

Places with Swiss names

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PLACES WITH SWISS NAMES

IN 1655 seven families from Fribourg received a land grant near Quebec on the St. Lawrence River. This grant bestowed upon them perpetual hunting, fishing and grazing rights. The area is now known as the "canton suisse". Descendants from these first Swiss settlers to Canada reportedly still live there.

Many regions and localities throughout the world are known today by the name of "Switzerland" or "Swiss". These names are generally due to Swiss immigrants. "Swissconsin", the Southern part of the State of Wisconsin, is a case in point. Immigrants from the Canton of Glarus established New Glarus in 1845. The area soon became famous as a centre for cattle raising and cheese making. It is now also known for its performances of "Wilhelm Tell" and "Heidi".

In years past there were quite a number of settlements throughout the United States of America called "Switzerland" or "Swiss". Most of these names are no longer used and have disappeared as a result of the policy pursued by the US postal authorities to close down small post offices. However, some twelve names such as "Switz City" and "Swiss home" still remain. A county in Indiana bordering the Ohio River is called "Switzerland County". Vevay, its county seat, was founded in the early nineteenth century by immigrants from the Canton of Vaud.

Most settlements abroad bearing Swiss names are located in North America. There are also a few throughout South America. Regions referred to as Switzerland, generally due to a striking likeness to Swiss scenery and landscape, may be found around the world.

The largest number of "Switzerland" regions are located in Germany. There were ten before the Second World War. "Saxon Switzerland" in the Eastern range of the "Erzgebirge", South of Dresden, was the most widely known. Around the turn of the century, cowhands in Germany, and particularly in the eastern parts, were called "Swiss", since this was the profession of many Swiss immigrants.

In other European countries, some beautiful, hilly or mountainous areas are also called Switzerland, such as "La Suisse Normande" in France, "La Piccola Svizzera" in Calabria, Italy; "Petite Suisse" in Belgium and in Luxemburg; "Kleen Zwitserland", an area of dunes between the Hague and the North Sea in The Netherlands; "Svica" on the Adriatic Sea in Yugoslavia; "Bohemian Switzerland" in Czechoslovakia; "Transylvanian Switzerland" in Rumania, etc. In Africa and Asia some countries or regions also carry the name "Switzerland" to describe the beauty of the scenery. Uganda's Kigezi district is known as the "Switzerland of Uganda" or "Switzerland of Africa"; the mountain city of Mbeya is in "Tanzanian Switzerland" and in the South African

province of Transvaal the tired world traveller can relax among tall pines in the chalets of "Little Switzerland".

The inhabitants of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic in the USSR, adjoining China's Sinkiang province, call their land of eternal snow, glaciers, forests and mountain lakes "Soviet Switzerland". Lebanon is often called the Switzerland of the Middle East" and Kashmir the "Switzerland of Asia".

In North America many holiday resorts, and particularly those located in mountain areas, use the by-line "Switzerland" to attract tourists, such as in California, Colorado, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Vermont and the Canadian Province of Ontario.

In South America, Argentina, Brazil and Chile each have a "Switzerland". "Suica Brasileira", in the Northern part of the State of Sao Paulo, is a favourite holiday resort for wealthy Brazilians. The "Chilean Switzerland" is located in the Osorno area.

The "Swiss" names of most localities and areas mentioned originated either from the fact that the inhabitants came from Switzerland or that the landscape resembles Swiss scenery. There is a locality in Argentina which combines both: Bariloche, located on the shores of Lake Navel Huapi, is known as "Switzerland of Argentina". In many years of hard work descendants of Swiss immigrants have created a vacation centre in that unique mountain area. It has since been declared a "national park" and is now a tourist paradise.

In South America Switzerland is not only known for its beautiful landscape. The term "suizo" is used as a synonym for quality, a reputation which must be safeguarded as much as the natural beauty of our country.

● **Re Swiss Names:** Here in New Zealand we also have a very prominent Swiss name, the railway station of "Helvetia" outside Pukekohe, which has originated from the Swiss settlers, the Schlaepfer family.

GRAUBUNDEN MEAT

ANYONE who wants to buy "Bindenfleisch" (hardened meat) — the Graubünden meat speciality — and asks in the shop for "Bündnerfleisch" gives away the fact that he is not a "Bündners", i.e. a native of Graubünden, because the latter calls it "Charn crüjas" or "Puolp" which in German is "Bindenfleisch". This is a speciality; air-dried meat.

It is not really known since when air-dried meat has been heard of in our mountain province. It can be assumed, however, that the first dwellers in the Graubünden valleys started its production. The first natives of Graubünden were hunters and mountain farmers — how could they not have been? There are no written records from which it can be ascertained when "Binden-