

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 5 (1997-1999)
Heft: 12

Artikel: Other Swiss walks
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-854587>

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I have enjoyed reading in Swiss Express the accounts of SRS members' adventures on the various designated railway walks. But I wonder how many members venture onto the footpaths of other Swiss walks? In the main, one has to use some part of the Swiss transport system to reach most of them and, as we all know, that is a pleasure in itself. I should like to introduce, therefore, a few of my own favourite Other Swiss Walks.

In Switzerland virtually all footpaths are clearly marked by signposts, of which there are two main categories. I give the German version namely: Wanderwege (walking / pedestrian paths), with plain yellow pointers, and Bergwege (mountain paths), where the yellow pointers display horizontal red and white stripes. With a few exceptions, the former are suitable for almost anyone wearing 'sensible' shoes. Users of the latter, however, are urged to have suitable footwear and to carry food and drink and some form

of weather protection as well as a map. There can also be tricky and/or hazardous patches. Here again, there are notable exceptions. Signposts point the way to one or more destinations, and about 95% of them also give the time required (without halts along the way) to reach the various points, e.g., 1^{1/2} Std. (1 hour). Nowadays there are additionally, in some areas, separate bikers' paths with signposts to match.

WEG DER SCHWEIZ (THE SWISS PATH).

This 35-km path around the Urnersee (a part of what we know as Lake Lucerne) was laid to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the founding of the Swiss Confederation in 1992. It was paid for by the Cantons proportionately according to population. It runs from Rütli+ to Brunnen+ and is very well signposted. A lot of it is more or less level, but some parts are physically quite

*On the Weg der Schweiz - a hilltop farm at Seelisberg/Bauen
Photo. Lester Weeks*



taxing. One can, of course, start from either end: Rütli (reached by SGV ship) or Brunnen SBB & SGV. At both starting points the walker is faced with quite an uphill slog, but this can be avoided by taking the funicular from Treib+ (SGV ship) to Seelisberg+ or, at the other end, by using the Postal-bus from Brunnen SBB to Morschach+. An hour's walking is saved in each case. It is a really rewarding walk, which can, of course, be tackled piecemeal and is highly recommended. The section from Bauen+ (SGV ship & Postal-bus) to Flüelen+ (SGV & SBB) is near to being flat and very easy walking. Maps of the walk should still be available locally and aboard the ships. Approximate timings are: Rütli/Bauen 3^{1/4} hours; Bauen/Flüelen 2^{3/4} hours; Flüelen/Sisikon (SGV ship & SBB) 2 hours; Sisikon/Brunnen 2^{3/4} hours. In wet weather, however, there is a very dodgy stretch in the latter segment.

ON THE RIGI:

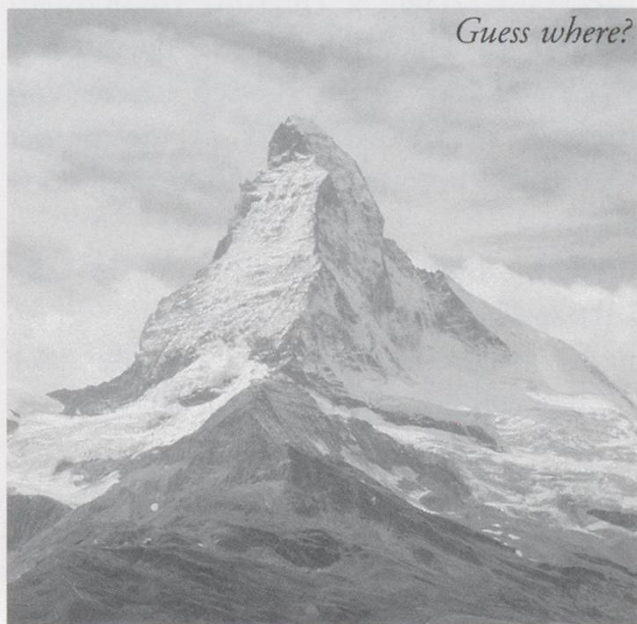
From Arth-Goldau SBB+ continue by the ARB to Rigi-First+ and walk on an almost level path (a little up-hill and stony at first) via Rigi-Kaltbad+ to Känzeli an excellent viewpoint - in about an hour. The path continues initially in a series of steeply inclined zigzags, then more level, to Rigi-Staffelhöhe+ or Rigi-Staffel+ in about a further 1 to 1^{1/2} hours. After enjoying the magnificent scenery, return, by the ARB or the VRB to Vitznau+ (SGV ship or bus).

From Arth/Goldau SBB+ continue by the ARB to Kräbel and thence by the very small cableway cabin to Rigi-Scheidegg+. At slack times it might be necessary to use the phone provided to get started upwards! A gentle downhill path runs from here (the track-bed of the former Scheidegg/First railway line to Rigi-First via Rigi-Kaltbad in 1^{1/2} to 2 hours. Along the path there is a reminder of the railway in the form of a

well-preserved passenger car on a plinth, now used as a weekend retreat. At Unterstetten (about half-way) there is a restaurant. Return by ARB or VRB or via the cableway from Rigi-Kaltbad+ to Weggis+, the lower terminus of which lies somewhat above the village (SGV ship and Postal Bus).

SEEBODENALP

This is situated on a shelf on the western flank of the Rigi. The lower station of the Seebodenalp cableway is situated 15 minutes walk from Küsnacht am Rigi SBB, and is signposted. However, there is a Postal Bus service. At the upper station at Seebodenalp+ take the track to the right marked to Altrüedisegg+ which is reached in about an hour. The catering facility here is rather primitive, but is highly recommended for good, hearty fare. The faint-hearted can retrace their steps back to the cableway, but a very rewarding path continues to Chrüzboden where commences an up-hill and not too taxing route to Rigi-Känzeli (mentioned above). The path has a number of zigzags which tend to mitigate the incline, and Känzeli is reached in about 1^{1/2} hours. Return can be via the VRB to Vitznau at Rigi-Kaltbad+ or the ARB route to Arth-Goldau from Rigi-First+.



Guess where?



The picturesque Chapel at Bettmeralp
Photo. Lester Weeks

ALETSCHE GLACIER:

From Betten FOB continue by the cableway adjoining the station to Bettmeralp+. From the picturesque chapel here the form of the Matterhorn can be picked out on a clear day. Follow the good, faintly undulating, path (essentially a little used road) with fine outlooks over the Rhône valley on to Riederalp+. Here a chair-lift (signposted) ascends to Hochfluh+ for a quite overwhelming view of the Aletsch Glacier and the not so far off peaks of the Berner Oberland. Bettmeralp to Riederalp takes about an hour. If the chair-lift were not used, it would take another hour to walk back to Riederalp from Hochfluh. An alternative would be to walk along the ridge from Hochfluh to Moosfluh+ (with a continuous panoramic view of the glacier, etc.) in a half-hour before returning to Riederalp by cableway and thence via a further cableway to the FOB station at Mörel.

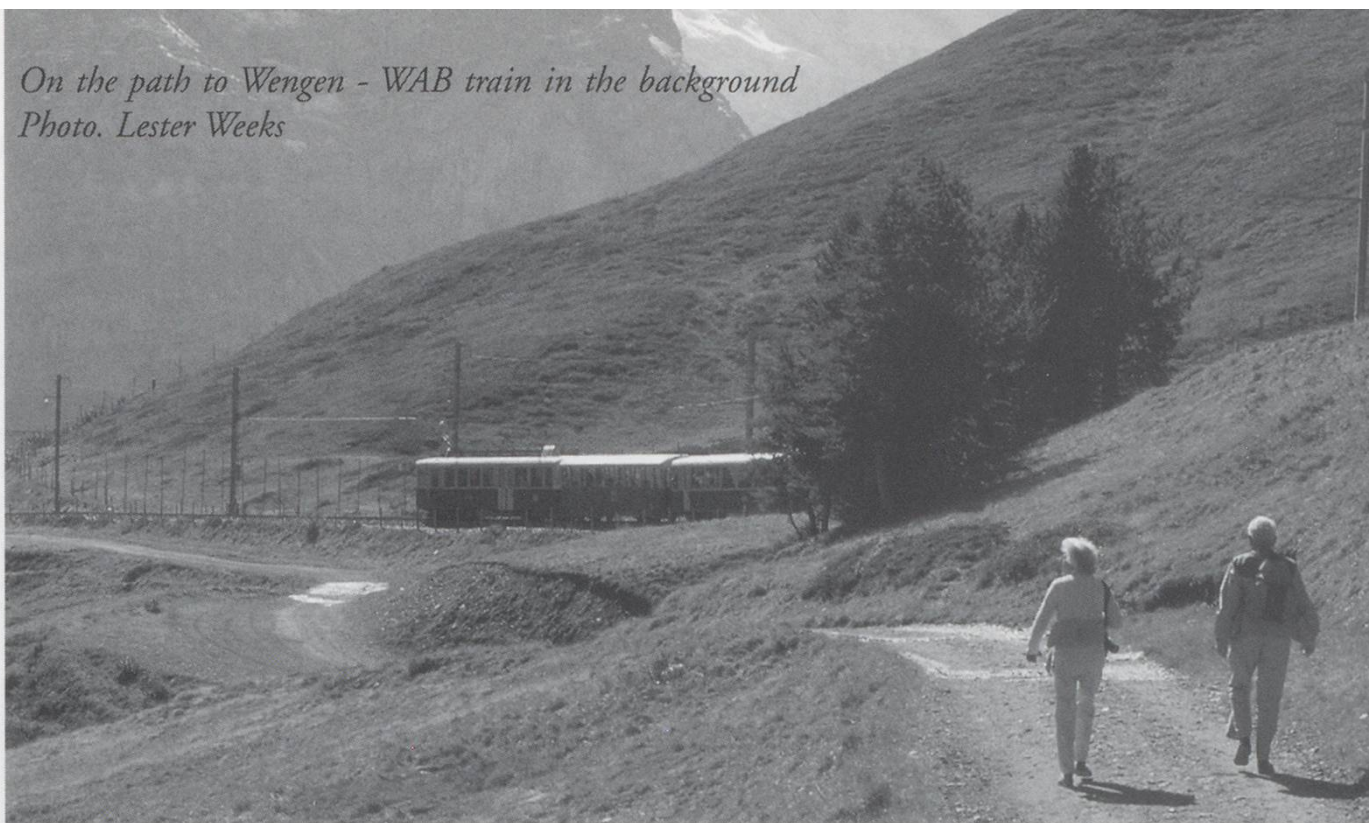
GRAUBÜNDEN:

Take the Postal-Bus from the Post Office beside the St. Moritz RhB+ station to Sils-Maria+.

The delightful, basically level, path beside the Silvaplana lake starts here, but at first (very un-Swiss!) it is somewhat elusive. However, there are signs pointing the way to the Furtschellas cableway and this is the way to the lakeside path. The Walk to Silvaplana+, in the midst of mountain scenery of heroic proportions, takes about 2 hours or, to continue beside the Champfersee to Champfer+, an hour more. To extend to St. Moritz needs yet another hour. Postal-Buses operate between Silvaplana, Champfer and St. Moritz.

From Klosters+ RhB continue by the cableway accessible from the station platform to Gotschnagrät+. From here a good pathway (somewhat stony at first), but with fine views, leads via the Alte Parsennhütte (starting point for a cableway to Weissfluhjoch) to the Hoheweg station of

On the path to Wengen - WAB train in the background
Photo. Lester Weeks



the Parsenn funicular in two hours. There is a choice here of descending via the funicular to Davos-Dorf RhB+ or continuing for a further hour rather uphill over more rugged terrain to Strella Pass+. Now the journey down from here is by chair-lift to the Hotel Schatzalp (which, sadly, may now be closed) and on by the funicular to Davos-Platz RhB+.

MATTERHORN:

Take the signposted route to the Alpen-Metro Zermatt Sunnegga 5 mins walk from Zermatt BVZ+. The 'Metro' is a very fast, and entirely underground, funicular. From the summit at Sunnegga+ a magnificent outlook towards the Matterhorn rewards the visitor. This is particularly excellent from the restaurant terrace. There are several good routes to walk back down to Zermatt, but one of the most agreeable, which affords numerous vistas of the Matterhorn and other neighbouring peaks, as well as, later, a 'birds-eye view' of Zermatt, is that designated via Tuttern+ and Ried. This is a 2-hour walk. Another, via Findeln and Winkelmaten, has rather more sharp descents, but needs only 1^{1/2} hours.

THE BERNER OBERLAND:

From Wengen WAB+ continue via the cableway (signposted) to the Männlichen+. Here an easy going path leads to Kleine Scheidegg WAB/JB+. The views are quite spectacular and about 2 hours is required. A further path descends from Kleine Scheidegg to Wengen, but this becomes quite steep after Wengernalp station. It's about a 1-hour walk to Wengernalp with an additional 2^{1/2} hours to return to Wengen. For anyone wanting something more strenuous, the same walk in the opposite direction might fit the bill! Anything up to a further hour should be allowed, however.

From Iseltwald+ (BLS bus & ship) take the attractive lakeside path that leads to Giessbach-See in about 1^{1/2} hours. At this point one can ascend by the funicular to the Hotel Giessbach+ for a panoramic outlook and a view of the Giessbach Falls. Return by BLS ship.

+ Indicates where food and drink is available. Where the + appears after the railway designation, e.g., SBB+, there is a station restaurant.

There is good signposting on all of the above walks, added to which, one is unlikely to be alone even on weekdays. A map is always useful. One of the sheets in the Landeskarte der Schweiz 1:25000 or 1:50000 series is recommended. Smaller scale maps are of little benefit.