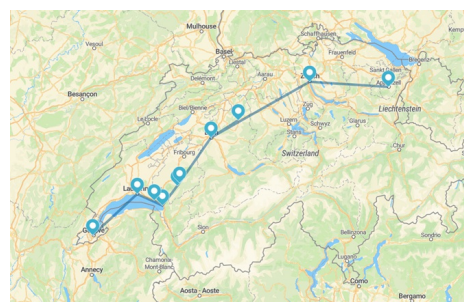




Switzerland, 8 Days · Tailor-made by car

## Swiss Gastronomie Route

Travel through picturesque Swiss towns and cities while relishing its world-renowned cuisine, all on the same trip. This Swiss Food Tour is a wonderful and mouth-watering journey through the top attractions of this Alpine country at the wheel of a rental car, allowing you to travel at your own pace and spend time on what you really want to do. It's all up to you. You can visit cities such as Zurich, the largest in the country and home to Bahnhofstrasse, considered one of the most attractive shopping streets in the whole world; the capital city of Bern and its impressive old UNESCO World Heritage Site; Montreux, a beautifully elegant city of parkland and stately homes nestled on Lake Geneva and popular for decades as a holiday hideaway for celebrities such as Charlie Chaplin and Freddie Mercury; and Lausanne, the world's 'Olympic Capital', as it's the base for the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee. On your road map you'll come across charming and delectable villages that fly the flag for Swiss cheese, such as Appenzell, birthplace of the famous Appenzeller Switzerland; Affoltern im Emmental, home of Emmental; and Gruyères, production hub of Gruyère. And as you can't only live off cheese, you can also witness the expert art of making exquisite Swiss chocolate at the Maison Cailler Chocolaterie in Broc, or savour the excellent wines of the 'Swiss Riviera' at vineyards such as Vevey and Lavaux, the latter planted on terraces built on the lakeside slopes and declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Discover Switzerland, its Alpine landscapes, its cities packed with art and culture and its spectacular cuisine. And all in just one week!



**Departure date:** Departures from May 2026 till May 2027

**From:** Dublin, Shannon, Cork

### Travel details

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## ● DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - ZURICH

Flight departure from the city of origin to Zurich, the largest city in Switzerland.

Arrival and rental car pick-up. Drive to your hotel located in the culinary and cultural capital of this beautiful Alpine country. Running along the shores of Lake Zurich at the confluence with the River Limmat in a majestic natural setting of gently-rolling hills, the city is renowned for its historical wealth, its cosmopolitan atmosphere and its fascinating cultural attractions. And it comes as no surprise that for several years Zurich has been rated as one of the cities with the highest quality of life in the world. The heart of the city features the eponymous lake and the historic quarter, a magical place waiting to be admired and home to Zurich's top landmark: the Grossmünster (in Zwingliplatz). The stand-out features of this Romanesque-style church-monastery built between the 12th and 13th centuries (which played a vital role in the Protestant Reformation) are its twin bell towers dating from the 15th century and designed under Gothic parameters. It also boasts Baroque elements thanks to the spires added at the end of the 18th century and beautiful stained-glass windows installed in the 20th century. Besides its architectural wealth, the old town is packed with tourist-focussed shops and outlets, including the fantastic Bahnhofstrasse, considered one of the most attractive shopping thoroughfares in the whole world. Zurich also has about fifty museums and one hundred art galleries, including Kunsthaus Zürich (Heimplatz, 2), with the most important collection of modern art in the city, and Landesmuseum Zürich (Museumstrasse, 2), the most visited cultural history museum in Switzerland. Another must-visit is the impressive Zürich Zoo (Zürichbergstrasse), home to 340 species and more than 4,000 animals and with plenty of opportunities for interaction, such as at the "Kaeng Krachan" Elephant Park. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). Zurich is also the world capital of football as it plays host to the headquarters of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the international governing body of 'the beautiful game' since 1904. As a result, you'll be able to explore a whole world of football under one roof thanks to the FIFA World Football Museum (Seestrasse, 27), a wealth of interactive experiences that will interest even non-fans. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). As the culinary capital of Switzerland, Zurich boasts one of the highest densities of restaurants per inhabitant in Europe, as well as a handful of Michelin stars, so you can savour everything from local recipes such as Züri Gschnätzlets (strips of lamb in a creamy sauce) to the most refined gourmet creations in the world. Make sure also that you visit the world's oldest vegetarian restaurant, the Haus Hiltl (Sihlstrasse, 28), which has been serving up meatless delights since 1898. Also very popular are the typical 'beizen', down-to-earth food halls found on many a street corner. And you've simply got to soak up the lively nightlife of Zurich, which is clustered in the old town along the Limmat River on streets such as Niederdorfstrasse and Oberdorfstrasse, and in the Hauptbahnhof district, mainly around Langstrasse and Escher-Wyss-Platz. Most bars and clubs close their doors at 2.00 am, although some stay open until 4.00 am.

Overnight stay in Zurich.

## ● DAY 2 · ZURICH - APPENZELL - ZURICH

Continue your culinary journey through this beautiful mountainous country, heading east towards the village of Appenzell, located some ninety kilometres away from Zurich. Despite being a remote place hidden among rolling hills, Appenzell is an important tourist destination thanks to its well-preserved architectural heritage, its beautiful natural setting and its traditional atmosphere. But above all it's well-known for being the home of the famous "Appenzeller", a cheese made from cow's milk and with a strong, refined and truly characteristic taste. Very popular in recipes such as "fondue", where chunks of bread are dipped into a mixture of melted cheeses, and "raclette", a take on fondue served with unpeeled potatoes, gherkins and pickled onions, the "Appenzeller" was first mentioned in writing about 700 years ago and there are now five main varieties: "Appenzeller Switzerland Classic", the original; "Appenzeller Switzerland Surchoix", a strongly spiced version; "Appenzeller Switzerland Extra", matured for twice as long as usual, i.e. six months; "Appenzeller Switzerland Bio", prepared with organic milk; and "Appenzeller Switzerland" 1/4 fat, with 30% less calories. You can see how this delicious cheese is prepared, or simply just treat yourself to a tasting session in town. The historical centre, declared a pedestrian zone, is wonderful for strolling around and buying local mementoes on its characteristic streets, brimming with shops and houses painted with exterior frescoes. The Appenzell Museum, found in the town hall, showcases the history and culture of the region, while the Kunstmuseum Appenzell and the Kunsthalle Ziegelhütte (art museums) are dedicated to contemporary painting and housed in a modern building designed by the Swiss architects Gigon/Guyer. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). Besides attending one of its many cultural manifestations, such as music and traditional dances, or walking along the vast network of hiking trails (such as the barefoot trail on Gonten moor), in Appenzell you can also visit the local brewery that produces more than thirty different types of beer. When you're ready, retrace your route back to Zurich for the night.

Overnight stay in Zurich.

### DAY 3 · ZURICH - BERN

Enjoy a hearty breakfast of "Birchermüesli", a dish created in 1900 by the Swiss physician Maximilian Oskar Bircher-Brenner. It consists of oat flakes, lemon juice, condensed milk, grated apples and hazelnuts or almonds, which will set you up perfectly for the day ahead.

Then it's time to head for the country's capital, 125 kilometres northeast of Zurich on the A1. The city of Bern captivates visitors with an impressive old town, considered one of the best examples of medieval town planning in Europe and listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1983. Perched on a hill embraced by the River Aare, the historic quarter cherishes a multitude of attractions that you really shouldn't miss, such as Bern Cathedral (Berner Münster, in German), a Gothic-style masterpiece that took more than 400 years to complete and whose 100-metre-plus spire makes it the tallest religious building in Switzerland. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). Another of its most characteristic sights is the famous "Zytglogge" clock tower dating from the late twelfth century, to which the astronomical clock with its moving figures was added in 1530. On the hour you can witness the nostalgic performance of figures that include the golden 'jacquemart' (the mechanised figure that strikes the bell), the rooster and Chronos, the Greek god of time. The one-of-a-kind medieval complex is completed by six kilometres of so-called "Lauben", which are 15th-century shopping arcades built to protect the public from the inclement weather, and a host of stunning 16th-century fountains, such as the Schützenbrunnen. But Bern is more than its wonderful old town. Being the national capital, it houses the Federal Palace of Switzerland (Bundeshaus in German, Palais Fédéral in French, and Palazzo Federale in Italian), the seat of the Swiss government designed by the architect Hans Wilhelm Auer and inaugurated on 1 April 1902 (Bundesplatz, 3). The Kunstmuseum (Bern Art Museum) is a world-renowned institution that exhibits more than 3,000 paintings and sculptures, as well as 48,000 hand drawings, graphics, photographs, videos and films by artists such as Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Ferdinand Hodler and Meret Oppenheim (Hodlerstrasse, 8-12). But, without a shed of doubt, the city's most bizarre tourist attraction is the Bärenpark (Grosser Muristalden, 6), literally the "Bear Park", where you can see Finn, Björk and their daughter Ursina climbing up trees, fishing in the water and frolicking around in an area of about 6,000 square metres that stretches from the bear pit to the banks of the River Aare. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). We recommend heading to one of the restaurants dotted around the old town or near the Federal Palace to try one of the country's most typical dishes - the "Älplermagronen" - a gratin of potatoes, macaroni, cheese, cream and onions garnished with apple sauce.

Overnight stay in Bern.

### DAY 4 · BERN - AFFOLTERN IM EMMENTAL - BERN

Get ready to explore another of the country's main cheese-producing regions today. Head northwest on the A1 for around thirty-eight kilometres and you'll reach your destination. Affoltern im Emmental is the birthplace of the famous "PDO-awarded Emmental" cheese, made from cow's milk and instantly recognisable by its characteristic holes, a delicacy that's highly appreciated across the globe. The Emmental Show Dairy is the perfect place to find out all about the cheese-making process, with both traditional and modern production techniques. At its two restaurants you can savour delicious regional and seasonal specialities, while at the Mätteli-Beck cheese shop and bakery you can buy different varieties of cheeses and sweets. Even groups can make their own cheese under the watchful eye of a professional cheesemaker, albeit with advance reservations. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included).

Then it's time to head southeast back to Bern, where you started off on this mouth-watering section of the trip.

Overnight stay in Bern.

## DAY 5 · BERN - GRUYÈRES - BROU - MONTREUX

Today you'll head towards the canton of Freiburg in the heart of Switzerland. Your destination is a beautiful town where cheese also takes centre stage, Gruyères (Greyerz, in German), birthplace of the ever-so-tasty and internationally famous gruyère cheese, protected by the Le Gruyère protected designation of origin.

So as soon as you set foot in the town, head over to the "Maison du Gruyère" (Place de la Gare, 3), where you can enjoy the process of artisan cheese-making and, of course, try a recently-made mild or matured variety. Delicious! And if that wasn't enough of an attraction, there's a delightful medieval atmosphere in Gruyères, as if time had stood still in this pocket-sized Swiss town. You can visit the majestic Gruyères Castle (Château de Gruyères, in French), a fortification built at the end of the thirteenth century, and the Saint-Germain Castle (Château St. Germain), both included in the so-called 'Swiss Inventory of Cultural Assets of National and Regional Importance'. What's more, the Saint-Germain Castle also houses the H.R.Giger Museum, in tribute to the famous Swiss artist who designed the most famous "Alien" ever seen on the big screen. (Note: Check prices and opening times. Not included).

The old city walls and several of the houses located on the Rue du Bourg add to the fascinating historical legacy of this charismatic town, a heritage intrinsically related to the Middle Ages.

Just five kilometres northeast of Gruyères is another of the must-sees on this tour. The village of Broc is a town well known for the "Maison Callier Chocolaterie" (Rue Jules Bellet, 7). This is a chocolate factory that has been operating since 1898 and offers guided and audiovisual tours to find out all about the process of making this exquisite sweet. They include a tasting session and, of course, the chance to pick up any of the wonderful chocolate products on sale at the Cailler of Switzerland store. For quite some time now, the "Maison Callier" has been one of the most visited places in the whole of Switzerland, so it's highly advisable to book a few days in advance. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included).

Onward journey now to the city of Montreux. Nestled in a bay of Lake Geneva, Montreux is a beautifully elegant city of parkland and stately homes that has been popular for decades with celebrities such as Charlie Chaplin and Freddie Mercury as a holiday hideaway. Very close to the town, along a lakeside path snaking through vineyard-blanketed slopes, is one of the most visited places in the whole of Switzerland, Chillon Castle (Château de Chillon). This thirteenth-century fortress with huge turrets and beautiful halls standing on a rocky island was Lord Byron's inspirator for his famous poem "The Prisoner of Chillon". (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). Montreux also has a close relationship with music. Freddie Mercury spent the final years of his life here (his ashes are said to have been scattered into Lake Geneva opposite the statue erected in his memory), while the group Deep Purple group experienced a fire during a Frank Zappa concert that inspired their famous hit "Smoke on the Water". What's more, in the month of July, Montreux turns into the world capital of jazz when it hosts the famous Montreux Jazz Festival which, since its launch in 1967, has attracted all the major stars from styles such as jazz, blues, rock, world music and soul. (Note: Not included). German, French and Italian cuisine have a great influence on food in Montreux, where typical recipes include "Maissuppe" (a meat broth with sweetcorn and pork fat) and "Rösti" (potato fritters fried in butter and lard).

Overnight stay in Montreux.

## DAY 6 · MONTREUX - VEVEY - MONTREUX

Next stop on the culinary tour is the nearby town of Vevey, just a quarter of an hour's drive away, which is home to a Food Museum and Nestlé's very own interactive museum. Vevey also abounds with traditional wineries that are linked by an extensive network of trails commanding picture-postcard panoramas, famous for the "Wine Train" (Train des Vignes) that will take you on a romantic tour of the country's most famous wine-producing region. In fact, Vevey is considered one of the pearls of the so-called "Swiss Riviera", which experienced its initial boom during the Belle Époque at the end of the 19th century and was where Charlie Chaplin lived for the last twenty-five years of his life. On the shore of the lake there's a sculpture in memory of the famous actor and director. When you're ready, drive back to Montreux to continue soaking up its charming atmosphere.

Overnight stay in Montreux.

## DAY 7 · MONTREUX - LAVAUX - LAUSANNE

On your way to Lausanne, we recommend a stop at the beautiful Lavaux vineyard, planted on terraces dug out of the lakeside slopes and declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2007. From Lavaux you should head west and continue skirting Lake Geneva until you reach today's destination. Lausanne is the second most important city on Lake Geneva and the world capital of the Olympic movement. What's more, it boasts an attractive medieval old town with steep streets and steps covered by a timber roof and crowned by the stunning Notre-Dame de Lausanne Cathedral (Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Lausanne). Described as the most beautiful and impressive work of the early Gothic period in Switzerland and located on the Place de la Cathédrale, construction began in the mid-12th century and lasted just over a hundred years. As a cultural reference in western Switzerland, Lausanne boasts several important museums, including the Collection de l'Art Brut at the Beaulieu Castle (Avenue des Bergières, 11), which since 1971 has exhibited a unique collection of works by social outcasts, prisoners and psychiatric patients, and the Fondation de l'Hermitage (Route du Signal, 2), which not only offers temporary art exhibitions but also spectacular views over Lake Geneva and the Cathedral. (Note: Check the websites for prices and schedules. Not included). The area surrounding the Cathedral and the waterfront neighbourhood of Ouchy are full of shops and restaurants, where you can enjoy many regional dishes such as the traditional "Saucisses au Chou", pork sausages with cabbage, or "Papet Vaudois", which is the version of the "Saucisse au chou" accompanied by gratin potatoes and leeks. Other typical dishes of the region are "Malakoff" (fried cheese balls usually served as a starter) and "Carac" (delicious chocolate tarts). Enjoy your meal!

Overnight stay in Lausanne.

## DAY 8 · LAUSANNE - GENEVA - CITY OF ORIGIN

Lausanne is first and foremost the "Olympic Capital", as it's the base of the Olympic Committee and the Olympic Museum (Le Musée Olympique, in French, located on Quai d'Ouchy, 1). This is the world's largest information centre about the Olympic Games and reviews the history of this sporting event from the 1896 Athens Games to the present day. Take the opportunity to soak up the "Olympic spirit" in this avant-garde building while walking around the interactive exhibitions and checking out the documents, films and collections of valuable objects related to Olympism. And then it's only seventy kilometres from Lausanne to Geneva, a comfortable trip along the A1 motorway that usually takes less than an hour.

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

## Your trip includes

### Your trip includes

- ✓ Return flight.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Zurich.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Zurich.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Bern.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Bern.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Montreux.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Montreux.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Lausanne.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Lausanne.
- ✓ Rent-a-car.
- ✓ Amount of the supplement for collection and return of the vehicle in a different office.

### Your trip doesn't include

- ✗ Accommodation taxes in Switzerland direct payment in facility.
- ✗ Possible toll charges.
- ✗ Insolvency protection.

## Destinations Visited

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Zurich



Appenzell



Bern



Affoltern im Emmental



Gruyères



Broc



Montreux



Vevey



Lausanne



Geneva



## Important remarks

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- We recommend buying the so-called "Zürich Card", which can be found on sale at the central railway station, the airport or the Schweizer Heimatwerk store located on Uraniastrasse. This will give you free or discounted access to more than forty museums, public transport (including the cable car), guided tours, cruises along the River Limmat and many tourist attractions. It can also be bought online.

- Driving in Switzerland: 1. It's compulsory to drive with headlights on at all times, even on the brightest summer's day. Seatbelts are mandatory for all passengers. 2. Speed limits. 2.1 Built-up areas up to 50 km/h. 2.2 Roads up to 80 km/h. 2.3 Dual carriageways and motorways up to 120 km/h. 2.4. There are many radars in Switzerland, especially in speed-controlled sections, and radar detectors are forbidden. Fines for speeding are very high, so make sure you stay within the limits at all times. If you are fined, the police can demand on-the-spot payment. 3. In Switzerland, blue road signs indicate secondary roads, while green ones indicate motorways. 3.1. Make sure that your rental car has a Swiss motorway vignette on the windscreen. This means you can use all

Swiss motorways for free over a one-year period (in Switzerland there are no toll roads as such). 4. Studded tyres are allowed from October to April, but they're not allowed on most roads throughout the rest of the year. The speed limit with these tyres is 80 km/h. 5. A red warning triangle and a reflective yellow vest must always be carried in your car in the event of a breakdown or accident. 6. Alcohol. The legal limit is 0.25 g/l. There are severe penalties for drivers that exceed the allowed limit. 7. Parking. All the major cities in Switzerland have metered parking. 7.1. If you want to park on the street, take careful note of the road markings. Yellow line: parking prohibited. Blue line: free parking, but limited to one hour (except at night). You can get a blue parking disc free of charge at tourist offices in any city and it will be valid for the whole of Switzerland. White line: metered parking for a limited time (varies depending on the location). You have to pay at the special parking meters.

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far as possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.
- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.
- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.
- We recommend buying the so-called 'Zürich Card', which can be found on sale at the central railway station, the airport or the Schweizer Heimatwerk store located on Uraniastrasse. This will give you free or discounted access to more than forty museums, public transport (including the cable car), guided tours, cruises along the River Limmat and many tourist attractions. It can also be bought online.