

Tourist news

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THE "SCHWEIZERBUMMLER" ARRANGEMENT

So great has been the success of the "Schweizerbummler" arrangement offered by Swissair in co-operation with Swiss Federal Railways and various private railways that it is to be repeated this winter, up to 31st March, 1979. This arrangement is a combined round trip by train and aircraft inside Switzerland.

The all-inclusive offer covers the following: outward journey by train from place of residence to Zürich or Genève, travel on the official Swissair bus in Genève and Zürich from central railways station to airport, flight from Zürich or Genève, or

vice-versa, on a Swissair wide-body aircraft and rail travel back to the starting point. The charge for adults is Sw.Fr. 130 (2nd class rail, economy class flight), or Sw.Fr. 150 (1st class rail, economy class flight); children from 6 to 16 pay Sw.Fr. 85 or Sw.Fr. 105, children up to the age of six are charged Sw.Fr. 60 in either class and holders of half-rate season tickets are charged Sw.Fr. 100 or Sw.Fr. 130.

Bookings should be made at travel agencies, railway stations or at a Swissair office, where prospectuses in colour are also available.

STAR SINGING – AN ANCIENT SWISS CUSTOM

Star singing, a popular custom in Switzerland which can be traced back to the 14th century is still carried on in several places in the Lucerne area, Obwalden, the Rhine Valley, district of St. Gall and in Canton Aargau. The procession which forms on a December evening is led by white-clad, golden-haired star bearers.

They are followed by singing children carrying little oil lamps and a choir of adults with parchment lanterns decorated with coats of arms. At the rear of the procession come the Holy Family, the shepherds and the Magi from orient. Well known throughout the region is the star singing at Wettingen, which takes place in three different places in the township on 23rd December. This year there was also a Nativity play. Rheinfelden observed the Sebastian Singing custom on 24th and 31st December. Honouring vows made in the plague year of 1541, the 12 members of the Sebastian Brotherhood have every year since then sung at that town's seven fountains.

SLEDGING – A POPULAR SPORT FOR ALL AGES

Sledging, whether with an old-type Davos sledge or the latest plastic model is becoming increasingly popular with young and old alike. A large number of resorts have special sledging runs.

A mecca for sledging enthusiasts is the three-mile run from Preda to Bergün. Grächen prepares a run of just over two miles every winter and every Wednesday there is officially-blessed sledging fun by the light of flaming torches, plus a raclette meal in the mountain restaurant.

Other places with goods runs include Braunwald, Kandersteg, Engelberg, Flims, Zuoz, Sils, Mürren, Sent, Grindelwald, St. Imier Valley

and Nods-Chasseral. Many people like to make the downrun by moonlight; sledging beneath the full moon is organised at Klosters and Pontresina, while in Engelberg and Arosa flaming torches provide the illumination.

Sledging package arrangements are organised at Davos and the Swiss Bob and Sledging Federation in Zürich provides information about sledge racing.

MURTEN'S TOWN MILL BECOMES A HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The old renovated town mill in the medieval township of Murten, still working during the last war, now houses an historical museum. The two water-powered mill wheels have been reconstructed to give the visitor an idea of the miller's trade which has a thousand years of tradition behind it.

Also on view are prehistoric finds and ancient military exhibits, the showpieces of which are trophies from the Burgundian Wars which remained in Murten.

In winter the Museum is open daily from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. except on Monday and additionally from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday and from 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. on Sunday.

WINDSURFING ON LAKE CONSTANCE

Windsurfing enjoys an increasing popularity. There are now 15 windsurfing schools on the Swiss and German shores of Lake Constance. The latest one has been opened in the small fishing village of Berlingen in Switzerland where an international windsurfing diploma is available to pupils having attended their special course programme. (Cost for course: Sw.Fr. 135).

TOURIST NEWS

FUN ON THE ICE

In Switzerland ice skating enthusiasts have 140 natural ice rinks and 80 artificial rinks to choose from. In fact as regards density of ice rinks per square kilometre, Switzerland leads the world. An advantage of ice skating is that in addition to being good for physical fitness, it needs no special clothing.

Ice skates can also be hired at most rinks or in a sports shop. This season new natural ice rinks will be available at Saas Fee and on the Stoos (with curling rinks) and in Bönigen while Arosa is getting an indoor rink. Ice skating weeks are being organised by Davos (until 22nd April) covering figure skating, ice dancing, speed skating and ice hockey, Lenzerheide-Valbella (until 3rd February) and Grindelwald (3rd February and 24th March to 7th April) with reduced-rate private lessons. Several big skating displays will be held in Arosa, Davos, Klosters, Pontresina and Crans-Montana this winter.

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" was inaugurated 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 exhibition 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 powerplants.