Switzerland’s Iconic Peaks: Lucerne, Zermatt & the Glacier Express

SWITZERLAND · ZURICH · LUCERNE · INTERLAKEN · ZERMATT

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See Switzerland’s defining mountain landscapes through a route designed for first-time visitors. Begin among Lucerne’s medieval streets before ascending to the glacier world of Mount Titlis. Continue aboard the Lucerne–Interlaken Express and travel into car-free Zermatt beneath the Matterhorn, with a full day for the Gornergrat railway and Riffelsee. The journey back to Zurich includes the celebrated Zermatt–Chur section of the Glacier Express, combining high valleys, viaducts and deep gorges in one panoramic ride. A Swiss Travel Pass can cover the principal intercity journeys and the Glacier Express base fare, while Titlis and Gornergrat generally receive a 50% reduction. The Glacier Express still requires a separately paid seat reservation.

DAY

01

LUCERNE · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 2

Zurich Airport to Lucerne — medieval streets by the lake

Arrive at Zurich Airport and take the direct train to Lucerne. After checking in, begin with the timber Chapel Bridge and its landmark water tower, then wander through the painted façades and cobbled squares of the Old Town. Continue to the Lion Monument, carved into a sandstone cliff in memory of the Swiss Guards who died during the French Revolution. Spend the evening beside the Reuss River, where the old city meets the lake.

OVERNIGHT

Lucerne

DAY

02

MOUNT TITLIS · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 2

Mount Titlis — rotating cable cars and the glacier

Travel by train to the alpine village of Engelberg and continue upward by cable car. The final stage aboard TITLIS Rotair turns slowly as it climbs, opening a changing panorama of rock, snow and glacier. At 3,020 metres, walk through the Glacier Cave and, when conditions permit, cross the Titlis Cliff Walk suspension bridge. Return to Lucerne in the afternoon. Swiss Travel Pass holders generally receive a 50% reduction on the standard return mountain ticket, excluding certain add-on activities.

OVERNIGHT

Lucerne

DAY

03

ZERMATT · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 2

Lucerne to Zermatt — lakes, passes and the Matterhorn valley

Board the Lucerne–Interlaken Express for a scenic journey past Lake Lucerne, Lake Sarnen and Lake Brienz, crossing the Brünig Pass before arriving in Interlaken. Continue by regular train through the Rhône Valley to Visp, then climb towards Zermatt. The resort is car-free, with electric vehicles replacing conventional traffic beneath the Matterhorn. Settle in and explore the compact village on foot.

OVERNIGHT

Zermatt

DAY

04

GORNERGRAT · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 2

Gornergrat and Riffelsee — face to face with the Matterhorn

Ride the Gornergrat cogwheel railway from Zermatt to its 3,089-metre summit. The viewing area opens onto the Matterhorn, the Gorner Glacier and a sweep of surrounding four-thousand-metre peaks. In suitable summer and autumn conditions, descend to Rotenboden and follow the trail to Riffelsee, where still water can mirror the Matterhorn. Weather changes quickly at altitude, so keep the day flexible. Swiss Travel Pass holders generally receive a 50% reduction on the Gornergrat fare.

OVERNIGHT

Zermatt

DAY

05

ZURICH · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Glacier Express to Chur — onward to Zurich

Leave Zermatt aboard the Glacier Express and follow the panoramic route through the Upper Rhône Valley, across high alpine terrain and along the Rhine towards Chur. Disembark in Switzerland's oldest city and change to a regular intercity train for Zurich. A Swiss Travel Pass covers the Glacier Express base fare on the valid route, but the compulsory seat reservation must be purchased separately. After arriving in Zurich, explore the lanes of the Altstadt and dine beside the Limmat River.

OVERNIGHT

Zurich

DAY

06

ZURICH AIRPORT

Zurich — departure or an easy extension

Spend a final morning in Zurich before taking the direct train to Zurich Airport. Travellers extending the journey can add another Zurich night for a day trip to Rhine Falls, or remain in Zermatt longer for the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise cable-car journey.