



WELCOME TO SWITZERLAND

An 8-day Trip (over New Year's Eve)

This was an 8-day trip through Switzerland over the New Year. We departed Zürich for the bridges, city wall, and beautiful lake of Lucerne before continuing by train to Geneva and driving to Gruyères for cheese, castles, and H.R. Giger. After returning to Geneva, we took a train to Zermatt for iconic winter paradise views of the Matterhorn and epic snowboarding through the Alps to ring in the new year. A couple days later we boarded the infamous Glacier Express to enjoy a leisurely ride and 4-course meal through the picturesque countryside to St. Moritz, where we took a final train back up to Zurich. We wrapped up the last couple evenings exploring the diverse food and architecture of the fantastic city of Zurich. This was an excellent Swiss sampler with plenty of cheese, mountains, and schnapps to keep us warm!



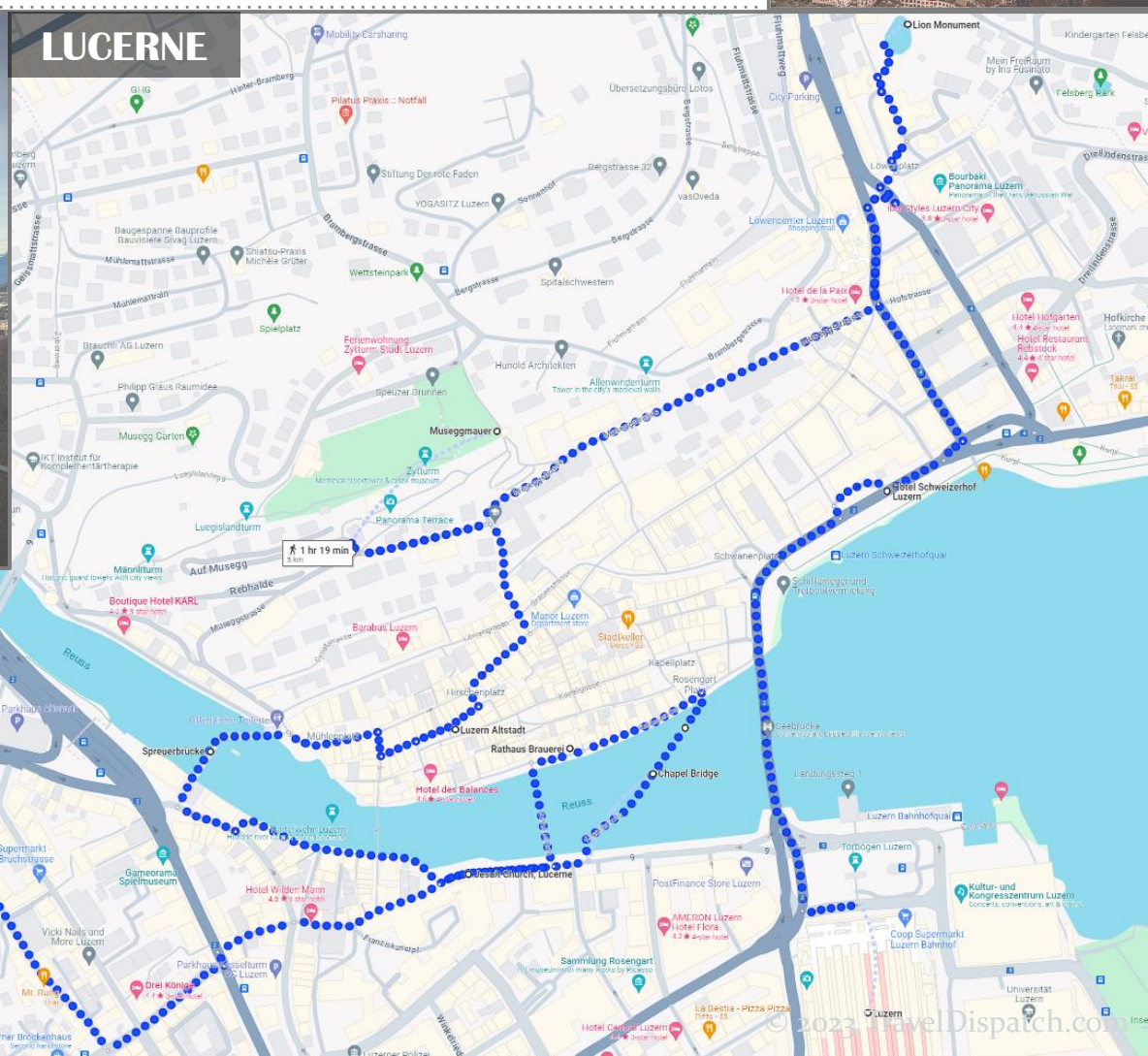
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DAY 1

Today we arrived in Zurich and took a train down to explore Lucerne. We arrived in Zurich after a red-eye flight from the USA and used our Swiss Travel Pass to take a train down to Lucerne. We then wandered along the bridges and streets of the beautiful lake town, quenching our thirst and satiating our hunger along the way. A well-deserved sleep awaited us that night.

7:40AM	Arrive in Zürich (ZRH) and transfer to train station
8:48AM	Depart Flughafen Zürich [IC5-514 → Zürich HB → IR70-2617]
9:51AM	Arrive Luzern
10:30AM	Drop off luggage / check in at Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern
11:00AM	Wander around Lucerne (3.4km; 45min) (Lion Monument; Musegg Wall; Old Town Frescos; Spreuer Bridge; Jesuit Church; Chapel Bridge)
1:30PM	Lunch at Rathaus Brauerei
2:30PM	Walk to Hotel Château Gütsch for Grand Tour Photo Spot (1.4km; 30min)
3:30PM	Cocktails at American Bar then walk (30min) back to hotel to freshen up
7:00PM	Dinner at Restaurant Pavillon (at hotel) [Sunset @ 4:43PM]



DAY 2

Today we migrated by train to Geneva and drove to Gruyères. After a sunrise wander around the bridges and waterfront, we took a train to the Geneva Airport and picked up a rental car. We then drove to the tasty area of Gruyères, where we explored HR Giger's museum and bar, the local castle, and of course ALL OF THE MELTY CHEESE this small town had to offer.

7:30AM	Catch sunrise along the lake / river [Sunrise @ 8:12AM]
8:15AM	Check out and walk to train station; enjoy a pastry & coffee
8:54AM	Depart Luzern [IR26-2312 → Olten → IC5-514]
11:56AM	Arrive Genève Aéroport
12:00PM	Pick up rental from Avis
12:45PM	Drive to Gruyères [114km; 1hr 15min]
2:00PM	Snacks and beverages at Les Halles 1787
3:00PM	Drive to check in at Gruyères Rooms [6.5km; 15min]
3:50PM	Check out HR Giger Museum , Grand Tour Photo Spot , and Gruyères Castle [Sunset @ 4:50PM]
5:30PM	Beverages at HR Giger Bar
6:30PM	Dinner at Le Saint Georges OR Chalet de Gruyères



GRUYERES

DAY 3

Today we made our way back to Geneva and took a train to Zermatt. We started our day off with a final stroll around Gruyères before exploring a few remaining sites around Lake Geneva and returning our rental to hop on a train for Zermatt. We then wandered through town and enjoyed the atmosphere, an excellent dinner, and a few night caps from a couple local establishments.

7:30AM

Drop luggage off at car and wander around town for sunrise

[Sunrise @ 8:15AM]

8:45AM

Check out and drive to **Genève Aéroport** [114km; 1hr 15min]
(via [Chillon Castle](#); [Grand Tour Photo Spot](#), [Broken Chair](#); [United Nations](#))

12:00PM

Return rental to [Avis](#)

1:01PM

Depart **Genève Aéroport** [IR90-1821 → Visp → 347]

4:51PM

Arrive **Zermatt** [Sunset @ 4:51PM]

Walk to check in at [Studio w/ Balcony](#)

(400m; 10min; Bodmenstrasse 52)

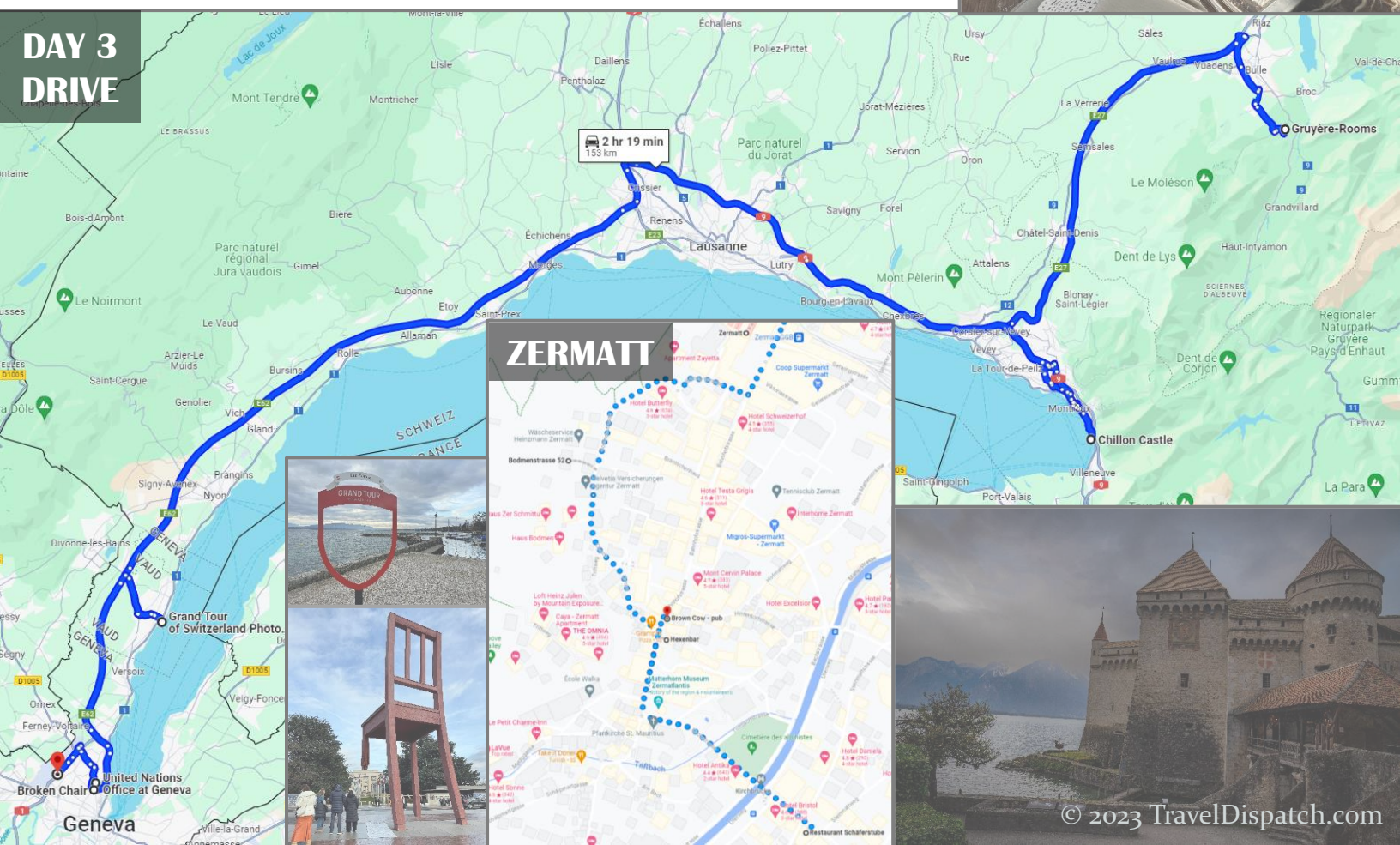
6:15PM

Dinner at [Restaurant Julen](#) [reservations recommended]

Drinks at [Hexenbar](#) OR [Brown Cow Pub](#)



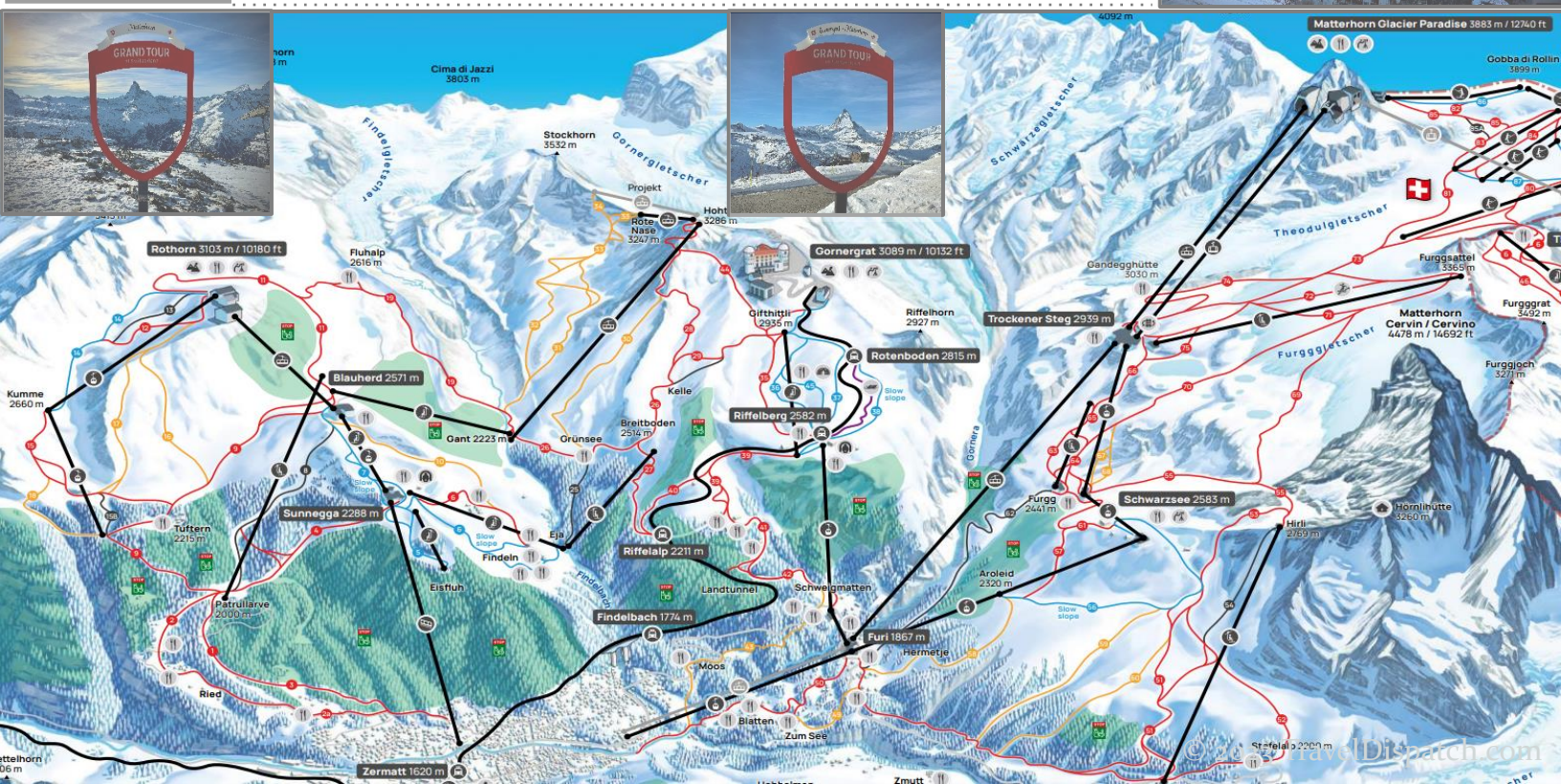
DAY 3 DRIVE



DAY 4

Today we sought out proper views of the alps and Matterhorn. We started our day with breakfast and amazing views at Matterhorn Glacier Paradise followed by even better views from Gornergrat and Rothorn before a fantastic sunset atop of Mürini Hill. Today was all about appreciating various views of the infamous Matterhorn and taking time for beverages and snacks along the way.

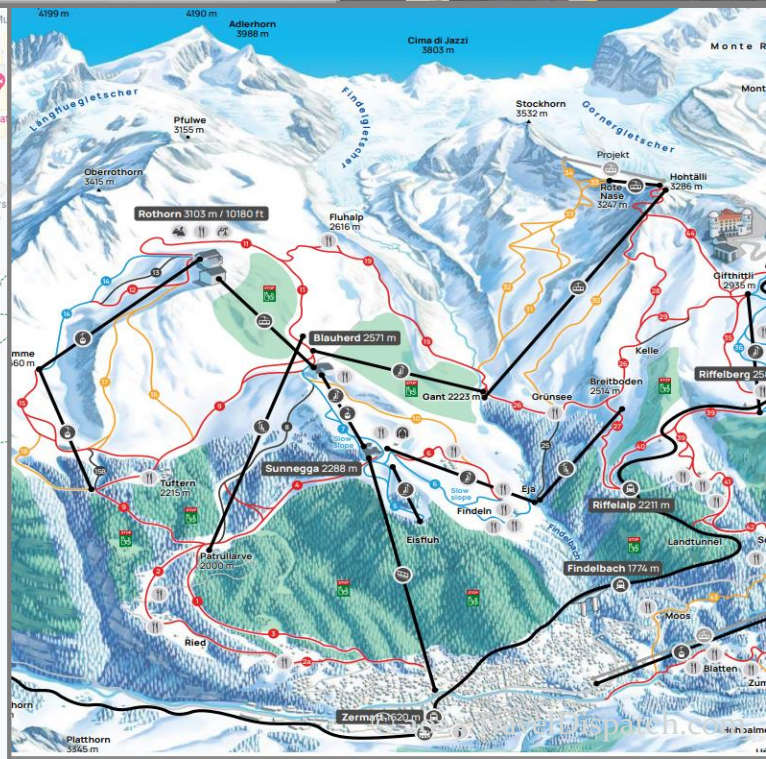
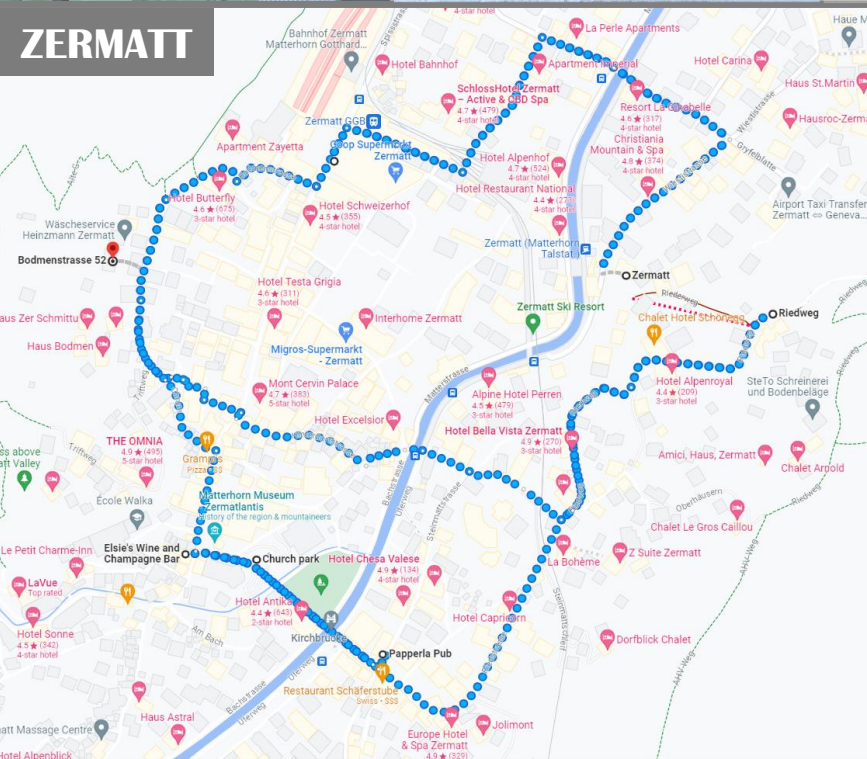
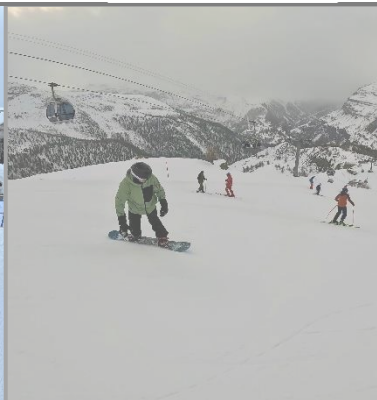
7:30AM	Walk via Bridge Viewpoint to pick up Peak-to-Peak tickets [Sunrise @ 8:10AM]
8:30AM	Depart Zermatt station for Glacier Paradise [45min] (Zermatt → Furi → Trockener Steg → Glacier Paradise)
9:15AM	Breakfast & explore Glacier Paradise (viewing platform ; restaurant ; glacier palace)
10:45AM	Take Peak-to-Peak route to Gornergrat [1hr 15min] (Glacier Paradise → Trockener Steg → Furi → Riffelberg → Gornergrat)
12:00PM	Explore Gornergrat (Grand Tour Photo Spot ; Golden Spot)
1:30PM	Take train back to Zermatt [35min] (Gornergrat → Riffelberg → Zermatt)
2:05PM	Walk over to Zermatt cable car station for tickets to Rothorn [35min] (Zermatt → Sunnegga → Blauherd → Rothorn)
2:45PM	Explore Rothorn (Grand Tour Photo Spot ; Pizzeria)
3:30PM	Take cable car for Zermatt [35min] (Rothorn → Blauherd → Sunnegga → Zermatt)
4:15PM	Walk over to Mürini for sunset (700m; 11min) [Sunset @ 4:52PM]
7:00PM	Dinner at Swiss Chalet [reservations recommended]



DAY 5

Today we snowboarded our way through the alps. Being novices, we booked an entire day of private instruction for the two of us; you pay the instructor by the hour, not by the person! We started with a 3-hour session in the morning, took a break for lunch, and then 2 more hours in the afternoon. By then, we were definitely ready for a relaxing dinner and drinks before ringing in the New Year!

7:45AM	Light breakfast and pick up gear from Bayard [Sunrise @ 8:10AM]
9:00AM	Private snowboarding lessons with Summit (Meet instructor at top of Sunnegga Express Lift by large Piste map)
12:00PM	Break for lunch at Findlerhof [reservations recommended]
1:00PM	Continue lessons in the afternoon
3:00PM	Return gear to Bayard and head back to apartment to change and freshen up
4:00PM	Walk over to Riedweg for sunset (1km; 20min) [Sunset @ 4:52PM]
5:30PM	Drinks at Papperla Pub
	Dinner at North Wall Bar & Pizzeria
	New Year's Eve fireworks at Church Park or from apartment balcony



DAY 6

Today we took the infamous Glacier Express to St. Moritz and continued on to Zürich. We started with a light breakfast before setting off to the train station and boarding the infamous Glacier Express to traverse 91 tunnels and 291 bridges along beautiful mountains with a 4-course meal and panoramic views before transferring at St. Moritz for a final train connection up to Zürich.

Light breakfast and pack up [Sunrise @ 8:11AM]

7:00AM Walk to Zermatt Station (400m; 10min)

7:52AM Depart Zermatt on Glacier Express
(book early; seat reservations are mandatory and limited)

3:37PM Arrive in Saint Moritz

4:02PM Depart St. Moritz [1156 → Chur → 908]

7:22PM Arrive Zürich HB [Sunset @ 4:45PM]

7:30PM Walk to check in at [Hotel Adler](#) (600m; 10min)

Dinner at hotel restaurant [Swiss Chuchi](#)



TRAIN TO ZÜRICH

GLACIER EXPRESS



DAY 7

Today we explored the diversity of Zürich. We started by fueling up with breakfast before taking in some of the most notable attractions and views in Zürich: Grossmünster, Fraumünster, Lindenhof, and Hardbrücke. We found snacks and beverages along the way to maintain our stamina for returning through Niederdorf and more views of the city from atop the Polybahn and Polyterrasse deck. That evening we enjoyed some cocktails and capped things off with an excellent final dinner in Zürich.

8:30AM	Walk to breakfast at Café Bar Odeon [Sunrise @ 8:13AM]
9:45AM	Walk to check out Grossmünster Tower views
10:45AM	Walk to check out Fraumünster Church
11:30AM	Walk via Lindenhof through Hardbrücke (3.1km; 45min) (Markthalle / Viadukt ; Frau Gerolds Garten ; Freitag Tower ; ViCafe Gerold)
1:30PM	Walk for beverages at Bierwerk Züri (1.5km; 20min)
3:00PM	Walk to Polybahn up to Polyterrasse deck
3:45PM	Walk to explore Niederdorf (1.3km; 20min) [Sunset @ 4:46PM]
4:15PM	Cocktails from Hotel Bourbon
6:00PM	Dinner at Zeughauskeller and drinks at ZuriBar



DAY 8

Today we made our way out of Zürich to fly home. We had a leisurely morning of breakfast, packing, and relaxing before taking the train to the airport. This was a fantastic winter adventure through Switzerland and we can't wait to return in the summertime!

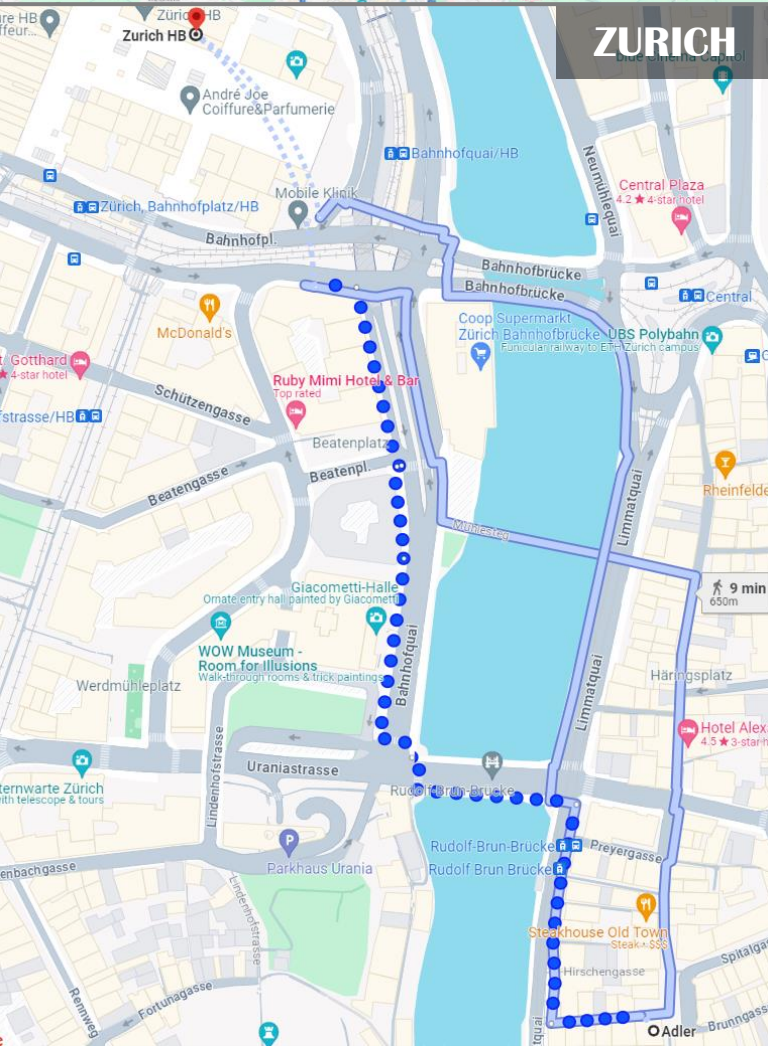
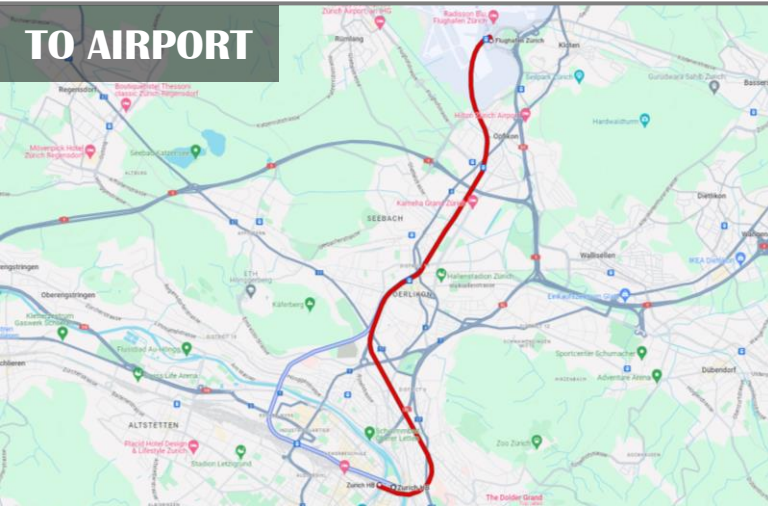
Breakfast at hotel; pack; and check out [Sunrise @ 8:13AM]

9:09AM Depart Zürich HB [IR13-3261]

9:21AM Arrive Zürich Airport

11:45AM Depart ZRH on flight home!

TO AIRPORT



The lists below illustrate our top picks based on our experiences along our trip. The lists are not intended to be exhaustive and we do not have partnerships or receive incentives from any of our recommendations. We've included any available links to the providers and to 'our reviews' I've posted on TripAdvisor. We wish you memorable travels and encourage you to reach out with any questions!

LODGING

[Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern](#) [Lucerne; Day 1] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Excellent hotel, staff, and location with an impressive history; we stayed in suite 048 which had great views of the lake.

[Gruyères Rooms](#) [Gruyères; Day 2] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★

Perfectly adequate place to stay in a unique hilltop town; we stayed in room #8 which had skylights / nice view.

[Studio w/ Balcony](#) [Zermatt; Days 3 – 5] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Overall, great service, space, and location with fantastic views over Zermatt; boked & reviewed on Booking.com.

[Hotel Adler](#) [Zürich; Days 6 – 8] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Great staff, hotel, and location; we stayed in room #402 which was cozy, but clean, equipped, and had terrific views of a central square on the main pedestrian thoroughfare / shopping area along Niederdorf.



RESTAURANTS

I've included our Top 5 places where we ate during this trip; *sequenced by day, not ranking.*

[Le Saint Georges](#) [Gruyères; Day 2] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Fondue was great, but it would be even better with charred pizza crust, rather than plain bread & potatoes.

[Restaurant Julen](#) [Zermatt; Day 3] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Great meal and experience; the 5-course prix fixe menu was an excellent journey through modern regional cuisine.

[Findlerhof](#) [Zermatt; Day 5] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Awesome location along Piste 6, unique experience, and tasty meal to fuel you for more boarding / skiing!

[Café Bar Odeon](#) [Zürich; Day 7] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Tasty breakfast and coffee with great atmosphere and storied history!

[Zeughauskeller](#) [Zürich; Day 7] [{Our Review}](#) ★★★★★

Entertaining theatrics and pretty good food & drinks to match; very busy, but communal tables help expedite.



EXPERIENCES

[Travel by train with the Swiss Travel Pass; 1st Class](#) [Everywhere; Days 1 – 8]

Although there isn't much difference between 1st and 2nd class in regards to quality of the train cars, we found 1st to be quieter, less crowded, and a better overall experience. You can configure your Swiss Travel Pass by number of consecutive days or flexible days within a month. Not only will you be able to hop on and off almost every train whenever you want (i.e., no booking tickets!) the pass provides you with discounts on most transit and attractions throughout the country; **the SBB app is excellent as well!**

[Explore and appreciate Zermatt](#) [Zermatt; Days 4 – 7]

Zermatt is one of our favorite cities in the world with its awe-inspiring location, car-free streets, and cool ski / snowboarding vibe and nightlife. Wander around and soak it in; you will love it too.

[Experience the H.R. Giger Museum & Bar](#) [Gruyères; Day 2]

A visionary artist who inspired an entire genre of science fiction aliens, creatures, and worlds. The museum is diverse in medium and one of the best I've experienced and the bar is just as fantastic; both may be arguably more exciting and worth visiting above the great quality cheese produced in the Gruyères region.

[Wander through Zürich](#) [Zürich; Day 7]

THE city of Switzerland has excellent culture, architecture, food, and accessibility that can give any European city a run for its money. Definitely explore Old Town, the church towers, and Lindenhof, but also make sure to wander through the Hardbrücke area to see Zurich's more creative and edgy side!

