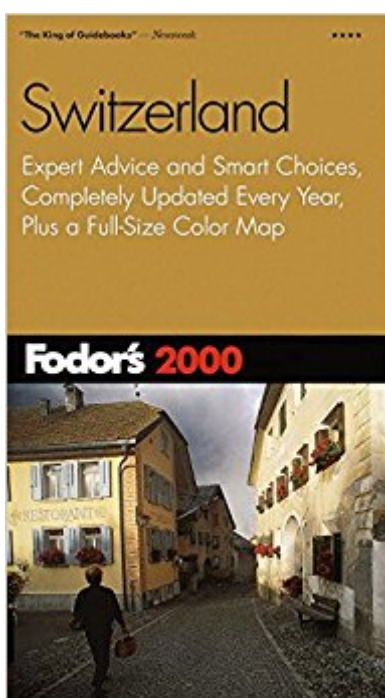


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Fodor's Switzerland 2000: Expert Advice And Smart Choices, Completely Updated Every Year, Plus A Full-Size Color Map (Travel Guide)



Synopsis

"Fodor's guides are always a pleasure." - The Chicago Tribune
"Teeming with maps and loaded with addresses, phone numbers, and directions." - Newsday
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Vivid descriptions evoke what makes Switzerland unique - Local experts show you the special places - Thorough updating keeps you on track - Practical information gives you the tools to explore - Easy-to-use format puts it all at your fingertips
Choose among many hotels and restaurants in all price categories
Stay in Victorian mountain chalets, family-run inns, sleek modern hotels - Dine in pine-paneled St. Gallen, chic French bistros, rustic Italian grotti - Check out hundreds of detailed reviews and learn what's distinctive about each place
Mix and match our itineraries and discover the unexpected
Savvy advice helps you decide where to go and when - City walks lead you to stunning cathedrals, historic squares, and fascinating museums - Driving itineraries guide you through Alpine passes, medieval villages, and hillside vineyards - Find great sources for chocolate, watches, and crafts
Go straight to the facts you need and find all that's new
Useful maps and background information - How to get there and get around - When to go - What to pack - Essential French, German, and Italian vocabulary - Costs, hours, and tips by the thousands

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Customer Reviews

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Pleasures and Pastimes Dining If you're looking for diverse dining experiences, you can't do much better than Switzerland, where French, Italian, or German cuisine may dominate, depending on which cantons you visit. In French areas (roughly Vaud, Geneva, Jura, Neuchâtel, and western parts of Fribourg and Valais) the cuisine is clearly Gallic, and wine stews, organ meats, and subtle sausages appear alongside standard cuisine bourgeoise: thick, rare beef entrecôte with a choice of rich sauces and truite meunière (trout dredged in flour and sizzled in butter). In the Ticino, the Italian canton, Italian cuisine appears virtually unscathed, particularly the Alpine-forest specialties of Piedmont and Lombardy (risotto, gnocchi, polenta, porcini mushrooms). The German cantons serve more pork than their neighbors and favor another standard dish that represents Switzerland though it vanishes in French-speaking or Italian-speaking areas: Röstli, a broad patty of hashbrown potatoes crisped in a skillet and often flavored with bacon, herbs, or cheese, is as prevalent in the German regions as fondue is in the French. Beyond the obvious cultural differences, Swiss cuisine is also influenced by the terrain: Mountain farmers have traditionally

subsisted on such basic foods as raclette (cheese melted over broiled potatoes and garnished with pickled vegetables), while cities nurtured wealthy burghers and noblemen with the cream of the crops of outlying lands -- milkfed veal, fruits from low-lying orchards. Though fondue, R  sti, and veal are likely to be on any resort's menu these days, traces of these influences can still be found almost everywhere.

HikingWhen the snow melts and the mountain streams start to flow, Switzerland takes to the hills. That the Swiss Alps are the ultimate in hiking is no secret: On a sunny day in high season in the more popular vacation areas, footpaths can be almost as crowded as a line for World Series tickets. On narrow trails, hikers walk in single file, and the more aggressive pass on the left as if on the Autobahns of Germany. However, there is an almost infinite quantity of quiet, isolated routes to be explored; if you prefer to hike in peace, head for one of the less inhabited Alpine valleys -- in the Valais or Graub  nden there are several -- and strike out on your own. Each of the regional tourist departments publishes suggested hiking itineraries, and major map publishers distribute excellent topographical maps of wilderness trails. In the German-speaking region especially, hiking is a deeply rooted tradition, and people of all ages and in all physical conditions head for well-beaten paths in jeans as often as knickers, woolen stockings, rucksacks, and hiking boots.

Regional CelebrationsBasel's extravagant pre-Lenten observance of Fasnacht (Carnival) -- in which up to 20,000 costumed revelers fill the streets with the sounds of fifes and drums -- is only one of the hundreds of festivals that the Swiss celebrate during the year. As if to prove that its spirit is vast despite its small size, almost every Swiss canton hosts its own popular celebration of one event or another. In Geneva, the Festival of the Escalade commemorates the heroic housewife who repelled the Savoyards by dumping hot soup on their heads. Lesser-known festivals range from the frivolous -- in the Schlitteda Engiadinaisa, young unmarried men and women ride decorated sleighs through the villages of the Engadine -- to the symbolic -- in the Landsgemeinde, the citizens of Appenzell pay homage to their country's democratic tradition by conducting a vote by public show of hands.

ShoppingSwiss Army knives, Swiss watches, Swiss chocolate -- what could be more...Swiss? Though you won't find many bargains in Switzerland anytime soon, you will find some uniquely Swiss treasures. Some of the best souvenirs of this pragmatic country are typically practical, such as watches, clocks, and Swiss Army knives. Others are more luxurious, such as sweet milk chocolate: Lindt, Nestl  , and Tobler are major manufacturers. Marvelous music boxes from the watchmaking country around Lake Neuch  tel are sold in specialty shops all over the country. Linens and good cottons -- dish and tea towels, aprons, sheets -- are another Swiss specialty, as are pottery and ceramics -- most of them dark-glazed and hand-painted with simple designs. D  coupage is the Swiss art of intricate silhouette paper-cutting. It's traditionally

done with black paper, but it can also be found in color. Farm or desalpage (bringing cows down from mountain pastures) scenes are common motifs. Skiing Switzerland is Europe's winter playground, and its facilities are as technically advanced as its slopes are spectacular. As one recent skier put it, "There's just more" -- more slopes; longer runs; more stunning, crisp scenery than you'll find in U.S. resorts. Any level of skier can find a resort to meet his or her needs, from a cozy family-oriented village with easy and moderate slopes to the world-class challenges at Crans-Montana, Verbier, Wengen, and Zermatt. Most of the resorts publish an area map showing their slopes and rating the trails for difficulty. Familiarize yourself with the resort's signs, including those warning of avalanche zones, before you set out. Spectator Sports If awards were given to countries with the most unusual sports, Switzerland would win hands down. In the winter, the action centers around St. Moritz, where a frozen lake provides a novel setting for golf, polo, dogsled races, and horse races: In the Winter Golf Tournament, red balls on white "greens" are a festive sight; in the Racing Hounds Competition, a motley crew of canines races across 480 m (1,574 ft) of ice at an average speed of 90 kph (55 mph). Also in St. Moritz, the uniquely Swiss sport of Skikj  ring involves skiers being pulled by galloping horses. Wrestling is a popular Swiss tradition: men wear baggy shorts of burlap and stand in sawdust rings; after the competition, costumed spectators sing and dance. Perhaps most unusual, stone-throwing competitions in Unspunnen (in the canton of Bern) take place every five years; 180-pound stones are used.

It is a very good book with lots of information about the Hotels, restaurants, Public transport. It made our trip a lot easier.

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