money.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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