



8 Days Swiss Rail Itinerary

Day 1: Zürich and Zermatt

You arrive at the Zürich airport and will be met by one of ECHO Rails & Trails Guides. Your Guide will review all your trip details with you and guide you through the airport to the airport train station.

You will have your First-Class rail ticket. The Guide will put you on the next scheduled train to Zermatt that is a direct train to Visp where you change platforms for the train to Zermatt. Zurich Airport train departure current schedules are: 11:45, 13:45, 15:45 with one easy connection in Visp.

After your scenic 3 ½ hr journey to Zermatt, you will be met by our ECHO Trails Guide at the Zermatt train station and transferred to your hotel.

In Zermatt, you may meet and be introduced to other ECHO Rails & Trails guests who are on the tour too.

Meals Included: Dinner

Accommodations: Resort La Ginabelle (or comparable lodging)

Day 2: Zermatt and The Matterhorn

Experience breathtaking views of Mt. Matterhorn and the Alps in an excursion that combines a cogwheel train ride with an easy-to-moderate day hike

You'll ride Europe's second highest railway and the highest open-air railway on the continent—the Gornergrat cogwheel train climbing up to the 10,134 feet (3089 meters) offering incredible views of the Matterhorn along the way.

The group walks up to the 360-degree platform area providing a panoramic view of 29 alpine peaks higher than 13,123 feet (4000 meters)—including the world-famous Matterhorn.

Our 1-2 hour guided hike travels along sign-posted trails of an alpine nature reserve feature awe-inspiring views of the Matterhorn mirrored in pristine alpine lakes.

Along the way, you'll learn about the origins of Zermatt and the people of the canton of Valais (French) or Wallis (German).

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Resort La Ginabelle (or comparable lodging)

Day 3: Goldenpass Line through Valais to Interlaken and Jungfrau

Travel through the French speaking Canton of Valais – known as the fruit basket of Switzerland offering delightful views of terraced vineyards and fruit trees.

This segment is branded as the Goldenpass Line with either a Classic train car or the Panorama Car with big panorama windows.

Experience what it was like during the Belle-Epoque, Golden Age period when the rich and famous were the only ones traveling on such trains.

We continue on the GoldenPass Line through the Préalps of the canton of Fribourg and through the beautiful Simmental Valley known for the sturdy brown and white cows and the world famous resort town of Gstaad, home to many Hollywood stars.

In Interlaken we stop for an immersive Chocolate Workshop. You will learn all about the origin of chocolate making as well as how to identify and understand the different tastes of chocolate.

The professional Chocolatiers will show you how to create your own masterpiece chocolate bar all the while enjoying a pleasurable and fun experience.

Afterwards we continue on the View Alpine valleys and rolling hills, green pastures and grazing cows, wooden chalets and picturesque villages as we journey to the Jungfrau region – one of Switzerland's oldest and most popular resorts in the UNESCO World Heritage Jungfrau region.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel Alpina, Grindelwald (or comparable lodging)

Day 4: Jungfrau and Trummelbach Falls

Today is a memorable one, starting with the new Eiger Express cable gondola taking us from Grindelwald to the Eiger Glacier station in just 15 minutes.

We then transfer directly onto the Jungfrau Railway cogwheel train to the top of the 3,400m / 13371 ft Jungfraujoch, the 1914 built complex between the Mönch & Jungfrau mountains. We will be inside and outside experiencing Europe's largest Aletsch glacier. One can view mountains, snow, and ice as far as one can see.

There is time to walk outside on the hard-packed glacier snow and be part of the scenery. Sit in on one of the free-standing deck chairs or go tubing and enjoy Europe's highest man-made splendor.

The afternoon finds the group on a train to Lauterbrunnen where we transfer to a postal bus on its way to Trümmelbach Falls, a series of ten glacier-fed waterfalls within the mountain, made accessible by a tunnel-funicular—a complex of lifts, galleries, tunnels, paths and platforms constructed in 1913. The falls carry melt water from the glaciers—up to 20,000 liters of water per second, rushing over 20,000 tons of boulders. The mountain shudders and thunders unceasingly—a stage for nature's majesty.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel Alpina, Grindelwald (or comparable lodging)

Day 5: Grindelwald Reichenbach Valley – Gotthard Tunnel – Lugano

In the morning we board the Grindelwald Bus for a scenic ride over the Grosse Scheidegg pass. One can see the 12,000 ft. Wetterhorn mountain peak written up by British climbers in 1856 that ushered in the so-called golden age of alpinism, the exploration of the Alps by British mountaineers.

We ride past alpine meadows and chalets to reach the Schwarzwaldalp. Here we change buses with time to visit the old Schwarzwaldalp sawmill. We continue past the Reichenbach falls that was the fictional location for where Sherlock Holmes, fights to the death with Professor Moriarty, at the end of "The Final Problem", first published in 1893.

Once in Meiringen, we transfer to the Zentral Railway to Lucerne where we connect to the train and proceed to ride through the World's longest Gotthard Base Tunnel and reach the Italian speaking region of Ticino in Lugano in the afternoon.

In Lugano, we take the funicular, first built in 1886, renovated in 2016 down to the main center by Lake Lugano and then we walk to our nearby hotel.

For Dinner, we take the Lake Lugano boat cruise and travel across the lake to the nearby outdoor Grotto, weather permitting, where we enjoy the local cuisine of this Italian speaking region of Ticino.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel International Au Lac or similar

Day 6: Lugano – Lake Como Cruise – Bellagio – Lugano

Today we will discover one of the most fascinating Italian lakes, Lake Como. We will travel with a local Italian bus from Lugano to Menaggio – then board the Lake Como boat to Bellagio.

Our day consists of a boat ride on Lake Como to Bellagio. We make a lunch stop and then continue with the hydrofoil boat, take a walk-through Como, view the beautiful cathedral the Duomo of Como, and take a return train to Lugano.

We will be cruising around the lake by boat, surrounded by mountains, sparkling water and villas, while relaxing in peaceful atmospheres on the beautiful lake of 146 square kilometers, and 400 meters deep (1,300ft) one of the deepest and certainly most beautiful lakes in Europe. With a shore length of 160 km, there's a lot to see.

We will visit the most beautiful town on the lake, Bellagio. We'll stroll on the cobbled sun-soaked streets that lead us down to the glistening blue lake surrounded by Alps. We see some of the most famous and beautiful villas of the rich and famous that line the sunny upper shores of Lake Como with its microclimates and the amazing gardens that touch the lake.

Como is the capital of the Lake Como region situated in Lombardy, in the North of Italy. It has the shape of an inverted Y and comprises many beautiful villages and villas to see. For the past five hundred years everyone from Bellini the composer, to Winston Churchill have enjoyed residence in the beautiful villas of Como.

Today we include Lunch in Bellagio at an authentic local Italian Restaurant.

Dinner: You'll be on your own.

Hotel: Hotel International Au Lac or similar

Day 7: Panoramic Express to Fluelen – Lucerne to Zürich

Lugano – Gotthard Pass Panoramic Express – Lake Lucerne Wilhelm Tell Express – Zürich – Zürich Airport

Today we depart the Italian part of Switzerland heading North over & through the original Gotthard Tunnel. This was built in 1882. It connected the North Sea and the Mediterranean Sea together on one line for the first time, facilitating the movement of goods and people between Northern & Southern Europe.

We will have 3 different views of the Wassen church, which has become world-famous thanks to the ingenious railway system and its many helical tunnels.

In Fluelen, we board a steamboat and glide over Lake Lucerne, past mystical bays and picturesque landscapes, all while savoring culinary delicacies. We will pass countless locations steeped in Swiss history – most notably the Rütli meadow, where Switzerland was founded in 1291, as well as the Schiller Stone and Tell's Chapel.

Lunch on-board the Lake Lucerne Steamer included.

Dinner: on own

Hotel: Zürich airport Radison Blu or similar

Day 8: Zürich

After our breakfast in Zürich, which is included, you are on your own.

We wish you a safe onward journey to your next destination.

Thank you for your interest in our tours. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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