

SWITZERLAND WALK

Nature & Culture of Appenzell & Engelberg

August 25 – September 6, 2015



HIGHLIGHTS

- ✚ Journey to Switzerland, the world's oldest living democracy and a matchless paradise for walking.
- ✚ Luxuriate in the magnificent views of the Swiss and the Austrian Alps.
- ✚ Discover the village of Apenzell, with its charming houses adorned by murals.
- ✚ Visit St. Gallen and the Abbey Library with manuscripts dating from the 8th century.
- ✚ Enjoy a curator-led tour of Engelberg's Benedictine Monastery, housing the oldest church organ in Switzerland.
- ✚ Experience an optional e-bike tour and take a boat ride on Lake Lucerne.
- ✚ Hike to castle in Werdenberg, the only wooden medieval settlement which retains its character.
- ✚ Sample regional specialties during beer and cheese tastings.
- ✚ Explore Rutli-Meadows — the “Cradle of Switzerland.”
- ✚ Take the Mt. Titlis Rotair cableway — the highest glacier excursion in Switzerland.



What to Expect

Participants must be in very good health and able to keep up with an active group. Walks are easy to moderate, 2–4 miles and approximately 2–4 hours per day. Expect a 500–800 feet elevation change over 2 miles. Most activities each day will take place at an average altitude of 3,000–6,500 feet, although one day you will reach 10,600 feet.

In order to participate, one should be able to walk on gravel and dirt hiking trails, and through meadows. One should be able to use stairs without handrails and walk and stand unassisted for periods of two hours at a time. You will need to board buses, trains and gondolas unassisted. Hotels are clean, comfortable and charming, but not luxury accommodations. You do not have to participate in every activity, and several options for longer and shorter walks are available depending on the day. The tour director will brief people each day on the next day's options and activities.

Itinerary

Tuesday, August 25

Depart the U.S. on independent flights to Zurich, Switzerland.

Wednesday, August 26 Zurich to Appenzell

Arrive at Zurich Airport and transfer to our hotel (1 ½ hours) in Appenzell, which sits at 2,676 feet. Enjoy a historical orientation walk through the village and visit a handicraft workshop that produces the *hackbrett*, a stringed instrument found in every Appenzeller folkore group, and similar to a zither. Enjoy a lecture before dinner at our hotel. *Hotel Adler (D)*

Thursday, August 27 Hoher Kasten

Today's walk takes us along the Sitter River to Weissbad (2,700 ft), or alternatively take a moderate uphill trail to Bruelisau (3,000 ft), then ride the cable car up to Mount Hoher Kasten (6,000 ft). Luxuriate in the magnificent views of the Alpstein, Rhine Valley and the Austrian Alps. After lunch at the top we return to Appenzell. *Hotel Adler (B,L)*

Friday, August 28 St. Gallen

Take a train ride to St. Gallen, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit the Old Town, including several old houses and enjoy a lecture in the Cathedral. Explore the Abbey Library's beautiful rococo and stucco work. See manuscripts dating back to the 8th century and a ceiling painting by Josef Wannemacher. Enjoy a traditional Swiss lunch at the oldest restaurant

in town, followed by a free afternoon. Return to Appenzell at leisure. (Trains depart every 30 minutes.) *Hotel Adler (B,L,D)*

Saturday, August 29 Ebenalp & Mt. Schaefer

We journey by train to Wasserauen, and take a cable car to Ebenalp (5,000 ft). We then descend on foot to see the prehistoric Wildkirchli caves, inhabited around 40,000 years ago. Walk down to the hermit dwellings and the well-known Berggasthaus Aescher. Continue on to Mt. Schaefer with magnificent views of the Appenzeller Mountains. Return by cable car and train. Back at the hotel, learn about traditional Appenzeller singing before dinner at a local restaurant. *Hotel Adler (B,D)*

Sunday, August 30 Appenzell

Leisure morning or an optional (and very fun) guided E-Bike tour to enjoy the Alpine panorama. In the afternoon learn about beer making and sample local specialty breads and beer at a beer tasting. Dinner at the hotel. *Hotel Adler (B,D)*

Monday, August 31 Werdenberg & Engelberg

Depart by coach for Engelberg, with a stop to independently explore the medieval castle of Werdenberg, founded in 1230. Continue along Walensee Lake, with a stop in Einsiedeln, known for its splendid church, considered one of the finest examples of Baroque architecture in Switzerland. Arrive at the hotel in Engelberg (3,444 ft). *Hotel Schweizerhof (B,D)*



Trip Details

Dates:

August 25 to September 6, 2015
(13 days)

Group Size:

Minimum 13, Maximum 22 participants
(not including staff)

Cost:

\$4,695 per person
\$500 single room supplement

Included:

Tour leader, local guides and guest speakers; activities as specified in the itinerary; transportation throughout; airport transfers on designated group dates and times; accommodations as specified (or similar); meals (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner); wine and beer with welcome and farewell events; bottled water at meals; Commonwealth Club representative with 13 or more participants; gratuities to local guides, drivers, and for all included group activities; pre-departure materials.

Not included:

International airfare to Switzerland; gratuity to local tour leader; visa and passport fees; meals not specified as included; optional outings and gratuities for those independent outings; alcoholic beverages beyond welcome and farewell events; travel insurance (recommended, information will be sent upon registration); items of a purely personal nature.

Tuesday, September 1 Engelberg

Enjoy a curator-led visit to the magnificent Benedictine Monastery, founded in 1120. Then walk to the impressive valley waterfall (3,555 ft) where we take a cable car to Fürenalp (5,544 ft). Have a light lunch at the "Hütte", and then return to the valley by cable car. Walk back to Engelberg.
Hotel Schweizerhof (B, L, D)

Wednesday, September 2 Gerschnialp

Take a gondola up to Gerschnialp and then a walk to Säلمي Töngi. Every summer since 1975, Säلمي Töngi cheese dairy has been turning milk into cheese - 300,000 kg of cow's milk and two tons of goat's milk are made into rounds of cheese and stored in cellars until they are ripe enough to take to market. Enjoy a cheese tasting followed by an optional trotti bike ride from Gerschnialp down to Engelberg. Or return the way you came. Afternoon to explore Engelberg on your own.
Hotel Schweizerhof (B, D)

Thursday, September 3 Engelberg & Mt. Titlis

Walk from the hotel to the Mt. Titlis (10,627 ft) cable car traveling part of the way in the world's first revolving cable car, "Rotair." At the top of the highest mountain in Central Switzerland you will witness breath-taking scenery and walk through the Glacier Grotto. The TITLIS Cliff Walk holds the record for being the highest suspension bridge in Europe. Enjoy a lecture about glaciology and the different snow conditions. From Mt. Titlis, walk over beautiful snowfields before taking the funicular to Trubsee (5,890 ft) where we

enjoy a walk around the mountain lake. Continue by cable car down to Engelberg.
Hotel Schweizerhof (B, L, D)

Friday, September 4 Lucerne & Mt. Stanserhorn

Travel to Lucerne this morning. For those interested, an *optional* excursion to the famous Stanserhorn is offered. (A fantastic 360° panorama on the "CabriO" cable car is exciting, but not for everyone.) It is the world's first cable car with a roofless upper deck. In the late afternoon take a guided city tour through the old town of Lucerne.
Hotel Ambassador (B)

Saturday, September 5 Lucern & Rütli-Meadows

Take a train ride followed by a unique postal-bus to Seelisberg (2,627 ft). Walk down through the forest to Rütli-Meadows (1,670 ft) — the "Cradle of Switzerland" above Lake Lucerne, Uri. Enjoy a lecture and a typical Swiss lunch in the place where the Confederates convened to confirm the Everlasting League of 1291. Then we take a boat across Lake Lucerne to Lucerne. Enjoy a farewell dinner.
Hotel Ambassador (B, L, D)

Saturday, September 6

After breakfast, transfer to Zurich airport.
(B)

*itinerary is subject to change



SWITZERLAND WALK



Phone: 415.597.6720

Fax: 415.597.6729

RESERVATION FORM August 25 – September 6, 2015

NAME 1 _____

NAME 2 _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ CELL _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

SINGLE TRAVELERS ONLY

If this is a reservation for one person, please indicate: I plan to share accommodations with _____

OR I wish to have single accommodations. OR I'd like to know about possible roommates. I am a smoker / nonsmoker. (circle one)

PAYMENT*

Here is my deposit of \$ _____ (\$500 per person) for _____ place(s).

Enclosed is my check (make payable to Commonwealth Club). OR Charge my deposit to my Visa MasterCard American Express

CARD# _____ EXPIRES _____ SECURITY CODE _____

AUTHORIZED CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

***Please note that final payment must be made by check.**

I/We have read the Terms and Conditions for this program and agree to them.

SIGNATURE _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR DEPOSIT TO:

The Commonwealth Club; Attn: Travel Department

P.O. Box 194210

San Francisco, CA 94119

You may also fax the form to 415.597.6729

Terms and Conditions:

The Commonwealth Club (CWC) has contracted European Walking Tours to organize this tour.

Reservations: A \$500 per person deposit, along with a completed and signed Reservation Form, will reserve a place for participants on this program. The balance of the trip is due 90 days prior to departure and must be paid by check.

Cancellation and Refund Policy: Notification of cancellation must be received in writing. At the time we receive your written cancellation, the following penalties will apply:

- 91 or more days or more prior to departure: \$350 per person
- 90-1 days to departure: 100% fare

Tour pricing is based on the number of participants. Tour can also be cancelled due to low enrollment. Neither CWC nor European Walking Tours accepts liability for cancellation penalties related to domestic or international airline tickets purchased in conjunction with the tour.

Trip Cancellation and Interruption Insurance: We strongly advise that all travelers purchase trip cancellation and interruption insurance as coverage against a covered unforeseen emergency that may force you to cancel or leave trip while it is in progress. A brochure describing coverage will be sent to you upon receipt of your reservation.

Medical Information: Participation in this program requires that

you be in good health and able to walk several miles each day. The "What to Expect" outlines what is required. If you have any concerns see your doctor on the advisability of you joining this program. It is essential that persons with any medical problems and related dietary restrictions make them known to us well before departure.

Itinerary Changes & Trip Delay: Itinerary is based on information available at the time of printing and is subject to change. We reserve the right to change a program's dates, staff, itineraries, or accommodations as conditions warrant. If a trip must be delayed, or the itinerary changed, due to bad weather, road conditions, transportation delays, airline schedules, government intervention, sickness or other contingency for which CWC or European Walking Tours or its agents cannot make provision, the cost of delays or changes is not included.

Limitations of Liability: In order to join the program, participants must complete a Participant Waiver provided by the CWC and agree to these terms:

CWC and European Walking Tours its Owners, Agents, and Employees act only as the agent for any transportation carrier, hotel, ground operator, or other suppliers of services connected with this program ("other providers"), and the other providers are solely responsible and liable for providing their respective ser-

vices. CWC and European Walking Tours shall not be held liable for (A) any damage to, or loss of, property or injury to, or death of, persons occasioned directly or indirectly by an act or omission of any other provider, including but not limited to any defect in any aircraft, or vehicle operated or provided by such other provider, and (B) any loss or damage due to delay, cancellation, or disruption in any manner caused by the laws, regulations, acts or failures to act, demands, orders, or interpositions of any government or any subdivision or agent thereof, or by acts of God, strikes, fire, flood, war, rebellion, terrorism, insurrection, sickness, quarantine, epidemics, theft, or any other cause(s) beyond their control. The participant waives any claim against CWC/ European Walking Tours for any such loss, damage, injury, or death. By registering for the trip, the participant certifies that he/she does not have any mental, physical, or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other participants. CWC/ European Walking Tours shall not be liable for any air carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket to or from the departure city. Baggage and personal effects are at all times the sole responsibility of the traveler. Reasonable changes in the itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the passengers.