# Switzerland's Classic Trains

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## Overview

### The Highlights

- The famed Glacier Express and Bernina Express

- Golden Pass line, running along six lakes from Spiez to Lucerne

- Mountain views from Rigi and Pilatus

- Furka Steam trip behind 80-year-old locomotive, a train lovingly maintained and run by volunteers

- Gornergratbahn, with amazing views from 10,000 feet above sea level

- Scenic Centovalli trip into Italy

- Mt. Blanc Express into France or St. Bernard Express to 8,000-foot pass

- Numerous shop/depot visits available upon request for a unique “behind the scenes” experience

- Optional trip on the Jungfrau Railway, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2012

## The Tour

If you've been waiting to take some of the most scenic train trips in the world, wait no longer! This independent journey includes the Glacier Express and Bernina Express, as well as the Centovalli Railway and Golden Pass line—four of Switzerland’s most scenic routes possible by train.

The Furka Steam adds a historic element, and the mountain railways are impressive engineering feats. Plus an optional trip on the Jungfrau Railway, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2012. You’ll never stop looking out your train window or taking photos!  Available as an 8-day or a 15-day tour.

# Itinerary

## Part I: Day 1: Zurich-Lucerne

Arrive Zurich airport; travel by train to Lucerne, a scenic one-hour trip. Check into hotel and spend the afternoon at the Swiss Museum of Transport, with its impressive collection of locomotives, cars, airplanes and more. Overnight Lucerne.

## Day 2: Lucerne, Mt. Rigi

Take the regular train from Lucerne to Goldau, where you’ll board the Mt. Rigi cogwheel train for an exhilarating roundtrip to the summit for unparalleled views (weather permitting). Visit to Rigi train depot also possible by request. Leisurely boat cruise on Lake Lucerne followed by afternoon at your leisure to stroll across the Chapel Bridge and explore Old Town’s delightful squares.

## Day 3: Mt. Pilatus

Depart for leisurely cruise on Lake Lucerne to Alpnachstad for a trip on Mt. Pilatus, the world’s steepest cogwheel railway (48% incline). Enjoy a fabulous meal (on your own; highly recommended is the Restaurant Taverne in the Hotel Bellevue) with stunning backdrop of the many mountains visible from the summit. Descend the mountain via gondola and cable car.

## Day 4: Furka Steam train

Travel on part of the Gotthard Railway south from Lucerne by regular train. Arrive Realp, where you'll board the Furka Steam Railway for the two-hour trip to Gletsch. (Short guided tour of Furka Steam depot possible*.) Travel behind the 80-year-old steam engine along the rack railway—over bridges, along rushing waters of the Furkareuss and finally, down the valley with views of the Rhone Glacier. Upon arrival, board postal bus to Meiringen and change for train to Interlaken.

## Day 5: Interlaken

Spend the day at leisure in Interlaken, or opt for a train excursion (at additional cost). The Brienzer Rothorn steam train covers 4.6 miles, passing through six tunnels and rich alpine flora. Optional tour of Brienzer Rothorn train depot. **Want a full "behind the scenes" rail experience? Opt for the Brienz Rothorn "Stoker Course" or "Engineer for the Day".**

Or venture to the highest railway station in Europe on the Jungfraujoch*. Travel the world-famous Jungfrau Railway to the 11,398-foot station for views of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau peaks.

## Day 6: Centovalli Train

Travel Interlaken to Domodossola via Spiez by regular train. Change to a Centovalli Railway train for the scenic ride through Italy to Locarno. Pass through centovalli—"a hundred valleys"—with views of spectacular waterfalls, vineyards and palm tree-lined lakes below. Continue to Italian-influenced Lugano, where you can stroll along the lakefront and wander the pedestrian-only historic city center.

## Day 7: Lugano

Day at leisure in Lugano. Suggested excursion: Mt. Generoso cogwheel railway for views of the whole Canton Ticino below (steam train available on select Sundays); stop off at Melide and visit the Swiss Miniatur—where 127 miniature Swiss buildings are on display, along with over two miles of railway track and model trains, funiculars and cable railways (all built on site). Model railroaders will also want to visit the Baumgartner Model Railway Gallery in Mendrisio, displaying thousands of model trains from all over the world.

## Part II: Day 8: Bernina Express

*(Return to Zurich for flight home if taking Part I only.)* Travel to Tirano via postal bus winding along lakes and through small Italian villages. Board Bernina Express, celebrating its 100th anniversary and now an UNESCO World Heritage site, for an unforgettable trip to Chur. Along the four-hour trip, you'll cross 196 bridges and travel through 55 tunnels. In addition to the spectacular glacier and forest scenery, highlights include the famed Circular Viaduct of Brusio and Landwasser Viaduct. Overnight Chur.

## Day 9: Chur

Free day in Chur. Suggested rail trips: Chur-Arosa Railway, a one-hour trip along picturesque country villages, including a run over the Langwieser viaduct (200 feet high); or travel Davos-Filisur—a line with multiple hairpin curves, tunnels and viaducts. Get off the train in Wiesen to see and photograph the impressive Wiesen Viaduct (289 feet high).

## Day 10: Glacier Express

Enjoy a full day on the Glacier Express on its entire routing, Chur to Zermatt. Sit back and relax in your comfy seat, taking in the Alpine scenery from the large picture windows and enjoying a delicious lunch served at your seat. Overnight Zermatt.

## Day 11: Gornergrat

Excursion to the Gornergrat—experience the breathtaking circular panorama over 29 of Switzerland's 12,000-foot mountains within a radius of more than nine miles, from an altitude of 10,000 feet above sea level. Admire the powerful majesty of rock faces, the glitter of eternal snow, and the sheen of ice falls and glaciers—and naturally the king of the mountains, the Matterhorn, with its crown princes the Monte Rosa and Weisshorn. Visit to the Gorgergrat depot in Zermatt possible upon request.

## Day 12: Zermatt-Martigny

Regular train Zermatt to Martigny. Options from Martigny: Mt. Blanc Express running carefully along a daring route of mountain precipices to Chamonix, France; or the St. Bernard Express, a combination train/postal bus excursion to the 8,054-foot St. Bernard pass, where you can visit the famous St. Bernard kennels.

## Day 13: Golden Pass Line

Regular train to Montreux where you'll board the panoramic coaches of the Golden Pass train, which takes you through the Lake Geneva region past mountain torrents, blooming alpine meadows, small mountain villages and vineyards, over the Golden Pass to Gstaad. Overnight Gstaad, a village of lovely traditional Swiss chalets.

## Day 14: Golden Pass Line

Continue your Golden Pass journey to Zweisimmen, where you'll change trains to Interlaken; one more train change to Zurich. This is an extremely scenic day, running along six lakes, over the Brünig Pass, through picturesque villages, vineyards and gardens. Sit back and enjoy the spectacular ride—a fitting finale!

## Day 15: Zurich

Take one of the many trains from Zurich to the airport for flight home.

*These options at additional cost, subject to availability and must be booked well in advance.

# Dates & Prices

## 2024 Dates

May 1 - May 31
June 1 - June 30
July 1 - July 31
August 1 - August 31
September 1 - September 30

Deposit: 30%
Pricing varies based on season and choice of hotel. As this is a custom-arranged journey by our staff, please note a professional planning fee does apply.
Please contact us for a quote and details.

# Our Process

This is a suggested itinerary for a wonderful private journey. It will be fully customized for you. Please contact us at (800) 478-4881, or (502) 897-1725, or email us at tourdesk@irtsociety.com, to schedule a brief conversation with one of our specialists to discuss our process.

# More

NOTE: This journey is an active tour.

Tour is available with options for:

- using four-star or five-star hotels.

- luggage transfers between tour destinations.

- tickets to railroad shops (not included in above itinerary).

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