

Tourist news

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NEW HIKING TRAILS IN SWITZERLAND

This summer the number of hiking trails in Switzerland has grown even larger. One attractive choice is the Lake of Thun round trip in four stages. The trail leads from Gwatt to Spiez in about two hours (a visit to the castle is recommended) and over Krattigen, Leissigen, and Därligen to Interlaken in four more hours. On the three hour leg from Interlaken to Merligen the hiker can include a visit to the Beatus caves, and from Merligen it takes four hours of walking through vineyards, meadows, ravines, and along the lakeshore to Thun.

In the Upper Grisons a 54 mile mountain trail, the "Senda Sursilvana", has been opened. It leads from the Oberalppass over Sedrun - Disentis / Mustér - Trun - Schlans - Breils / Brigels - Andiad - Pigniu - Siat - Ruschein - Ladir - Falera - Laax / Flims - Trin - Tamins - Felsberg to Chur. The various departure- and end-stations are accessible by trains of the Rhaetian Railway and the Furka-Oberalp Railway. From the valley to the upper villages on the left side there is a postal coach service. In the hiking guide (obtainable from stations of the Rhaetian Railway, the Furka-Oberalp Railway as well as postal stations) the entire route is given in seven legs of each three to five hours walking time. In addition to a map there is a description of the trail with information on hiking time and a list of addresses for information concerning board and lodging.

MOUNTAIN BREAKFAST ON THE STOCKHORN

Until the end of October the Panorama-Restaurant on the Stockhorn (6,470 ft) organizes a daily mountain breakfast with the Swiss speciality "Roschti" from 8 to 10 a.m. (on Sundays during the high season already as of 7 a.m.). Reduced transportation rates and a breakfast check are obtainable from various train stations and at the valley station Erlenbach in the Simmental.

500th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE AT GIORNICO

1978 marks the 500th anniversary of the battle at Giornico, also called "Sassi Grossi", which was fought between the Confederates, the Leventines, and the troops of the duchy of Milan. This date sealed the membership of the Leventina as one of the Confederation. In honor of this occasion several activities have been planned for the following dates in September: A commemorative procession on the 3rd, day of Ticino wines and the caves of Giornico on the 10th, a concert in the Roman church of San Nicolao on the 23rd, and a folkloristic parade

showing off Ticino costumes on the 24th. In October a number of lectures will be given on historical and military topics. Until the close of the year the Casa Stanga, cultural and historical museum in Giornico, is exhibiting shields and weapons dating from the battle era. Envelopes and postcards, commemorative gold and silver coins have been printed and stamped to be sold as souvenirs.

EXHIBITION ON GLACIERS AT THE STOCKALPER PALACE IN BRIG

On 15th August the exhibition "Switzerland and her Glaciers - From the Ice Age until the present" will be opened at the Stockalper Palace in Brig. The exhibition is sponsored by the Swiss National Tourist Office and was prepared in collaboration with scientists and glaciologists. Its purpose is to relay to the audience an understanding of the work of glaciologists and to present glaciers as reigning natural phenomena of the Swiss Alps. The exhibit is composed of eight sections: Traces of the Ice Age, Climate after the Ice Age, Historical documents, Glacier changes, Glacier inventory, Information preserved in ice, Glaciers as natural forces, and Glaciers and power-plants. The exhibition will stay in Brig until 15th October, will then be moved to the Alpine Museum, Berne, the Geological Musuem. Lausanne, the MUBA in Basle, the Glacier Gardens, Lucerne, and other cities.

HIKING WEEKS IN THE SWISS AUTUMN

Autumn is the ideal time to hike in the Swiss mountains. During September and October numerous resorts offer their guests hiking arrangements including hotel at half-pension and guided day-excursions. Among others these resorts are Arosa, Ausserberg on the southern slope of the Lötschberg, Bergün, Beatenberg, Bettmeralp, Breiten combined with a fitness program, Brienz, Brig offering hiking and other excursions in the surrounding area, Brunnen, Celerina, Crans-Montana, Davos, Les Diablerets, Disentis, Engelberg, Fiesch, Flims/Laax, Gstaad, Kippel in the Lötschen Valley, Klosters, Lenzerheide-Valbella, the Valle Maggia, as well as Mendrisiotto, Oberiberg, Pontresina, Saas Almagell, Saas Fee, Savognin, Zuoz, and S-chanf with outings in the National Park, Trubschachen in the Emmental for a long weekend, Unterwasser, Vevey, Weggis, Wengen, Wildhaus, and Zermatt. Information can be obtained from the respective local tourist offices. Mountain climbing weeks in the fall are still possible in Brienz, Fiesch (also excursions on mineralogy), La Fouly, Davos, Geneva, and Grindelwald. Branches of the Swiss Ramblers' Association.

TOURIST NEWS

A GREAT RAILWAY EXHIBITION IN BASLE

"Railways - Original and Model", that is the great railway exhibition arranged by Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) and the Swiss Industries Fair (MUBA) in Basle from 28th October to 12th November, 1978.

This "Exhibition and trade fair for all railway fans" puts on show - with the participation of the German Federal Railways (DB), the French National Railways (SNCF), many regional transport companies, the Swiss Transport Museum, and the Association of Railway Amateurs - rolling stock from the early days of the railways to the latest designs, models and layouts built by amateurs, as well as models and layouts in various gauges from toy manufacturers. The trade being represented, the visitors have the chance of studying the whole range of model railways on offer and of buying there and then what they fancy.

Railway bands and choirs entertain you in the pub "Schwellebaiz" run by railway staff. A programme of accompanying events offers special attractions, such as visits of railway installations in Switzerland and across the borders, steam engine trips, tours of three countries with visit of the French Railway Museum in Melhouse.

SBB, and probably also DB and SNCF, grant reduced-rate travel for visitors to the exhibition, and the Basle Tourist Office offers a special weekend arrangement with hotel accommodation.

The event is under the patronage of the former Federal Councillor Ernst Brugger, himself an active builder of models.

A CARPENTRY MUSEUM MOVES INTO CASTLE ALTISHOFEN

The top floor of the 16th century castle of Altishofen has recently become the locality of a carpentry museum. Exhibited are many different tools used in carpentry as well as in other trades of wood-workmanship.

The 160 objects which have been collected so far constitute only a beginning. The museum is open on Saturdays from 2 to 5 p.m., other visits arranged by appointment.

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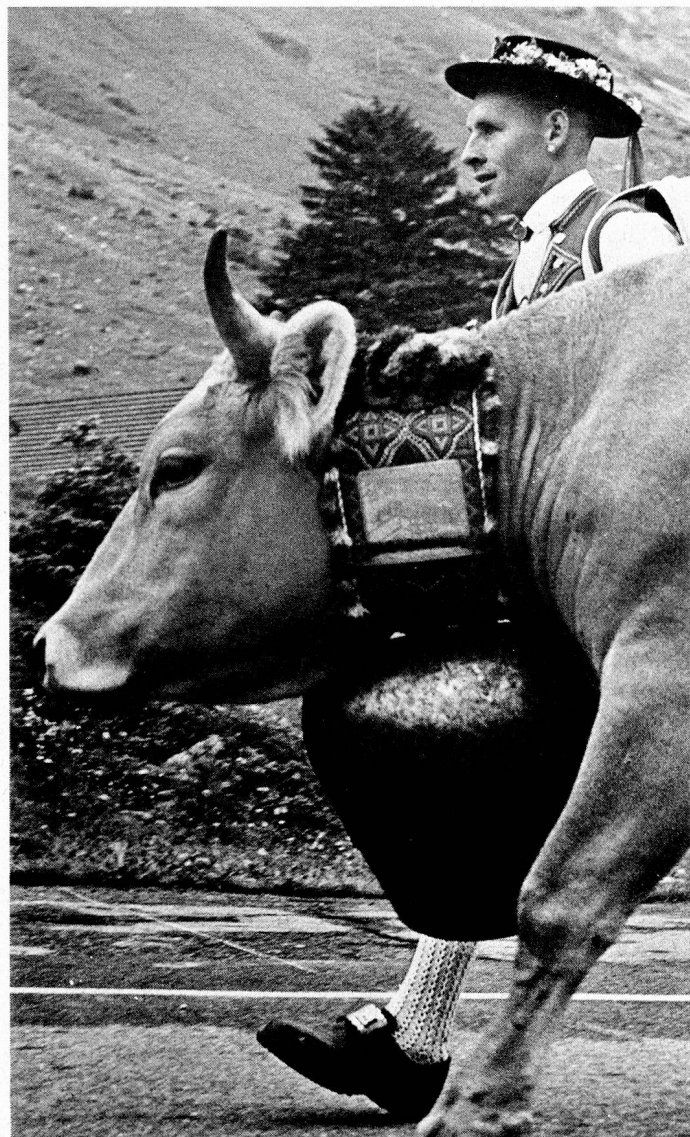
The Bell shows off

The Appenzeller is proud of his unique culture and keeps alive and fosters his old customs and skilled crafts. The bell-collar for the leading animal in a herd of cows, for instance, is painstakingly decorated, piece by piece, in readiness for the trek into the mountains. The broad leather collar is carefully stitched by the bell-saddler with tinted leather strips and decorated with plaited wool. Its edge is fringed with hundreds of gaily coloured woollen tufts which protect the skin of the leading cow during its hours-long trek up to the Alps.

No such collar is complete without its embellishment of beaten sheet brass — the so-called "farmer's gold". Various kinds of steel punches are used to chase or emboss the shaped brass plates. The designs fashioned are usually of cattle of all shapes and sizes. The highly polished plates are then rivetted to the collar in between the leather decorations. When the collar is ready the heavy bell is hung from it.

Among other examples of the bell-saddler's handiwork to be found in his workshop are collars for the Alpine herdsman's dog and fancy studded braces, leg straps and shoe buckles for the cowherd's Alpine costume.

The quality of this handiwork reflects the love of the Appenzeller farmer to his folklore. Pictures and story by courtesy of SNT0.



Master herdsman and lead cow precede the herd on their way up to Summer pasture. On this day all the cows wear their beautiful bell straps.

Saddler his craft



A hammer and various punches are needed for the delicate engravings on the brass buckles.



It takes some 25 hours of meticulous work to finish one of the bell straps with leather laces, woollen frills and brass engravings.

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