

Tourist news

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Holidays on Swiss farms

When the new idea of taking farm holidays in Switzerland was first launched last year, it was so successful that demand far outstripped available accommodation.

This year more farms in Cantons Vaud, Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Valais and Ticino have been added to the list. Three types of arrangement are available: independent private quarters with cooking facilities for one week, overnight accommodation with meals for holidaymakers travelling around, or accommodation plus all meals taken with the farmer and his family.

Information will be found in a brochure published by the "Service romand de vulgarisation agricole", the address of which is route du Pavement 81, CH-1018, Lausanne (Tel: 021/37 75 51).

It is called "Tourisme Rural" and gives addresses and details of number of beds available, services offered, sports facilities in the neighbourhood, charges, etc. for farm holidays in French-speaking Western Switzerland and in the Italian-speaking Canton Ticino.

Three for the price of two!

Swiss Federal Railways, postal coach services and other Swiss transport undertakings are offering cheaper travel between the middle of January and the beginning of April in a special "Three for Two" campaign.

Two full-fare paying adults with normal, excursion or circular-tour tickets can take a third adult or a child with them free of charge. For every two children, a third can travel free. The days on which this offer is available are every day from 22nd March to 8th April.

NEW PIZOL AERIAL CABLEWAY

The ski descent from the Pizol summit to Wangs (one and a quarter miles from the Zürich-Chur motorway and the international railway junction at Sargans) is one of the longest in the Alps, with an altitude difference of more than 7,500 feet.

In this ski region snow is guaranteed into springtime and it has become so popular that a new aerial

cableway with double carrying capacity had to be built for the present winter season. It has 110 new observation gondola-cabins with automatic doors and travelling time has been cut from 22 to 16 minutes.

The middle station has been completely rebuilt while the top and bottom stations have been renovated. Other facilities available are well-appointed mountain hotels and inns, four ski-lifts and chairlifts and ski and ski-bob school. Here's a tip: ski-ing on the Pizol is cheapest on weekdays. A day ticket costs 24 francs and for Swiss Federal Railways passengers only 21 francs.

LOOKING BACK

A double distinction has been awarded the La Palma au Lac Hotel in Locarno - a member of the Leading Hotels of Switzerland group.

One is the *Diplôme de l'Excellence Européenne* for its "outstanding creativity", and the other the *Fourchettes d'Or* for its "unsurpassed contribution to European gastronomy".

Both were awarded the hotel by the *Comité de l'Excellence Européenne*, whose Paris-based Executive President Mr. Serge J. Vaissière made the presentations at a ceremony in Locarno.

Mr. Urs Meierhofer, spokesman for the Leading Hotels of Switzerland group, said it was believed to be the first time that the two awards had been made simultaneously to any one hotel.

The La Palma au Lac Hotel marked the occasion with a six-course gala banquet identical to the one prepared in the Swiss lakeside resort exactly 50 years earlier for delegates to the historic Pact of Locarno conference - the talks at which an attempt was made to establish European understanding and co-operation through friendly negotiation.

"OPEN HOUSE" AT VILLARS

Villars, Chesières and Anveyes are the three connected winter sports resorts at the foot of the Chamossaire (6,950 ft.) on a sun terrace above the Rhône Valley. Among the many facilities available for winter sports enthusiasts are more than 30 miles of prepared pistes for all grades of skier, 40 ski instructors, ski-bobs, ice stadium, a mountain railway, two gondola cableways and more than 20 ski lifts, an indoor swimming bath and a bathing centre with fresh-water and salt-water pools as well as a keep-fit club with sauna, "bronzage" and massage.

Acting on its slogan "Open House", Villars, which has managed to retain its village-like character, offers visitors free entry to all sports facilities (except mountain railway and ski lifts). A novelty this winter are the all-inclusive "gogo-ski" arrangements with six overnight stays, half board and as much ski-ing as you like at Château-d'Oex, Les Diablerets, Leysin, Villars, Les Mosses and La Lécherette.

The prices vary from 324 to 540 francs, according to hotel category.

TOURIST NEWS

INNOVATIONS IN SWISSAIR IN-FLIGHT CATERING

On flights exceeding two hours Swissair now offers its first class passengers a selection of cheeses from a tray after a hot meal. Hot meals have been introduced in first class to and from Vienna and Barcelona. In addition, Swissair's first class service to the Middle-East has been adapted to long haul standard and now includes flight information kits and slipper socks. Earphones for sound programmes are available on DC-10 flights.

The grill service, one of the attractions on Swissair's North Atlantic flights, has been introduced to first class passengers as an additional feature on the non-stop sectors Zürich-Bombay and of the Far East flights. Steaks, veal escalopes, and different meats on a skewer are specially grilled to passengers' wishes.

Pre-ordered special meals for children have been introduced on all Swissair flights from Zurich and Geneva to West African destinations except Dakar. After a temporary suspension these meals are also again available on the North Atlantic.

A colourful large "Carte du Jour for the Junior Jet Set" lists eight different menu suggestions for children's meals. It is distributed to families with children on the West African routes towards the end of the flight, for the business reply card attached to the menu to be returned to Swissair with the meal order for the return journey. The menu cards and pre-order facilities are also available from Swissair offices.

NEW SWISSAIR SERVICE TO DUBAI

In the course of building direct links with the Gulf states Swissair began a new flight between Zürich and Dubai earlier this month. It flies once weekly by DC-8, eastbound on Monday and westbound on Tuesday.

Dubai, the United Arab Emirates' most important port and commercial centre, is the third Gulf destination to be served by Swissair. The airline opened a service to Dhahran and Abu Dhabi last spring.



This DC10-30 wide-bodied jet is one of the latest additions to Swissair's fleet. With the advent of these giants of the air Swissair has sold two of its DC8s — see story right.

Swissair sells two of its DC8s

Following last year's increase in Swissair's DC-10-30 wide-bodied jet fleet from five units to eight, the airline has decided to sell two DC-8s.

The aircraft involved are the DC-8-62 HB-IDH, acquired in 1968, which is to be taken over by Swissair's associate company Balair on 1st April, 1976, and the DC-8-53 HB-IDB, in service since 1960, which has been bought by a Geneva finance institute on behalf of the Geneva-based charter carrier SATA. This aircraft was handed over recently.

CONTINUED TRAFFIC EXPANSION FOR SWISSAIR IN 1975

In 1975 Swissair carried 5,649,824 passengers, or 5% more than in 1974. Cargo traffic also rose by about 5%, while mail transport declined by 1%.

The total capacity offered by Swissair increased in 1975 by 11.6% over 1974 to 1,961,552,000 ton-kilometres. Revenue capacity sold advanced by 7.3% to 1,007,965,000 ton-kilometres. As demand in the year under review did not

quite keep pace with the greater capacity available, the overall load factor fell to 52% from 53.5% in 1974 and the seat load factor to 55% from 56%.

The traffic areas Middle East and Africa produced in 1975 better load factors than in the previous year, while in Europe and in the Far East load factors receded slightly; they were markedly lower on the North and South Atlantic.

The upswing in traffic, noted since the autumn, continued in December 1975. All areas except South America showed increases compared with December 1974, with the Far East recording a rise in traffic of 36% and Africa 23%. On average passenger transport was 12% and cargo 16% up on the same month a year earlier.

Swissair's network extended in 1975 over 249,965 kilometres, covering 85 destinations in 61 countries on all continents except Australia.

Swissair has increased the liability limit for accidents to passengers on any of its flights to Sw.Fr. 170,000.

Previously, this liability was limited, in accordance with the Warsaw Convention, to Sw.Fr. 67,750 — except on flights to and from the United States, where a higher limit applied.

The new liability limit applies to all Swissair flights.

A Swissair statement said the carrier, along with "a few" other airlines, had made the decision voluntarily — "because efforts towards a corresponding international legislation have not yet been successful."

SILVER DOG SHOW

Berne's International Dog Show celebrates its silver anniversary on 3rd and 4th April. The 25th annual show has attracted this year some 1,500 animals from ten countries and is again staged at the Guisanplatz Exhibition Centre.

Fares are reduced

Britain and Switzerland have given approval for British airline Dan-Air to charge lower air fares on its London (Gatwick)-Berne scheduled service.

The economy return fare has been reduced five per cent from Sw. Fr. 758 to Sw. Fr. 720, and the monthly excursion fare 11 per cent from Sw. Fr. 537 to Sw. Fr. 480. The new lower fares take immediate effect.

Dan-Air originally sought approval for a 15 per cent reduction. But a compromise settlement was accepted after discussions with other airlines.

Dan-Air's argument was that it has to use Hawker Siddeley 748 turbo prop jet aircraft on the London-Berne route, because the short runway at Berne Airport prevents the use of larger aircraft. To compensate passengers for the flight taking 45 minutes longer in the smaller aircraft, the carrier felt it should be able to offer a 15 per cent lower fare — and still make a profit.

New publications from SNTO

The Swiss National Tourist Office (SNTO) has just published the brochure "Switzerland — Holidays and Language Courses". It contains information about private schools and language courses at publicly-maintained schools, universities and in holiday camps. The brochure is available free from the SNTO in London, telephone 01-734 1921.

Hello Babs

January marked the introduction in Switzerland of BABS — British Airways' computerised Booking System.

But for the carrier's personnel in Basle, it meant a double BABS launching. The airline's office there also introduced its own British Airways Businessman's Service for delegates and visitors to the many exhibitions and conferences held in this Swiss city every year.

Said District Superintendent Tony Wadlow: "We have been operating a trial reservation and information service at many of the important events in Basle for some months.

"Basle is one of Europe's leading conference and exhibition centres — and results so far have indicated a definite need for an on-the-spot service for delegates, exhibitors, businessmen and other visitors".

SWISS FILMS WIN PRIZES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Switzerland is one of the 25 countries that took part in the International Tourist Film Festival, "Tourfilm 75", recently held in Czechoslovakia. Of the 90 films shown, 18 – including two Swiss – were awarded prizes. The Condor-Film Co. Ltd. in Zürich, won the jury's special prize for the film "Happy Holidays", which it had made for the resort of Arosa, in the canton of the Grisons.

The other prize-winning film was "Glissando", made by Kern-Film Co. Ltd., in Basle, for the Swiss National Tourist Office and the Swiss Ski Federation. At "Ekofilm", the 2nd International Showing of Films on the Protection of the Environment, another of Condor-Film Co. Ltd.'s productions, "Luft zum Leben", won the prize awarded by the Environment Committee of the Czechoslovak government. This was the 13th international award won by this Swiss film.

FROM CENTRAL ASIA TO SWITZERLAND

Two special exhibitions are currently being staged at the Berne Historical Museum – one devoted to native huts in Central Asia and the other to Swiss castles. "Native Huts in Central Asia" concentrates on two areas of that vast region, Mongolia and Usbekistan.

The exhibition takes visitors inside

the huts and shows how they are used by the native population. The second exhibition "Historical Bernese Buildings of the 17th Century", is a collection of 82 water colours with accompanying topographical exhibits, devoted mainly to the castles of Switzerland. Known also as the "Kauw Collection", the exhibition contains mostly works by the Bernese artist Albrecht Kauw (1621-1681) and by Wilhelm Stettler, Georg Friedrich Meyer, Kaspar Beutler and Johann and Abraham Dünz.

The collection is being shown in its entirety for the first time. Both exhibitions will continue until the end of the year.

ART SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YOUNG SWISS

The Gewerbemuseum in Berne is again staging its annual exhibition of applied art by young scholarship-seeking Swiss. The Swiss Federal Scholarship for Applied Art helps Swiss artists up to the age of 40 and furthers their training.

The scholarships total Sw.Fr. 8,000 in value. The Berne exhibition – from 21st February to 21st March – will show the work of some 200 young artists in wood, clay, gold, silver, paper, cloth and a variety of other materials.

FIGHTING TALK IN PARLIAMENT

The spring session of the Swiss parliament will be held in Berne from 1st

to 19th March. Two of the most important topics on the agenda are the purchase of new fighter aircraft for Switzerland and the state of the nation's military preparedness in the 1980s.

The Swiss parliament meets four times a year. The proceedings are always open to the public, affording Swiss and foreign visitors alike the opportunity to see Swiss democracy in action.

In between the four annual sessions the houses of parliament themselves are also a popular attraction, with free guided tours led by multi-lingual guides.

CONTEMPORARY ART IN COPPER

Berne's Kunstmuseum is showing from 3rd March to 2nd May another in the series of exhibitions devoted to contemporary Bernese artist. This one features the work of Bernhard Luginbühl, following the one-man shows by Serge Brignoni (1969), Peter Stein (1973), Otto Tschumi (1974) and Rolf Iseli (1975). Luginbühl – whose works are already known in New York and Tokyo – will be exhibiting mainly copper engravings and lithographs.

BERNE PRESENTS "SYMPHONY OF A THOUSAND"

The musical highlight in Berne this year will be the performance on 8th and 9th April at the Berne Exhibition Hall of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 8 in E Major – also known as the "Symphony

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of a Thousand” because of the number of performers often involved.

The work has never before been staged in the Swiss capital. For the Berne performances there will be some 750 singers and musicians – a 500-strong adult choir, a children’s choir of 100, seven soloists and an orchestra of 130 players. Charles Dutoit will conduct the Berne Symphony Orchestra (augmented for this performance by members of the Biel Orchestra), the Berne Liedertafel and Oratorio Choirs, the Fribourg Cathedral Symphonic Choir, the Düringen Women’s Choir and the Children’s Choir of the Berne Freies Gymnasium.

Soloists are Hanneke van Bork and Elsbeth Fehlmann (soprano), Margrit Conrad-Amberg and Elisabeth Glauser (contralto), Dieter Ellenbeck (tenor), Kurt Widmer (baritone) and Jakob Stämpfli (bass) with Philippe Laubscher at the organ. A total of 7,000 tickets for the two performances will be on sale in Berne from 1st March.

MAIN STATION – OR MUSEUM?

Berne’s re-modernised main railway

station has an unusual new attraction – an underground “mini-museum”. It is to be found at the recently-completed Christoffel Subway, where a number of permanent exhibits have been installed relating to the Christoffel Tower.

This tower, located close to where the station now stands, was torn down in 1865. The exhibits include part of the city’s original fortification walls, and a large sculptured replica in colour of the head of St. Christopher, the original of which dates back almost 500 years.

The exhibition is completed by a 45 ft. long plaque listing the most important dates and events in the history of Berne.

BY AIRMAIL FROM APPENZELL

The Swiss Postal Museum in Berne opens its 1976 programme of special exhibitions with “The Appenzell Mail” – a display devoted to the two half-cantons of Switzerland. Highlight of the exhibition is a collection of Appenzell postmarks on Swiss stamps dating from 1850, including the rare “Sitting Helvetia” and “Standing Helvetia” issues.

Other exhibits date from 1798 to modern times and include postmarks on Swiss airmail, and Pro Juventute stamps, ancient prints, rare documents and other items relating to Appenzell postal history. The special exhibition lasts until 25th April.

HOW TO SEE THE SIGHTS OF BERNE

One of the most popular features of the summer programme in Berne is always the daily guided tour of the city sights by luxury coach. This year’s programme is being operated from 1st April to 31st October, with the exception of Sunday and Public Holiday afternoons. The tours are conducted in English, French, German and Italian and, upon request, in Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish and Japanese. The price – Sw.Fr. 11 per passenger.

The 90-minute tour starts from bay three (the bus stop for the Wyler and Bremgarten routes) just in front of the Berne City Tourist Office. Departure times are at 14.00 and, from 2nd May, also at 10.00.

Swiss airports keep pace with progress

This aerial view of Zürich’s Kloten airport shows, on the right, the new runway currently under construction. On the left is the new terminal B with its “finderdocks” for handling many types of aircraft of varying sizes. These extensions, along with those recently announced at Geneva’s Cointrin airport, are helping Swissair keep pace with the growing volume of passenger and freight traffic as well as the ever increasing sophistication and size of today’s aircraft.



U.K. GROUP PROFITS



NEWS FROM ACROW

At a recent Board meeting of Acrow Ltd., the Chairman, Mr. W. A. de Vigier, centre, announced his new team for the next decade of expansion. In accordance with Group Policy, all but one of the appointments are filled by existing employees of the Group. As from 1st April, the present Managing Director, Mr. W. A. de Vigier, will resign this appointment which will be filled by Mr. W. Jack, right, aged 54, present Managing Director of Coles Cranes Limited, the largest subsidiary in the Group, with a turnover of £44 million and exports of £32 million. Mr. A. D. Steel, left, aged 34, will become the Managing Director of Coles Cranes Limited. Major J. A. E. Hathrell, aged 49, will become Managing Director of Thos. Storey (Engineers) Limited, makers of the well-known Bailey bridges — the present Managing Director Mr. J. Holmes, retiring after 22 years outstanding service with that company. Mr. G. Butterworth, aged 55, will become Managing Director of the new Operating Company, Acrow (Engineers) Limited. Mr. G. S. Clarke, aged 38, becomes Financial Director of Coles Cranes Limited. Mr. P. K. Steel, aged 34, already a Director of Coles Cranes Limited, will become General Manager of the Sunderland factory. Mr. R. J. Buckland, aged 32, will become General Manager of Coles Cranes — Grantham. A new Board of Directors of Acrow Limited will be announced in early April. Mr. W. A. de Vigier will remain as hitherto Chairman of the Group.

Philip Jones brass ensemble in Switzerland

No, it is not a report of a concert tour, but the name of a most unusual record. Philip Jones is a member of the English Chamber Orchestra, husband of Ursula Strebi, Swiss director of the Orchestra for many years. His Brass Ensemble has travelled a great deal during the past few years and given successful concerts all over the world. He considers that Switzerland has at least three of the important facets that make up a satisfactory visit: enthusiastic audiences, good concert halls and comfortable hotels. The above record, he says, is

intended as a light-hearted appreciation of many pleasant hours spent there.

But when you listen to the record, it is not only the extremely clever arrangements by Elgar Howarth of six Swiss folk melodies (Basler Fastnachtsmarsch, Il cucù, Vo Luzern uf Weggis zue, Zuercher Sechselauten-Marsch, Le vieux chalet, alten Bernermarsch) and four of the Ensemble's own favourites, such as the Music Hall Suite by Joseph Horowitz, the Petite Suite by Jan Koetsier and variations on the Carnival in Venice, that intrigue you, but as you proceed, the

brilliance and fantastic precision of the musicians become more and more of a delight. Real musicians to their fingertips.

It is a record much to be recommended both for personal enjoyment and as a present. The quality of the recording is superb; it is a Claves production (Thun, BE) and if you have difficulty in getting it, please refer to Continental Record Distribution, Greenford, Middlesex.

Other admirable records from the same source and with mainly Swiss artists are a first recording by Peter-Lukas Graf (flute), Ursula Holliger (harp) and Hansheinz Schneeberger (violin) of Louis

Spohr's Concertante No. 1 and a sonata op. 113. The Orchestra is the English Chamber Orchestra; Bach's Suite in B minor and the Triple Concerto in A minor, both performed by Peter-Lukas Graf (flute), José-Luis García (violin), a Spaniard, and Joerg Ewald Daehler (harpsichord), again with the English Chamber Orchestra; it also accompanies Graf in French flute concertos by Devienne (1760-1803) and Ibert (1890-1962).

All these records are of exceptional quality, and all the artists give first-class performances.

MM

FOR THE GARDENER

FUCHSIA (Onagraceae)

This is a flowering shrub of a deciduous nature and during the summer and autumn gives a beautiful and brilliant display in the garden. In the warmer parts of the country such as Cornwall and Devon these plants are really magnificent.

During cold and frosty spells many of the species can be cut right down to the ground, but comes the spring and they will re-shoot freely from the old roots. Cuttings root quite readily under glass.

This plant has been developed in modern times and can be had in what is commonly called the Tree Fuchsia, that is one main stem which branches at its head and the leaves and flowers cascade down. This is very useful as a height-giving centre piece among smaller growing plants or as a back cloth as one might say. The height of these are usually around 2½ft. to 3ft.

Species:

F. Riccontonii:

This is the hardiest of the fuchsias and in mild districts is sometimes used as hedging. The flowers are crimson and purple, borne throughout the summer and autumn making a striking feature in the garden.

F. Coccinea:

Large violet corolla and red sepals.

F. Macrastemma:

South American. Long scarlet calyx and purple petals.

F. M. pumila:

A dwarf compact variety of pyramidal habit, purple flowers and very suitable for the rock garden.

F. Paruiflora:

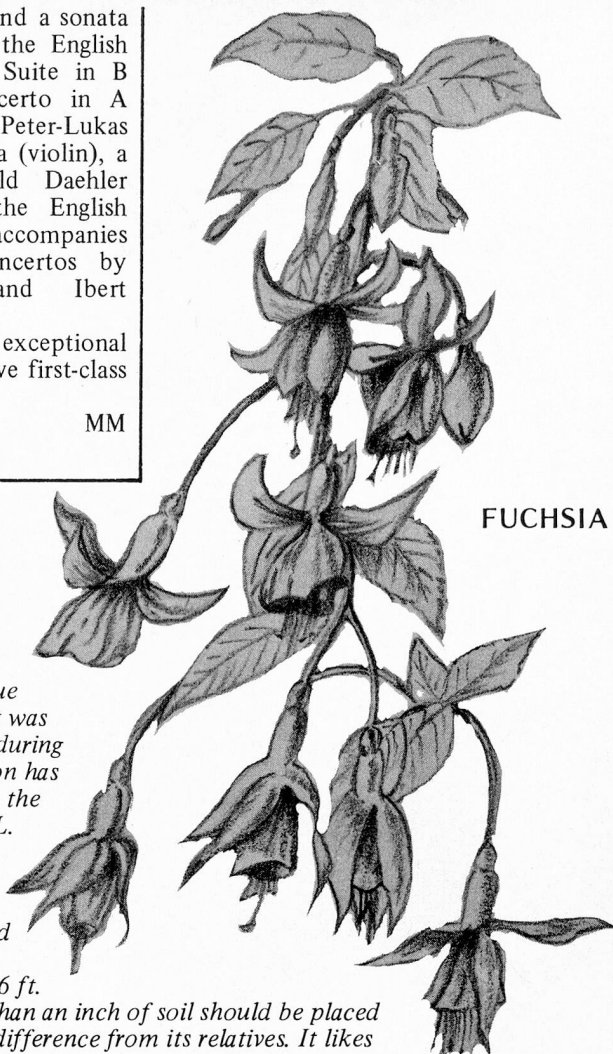
Coral pink flowers passing to crimson. Must be protected in all but the mildest districts.

F. reflexa:

Dwarf, with cerise flowers, also needs some protection in the winter.

Special Note

In the January 1976 issue this article dealt with Lilies. It was stated that planting time was during autumn or spring, our attention has been drawn to the fact that in the case of the "Madonna Lily" (L. Candidum) planting should be done in August and if one is transplanting this lily, the bulb should go into the ground on the same day. This lily will grow to a height of some 6 ft. and when planting not more than an inch of soil should be placed over the bulb, this is another difference from its relatives. It likes a limy soil.



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