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Returning to Switzerland continued from page 21

longer hours? Close to family or friends? And can we find a job and a place to live there? Do we adjust our place of living to our place of work or do we dare to do the opposite? Well: what exactly DO we want? ... So many questions. The only thing we knew for sure was that we did not want to live the same way as before our departure to New Zealand. That would have given us the feeling of never having left Switzerland.

Looking for a new job also highlighted some of the differences between Switzerland and New Zealand. In many professions there are more jobs on offer than in New Zealand, but they are also far more specialised. Especially with non-management related positions, the queries are often very specific in terms of the experience and knowledge sought. If you cannot tick all the boxes exactly just so, or if you lack experience in something relatively simple and insignificant, the interest in you may wane quickly as there are many other people who have „exactly that right knowledge and experience“. Jobs seem to be much more tightly prescribed and filled.

We observed a similar level of saturation in other areas. For example, we found that offers on „Ricardo“ are much more fiercely competed over than on New Zealand’s equivalent „TradeMe“ and that the good deals are much harder to come by. Of course, these are just our personal observations and may not be representative on a wider scale.

As we know both countries quite well now, the key differences are starting to emerge in sharper contrast. These country comparisons may be somewhat futile but still rather interesting!

There’s so much to appreciate in Switzerland. For example, the falling snow during winter, or the festive Christmas season and the opportunity to visit a lovely Christmas market across Switzerland’s nearby borders, the many mountain funiculars and gondolas, the mountain restaurants and indeed any restaurants that offer a beautiful view.



Brilliant are also the many signs that limit local traffic such as „Zubringerdienst“ or the „Fahrverbot“. We hardly ever saw this in New Zealand. As much as these signs annoy drivers in Switzerland, they enable local residents to walk safely and without constraint in their own neighbourhoods and further afar. What a difference to New Zealand, where outside of cities there is mostly only a main road where cars drive at 100km/hr, with few side roads branching off. Here, you find selected entries and gateways, often labelled as „private, no entry“. If you want to walk freely in New Zealand, you have to do this within city, on a beach, in a park, or a marked-out track. In contrast, the ability to go criss-cross tramping anywhere Switzerland is a wonderful thing.

From a culinary viewpoint, Switzerland has been somewhat disappointing after three years in New Zealand. We certainly miss the diversity of food in New

Zealand, the delicious salads, sushis, sashimis, the excellent Thai food, and the many creative and comfortable cafes, producing their beautifully decorated „flat whites“, and last but not least the delicious hamburgers with beetroot. We also miss the sea, the comfortable cabins on camping grounds, stopping work at 5pm, the untouched nature, Air New Zealand with its hilarious safety videos, Auckland, fishing at sea, the beautiful beaches ... I could go on!

Overall, I can say with a clear conscience that both Switzerland and New Zealand are great countries, with all their many advantages and few downsides.

After just eight months back in Switzerland we have settled down, although in some ways we have not fully arrived yet. Progress can be a bit slow at times in Switzerland but we are now living in Berne. As for the most part our lives are now on a good track, we can say that our return to Switzerland has been a successful one.

Ä schönä Gruess (many regards)
Balz und Jenny

Photos by Balz Schärer. Translated by SW

Looking for a House Sitter?

Trudi Fill-Weidmann will be back in New Zealand in September and is available for house sitting (this includes cats, dogs, birds, gardens etc., Numbers negotiable).

Preferably in the Wellington region but anywhere will be considered.
I have references if needed.

If interested please contact me on weidfill@gmail.com

chuderwälsch by Tanja Latham-Zurbruegg

I hope you enjoyed our bi-monthly lessons of Swiss "Mundart" (even though most of it was "Bärdüütsch") – the timing was perfect: 4 years just got us through the A-Z:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 wääger | relly, surely |
| 2 Wank | movement |
| 3 Wasgiischwashäsch | super quick |
| 4 Wischiwaschi | odgy |
| 5 Zainä | wicker basket |
| 6 Zanggä | to quarrel / fight |
| 7 Zeuslä | to play with fire (literally) |
| 8 Zunderobsi | upside down |
| 9 Zwängälä | to be stubborn |

Consigli della Nonna



To clean stainless steel appliances doors

Use a little baby oil on a soft rag and wipe. All fingerprints and marks disappear, even on the glass.

Works like a charm!

Contributed by Edith Hess