

Rail holidays to Switzerland



Bernina Express Holiday



Bernina Express

5 NIGHTS / 6 DAYS

Zurich

St Moritz

Bernina Express

Lugano



Bernina Express

Spanning the most south-easterly point of Switzerland, the Bernina Express takes you south by train through the canton of Grisons into Italy, past glaciers, mountains, and marvels of railway engineering. Then, the Bernina Express coach takes you west past Lake Como and back into Switzerland to Lugano. After your arrival into Zurich, spend one night at your choice of Zurich hotel before catching a train south to St Moritz. Just outside the Parc Ela and at the foot of the Suvretta Mountain, St Moritz is a picturesque place to spend a night at any time of year. From St Moritz on your fourth day, your experience of the Bernina Express begins in earnest. In less than one day, travel through southern Switzerland into northern Italy, finally stopping in Lugano for the final two nights of your tour.

ABOUT THE BERNINA EXPRESS

Route length 7.15 hours and 268km from Chur to Lugano or vice versa; including 156km rail travel and an optional 112km by bus

Stops Chur, Tiefencastel, Davos, Filisur, Bergun, Samedan, St Moritz, Pontresina, Ospizio Bernina, Alp Grum, Poschiavo, Le Prese, Tirano, and Lugano

Facilities There is no dining car, but carriages do have panoramic windows

The Bernina Express carriages are perhaps the most distinctive of all the iconic rail journeys. The panoramic windows stretch up onto the roof to allow passengers to admire the view from the lakes and meadows to the highest peaks and glaciers. The track itself features many twists and turns, navigating 360 degree revolutions, tackling dramatic changes in altitudes, and disappearing into the formidable rock faces of mountains.

PRICES

From £1,610 per person

Based on double occupancy in 4 star hotels, with flights to and from, and rail travel within Switzerland in 2nd class.

1st class rail travel and five star hotels can be added for a supplement.

DATES

This rail holiday can be arranged throughout the year. Timings can vary depending on the month and day of the week. For more information regarding rail services to and within Switzerland, view our train guide.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flights from UK to Zurich and back from Zurich or Milan OR rail travel London to Switzerland and back (first class can be booked at a supplement)
- 4 day rail flex pass (first class can be booked at a supplement)
- 1 night's bed and breakfast in Zurich
- 2 nights' bed and breakfast in St Moritz
- 2 nights' bed and breakfast in Lugano

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Optional extra nights in Zurich, St Moritz, Lugano, or one of our Italian Lakes hotels
- Transfers in Paris
- Transfers in Switzerland station to hotel unless offered by your hotel

A luggage transfer service is available within Switzerland, please contact us for further details.

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Zurich - St Moritz - Bernina Express - Lugano

Expressions

Day one: Arrive in Zurich

Begin this touring holiday with a flight or rail journey into Zurich. Though the flight will drastically cut travelling times, enabling an earlier arrival, we would always recommend taking the scenic railway trip via Paris, Dijon, and Basel, or via Brussels, Cologne, and Frankfurt. This is an excellent way of making the most of your journey, taking in a vast expanse of Western Europe as well as Switzerland upon your arrival.

Days two and three: Zurich to St Moritz

On the morning of your second day, board the train to St Moritz, arriving around 3 and a half hours later. This rail journey takes you first along the southern curve of Lake Zurich, passing through Horgen, Wädenswil, and heading inland onto the vast plains of the valley at Lachen. From here, you carry on towards the undulating green shores of Lakes Walen, Weesen, and Walenstadt. Follow the paths of the valleys as you continue southeast to the spa town of Bad Ragaz, and cross the border into the canton of Grisons at Landquart.

Change trains at Chur, Switzerland's oldest city, and join the pathway of the Bernina Express as it continues briefly west to Tamins, Rothenbrunnen, and Thusis. Notice the sheer white cliffs, hilltop towers, and gorges of the Ruinaulta as you traverse the area around the pretty ochre village of Tiefencastel. The train now sweeps back round to Filisur, passing through the railway town of Bergun, Samedan, Celerina, home to the Cresta Run, and finally arriving in St Moritz. Spend one night in St Moritz, staying in your choice of elegant hotel. Use the rest of your afternoon and the following morning to explore the quaint village of St Moritz. The dry, clear climate of the Upper Engadine Valley makes it the perfect winter sports resort, but also well-suited to long rambles, walks, and hikes across the undulating mountainside. Perhaps spend an hour or two wandering around the lake shore, admiring the mountains and the waterside, and uncovering shady groves, trickling waterfalls, and hidden caves. It is also possible to navigate higher up the mountains by rail, reaching the vantage points on the Piz Corvatsch and Chantarella at the top of the steep track. At Corviglia, a cable car takes you up to the Suvretta Mountain's most popular viewing point. Those looking for more thrilling and active experiences could partake in the water sports at Lake St Moritz or Lake Sils, or across at the high-altitude Lake Silvaplana, known for being windy.



Landwasser Viaduct, Bernina Express

Day four: St Moritz to Lugano

After one night in St Moritz, board the Bernina Express. In one of the distinctive red train carriages, with their tall, angular windows, and comfortable, airy interiors, the Bernina Express will take you from St Moritz to Tirano on the Swiss-Italian border. The Bernina Express takes you around the Montebello Curve, the most photographed section of the journey, which prolongs the breath-taking views of the Morteratsch Glacier. From here, gain altitude until you reach the highest point on the Rhaetian Railway at Ospizio Bernina at 2253m above sea level, with its picturesque, isolated station house. The Bernina Express then takes you to a restaurant that can only be accessed by train, past the grand houses of Poschiavo, through idyllic villages, across a spiralling viaduct, to Tirano, surrounded by vineyards and orchards in Italy. From here, disembark the train and board the dedicated Bernina Express bus past mountain lakes, fertile green agricultural land, and ancient towns and villages to Lugano, the largest town in the Swiss region of Ticino. Once in Lugano, spend two nights at another of our luxury hotels.

Day five: Lugano

Use your fifth day to explore this cultural lakeside town, which is quintessential of the Ticino region. Lugano's Old Town will be one of the highlights of your stay here, with its relaxed café culture influenced by both the Italian border and the prominent Swiss towns to the north. Pay a visit to the Cathedral of Saint Lawrence, which sits at the top of the gently stepped Via Cattedrale. This Roman

Catholic cathedral was founded in the Middle Ages, but was drastically rebuilt in the late 15th century. Its tower still rises high above Lugano, crowned by a distinctive green dome. For a further, more rounded, insight into Swiss cultural history, visit the waterside pink-fronted Museum of Cultures. Lake Lugano is perfect for a final sweeping boat trip, or for sampling the local water sports. The peak of nearby Monte Bre can be reached by funicular railway from Casserate, from where you can take in the sublime views, seek out the forested beauty spots, and embark on a hiking trail. San Salvatore can also be reached by funicular railway from Lugano, and offers an alternative, but no less stunning, perspective.

Day six: Return via Zurich

After two nights in Lugano, board the train back to Zurich for your return flight, or to Milan for a taste of cosmopolitan Italian life before flying back. If you wish to return by rail, we would recommend spending an extra night in Zurich beforehand.

OPTIONAL

It is possible to add extra nights in Zurich, St Moritz, and Lugano, or in one of our hotels situated on the shores of the Italian Lakes.

HOTELS

At Zurich, St Moritz, and Lugano, you can choose between a range of different luxury hotels, details of which can be found below.

Expressions

ZURICH

Hotel du Theatre 3 star

This three star option in the centre of Zurich offers sophisticated and quirky accommodation in a hotel that adopts a cinema theme. Rooms are therefore suitably glamorous, with wholly unique features and excellent access to Lake Zurich and the city's important cultural sites. [read more](#)

Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera 4 star

As a member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World group, the Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera prides itself on the high quality of its service, its seasonal and locally-sourced food, and the very particular, serene style of the rooms. It is well-placed for enjoying Lake Zurich, the Limmat River, and the small marina at the end of the street. [read more](#)

Hotel Storchen Zurich 4 star

Since the beginning of its hospitality 650 years ago, the unique and charming Hotel Storchen Zurich has offered an authentic insight into Swiss culture, design, and lifestyle. A pavement café lines the riverside, and behind the distinctive pink façade are high-ceilinged, tastefully decorated rooms, and the Rotisserie Restaurant, the ceiling of which is decorated in frescoes. [read more](#)

Hotel Baur au Lac 5 star

Set on the banks of Lake Zurich, the Hotel Baur au Lac is equipped with a Michelin-starred restaurant, extensive tranquil parkland, and a rich, warm interior design. Guests can enjoy the beauty of the lake from the promenade or from a boat cruise, before returning to the hotel to enjoy the serene gardens, the chic luxurious indoor spaces, and the circular restaurant that juts out across the water. [read more](#)



Suvretta House, St Moritz

ST MORITZ

Hotel Hauser 3 star

This family run hotel is a hub of social activity in St Moritz, providing excellent food on a pretty outdoor terrace that caters for visitors and local residents alike. The guestrooms have a simple elegance, and are the perfect base from which to get out and explore St Moritz. [read more](#)

Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz 4 star

Dating from over 100 years ago, the Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz is a sophisticated hotel built in the Belle Epoque style. Fresh, bright, and luxurious rooms are accompanied by multiple dining options, including a picturesque garden and a selection of relaxing spa facilities. [read more](#)

Suvretta House 5 star superior

At the foot of the mountain that gives it its name, Suvretta House is a stunning, palatial hotel that offers its guests excellent regional cuisine, including some Swiss favourites, a tranquil spa with 25m swimming pool, and spacious, refined accommodation with a regal touch. [read more](#)

LUGANO

Hotel Lugano Dante 4 star

Built around traditional Swiss elements, this hotel provides simplistic luxuries in an area rich with gourmet restaurants. Inside the hotel, guests experience cosy, warm rooms, sleek, monochrome suites, and an unrelenting attention to detail. [read more](#)

Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola 5 star

Housed within a late 19th century mansion, the Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola channels aspects of Mediterranean culture in its pale-peach façade, its summery garden, and the dining experiences on offer. Guestrooms have wholly unique touches to ensure that every stay here is different, and the swimming pool, lounges, and bars encourage guests to keep returning. [read more](#)



Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera, Zurich



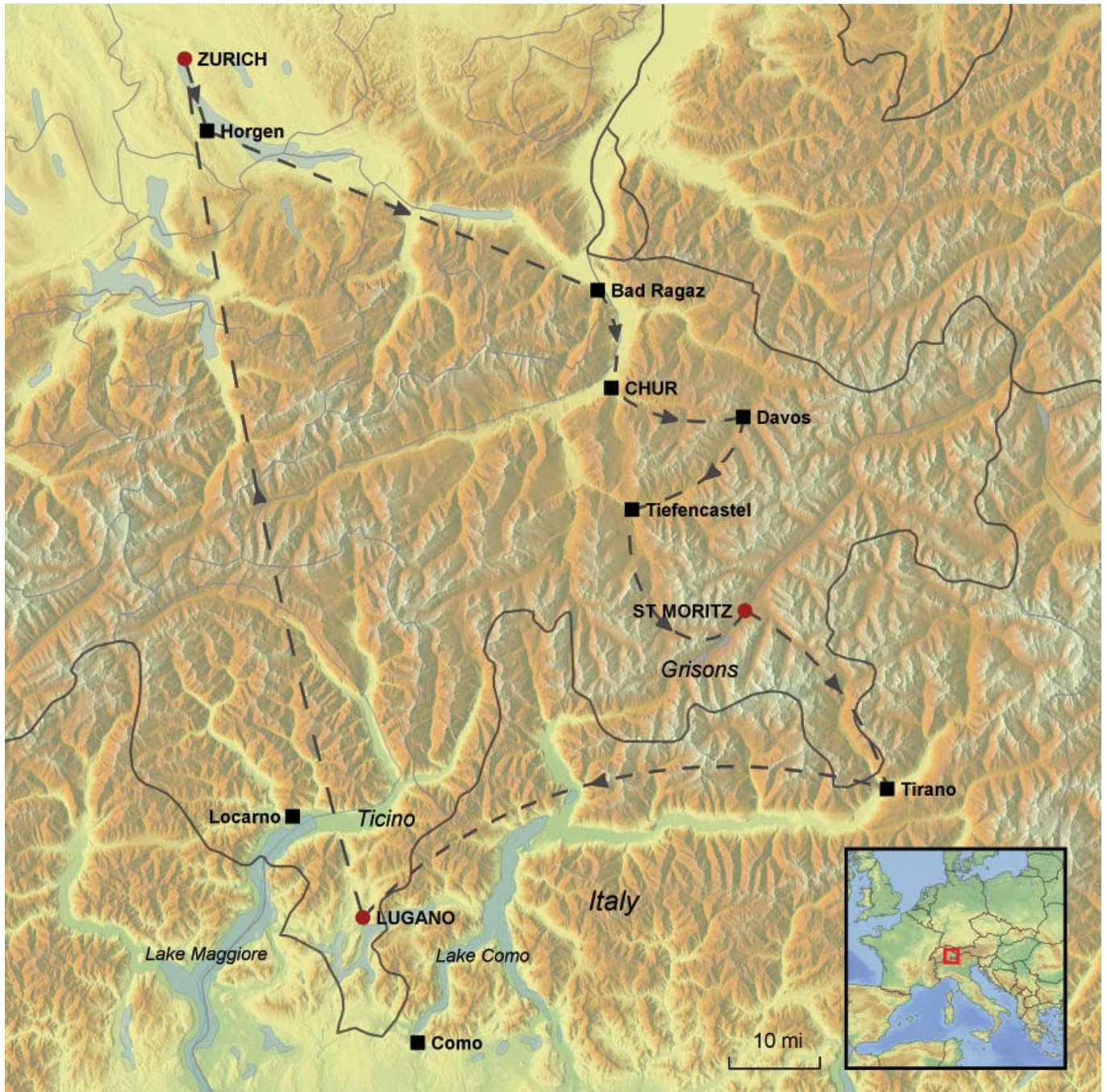
Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz



Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola, Lugano

MAP OF BERNINA EXPRESS TOURING HOLIDAY

The map below illustrates the route outlined in this touring itinerary, with overnight stops and places of interest highlighted.



GENERAL INFORMATION

This rail holiday is one of several suggested rail holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one mountain or lake resort too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

The logo for Expressions, featuring the word "Expressions" in a white, elegant script font on a dark blue rectangular background.

OUR TOURS

Our rail tours are for individuals travelling on their own or in their own family group. You do not join a group and you are not escorted.

FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Our arrangements are very flexible in that you choose to travel on any day you want, subject to availability of trains and hotels. As mentioned above, additional nights can be added at any point.

FLEX PASS INCLUDED

We include travel to and from your first and last hotel but also a Flex pass is included for the rest of the holiday, depending on its length. For example, on a long stay we would include an 8 day Flex pass. This gives you 8 non-consecutive but selected days of travel within a one-month period.

The pass gives you a choice that includes

- Unlimited travel by rail, road and waterway on your selected days of validity, including most panorama routes and public transport in 75 towns and cities
- Free admission to more than 490 museums on the selected days of validity
- Children under the age of 16 travel free of charge when accompanied by at least one parent holding the Swiss Family Card

If we have included a panoramic route in your holiday, we will automatically include any applicable supplements for that train.

TRAIN TIMES

We have planned our itineraries based on train times that work day by day at the time of planning which can be up to a year before you travel. Usually train times stay more or less the same every day, season by season. The times we have planned will be discussed with you at the time you enquire about the holiday and they are detailed to you in your written holiday quotation. It may be that the timetable changes between the planning of the itinerary and when you come to book but we can always adjust the itinerary to suit the actual train times and any requirements you have for particular times of travel.

FIRST OR SECOND CLASS

We will automatically include travel in second class but lots of our clients do upgrade to first class service. On Eurostar this is called Premier Standard for leisure travellers as it gives you an upgraded on-board service and more spacious seating but without paying for the fully-flexible business tickets. On the TGV trains from France to Switzerland, upgrading to first class gives you more spacious seating with increased legroom. Within Switzerland, first class gives you again more space and more comfortable seats, often with a quieter environment. The price of upgrading varies from route to route but is something that is not always proportionately a lot more on the price of the overall holiday, so well-worth considering.

LUGGAGE TRANSFER SERVICE

Swiss rail operates an efficient transfer service for your luggage. This works in a number of ways:

For travel to Switzerland by air, you can check-in your baggage with any airline, from any airport in the world and it will be forwarded to our destination station in Switzerland from Zurich, Bern or Geneva airports. Simply collect your baggage from the station at your destination.

For departure from Switzerland if flying with Swiss, you can check-in for your flight at the train station the day before you fly (major stations only). You receive your boarding pass and your seat allocation and your baggage will be transported onto the aircraft.

For departure from Switzerland with other airlines eg British Airways or Easyjet, you can have your baggage transported to the airport train station ie Zurich or Geneva and you collect it from there to take it to check-in as usual. Just allow enough time for the luggage to reach the airport station, so well before you travel. Your station will be able to advise a day or two beforehand.

Within Switzerland you can transfer your luggage from one location to another. The Fast Baggage service is available between 45 destinations. You just have to check-in your luggage before 9am at your departure station and collect it by 6pm on the same day at your destination (or sometimes the following day, depending on the actual destination). The cost of this service is approximately £17 per item.

TRANSFERS

Transfers in Paris between stations and from the station to each hotel are not automatically included in the price of the holiday. In Paris most clients choose to take a taxi between the stations rather than go on the Metro but we can arrange a private car with driver to take you in between. This is quite useful if you are a family group that can't fit into one Paris taxi. In Switzerland, depending on the location, hotels sometimes have their own transfer vehicles that they will send to collect you if we advise them in advance (eg in St Moritz and Zermatt this is usual) but elsewhere some hotels are within walking distance and others are a short taxi ride away.

OUR PRICES

The sample prices mentioned in this leaflet are generally a 'from' price based on the cheapest season of travel. However, train fares and hotel rates can change (up and down depending on offers), so we give you an accurate price for your holiday when we provide you with a quotation. Our sample prices should be used as an indication of how much a particular combination will cost and to show the differences on average between the hotel categories on offer.

PRICE INFORMATION IN MORE DETAIL

Rail (standard class on Eurostar and second class on all other trains) from London and throughout back to London at 4 star hotels (eg Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera, Zurich, Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz, and Hotel Lugano Dante).

From £1,690 per person

Supplement: Standard premier on Eurostar and first class on all other trains £350 per person

Flights to/from Switzerland and second class rail travel in Switzerland at 4 star hotels (eg Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera, Zurich, Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz, and Hotel Lugano Dante).

From £1,610 per person

Supplement: First class rail in Switzerland £190 per person

Rail (standard class on Eurostar and second class on all other trains) from London and throughout back to London at 4 and 5 star hotels (eg Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera, Zurich, Suvretta House, St Moritz, and Hotel Lugano Dante).

From £2,020 per person

Supplement: Standard premier on Eurostar and first class on all other trains £350 per person

Flights to/from Switzerland and second class rail travel in Switzerland at 4 and 5 star hotels (eg Hotel Ambassador a l'Opera, Zurich, Hotel Schweizerhof St Moritz, and Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola, Lugano).

From £1,810 per person

Supplement: First class rail in Switzerland £190 per person

BOOKING CONDITIONS

Our booking conditions apply to all holidays. A copy can be found on our website and a copy is also sent to you with a written quotation and when you make a booking.

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Expressions Holidays offers full financial protection for all holidays you book with us. If your holiday includes a flight, the ATOL (3076) covers the costs of the holiday. If the holiday does not include a flight, it is the ABTOT bond that protects the cost of the holiday. We are also members of AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators) and ABTA.



Expressions Holidays
Lynx House, Pynes Hill, Exeter EX2 5JL

HOW TO BOOK

To make a booking, just phone us on

01392 441217

and we can take you through the details we need and start the booking process. A deposit is required to confirm the arrangements and this can be paid by debit or credit card over the phone. No handling fee is charged on deposits up to £1000. The level of the deposit will be confirmed at the point of booking and will depend on the ticketing deadlines of the rail tickets involved in your booking.