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Switzerland Tour Contents

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Switzerland Tour Introduction

Here are my photos from a two-week tour of Switzerland.

I was coming from Germany by train, and planned a rail route around Switzerland, beginning in the eastern part of the country and circling clockwise all the way across to Geneva, and then back up to Zurich.

Most of my travel was on the Swiss Rail Pass, probably the best travel deal on the planet. It's a bargain, and incredibly convenient. One pass covers rail travel, lake boats, and all municipal transit systems.

I took advantage of portions of two special train routes, the *Bernina Express* in the east, and the *Glacier Express* in the south.

The rail system works with incredible efficiency and Switzerland is a small country, so travel from place to place doesn't consume huge amounts of time. A two week tour can see a lot, and Switzerland has incredible variety – lakes, mountains, rolling farm land, picturesque villages, and big cities. I was fortunate that the weather was near-perfect.

I brought home so many pictures that I think are interesting that I've packaged 209 of them into two parts. I don't think you'll mind the inconvenience or be bored, though you can always page ahead very quickly if you are.





Part 1 of a two-week train journey around Switzerland (clockwise, of course). Down to St. Moritz, on to Lugano, back through the mountains to Zermatt.



My Bernina Express rail trip begins at Chur, and passes through picturesque valleys en route to St. Moritz.



The train has both premium and regular coaches.





The viaduct curves above the valley and leads to a tunnel entrance.



The viaduct was built in 1902, and is 215 ft / 66 m high.



Village of Filisur, not quite half way to St. Moritz











St. Moritz Hosting the Winter Olympics in 1928 and 1948 made St. Moritz famous.



St. Moritz

As in many towns in Switzerland, most everything is uphill.





St. Moritz

Central shopping, mostly operated by Paris and Milan fashion houses



St. Moritz Funicular tracks stretch up into the mountains, for skiers in winter and sightseers in summer.



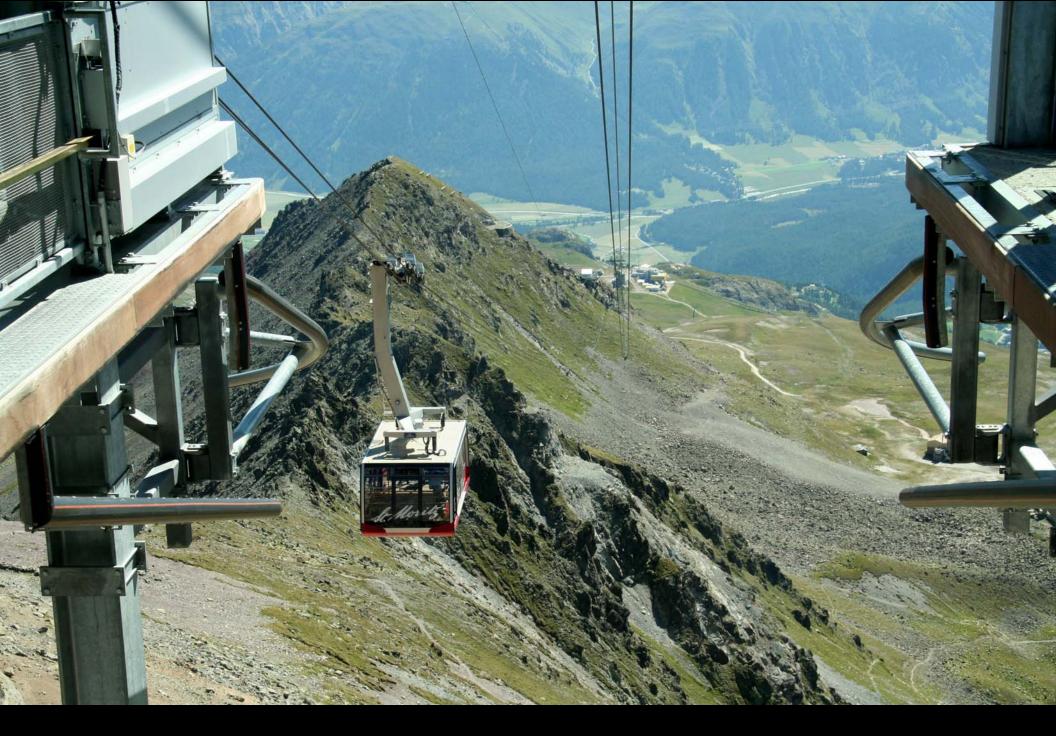
View of Lake St. Moritz from the funicular (inclined railway)



The ascent to Piz Nair continues by cable car.



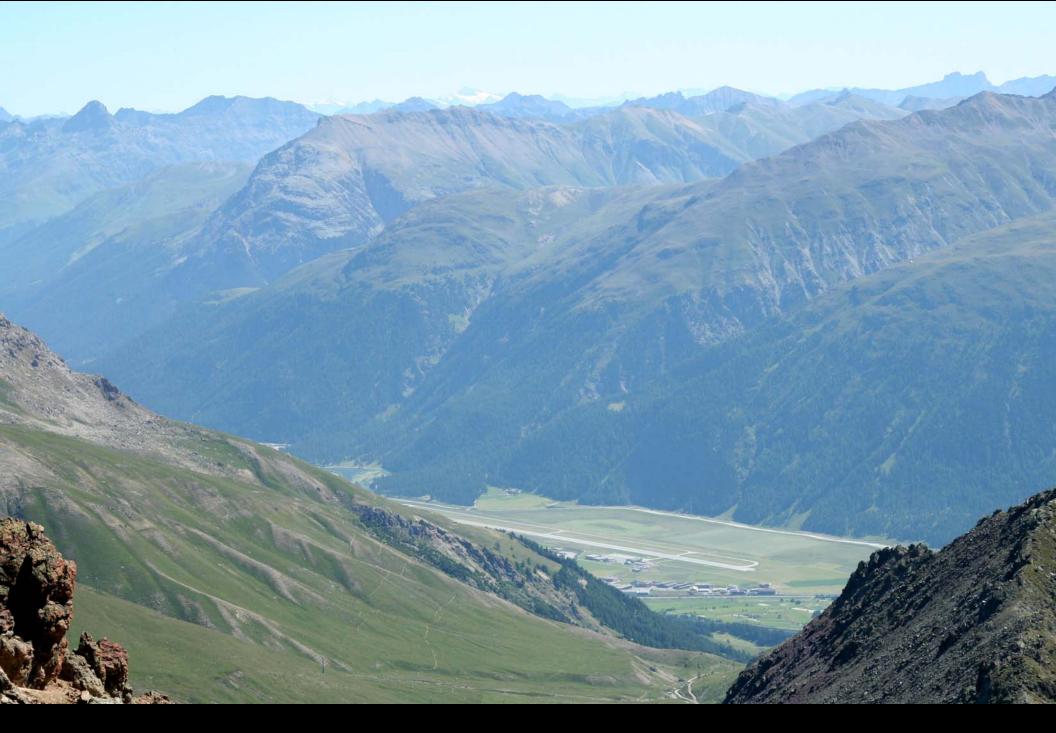
Piz Nair is 4000 ft / 1220 m above St. Moritz.



Approaching Piz Nair, elevation 10,030 ft / 3057 m.



Looking south from Piz Nair, Lake St. Moritz on the left, Lakes Champfer and Silvaplana on the right



Engadin Airport is the highest in Europe, elevation 5600 ft / 1700 m.



Piz Nair summit restaurant



Southbound – over the Alps and through the Bernina Pass to Tirano, Italy



Near Ospizio Bernin, highest Bernina Express station. Elevation 7392 ft / 2253 m.



Lago Bianco (White Lake) has a light colour because it contains glacier meltwater.



Bernina Express Palü Glacier and the Puschlav valley to Tirano



Gradual descent on the other side of the Bernina Pass





Poschiavo. The train track is on main street. Elevation here has dropped to 3,327 ft / 1,014 m.





The Circular Viaduct in Brusio accomplishes an elevation change of 66 feet on the spot.



Bernina Express Navigating the Circular Viaduct in Brusio to Tirano





Bernina Express to Tirano

Tirano, just inside the Italian border, is the end of the Bernina Express rail journey. Travel to Lugano will be by bus.





Bernina Bus to Lugano

Lake Lugano, partly in Switzerland and partly in Italy



Lugano is in the heart of Switzerland's Italian-speaking region.









Most everything in Lugano is uphill.



Lugano

Street stairs



This funicular heads up Monte Brè, elevation 3061 ft / 933 m.



View from the top of Monte Brè

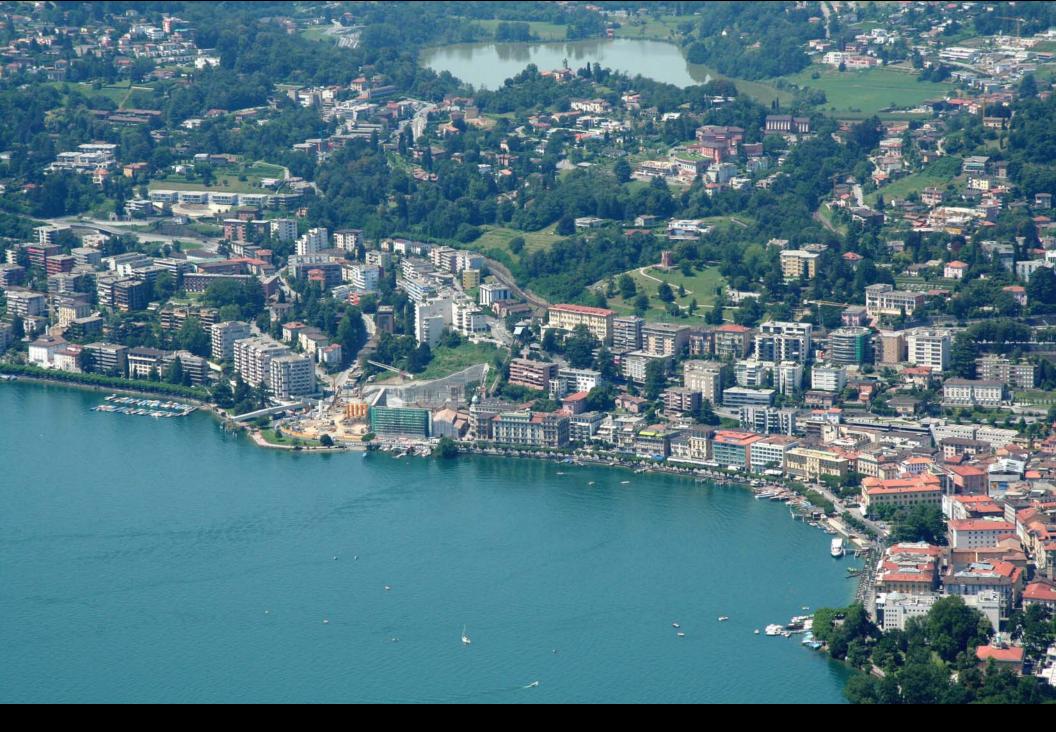


Monte Brè is 2172 ft / 662 m above Lake Lugano.





Lugano from above



Lugano



Lake Lugano Cruise

Time for a cruise on Lake Lugano















Lake Lugano Cruise At Figino





Lake Lugano A
Cruise

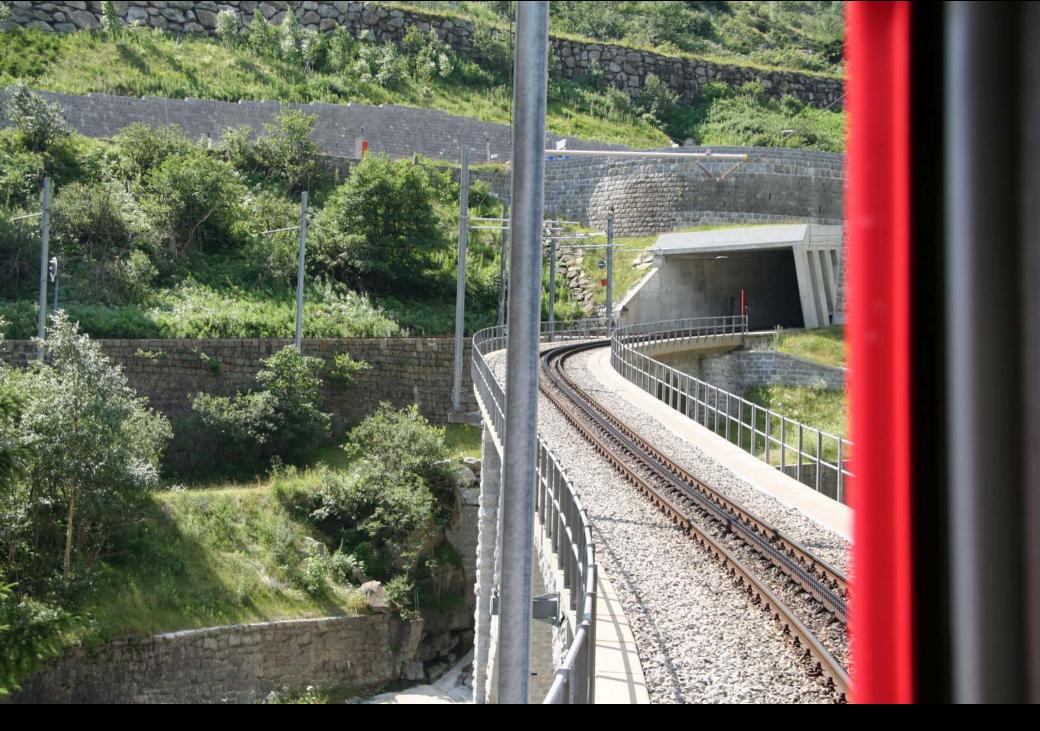
At Campione d'Italia, Italy



To Andermatt Heading north from Lugano, in the Leventina valley, between Biasca and Faido



To AndermattThe train passes through the Alps in the 9 mile / 14 km Gotthard Rail Tunnel.



To Andermatt

The train journey to Andermatt doubles back from Göschenen on a cogwheel rail line.







Andermatt

Andermatt, elevation 4747 ft / 1447 m is a rail hub where the east-west and north-south mountain trains meet.





Glacier Express to Zermatt

Travel from Andermatt to Zermatt is on the Glacier Express, "the slowest express train in the world".

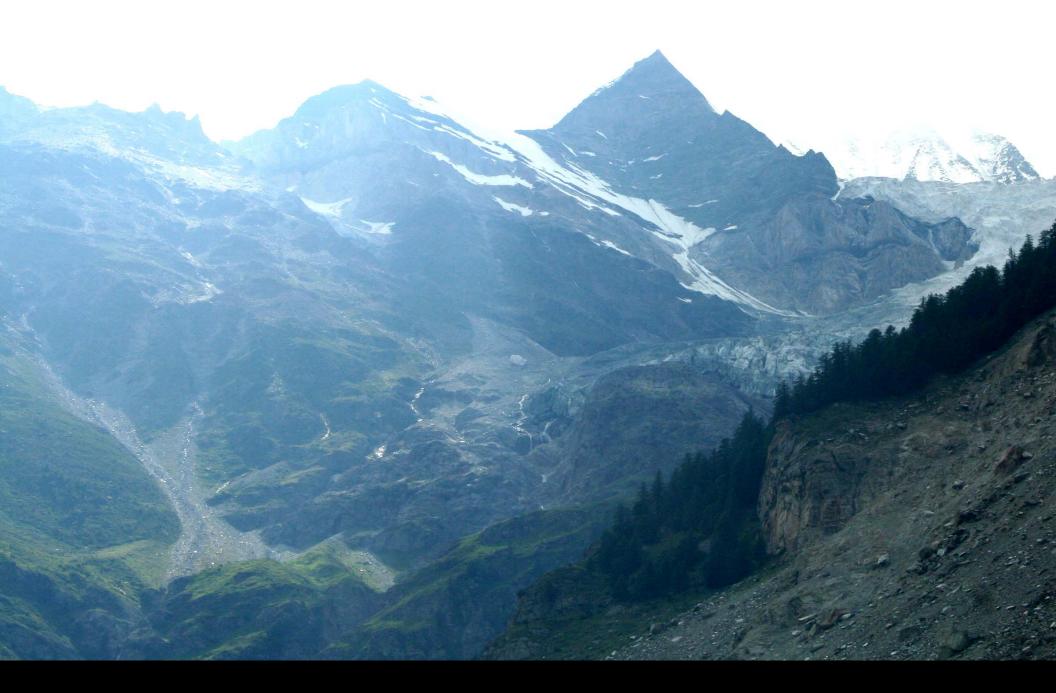














Glacier Express to Zermatt

Passing Randa, between St. Niklaus and Zermatt







Zermatt's Bahnhofstrasse (Station Street)

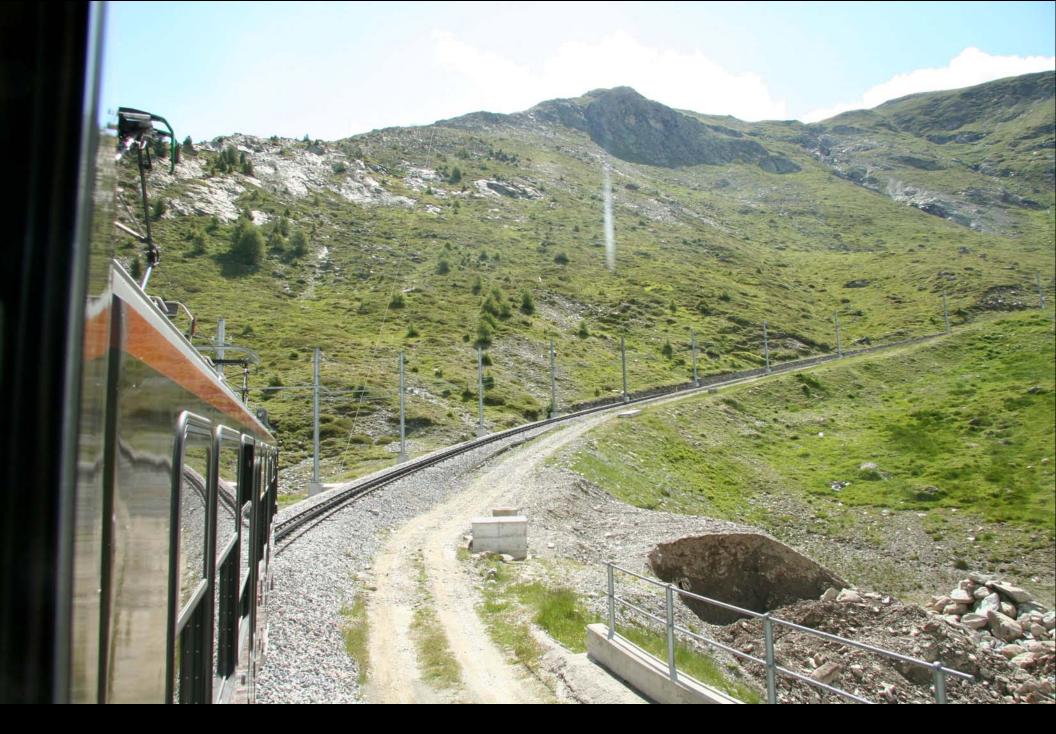


Zermatt The Grand Hotel Zermatterhof is one of Zermatt's 5-star hotels.



Zermatt

The Matterhorn, seen from hotel room



The Gornergrat Bahn is a cogwheel rail line from Zermatt to the Gornergrat peak.



Leaving Zermatt, elevation 5276 ft / 1608 m



The trip to the top takes 45 minutes. The train climbs 4859 ft / 1481 m.



First glimpse of the Matterhorn





Snow sheds protect the tracks in some areas.



Leaving Riffelberg, one of two stops on the way up







Gornergrat Station, elevation 10,135 ft / 3089 m.



The left dome houses an observatory. The right one belongs to the CIA.



Looking down on Gornergrat Station from the top of Gornergrat









Gornergrat Station. Hotel, two restaurants, shopping mall, fresh air.







The Matterhorn, height 14,692 ft / 4478 m, or as much of it as we'll see today



Too soon we have to head back down. In Part 2 we set off for Geneva.

< End >

★ Switzerland Tour Part 1 – East