Swiss Big Five Mountain Railway Discovery



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Rail Adventures	Switzerland	1	223kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Experience five of Switzerland's most scenic rail and cable car journeys in one holiday. Travel from London St Pancras to the central Swiss canton of Nidwalden by train and stay on the stunning shores of Lake Lucerne. Climb to the summits of Pilatus, Stanserhorn, Rigi, and Titlis with ease, allowing you to focus your energy on admiring this alpine landscape where snow-capped peaks and crystal lakes steal the show.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Staying in Hergiswil on the shores of Lake Lucerne
- Experiencing the Hammetschwand Lift, the highest outdoor lift in Europe
- Journeying on the Stanserhorn CabriO Cableway
- Riding the Rigi Railway, Europe's first mountain railway
- Travelling on the Pilatus Railway, the steepest cog railway in the world
- Soaking up the views on the Titlis Rotair Revolving Cable Car

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return rail travel from London to Hergiswil
- Fully escorted travel with an HF Holidays Tour Manager
- Excursions guided by a local leader
- 7 nights in Hergiswil and overnight stays in Strasbourg & Basel
- 9 breakfasts & 9 dinners
- All rail and cable car journeys
- Local transport pass

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 LONDON TO STRASBOURG BY TRAIN

Meet your HF Holidays Tour Manager and fellow travellers at London St Pancras International railway station. After check-in, baggage checks, and passport control, we'll wait for our train.

We'll board the Eurostar to Paris, where we'll disembark and leave Gare du Nord to walk the short distance to the Gare de l'Est (about 800 metres). At Gare de l'Est we'll join the high-speed TGV service and travel eastwards from Paris to Alsace and the charming city of Strasbourg.

In Strasbourg, we'll walk a short distance (about 350 metres) to our hotel. We'll have time to stretch our legs and stroll around the old town, much of which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This evening we'll enjoy dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 2 STRASBOURG TO HERGISWIL

In the late morning we'll make our way back to Strasbourg railway station where we'll board a regional train through Alsace and across the border into Switzerland. In Basel we'll change trains and continue into central Switzerland. There's a final change of trains in Lucerne, arriving in Hergiswil in the late afternoon - our base for the next seven nights. We'll walk the short distance (about 450 metres) to our hotel.

Day 3 HAMMETSCHWAND LIFT

We'll travel by train from Hergiswil to Lucerne where we'll board a boat to take us across the lake to Kehrsiten-Bürgenstock. A funicular then takes us up to Bürgenstock where we'll walk (about 40 minutes to an hour) to the Hammetschwand Lift, the highest outdoor lift in Europe. Journey upwards (153 metres in one minute), and from the summit you'll be able to gaze out over Lake Lucerne, the Rigi and Pilatus mountains, and the Bernese Alps. There's time for lunch before our return journey.

Distance: 1 mile (1.7km)

Day 4 STANSERHORN

We'll travel by rail around the lake to Stans, where the first part of our Stanserhorn experience is the funicular railway dating from 1893. We'll then hop on the world's first cableway with an open-air upper deck from where you can take in the outstanding views. At the summit, there's the Rondorama revolving restaurant, which makes one complete revolution every 43 minutes, soaking up 360-degree panoramic views of the Alps. Enjoy lunch before our return journey to Hergiswil.

Day 5 FREE DAY

Make the most of the hotel's leisure facilities and lake surroundings or visit Lucerne with its famous wooden footbridge and Swiss Museum of Transport. You'll be given a local transport pass you can use to visit the sights in the local area.

Day 6 RIGI

Affectionately called the Queen of the Mountains, Rigi is Europe's first mountain railway, which opened in 1871. After a train ride to Lucerne, we'll take a boat and travel across Lake Lucerne to Vitznau. Here we'll join the cogwheel railway that leaves the lake behind for a magnificent journey through the meadows to the summit of the Rigi. On a clear day you can see France and Germany. Enjoy the views and have some lunch before the return journey to Hergiswil.

Day 7 PILATUS RAILWAY

We'll travel from Hergiswil to Alpnachstad by boat for the start of our Pilatus Railway experience. In Alpnachstad we'll board the steepest cogwheel railway in the world to reach the summit at 2,132 metres above sea level. Enjoy some free time to soak up the panorama of the Alpine Massif. Then we'll travel by aerial cable car and panorama gondola to Kriens and return to Hergiswil from there, via Lucerne.

Day 8 TITLIS ROTAIR, ENGELBERG

We'll travel by train away from the lake and into the mountains to Engelberg via Stans. In Engelberg we'll hop on a cable car to Stand station where the world's first revolving gondola to the summit awaits. The TITLIS Rotair sweeps you up to the summit at 3,020 metres above sea level. The TITLIS Cliff Walk at the summit is sure to get your adrenaline pumping, too.

Day 9 BASEL

We say farewell to Hergiwsil and Lake Lucerne and travel to Basel by train, changing in Lucerne en route. On arrival in Basel we'll walk to our hotel, Hotel Schweizerhof, just across the road from the station. We arrive in Basel in the early afternoon so we'll have time to wander and see the sights. The hotel provides each guest with a local BaselCard giving you complimentary travel on local public transport and discounts on numerous attractions. This evening we enjoy dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 10 BASEL TO LONDON

After breakfast we'll board the high-speed TGV train for Paris. At Gare de Lyon, a coach will transfer us across Paris to Gare du Nord station. Sit back and relax on the Eurostar from Paris to St Pancras International railway station.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 1

Short, easy walks on level paths with no stiles. Ideal for relaxed walking and active sightseeing. Typically, 2-3 miles (3-5km) or less, with little if any ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Seehotel Pilatus, Hergiswil

This 4-star family-run hotel features a standout location on the shores of Lake Lucerne in Hergiswil, a short train journey from Lucerne. Surrounded by mountain vistas, there's plenty to please here, including a host of wellness facilities like an indoor pool, whirlpool, Finnish sauna, sundeck, and direct access to the lake.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address:

Seehotel Pilatus,

Seestrasse 34,

6052 Hergiswil

Switzerland

Tel: 00 41 (0)41 632 30 30

Hotel Schweizerhof, Basel

Located just opposite the train station, Hotel Schweizerhof is a short walk into the centre of Basel. It dates back to 1864 with four generations of the same family running it since 1896. Rooms are modern with en-suite bathrooms, air conditioning, TV, Kettle, and free Wi-Fi.

FOOD & DRINK

Our hotel in Basel does not serve meals in the evening. We will therefore have breakfast in the hotel but enjoy dinner in a local restaurant in Basel.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address:

Hotel Schweizerhof

Centralbahnplatz 1

4002 Basel

Switzerland

Tel: 00 41 (0)61 560 8585

Best Western Plus Monopole Metropole, Strasbourg

This 4-star hotel's location near the train station makes it an ideal base for exploring the city. Rooms are contemporary with en-suite bathrooms, plus it's an eco-responsible hotel, certified by Green Key International. There are two lounges to relax in, one with a pool table, plus there's free Wi-Fi throughout.

FOOD & DRINK

Our hotel in Strasbourg does not serve meals in the evening. We will therefore have breakfast in the hotel but enjoy dinner in a local restaurant in Strasbourg.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address:

Best Western Plus Hotel Monopole Metropole

16 Rue Kuhh

67000 Strasbourg

France

Tel: 00 33 (0) 3 88 14 39 14

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 RAIL)

Notes for Rail Travel

Rail travel will be from St Pancras International Station, London and onward to Switzerland via Strasbourg and Basel.

Your group meeting point at St Pancras will be the Sir John Betjeman statue on the upper level of the station, 2 hours before departure time. Here you will join the rest of your group and meet your HF Holidays Tour Manager who will guide you throughout your journey. You will then make your way to the ticket gate as a group.

A suitcase with wheels is strongly recommended as you will be responsible for carrying and lifting your luggage on all parts of the journey. All luggage will be scanned at the departure gate and needs to be clearly labelled. You will need to be responsible for your luggage and belongings at all stages of your journey so it's advisable to have it within eyesight when travelling on the trains and be extra vigilant when moving through busy railway stations. Please refer to the website below for the latest information on luggage requirements for your journey and trip information: https://www.eurostar.com/uk-en

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/

BaselCard

When you check in to your hotel in Basel, you will be given a BaselCard, which entitles you to complimentary travel on local buses and trams and discounts on local attractions. Please see www.basel.com/en/baselcard for further information. You may wish to join a guided tour of Basel to make the most of your stay. Two hour guided walking tours in English take place on Saturdays at 2.30pm and can be booked via the BaselCard website. The usual price is CHF25.00 and BaselCard holders benefit from a 50% discount.

Trip information

Our Discovery holidays give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture of the local area through active sightseeing. On each Discovery day, you will be walking throughout the course of the day as you explore the venues and locations we visit. You'll also be hopping on and off coaches, trains, boats and cable cars throughout, depending upon your itinerary - you should expect to spend the majority of the day on your feet. Most of this walking will be at attractions but some may be across country tracks or footpaths or through guided walking tours in towns and cities. Be sure to bring sturdy shoes. There may also be stairs to climb at the venues and locations you visit. At some venues and locations, there may also be uneven surfaces, such as cobbles, rocky paths or uneven surfaces.

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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