

SERVING TRAVELERS FOR THE PAST 40 YEARS

SWITZERLAND

TRAVEL GUIDE



Kelturas
Vacations

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WELCOME

Dear Traveler,

In 2025, Kelturas Vacations celebrated its 40th year of helping to create extraordinary experiences and making memorable moments for our clients. A family owned business based in Boston, Kelturas Vacations (formerly Crystal Travel and Tours) was founded in 1985 by our parents, Jim and Teresa, and since that humble beginning, it has grown into a trusted resource that has helped tens of thousands of people better enjoy their travel.

We recognize that you have plenty of choices when it comes to selecting a partner to assist in your vacation planning, and if we are fortunate enough to hear from you, we want you to know that we take great responsibility in providing you with the best quality, exceptional value, and personal service.

Our experienced team of destination experts are well-traveled and passionate, and enjoy sharing that with you. We leverage our years of specialist experience and the deep partner relationships we have developed since we opened our doors to assist you in crafting the type of travel experience you want. Whether you are interested in an escorted motor coach tour, prefer a customized chauffeur-driven excursion, or an independent self-drive holiday, we have the resources and experience to help make it exceptional and memorable.

At Kelturas Vacations, you will deal with the same travel expert from the moment of initial contact until you are safely back at home. You will form such a relationship with your agent that you will want them to be the first person to hear all about your trip - and they will be excited to listen!

For a vacation brimming with options, flexibility and truly authentic experiences, you need look no further than Kelturas Vacations. On behalf of our travel experts, I invite you to explore the extraordinary experiences and memorable moments that we can help create.

Seán Kelly

Operations Director



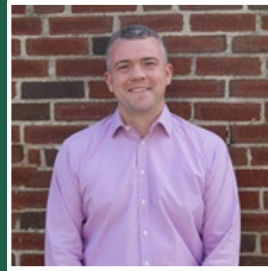
Kevin Kelly

VP of Business Development



MEET THE TEAM

Kelturas Vacations is a family-run business with a close-knit team, many of whom have been with us for over 15 years!



Seán Kelly
VP | Operations



Kevin Kelly
VP | Business Development



Vivienne Stanley Kelly
Group Air Manager



Bridie Tamer
Senior Travel Designer



Ann O'Brien
Travel Designer
Senior Product Manager



Josephine Keenan
Travel Designer
Product Manager | UK



Sean McCay
Travel Designer



Sean Barrett
Travel Designer



Dana Lussier
Travel Designer



Niall McCann
Accounts



Sean O'Gara
Operations & Logistics



Shari Risi
Operations & Logistics



Hannah Cleary
Marketing Associate



Joe Donnellan
Director of Leisure Travel

[Learn more about our team here!](#)



THE WEATHER

Switzerland's weather is comprised of all four seasons and can vary between regions. Each season offers opportunity for a wide array of activities, and it is important to consider the time of year when preparing and packing for your visit.

TEMPATURURES

Winter (Dec–Feb): 32–45°F, cold, with frequent snow in the Alps.

Spring (Mar–May): 41–62°F, cities warm up, while mountains remain cooler.

Summer (Jun–Aug): 65–80°F, warm, long days with cooler evenings in the Alps.

Autumn (Sep–Nov): 40–70°F, mild with near-freezing temps as winter approaches.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Consider which region you are visiting when packing. The Alps experience lower temperatures than cities like Geneva. Layer clothes during spring and autumn to be prepared for warmer days and cooler evenings.

GEOGRAPHY

MOUNTAINS

Switzerland is famous for its mountains, with the Swiss Alps being its landmark mountain range. Within the Swiss Alps are many iconic peaks and countless opportunities for activities, such as skiing and hiking. The mountains of Switzerland are also home to many quaint, beautiful villages.

STATISTICS AND OUR MOST FAMOUS

- ◆ Matterhorn, one of the peaks of the Swiss Alps, is famous for its distinct shape.
- ◆ Monte Rosa is the highest peak, standing around 15,091 ft.
- ◆ About 70% of Switzerland is comprised of mountains.
- ◆ Part of Switzerland's border with France is formed by the Jura Mountains.
- ◆ Cog railways offer a unique way to journey up the mountains.
- ◆ Millions of people visit Switzerland every year to ski their famous slopes.



GEOGRAPHY

RIVERS & LAKES

Switzerland's natural beauty is complete with blue, sparkling rivers and lakes, often coupled up with mountainous backdrops. Typically enjoyed by boat tours, the water in Switzerland is not to be missed.

STATISTICS AND OUR MOST FAMOUS

- ◆ The largest lake in Switzerland is Lake Geneva and it is shared with France.
- ◆ Lake Lucerne is perfect for visitors looking for a mix of water and mountains.
- ◆ The Rhine River, the longest river in Switzerland, is 766 miles in length and runs through the Swiss Alps into the North Sea.



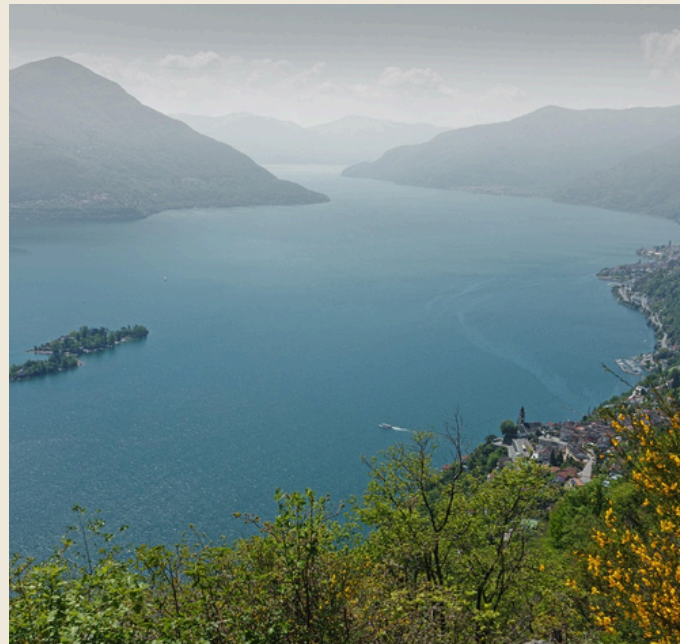
GEOGRAPHY

ISLANDS & PENINSULAS

Although Switzerland is landlocked, its lakes are home to various small islands and peninsulas that make great for great day trips.

STATISTICS AND OUR MOST FAMOUS

- ◆ St. Peter's Island, now a peninsula, is home to beautiful vineyards and beaches.
- ◆ Located on Lake Zurich is the country's largest island, Ufenau Island.
- ◆ A quick ferry ride brings you to Schwanau Island, where you can visit and learn about historic ruins.
- ◆ The Lorelei Bathing Islands are man-made, bringing the Caribbean to Switzerland.



SWITZERLAND'S RICH HISTORY



800-58 B.C.

The Helvetians, a Celtic tribe, inhabit Western Europe.

58 B.C.-400 A.D.

Roman troops occupy Switzerland and begin the country's written history.

1291

Switzerland's birth document is written.

1332

Lucerne becomes the first city to join the Swiss confederacy.

1484-1531

The Reformation begins in Zürich.

1536

Reformation begins in Geneva upon Jean Calvin arriving.

1618-1648

The Swiss Confederacy remains peaceful amid the 30 Year's War.

1803-1815

The Helvetic Republic ends as a result of civil war; Napoleon declares Switzerland's borders and their neutrality.

SWITZERLAND'S RICH HISTORY



1874

State authorities remove control of marriage, birth, and death certificates from the church.

1914-1918

Switzerland remains neutral during WWI.

1918

Women gain the right to vote.

1920

The League of Nations is founded and establishes HQ in Geneva.

1939-1945

Switzerland remains neutral during WWII, having economic relations with both sides for survival purposes.

1984

Elisabeth Kopp becomes the first female elected to the Swiss federal government.

2002

Switzerland joins the United Nations.

PLACES YOU'LL LOVE WHERE EVERYONE GOES



LAKE LUCERNE

A boat ride across Lake Lucerne is one of the best ways to enjoy the beauty of Switzerland. The blue water and mountainous backdrop result in the perfect photos.



THE MATTERHORN

While in Zermatt, don't miss out on opportunities to view the Matterhorn from different vantage points. Viewing platforms, scenic hikes, and even helicopter tours all provide a chance to snap a picture of the Toblerone chocolate mountain.



CHAPEL BRIDGE

While in Lucerne, take a stroll along the Chapel Bridge, which crosses over the River Reuss. Considered to be Europe's oldest covered bridge, this landmark is surrounded by great shops and restaurants, perfect for an afternoon outing.



LAKE GENEVA

If you are exploring Western Switzerland, spend a day in Geneva and enjoy the lake via boat ride. The city itself also offers great opportunity to dive into Switzerland's history and enjoy luxury shopping.

PLACES YOU'LL LOVE OFF THE BEATEN PATH

RHINE GORGE

Known as the “Swiss Grand Canyon,” the Rhine Gorge is a stunning, 40 mile collection of valleys, mountains, and Rhine river. Deemed a UNESCO World Heritage site, this gorge is home to many opportunities for hiking and water sports, making it a great destination during the summer months.



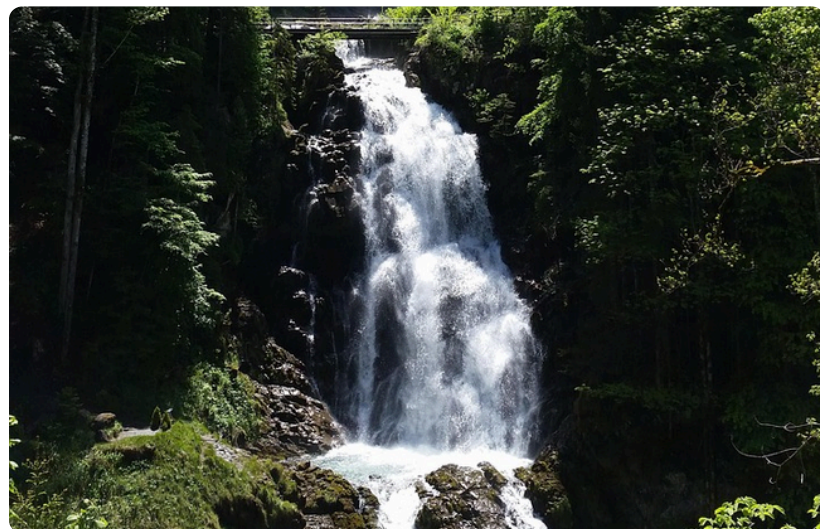
SONNENBERG BUNKER

Located in Lucerne, the Sonnenberg Bunker is an impressive facility built into the Sonnenberg mountain that was designed to house 20,000 people, making it the largest civilian shelter in the world. Learn about its history and purpose on a guided tour.



GIESSBACH FALLS

For visitors staying in the Interlaken area, an ideal day-trip, perfect for a lunch outing and break from tourist hotspots, are the Giessbach Falls. Accessible by both boat and car, visitors can enjoy a bite to eat at the nearby restaurant with views of the water, as well as follow a path to walk behind the falls, making for a great photo opportunity!



PLACES YOU'LL LOVE

HIDDEN GEMS



CAUMASEE

Perfect for a break from high-touristed areas, Caumasee is a picture-perfect lake near Flims. Whether you are interested in having a relaxing, lakeside picnic, or hiking from the lake to The Rhine Gorge, this hidden gem has something for everyone!



BELALP

Calling all skiers! Located in the Upper Valais region, Belalp is home to over 35 miles of slopes, all of different difficulty levels that are suitable for skiers of varying ability. An added bonus of skiing at Belalp is the view offered of the Alps' largest glacier in Switzerland, the Aletsch Glacier.



MÜRREN

The perfect escape from tourist-crowded areas and cars...yes, cars. Mürren, a car-free village, can be reached by cable car or mountain train. This hidden gem is perfect for outdoor activities all year long.



GRUYÈRES

Enjoy gruyère cheese? Visit the medieval town in which it originates from. Besides a sampling of their famous cheese, visit the Château de Gruyères and marvel its history and works of art.

TRAIN TOURS

TOURING OPTIONS

Looking for a mix of organized accommodations and the freedom to explore places independently? Train tours include hotels and train tickets, transporting you to and from some of Switzerland's most charming regions. These tours are perfect for exploring the many cities of Switzerland at an ideal pace, with spectacular views at every point in your journey.

WHY?

If you prefer to have accommodations organized for you, a train tour may be the best fit. These group tours include your hotels and train tickets. It is a great way to meet fellow travelers and enjoy a smooth, well paced journey without planning each detail yourself.

TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR CLIENTS

SUSAN | SWITZERLAND & AUSTRIA | SEPTEMBER 2025



All of the hotels were excellent! All 4 or 5 star. The view in Lugano was beautiful! The photo of us shows big smiles and every picture we took of us was like that. Thank you to Ann for a trip of a lifetime!



PATRICIA | ITALY & SWITZERLAND | MAY 2025



My favorite part of the trip was the Alps for sure. Breathtakingly beautiful. We loved the bottle of wine from Ann and the unexpected upgrade to a suite upon arrival in Milan.

TRAIN TOURS

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES

GRAND TOUR OF SWITZERLAND | WINTER EDITION

7 Nights | 4 Accommodations

From snow-dusted peaks to charming alpine villages, this journey combines Switzerland's most breathtaking panoramic train routes into one seamless adventure.



GRAND TOUR OF SWITZERLAND | THE ORIGINAL

7 Nights | 7 Accommodations

From lush meadows and crystal-clear lakes to charming towns and majestic mountains, every moment offers a new breathtaking view. Experience Switzerland's incredible diversity as you travel through its four language regions, each with its own unique culture and charm.



TRAIN TOURS

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES

GRAND TOUR OF SWITZERLAND | THE CLASSIC

6 Nights | 6 Accommodations

Traveling by rail throughout, marvel at the diversity of bustling cities and shimmering lakes; from snow-capped mountain peaks to palm-tree lined streets.



GRAND TOUR OF SWITZERLAND | HISTORIC TOUR

6 Nights | 5 Accommodations

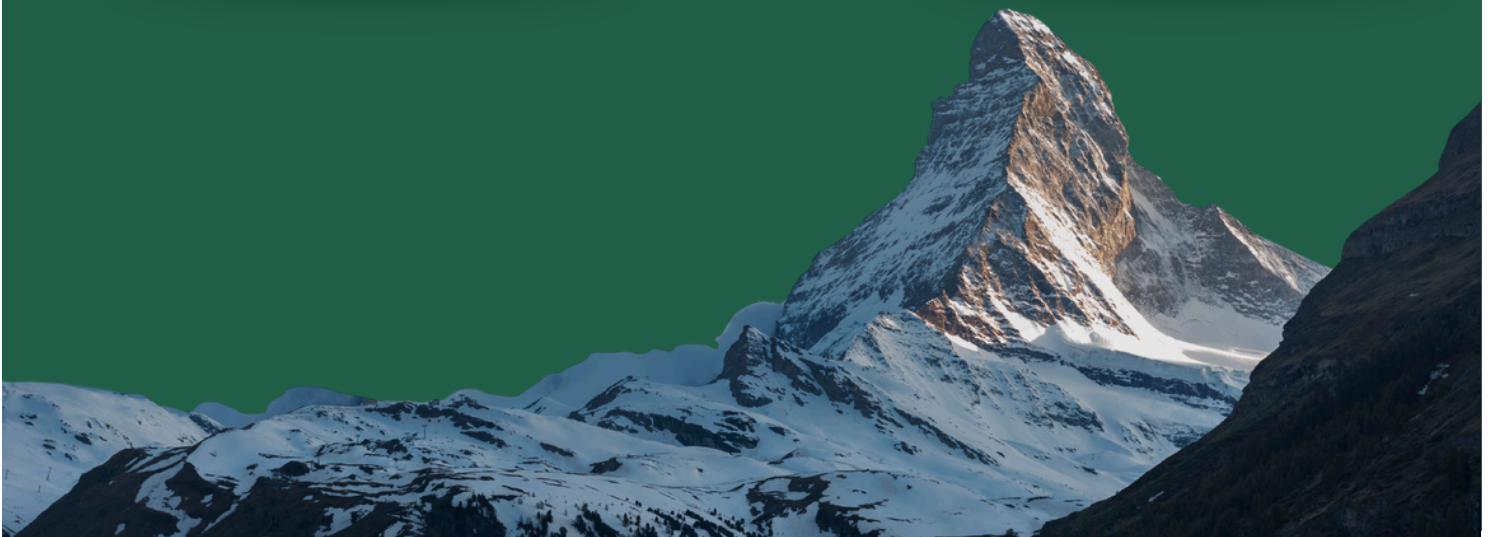
Stay in select Swiss Historic Hotels, each rich in character and tales of the past. Glide through the Swiss countryside in the Bell Époque carriage of the GoldenPass Line, where the past comes alive with every mile. It's a truly immerse experience, where the charm of yesterday meets the beauty of today.



TRIP PLANNING TIMELINE

BOOKING STEPS FROM 6 MONTHS TO 1 WEEK OUT

- 1** You make an Inquiry on our website under your desired Tour or reach out to us. We'll assign a suitable agent based on your request. We strive to respond in 48 hours but that may be longer depending on your booking window.
 - 2** We discuss your dream plans with you however you feel most comfortable - video or phone call, over email, or in office if you are local.
 - 3** We'll send you a first draft based on everything we have talked about and will rework it twice more until you are fully satisfied. Some trips may require a planning deposit, whereas others may require one for reworks only, but we would discuss that in advance.
 - 4** When you are fully happy with your plans we will book everything. Flights and travel insurance, if desired, are payable in full at the time of booking. We will also take a deposit for your land portion at this time.
 - 5** Ten weeks before travel, we will request your final payment and finalize all trip details before sending your travel documents.
 - 6** It's time to jet off! We will be there every step of the way with 24/7 support while you travel.
- 



WHEN TO TRAVEL?

WHAT TIME OF YEAR SHOULD YOU VISIT?

Switzerland makes for a great travel destination year round! Each season offers different activities, with the winter being a great time for skiing and the summer offering great hiking weather.





WHEN TO TRAVEL?

NOVEMBER–MARCH- LOW SEASON

This is the most budget-friendly time to go. Main attractions that are still open often experience fewer crowds and shorter queues, however some hotels and restaurants may close to prepare for the winter. Visitors can enjoy what is remaining of the fall foliage, or the early stages of spring's bloom.



APRIL & OCTOBER- SHOULDER SEASON

A great balance of cost and comfort. Blooming flowers in April and foliage in October make for breathtaking landscapes. Accommodations and tours often offer discounted rates and mild temperatures are ideal for many outdoor activities and sightseeing.



JUN-AUG/DEC-FEB - HIGH SEASON

The most popular times to visit. Expect higher prices and bigger crowds. During the summer months, many travelers enjoy hiking trails and boat rides across the country's many lakes. In the winter, opportunity for skiing and snowboarding is abundant. Flights and accommodations around the holidays often see their highest prices as Switzerland is known for their festive Christmas markets.

PACKING TIPS

1. Layer Up

Bring light layers you can easily add or remove - think T-shirts, sweaters, and a warm fleece or jumper.

2. Waterproof Essentials

A reliable rain jacket or a small umbrella may also be useful in the event of rainy weather.

3. Comfortable Walking Shoes

Switzerland is best explored on foot, so pack supportive shoes for city streets and countryside paths.

4. Smart Casual Clothes

Most places are relaxed, but you may wish to pack one nicer outfit for dining out.

5. Travel Adapter

Switzerland uses Type C and Type J plugs, and voltage is 230V. Bring an adapter.

6. Compact Day Bag

For day trips, hikes, or carrying snacks and souvenirs.

7. Medications & Toiletries

While pharmacies are common, bring any prescriptions and preferred travel-size items.

8. Power Bank & Charging Cables

Useful for long touring days or rural areas with limited outlets.



THINGS YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU KNEW



Pack Layers

Weather in the mountains can be significantly cooler, so bring layers!



Rent an Automatic Early

Manual cars are quite common in Switzerland. Book automatic vehicles in advance if needed.



Franc

Switzerland uses the Franc (CHF). Carry some cash just in case.



Expect Slower Pace

Relax and take your time. Locals value conversation and storytelling.



Credit Cards Are Widely Accepted

But it's smart to have a bit of cash for small towns, markets, and tolls.



Check your bag

and your packing list often!



Electricity is 230V

Bring a Type C and Type J plug adapter.



Book Tours Ahead

Popular spots fill up, *fast*. Reserve early for places like Jungfrauoch and seats on panoramic trains.



Bring sunscreen

When at higher altitude, the sun is stronger.



Embrace Tap Water

Swiss tap water is extremely clean, making it safer for drinking than some bottled water varieties.

YOUR TRIP, MADE SIMPLE

WHAT DO WE BRING TO YOUR TRAVELS?

At Kelturas Vacations, we take care of the details so you can enjoy the journey. Here's what we handle for you:

- Personalized itinerary planning based on your interests, timeline, and travel style
- Hand-picked accommodations that match your comfort level and budget
- Rental car bookings or private chauffeur arrangements for stress-free travel
- Train tour selection and reservations for a worry-free experience
- Flights booked upon request with preferred schedules and carriers
- Dining recommendations and advance reservations
- Guided tour and attraction bookings with skip-the-line access when available
- Travel insurance guidance and options for peace of mind
- Insider tips, local contacts, and destination support
- Emergency assistance while you travel
- Group travel coordination, including payment tracking and communication support

*Let Us Take On
The Guesswork!*



HOW TO GET THERE?

When booking a vacation, it is always better value to book an air-inclusive package. Our airline partners make available special discount airfares for inclusive tour participants. Kelturas Vacations works with most international airlines, frequently offering the most competitive fares for travel to Ireland, Britain and Europe.

WE CAN BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS!

Our expert team of agents can assist you in booking an ideal combination of price, convenience and preference for your itinerary. We offer economy, business and first class airfares, as well as arranging private jet services for those who prefer to travel on their own schedule.

With 24/7 customer support, you won't have to wait on hold for hours with an airline in the event of a disruption. Our team is ready to assist whenever you need us!

ZÜRICH OR GENEVA?

Zürich and Geneva are the two main international airports in Switzerland. Zürich is larger and busier, however Geneva is ideal for travelers looking to fly into West Switzerland.

WHY CHOOSE ZÜRICH?

Zürich Airport is the busier of the two, offering a large array of international flight routes. Those looking to explore the north and east of Switzerland would have better access from Zürich Airport, which is conveniently located near Lucerne.

WHY CHOOSE GENEVA?

Geneva Airport is located in West Switzerland and provides a less crowded option for international travelers. This location is ideal for visitors looking to explore Geneva, Bern, and the Matterhorn.

OTHER AIRPORTS IN SWITZERLAND

Switzerland has many other smaller, regional airports, such as Bern Airport, Lugano Airport, Sion Airport, and St. Gallen–Altenrhein Airport.

Depending on your preferred location, travel plans, or onward trips within Europe, these airports offer flexibility and make it easy to explore on your own terms.



SWISS CULTURE



CLEANLINESS & EFFICIENCY

Switzerland is recognized globally for its commitment to cleanliness and overall efficiency, both of which should be acknowledged and respected by tourists. Visitors should be sure to do their part in keeping public spaces clean and abide by posted recycling guidelines.

Perhaps one of Switzerland's most famously enjoyed foods is fondue, which is a pot of melted cheese ideal for dipping bread. Gruyère, both a region in Switzerland and popular cheese, is the most common variety melted for fondue. Enjoyed communally, this is a great bite for travelers to enjoy with their group.



COMMON SWISS PHRASES

As a very diverse country, Switzerland is home to four national languages, which are German, French, Italian, and Romansh. Though German is the most commonly spoken, language dominance varies from region to region.

“**Hoi**” – Hello (informal)

“**Danke**” – Thank you

“**Proscht!**” – (pronounced “pro-st” like toast) Cheers!

“**Adieu**” – Goodbye



OLD FAVORITES

ANDREAAS VOLLENWEIDER | KROKUS
 CELTIC FROST | THE YOUNG GODS
 DJ BOBO | STEPHAN EICHER

NEW FAVORITES

DJ ANTOINE | BENJAMIN AMARU |
 NICKLESS & JOYA MARLEEN | LOREDANA

SWITZERLAND ON THE BIG SCREEN

For decades, Switzerland has drawn in filmmakers looking for the perfect city or dramatic backdrop for their movies. From Geneva in the west to Zürich in the north, Switzerland's breathtaking landscapes can be identified in many blockbuster films, including Scorsese's highest grossing film, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, and film classic *Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory*.

SWITZERLAND'S CULTURE

THE SOUNDTRACK OF SWITZERLAND

Diverse and vibrant, the sounds of Switzerland are a lovely mix of traditional folk music and contemporary pop and rock. While city nightlife is likely to feature electronic house music, the Central Alps are home to the vocal style of yodeling, which is still featured in folk music today, along with instruments like the Alphorn.



STAR WARS: EPISODE III - REVENGE OF THE SITH (2005)
 GRINDELWALD

THE WOLF OF WALL STREET (2013)
 GENEVA

THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO (2011)
 ZURICH

WILLY WONKA & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY (1971)

TOBLERONE CHOCOLATE FACTORY - BERN

WHERE TO STAY?

4-STAR HOTELS

With over 1,000 4-star hotels, Switzerland provides endless accommodation options for those looking for a stay that is both affordable and comfortable. Many hotels are centrally located, providing great access to cities and activities. Other hotels feature more remote locations for those looking to unwind and take a break from the hustle and bustle of highly-touristed areas.

A FEW OF OUR MOST POPULAR

CASCADA BOUTIQUE HOTEL >>>

Waterfall-themed, centrally located hotel in the Lucerne Neustadt district.

HOTEL SEIDENHOF

Boutique hotel walking distance from Zurich's shopping avenue, Bahnhofstrasse.

GAIA HOTEL >>>

Environmentally conscious and organic hotel located in Basel.

HOTEL STERN

Historic hotel known for its value and ideal location in Chur.



WHERE TO STAY?

5-STAR HOTELS

Looking for the ultimate way to elevate your Swiss experience? A stay at one of the country's 5-star hotels adds elements of luxury and relaxation to your vacation. Whether you are looking for an accommodation in a city center, or one tucked into the Alps, Switzerland has a wonderful selection of luxury hospitality.

A FEW OF OUR MOST POPULAR

THE OMNIA >>>

Beautifully situated atop a rock in Zermatt's center.

BEAU-RIVAGE PALACE

Luxurious and located in Lausanne complete with restaurants and access to activities.

ROMANTIK HOTEL SCHWEIZERHOF GRINDELWALD >>>

Cozy, family-run hotel that rests along the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau.

HOTEL SPLENDIDE ROYAL

Conveniently located within the city of Lugano and paired with a view of the lake.



GROUP TRAVEL

Traveling with others is a rewarding experience, but group size can shape how your trip comes together. Whether you are planning with a few friends or a large family, understanding what to expect will help make the journey smoother and more enjoyable for everyone.

TRAVELING WITH 5 OR MORE

When planning for groups of five or more, it's important to keep these essentials in mind.

UNDERSTAND GROUP DYNAMICS

Every group travels differently, with varying interests and energy levels. Setting expectations early keeps everyone on the same page..

IMPORTANCE OF EARLY PLANNING

Bigger groups need reservations well in advance for stays, dining, and key activities. Early organization keeps the group together and avoids stress.



TRAVELING WITH 5 OR MORE

CHOOSING ACCOMMODATION

Look for places that offer plenty of space to relax, with shared areas where everyone can gather. Staying in the same property or connected rooms helps the group feel unified without feeling crowded.

TRANSPORTATION

Private drivers and pre-booked transfers make getting around much easier for bigger groups. If everyone travels together, timing is simpler and no one gets left behind.

COORDINATING ACTIVITIES

Try to choose one main activity each day for whole group, then smaller optional choices for those with different interests. A little flexibility goes a long way toward keeping everyone happy.

ASSIGNING A GROUP LEADER

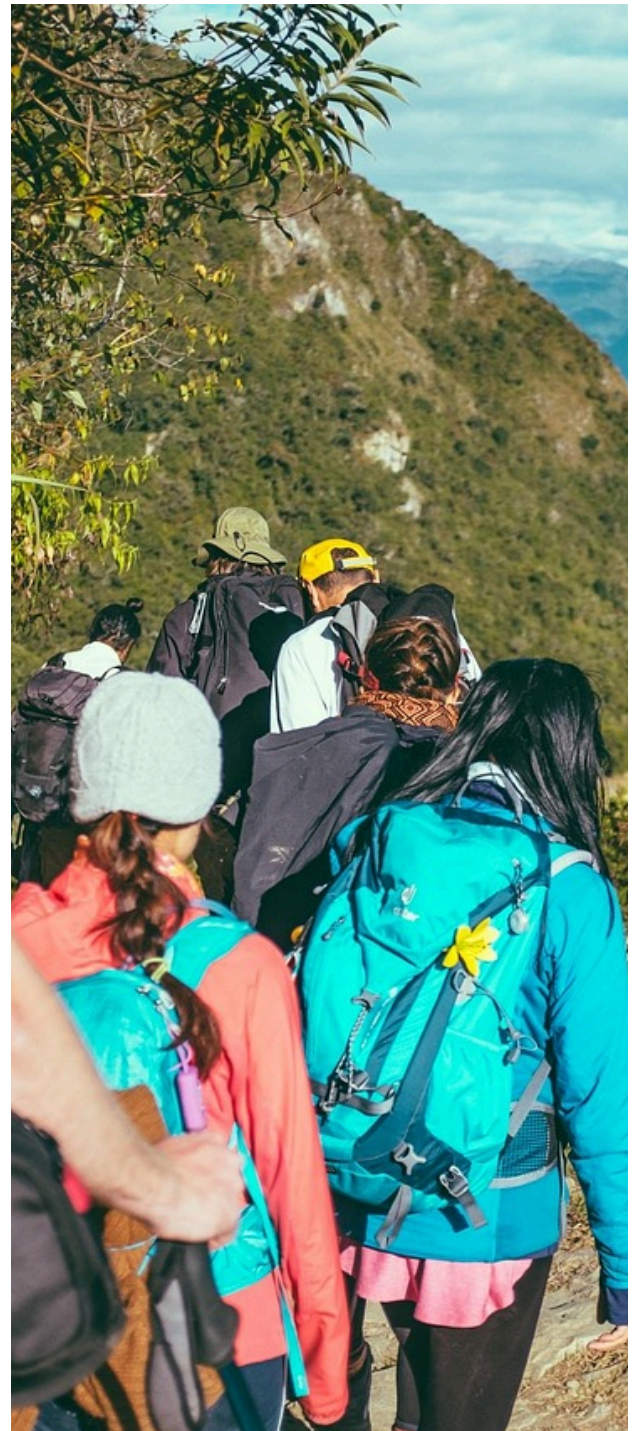
Designating one person (or a few) to handle confirmations and communication helps keep things organized. It's less about being "in charge" and more about making sure information flows clearly.

MANAGING BUDGETS

Clear budgeting from the start helps everyone understand what to expect. With your trip priced upfront and no hidden fees, it's easier to plan together and split costs.

BUILDING IN FREE TIME

A bit of downtime gives everyone space to recharge. These small breaks keep the group refreshed and make shared moments more enjoyable.



TRAVELING WITH A SMALL GROUP

Trips with fewer than five people offer more flexibility and spontaneity. It is easier to agree on plans, book last-minute activities, and dine without reservations

Boutique hotels and unique stays are often available. The pace can be relaxed, with decision-making quick and the itinerary more open to change.





Kelturas Vacations



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