

Objektyp: **Advertising**

Zeitschrift: **Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad**

Band (Jahr): **36 (2009)**

Heft 4

PDF erstellt am: **22.07.2024**

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The Swiss winter offers the perfect winter break

In Switzerland, guests enjoy the cosiest and most authentic winter breaks with a wide range of traditional chalets and fine local cuisine. Winter-time in Switzerland is ideal for the perfect winter break, offering winter sports, the charm of alpine chalets, spas, culinary delights, Christmas markets and lots more besides.

In Switzerland, the presence of nature is a little bit stronger than anywhere else in the world. Switzerland Tourism's "get natural" slogan captures what guests can expect from holidays in Switzerland in a nutshell: enjoy the winter – and surrounded by exquisite alpine scenery get a bit more natural yourself.

Get natural by taking a winter hike or a husky-drawn sleigh ride through forests covered with fresh snow, go downhill skiing through powder snow, enjoy a trek in snow shoes high above the clouds, go skating on frozen lakes, sledge down the valley or take a hot air balloon trip above the winter mountain landscape.

Of course, you will build up quite an appetite after all this activity. Each region offers its own individual dishes to satisfy your hunger. Traditional mountain cabins and refined eating houses offer a variety of traditional specialities. There is raclette in Valais, fondue in Fribourg, polenta in Ticino and capuns and salsiz in Grisons. There is a lot of fine food to discover – in a country where four languages and cultures meet, each region has its own "national dish".

You will find a Swiss ski and snowboarding school wherever a mountain railway leads to winter snow. The youngest visitors receive tuition in the Swiss Snow Kids Village and are looked after by Snowli, the mascot. Each school offers a standard course for the different types of equipment and levels of learning – the Swiss Snow League.

A busy winter's day will tire you out. Perhaps you will spend a night on ice in an igloo, get your head down in the dormitory of a SAC hut, sleep in the suite of a grand hotel or doze off in front of a chalet

fireplace. If you are not ready for bed just yet, why not enjoy a glass of mulled wine at a snow bar after a torch-lit descent, play a game of cards in a ski cabin over a Kafi Luz, a coffee with apple and pear schnapps, or party the night away in a nightclub – alpine nightlife is extremely diverse, not to mention legendary.

After so much enjoyment, you will occasionally want to take it easy. In the seclusion of the Alps, wellness is provided in an exquisite natural setting – hot springs rich in minerals from the depths



Sleeping in a dreamy chalet



Winter holidays in Switzerland: just like in the brochure

of the Alps, fresh mountain air, mountain scenery radiating peace and quiet, and idyllic winter landscapes.

Find out how to really enjoy the winter at www.MySwitzerland.com or by reading Switzerland Tourism's new winter brochure. This can be ordered free of charge from Switzerland Tourism online at www.MySwitzerland.com/aso

Christmas markets

Swiss Christmas markets are a real treat. You can enjoy the romantic Christmas atmosphere of the Advent period in various Swiss towns and villages. There is an abundance of local craftwork and Christmas delicacies, as well as cultural and musical performances. The markets are bathed in candlelight by evening and the air is filled with the wonderful Christmas aromas of punch and cakes.

The largest and most romantic Christmas markets are held in Basel, Montreux, Einsiedeln, Bremgarten and Appenzell. Further details on the different markets can be found at www.MySwitzerland.com/aso

Top event

On 1 August 2009, the Swiss National Museum in Zurich opened two new permanent exhibitions: the "History of Switzerland" and the "Collections Gallery". With these exhibitions, the museum provides a comprehensive insight into Swiss history for the first time and displays its own collections, focussing on handicrafts in Switzerland. Various media stations help visitors to understand Swiss history and the exhibits. They offer a more in-depth knowledge of the history of Switzerland and the history of individual pieces. To mark the re-opening of the main part of the National Museum, Swiss citizens abroad can visit the museum at special rates until 31 January 2010: there is a 2-for-1 offer on. For more details, visit www.MySwitzerland.com/aso



If you **REGISTER** with Network Switzerland by 31 January 2010 at www.MySwitzerland.com/aso you will automatically be entered into the prize draw for a 3-night stay for two persons, including breakfast, at a 3* hotel, plus 2 x 2-day ski passes for Villars Gryon.



A collaboration between Switzerland Tourism and the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA)

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