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TOURIST NEWS

TOURISM BREEDS UNDERSTANDING

International tourism is playing a key role in breaking down barriers between social classes and cultures, according to Vatican tourism director Father Giovanni Arrighi.

In a report to the Geneva-based World Tourism Organisation, he says: "The civilising mission of international tourism is the passport to peace."

"War and its sequel of hatred cannot co-exist with tourism; without peace there can be no tourism."

"By imparting to travellers a deeper awareness of human solidarity, tourism is a powerful bulwark of peace. By removing barriers between individuals and social classes tourism favours the spread of hospitality and encourages communication between men of goodwill."

"And it facilitates the meeting of different cultures and promotes the economic prosperity of the receiving countries through a more equitable distribution of wealth."

Father Arrighi calls on all governments to ensure "a rational development of tourism as the principal frontier-crossing leisure activity, breaking the shackles of parochialism and uniting peoples in the mutual recognition of every individual's right to fulfilment as a human being in the community of mankind".

The Vatican director says the inter-governmental WTO has a major role to play in making the world "a more humane place in which to live".

THE "TREATMENT" IN TRANSIT

Swissair has introduced a first-class service on all its domestic flights between Zurich, Basle and Geneva.

An announcement by the airline said the new service was being offered from this month and that a fare had been approved.

Swissair says the passengers who will benefit most from the new service are those from abroad holding first-class tickets and in transit through Switzerland. Until now they have had to travel economy class between Swiss points.

IRISH WANDERERS

Senior executives and members of the Northern Ireland Catering Industry Training Board and Tourist Board have been on a two-week tour of the Continent to study general management techniques in the European hotel industry. The tour covered Switzerland, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

SWISSAIR RECEIVES FIRST DC-9-51

Swissair's first DC-9-51 twin-jet arrived at the airline's base in Zurich recently. With an order for 10 DC-9-51s, Swissair is the world's first airline to put the new stretched version 50 of the well-proven McDonnell Douglas DC-9 into service.

The aircraft entered regular service in Europe on Sunday 24 August. Its first flight into Heathrow Airport, London, was scheduled for that day as SR 804 arriving at 14.10, and departing again for Zurich as SR 805 at 15.05. On the same and subsequent days the aircraft will operate further scheduled services between London and Zurich.

Altogether four more DC-9-51s will be delivered to Swissair in September and October, the remaining five aircraft being due in the spring of 1976 and 1977.

Swissair's DC-9-51s seat 12 first- and 180 economy-class passengers; economy-class has the traditional DC-9 seating arrangement of two and three abreast. The cabin has a flat, wide-body style ceiling, closeable overhead luggage racks and a colourful decor. The new aircraft can also carry up to 2,000 kg of cargo.

Swissair already operates 21 DC-9-32s and one all-cargo DC-9-33F.

KURSAAL BERNE - GALA EVENING IN AID OF SWISS SPORT

A gala evening in aid of Swiss sport will be held at the Kursaal Berne on 29 September. It is being held under the patronage of Swiss national sporting organisations and the Lord Mayor of Berne.

Taking part will be top sports stars - among them Olympic champion Edy Hubacher, wrestling title-holder Ruedi Hunsberger, former European boxing champion Fritz Chervet and members of Berne Ice Hockey Club.

Also present will be the Swiss TV personality Heidy Abel, and actor and cabarettist Jörg Schneider.

Providing the musical entertainment will be the Joe Schmid Dance Orchestra from the "Kindli" in Zurich and Hans Honegger's Brass Band from Berne.

MAYOR IS CLUB'S GUEST

Berne Skat Club has received the most prominent visitor in its 36-year-old history - the Lord Mayor of the City, Dr Reynold Tschäppät. He was a guest at the club's last monthly luncheon in the Swiss capital.

YOUTH HOSTELS DO WELL

Switzerland's 112 youth hostels registered a combined 785,000 overnight stays last year, according to figures just released. This was 7,000 more than the previous year.

VALAIS IS VALUE

Nine hotels in the Valais region - all of them members of the Ambassador Service Hotels group - have launched a joint "Valais for Value" campaign.

The hotels are in the resorts of Zermatt, Martigny, Anzère, Crans-Montana, Loèche-les-Bains, Viège, Brigue and Saas-Fee, and are offering visitors a SFr 50 a day arrangement. In first-class hotels the price covers an overnight stay with breakfast and in standard-class hotels the price also includes a main meal.

In addition round-trip tourists spending nine nights in the Valais get a tenth night free. The arrangement is being offered until 10 December.

Ambassador Service Hotels group manager, Dr Peter Kühler, said it was hoped that other hotels in the group elsewhere in Switzerland would also co-operate in similar regional schemes.

ONLY THE BEST WANTED

The resort of Hilterfingen on Lake Thun is planning a campaign to attract "discriminating tourists" to the area.

Mr Beat Rothenanger, newly-elected President of the Hilterfingen Tourist Association, said the 3,700-population resort was planning to offer Swiss sailing weekends and holidays and was also considering horse riding, rambling and other special interest package arrangements.

Hotels in Hilterfingen are offering special autumn full-board rates, starting this month, from SFr 45 per day per person.

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IT'S GOT THE LOT

A new de-luxe hotel has been opened in Lugano — the 150-bed Hotel Admiral. It is situated in the residential area of Paradiso and is close to the lake.

Facilities include conference rooms for up to 130 people, two heated swimming pools, three restaurants, a fitness centre, a bridge room and a children's playroom.

NOT FOR SNAPPERS!

Fribourg is offering visitors all-inclusive arrangements in connection with TIP 75 — the first International Triennale of Photography. The event closes on 12 October.

The exhibition features more than 300 works by the world's top photographers, chosen from an original entry of 3,500. The event is being accompanied by *Son et Lumière* presentations, concerts, folklore events "and other art performances".

All-inclusive arrangements cover stays of from three to seven days, excursions, folklore performances and entry to TIP 75.

MORE GENEVA LUXURY

The European Hotel Corporation is to build a SFr 42 million hotel in Geneva.

The hotel — the Penta-Geneve — is to be constructed close to Geneva-Cointrin Airport, and will offer services "comparable to those of a first-class hotel but at 30 per cent lower prices".

It will have 336 rooms, conference facilities for up to 160 people, and three separate restaurants.

SWISS-ISRAEL EXCHANGE

Berne hotelier, Mr Jost Schmid, frequently honoured for his services to Swiss-Israeli tourism, recently hosted 25 wounded Israeli soldiers who were on a two-week holiday in Switzerland.

Highlights of their three-day stay in Berne included an excursion to the summit of the 10,000 ft Schilthorn in the Bernese Oberland, and a candlelight dinner.

Earlier this year Mr Schmid, general manager of the Bellevue-Palace Hotel, was honoured by visiting Israeli travel agents who presented him with a framed picture of Jerusalem.

SEEING SUNSET FROM THE JUNGFRAUJOCH

When the weather is good tourists can watch the spectacle of sunset from the 11,333 ft high Jungfrauoch every Tuesday until the end of September. The little world on the rooftop of Europe also offers other attractions such as the fascinating ice palace, a breathtaking view of the Aletsch Glacier — the largest area

of ice in the Alps — an exhibition at the High-Altitude Research Station and a self-service restaurant. The last train leaves the Joch at 9.25 pm for Interlaken. Reduced price tickets are available for the evening trip (SFr 66.60 for individual passengers and SFr 69 for escorted tours). Swiss Holiday Tickets, the Holiday Pass or regional holiday season tickets can be used. Information about these trips is obtainable on Tuesdays from mid-day onwards by ringing 169 or the management of the Jungfrau Railways (tel: 036/22 52 52).

NEW MOUNTAIN WALKING ROUTE IN TICINO

In Canton Ticino, South Switzerland, a new walking route has been mapped out for mountain lovers. It takes them over mountains more than 6,500 ft high. The route begins at the resort of San Bernardino, continues over the Rheinwaldhorn to Campo Blenio and then goes on across the Passo del Sole to Airolo, across the Cristallina to Fusio, the Redorta Pass to Sonogno in the Verzasca Valley and finally over the heights of the Cardada and then down to Locarno. A good week should be allowed for the entire route, meaning about 65 hours actual walking time in summer, while in winter experienced skiers reckon to do it in 50 hours. Overnight accommodation is available in the various localities along the route and in the Swiss Alpine Club's Adula Hut (room for 30 people) in the Rheinwaldhorn district and the club's hut on the Cristallina Pass (accommodating 80 people).

DESCENT FROM THE ALPINE PASTURES—A COLOURFUL SWISS CUSTOM

As summer comes to an end, the cattle are brought down from the alpine pastures in the mountainous regions of Switzerland, an event often combined with a ceremonial distribution of cheeses. This old custom is a big occasion in the Gruyère region. In Canton Valais on the Saturday after the Feast of St Bartholomew the herdsmen go down from the 11 alps of the valley to Vissoie, chief town of the Val d'Anniviers, to bring the priest cheese in return for blessing the alps. Towards the end of September a colourful group of local people and tourists makes its way high above the Lake of Thun through the Justis Valley towards the pastures for the traditional "Chästeilet" or distribution of the cheeses. In the wooden buildings the cheeses are piled up in "lots" (one lot represents one cow's yield during the summer — about five 20 to 30 lb cheeses). The steward says a few words and then each farmer's share is announced. Before the herdsmen go down into the valley in the evening there's entertainment for young and old alike to enjoy.

BERNE'S WONDERFUL WOODLAND

The Enge peninsula in northern Berne — where excavations have revealed signs of Roman settlements, is covered with beautiful woodland.

Now the local authorities have laid out a two-and-a-half mile path marked by some 40 plaques with information about the early colonies, explaining the many trees and plants growing and describing woodland cultivation generally.

There's also a shorter one-and-a-quarter mile course which can be negotiated even by handicapped visitors confined to a wheelchair.

UP AND DOWN THE APPENZELL COUNTRYSIDE

The hilly Appenzell region in North-East Switzerland is an ideal holiday area for people who want to get away from the madding crowd, and above all for walking enthusiasts. That's why the Appenzell Railways arrange guided walking tours and excursions to the Hoher Kasten, the Ebenalp, the Kronberg and the Gäbris, as well as a horseback trip to Urnäsch. From 14 to 20 September there is a walking tour week that takes visitors the length and breadth of the Appenzell region, with three to five hours' walking daily at lower alpine heights. The all-inclusive price is SFr 330, and there's one big facility for the footsloggers: the baggage is carried along with them to each destination along the route.

SWISS PARLIAMENT'S AUTUMN SESSION IN BERNE

The two houses of the Swiss Federal Parliament — the National Council (200 seats representing the people) and the Council of States (44 seats representing the cantons) — are holding their autumn session from 15 September to 3 October.

This will be the last session of the current legislative period; after the October national elections, the new parliament will meet in December for the winter session. Parliamentary proceedings are open to the public, allowing Swiss and foreign visitors alike to see Swiss democracy in action.

In between the four annual sessions, the parliamentary buildings are a popular tourist attraction, with multi-lingual guides showing around visitors from near and far.

NEW INFORMATION HEAD

Mr Martin Buehler, 28, has been appointed head of the Information and Travel Service at the City of Berne Tourist Office.

Mr Buehler has worked in Switzerland for the past five years for Eurotours of Boston, Massachusetts. Before that he spent seven years with Swiss tour operator KUONI.



Alpine marmots basking near their maze-like lairs. The rodents are to be seen in the Swiss Alps. Let us consider them in Conservation Year.