

Dear Subscriber

Technology and Travel

Imagine you're in a rental car parked by the side road in the town of Marktheidenfeld in the German countryside, about 45 minutes east southeast of the Frankfurt Airport. It's 10am and you have no planned itinerary. What's on your mind is a slow meander over scenic backroads through a few small villages, a stop for lunch, and at the end of the day a good dinner and bed in a charming country inn.

This is the exact scenario that, for the past 24 years, *Gemütlichkeit* has based its editorial focus. Until now, our recommended solution has been the *Michelin Red and Green Guides* for Germany, and the *Deutschland ADAC MaxiAtlas*; the Red Guide to locate the right hotel and restaurant, the Green Guide for sights, and the MaxiAtlas to determine the scenic route. Though those tools are still effective, there may be a better way.

Let's say that instead of the three recommended books whose combined weight is more than five pounds, you're carrying the new 1.5-pound Apple iPad with its nine-inch color screen.

From your car, using iPad's 3G cell phone technology you connect to the Internet. Your first stop is Google, where you type the word "Marktheidenfeld, Germany," then click on the resultant map. Zoom out and you get an overall perspective of the region. You decide to end your day in Volkach traveling a U-shaped route through Wertheim, Tauberbischofsheim, Weikersheim (great castle), Crelingen, and Kitzingen. Google plots the route and tells you it's 156 km (98 miles) and estimates a driving time of two hours, 43 minutes. But there's a lot more information than mileage and driving time. You can click "Satellite" on the map to get an aerial view of the area. Zoom in on towns to get the same view as from an airplane, plus labels for important buildings, even hotels and restaurants. Click

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GEMÜTLICHKEIT

The Travel Letter for Germany, Austria & Switzerland

THE MOSEL WINE ROAD

The Mosel and the Rhine, two of Germany's great rivers, ultimately flow together as one to the North Sea. Important waterways since ancient times, their banks were the site of Roman settlements two millennia ago. The Romans also planted grapevines there, establishing the wine industry for which both regions are famous today.

Anyone living along the Mosel will tell you that their river is the prettier of the two—narrower, slower, and more serene than the busy, industrial, rushing Rhine. Wines from the Mosel are more delicate, too, often lighter in taste and lower in alcohol than their Rhenish relatives, but equally fine in quality.

Although wine-making is the primary industry in this region, tourism is not far behind. The Mosel is a popu-

lar vacation spot for both Germans and foreigners, especially from May through October. The peak period is harvest-time, when hordes of wine-lovers flock to the region to watch the Riesling, Müller-Thurgau, and other varieties of grapes start their journey from the steep, slate-covered vineyards to the tall green bottles in which most of the Mosel wines are sold.

But there's more to the Mosel area than wine. Rising in the Vosges mountains of France (where it's known as the *Moselle*), the river meanders for its final 150 miles through a pleasant part of the Rhineland-Pfalz region in Germany before converging with the Rhine at **Koblenz**.

Snaking through a deep, narrow valley between the high hills of the Eifel and the Hunsrück, the Mosel makes

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An 8-Day Swiss Rail Tour

Switzerland is the only European country—probably the only country in the world—where a visitor can see just about everything via the public transportation system: trains, postal buses, lakeboats, even cable cars.

Schedules of these various transport modes are ingeniously coordinated to enable smooth transfers with very little waiting. This brilliant meshing can be optimized by travelers who use the Swiss Rail timetables at www.rail.ch.

Let's say you want to go from Bern, the capital, to Iseltwald, a small lakeside village across the Brienzensee from Interlaken, with the last leg from Interlaken to Iseltwald via lakeboat. Using Rail.ch's advanced search feature, you can specify from a list of possible conveyances such

as IC (InterCity train), R (regional train), ICE (InterCityExpress train), Bus, and BAT (boat).

IC 1067 leaves the Bern rail station from Platform #3 at 10:35am and, after brief stops at Thun, Spiez and Interlaken West, arrives at Interlaken OST (east) Platform #7 at 11:28am. The boat for Iseltwald departs 17 minutes later at 11:45am and the timetable says the boat landing is a six-minute walk. You'll have time for lunch aboard before arriving in Iseltwald at 12:31pm after stops in Bönigen and Ringgenberg. You could have chosen to take the bus from Interlaken to Iseltwald and shortened the journey by about 30 minutes. The train-boat itiner-

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Exchange rates as of 3/4/2010
1 euro = \$1.36
1 Swiss franc = \$0.93
1 gallon diesel, Germany=\$5.85

DEAR SUBSCRIBER

Continued from page 1

“Terrain” for a topographical view of the area, then click “More” for photos and videos. Want to see what Volkach’s *Altstadt* looks like? Just click the photos. Using the satellite view, I was able to zoom in close enough on Volkach’s **Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten** to see the garden where we spent part of a Sunday afternoon reading our books.

To find a hotel in Volkach, go to www.viamichelin.com and navigate to “michelin guide hotel selections.” A search for Volkach hotels will yield the Vier Jahreszeiten. At that point you can book online, phone the hotel using Skype on your iPad, or request an email quote. (Remember, you’re doing all this from your car.)

You postpone the lunch decision and plan to find something along the way. When the time comes you can either choose a place with “curb appeal” or get back on the iPad. One option might be to find a restaurant via an application such as Yelp which uses the iPad’s GPS feature to locate hotels, restaurants, banks, bars, etc. The software knows where you are and locates nearby businesses in various categories and spots them on a map. The info provided typically includes street, email, and web addresses, plus phone numbers, ratings, and user reviews. (Ed. Note: Yelp does not yet cover Europe, but surely will in the very near future.)

It should also be noted that the iPad is not just a traveler’s aid. You can down-

load books, newspapers, and magazines from the iBookstore, wirelessly access movies and music (which undoubtedly you’ll soon be able to play through your rental car’s sound system), and stay in touch via email. Let me stress again that this can all be done from a car, train, hotel room, or park bench; in fact anywhere there is cell phone service.

This is not a sales pitch for the iPad, merely to show how important elements of the travel experience have changed in a few short years. Like many of you, I’m nostalgic for the days when a European vacation felt like the real world had been left behind. One warm summer night, at a tiny hotel deep in the German countryside, I recall the sudden but oddly pleasant realization that I was completely out of contact, totally inaccessible. Not a soul in the world knew my whereabouts. Today, with a mobile phone and a laptop, I’m almost as reachable on the road as I am at home.

Like it or not, the changes wrought by technology affect every traveler, even those who choose to detour the cyber highway. Twenty years ago, buying a transatlantic airline ticket required conversation with another human being. Though that probably remains the best and safest way to book a flight, European rental car, or railpass, it may not always be the least expensive. The folks who own airlines, rental cars, and passenger trains, want to shift the booking task from their own employees to the customer. They do so by providing a financial incentive for booking on the Internet. Whether in the final analysis

that’s in the best interest of the customer is a discussion for another time, but the fact remains that in many cases you’ll pay more to buy travel from a live person than via your computer.

Despite my vague longings for the good old days of European travel, I’m in love with technology. The astounding, marvelous Google maps are alone worth the price of a monthly broadband Internet connection, and I am dumbfounded that this magnificent service is free.

Booking a hotel for the night from our rental car via a cell phone is something we’ve been doing for several years. For us, public phone booths are a thing of the past. Good riddance.

Remember when you had to buy and carry a big thick book to know when the trains ran in Europe? It was the *Thomas Cook Timetable* and a subscription cost something like \$20 a month. Today that information is free at www.bahn.de and accessible from any computer with an In-

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Using Gemütlichkeit

- Hotel prices listed are for one night. Discounts are often available for longer stays.
- All hotel prices include breakfast unless otherwise noted.
- Local European telephone area codes carry the “0” required for in-country dialing. To phone establishments from outside the country, such as from the USA, do not dial the first “0”.

Logging on to Our Website

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User Name: **winem** Password: **9423**

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HOTEL RESTAURANT RATING KEY

Rating Scale	Scale	Restaurant Criteria	
Excellent	16 - 20	Food	65%
Above Average	12 - 15	Service	20%
Average	8 - 11	Atmosphere	15%
Adequate	4 - 7		
Unacceptable	0 - 3		
Hotel Rating Criteria		Value Rating	Scale
People/Service	30%	Outstanding Value	17 - 20
Location/Setting	15%	Very Good Value	12 - 16
Guestrooms	30%	Average Value	9 - 11
Public rooms	5%	Below Average Value	5 - 8
Facilities/Restaurant	20%	A Rip-Off	0 - 4

MOSEL WINE ROUTE

Continued from page 1

more twists and turns than any other river in Germany. Each bend brings a changing perspective of the landscape into view: old abbeys and monasteries, Romanesque towers and Renaissance houses, sunlight sparkling off the water, wind rippling the leaves on the grapevines.

Nearly 130 villages nestle along the Mosel's banks between the German border and Koblenz, many of them filled with fairy-tale-looking *Fachwerk* (half-timbered) houses hundreds of years old. Best known are the large tourist centers of **Bernkastel-Kues**, **Traben-Trarbach**, and **Cochem**, but many smaller villages have a charm all their own. Hours can be spent wandering their narrow streets, strolling pretty promenades along the river, sipping wine in sidewalk cafes, and watching swans glide by.

The picturesque serenity of this region belies its sometimes turbulent history. Medieval fortresses attest to the Mosel's importance during centuries past, but conflicts from the Middle Ages through World War II destroyed many castles and villages. Some of the old castles remain in ruins; others have been restored and turned into romantic tourist attractions, such as the 11th-century **Imperial Castle** at Cochem and the 12th-century **Burg Eltz**.

Since there's no continuous rail line following the river, the best way to see this scenic region is by car, meandering the small roads that hug the riverbanks for 100 miles between the two largest cities, **Trier** in the southwest and **Koblenz** in the northeast.

Begin your downriver journey in **Trier**, one of the oldest cities in Germany, founded by the Romans in 16 B.C. Today the modern city proudly bears many traces of its Roman past: the **Imperial thermal baths**, a **stone bridge** spanning the Mosel, a huge **amphitheater**, and the imposing **Porta Nigra**, the only surviving gate of the massive wall built to enclose the city in the second century. Trier's excellent **Rheinland Regional Museum** displays some of the most important archeological finds in Germany, including intricate mosaic floors,

MOSEL WINE ROUTE BASICS

Visitor information: Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH, Löhrr-strasse 103-105, 56068 Koblenz, tel. +49/261-915-200, fax 915-2040, info@rlp-info.de, www.rlp-info.de

Driving distances to Trier:

Frankfurt	232 km/146 miles
Munich	522 km/324 miles
Koblenz	195 km/121 miles

Driving distances to Koblenz:

Frankfurt	125 km/78 miles
Munich	521 km/324 miles
Trier	156 km/98 miles

Nearest airport: Frankfurt/Main Airport, 232 kilometers (146 miles) from Trier and 125 kilometers (78 miles) from Koblenz. Frankfurt-Hahn Airport, 19 kilometers (12 miles) from Traben-Trarbach.

Rail service: Good rail service to Koblenz and Trier from many German cities, but no direct rail line between them that runs completely along the river; many smaller towns in the Mosel valley do not have rail service at all.

Bus: Frequent service between most towns and villages.

Boat: During tourist season (April or May through October), several boat companies offer sightseeing cruises on different segments of the Mosel.

Recommended map: *The Moselle: Trier to Koblenz & the Saar Valley*, colorful accordion-fold tourist map (in English) with thumbnail sketches of the towns and important sights on the route, plus city maps of Trier, Bernkastel-Kues, Cochem, and Koblenz. Available at many local Mosel tourist offices and bookstores, and online.

stone statues, fragile wineglasses, and hundreds of Roman coins.

Not far downriver from Trier the partially restored Roman **Villa Urbana** in **Longuich** and the reconstructed Roman **Villa Rustica** in **Mehring** both give a glimpse of what upscale housing must have looked like here nearly 2,000 years ago. A few miles farther along the river, **Neumagen-Dhron** claims to be Germany's oldest wine village, also dat-

ing from Roman times. And at **Piesport**, a famous wine-producing area today, is a reconstruction of the largest **Roman wine press** north of the Alps, excavated there in 1985.

Bernkastel-Kues, the main tourist center in the middle part of the Mosel valley, is a picture-postcard town with a market square enclosed by medieval half-timbered houses. Wine lovers will enjoy the informative **Mosel Wine Museum** next to the 15th-century **St. Nikolaus Hospital** on the Kues side of the river. An added attraction is the adjacent **Vinothek**, where €15 buys you a wineglass and the right to taste any or all of the 160 Mosel wines stored in the old cellar there.

Below the ruins of **Grevenburg castle**, the wine town of **Traben-Trarbach** is a pleasant place to headquarter for several days while exploring the river valley in both directions, by bicycle, boat, or car. A few miles downriver you'll come to **Zell**, famous for its "Zeller Schwarze Katz" (Zell Black Cat) wines. A symbol of the town since the mid-1800s, black cats are depicted on the wine labels, postcards, tourist souvenirs, and a stone fountain with a statue of a cat arching its back atop a wine barrel.

North of Zell, on the other side of the river, the tiny towns of **Bremm** and **Ediger-Eller** boast the steepest vineyards in Europe, where some of the slopes have a gradient of 65% or more. At several places like this along the Mosel, you'll see vineyard workers being hoisted up the high, terraced hills on chair lifts pulled by cables or mounted on rails.

A few bends of the river past Bremm, **Cochem** is a major tourist center that counts more than a million visitors each year. Like other towns on the Mosel, Cochem has survived the devastating floods that plague the region periodically. Look for the high-water marks on some of the buildings, with the dates of each deluge painted on the stone-and-*Fachwerk* facades.

The downriver journey ends at the confluence of the Mosel and the Rhine in **Koblenz**, a bustling modern city founded by the Romans. Towering over the town, the massive **Ehrenbreitstein Fortress** overlooks the landmark **Deutsches Eck** (German Corner) where

the two great rivers converge. And now that you've traveled the entire Mosel wine route from Trier to Koblenz, you'll understand why the poet Stefan Andres (born in a Mosel village himself) wrote, "Drinking is like praying—and my favorite place of worship is on the Mosel."

Mosel Wine Route Hotels

Accommodations are plentiful all along the route, from simple *Zimmer* (rooms, with breakfast included, in private homes) to modest family-run inns to luxurious five-star hotels. If you're planning to stay for a week or more, it's fun (and more economical) to rent a *Ferienwohnung* (holiday apartment that sleeps two to eight people) equipped with its own kitchen. Most local tourist offices on the Mosel have lists of *Ferienwohnungen* in their area, with contact information and prices.

Hotel Villa Hügel Trier

The intimate **Hotel Villa Hügel** is a family-run, four-star, "boutique hotel" in a renovated 1914 villa in a quiet neighborhood just outside the old city center. Each of the 43

EDITOR'S
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Key Websites for the Traveler

- www.gemut.com Gateway site for travelers to Germanic Europe, including car rental, rail passes, hotel bookings, travel tips, and past issues (free access to back issues for subscribers; see log-on info on page 2).
- www.viamichelin.com The Michelin database of hotels and restaurants, plus great interactive trip planning tools
- www.travelessentials.com Guidebooks, maps, travel accessories, luggage, all at 10 percent off for subscribers. Use discount code gemut2010.
- maps.google.com Amazing map resource. Driving & walking. Zoom in-out. Great detail city & country. Satellite & terrain views.
- bahn.hafas.de/bin/query.exe/en German rail website, with train schedules throughout Europe, as well as Germany.
- www.sbb.ch/en/ Swiss and European rail schedules
- www.ski-europe.com Top Web resource for skiers with much info on Alpine resorts
- www.myswitzerland.com Website of Switzerland's national tourist authority
- www.germany-tourism.de Germany's national tourist authority
- www.austria.info/us Austria's national tourist authority
- www.historicgermany.com Website for an alliance of historic German cities
- www.thetravelinsider.info Info on electronics for travelers — cell phones, computers, etc.

spacious, high-ceilinged rooms is different, with upscale decor ranging from antique to traditional to modern. Guests will appreciate the tranquil setting, the beautifully landscaped gardens, the pool and sauna, and the friendly staff.

A superb, very large breakfast buffet is served in three elegantly furnished, pastel-painted dining rooms and on the large terrace overlooking the city. Moderately priced evening meals are offered for hotel guests only. Parking is available on site, and the center of Trier is only a 10-minute bus ride from the bus stop near the hotel.

Contact: Hotel Villa Hügel, Bernhardstrasse 14, 54295 Trier, tel. +49/651-330-66, fax 379-58, info@hotel-villa-huegel.de, www.hotel-villa-huegel.de

Daily Rates: Singles €88-118, doubles €118-185. Parking €10/day

Rating: QUALITY 16/20, VALUE 16/20

Hotel Petrisberg Trier

Over the past three decades, through personal charm and genuinely caring service, the brothers Pantenberg have attracted a large and fanatically loyal following of *Gemütlichkeit* readers to their hillside hideaway above Trier. In 2006, the Petrisberg was named in this newsletter's all-time, top-10 list of *gemütlich* hotels. An amazing value, it is not to be missed.

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Contact: Hotel Petrisberg, Sickingenstrasse 11-13, 54296 Trier, tel. +49/651-4640, fax 46450, info@hotel-petrisberg.de, www.hotel-petrisberg.de

Daily Rates: Single €68-75, double €97-105

Rating: QUALITY 15/20, VALUE 18/20

(Note: Two four-star hotels, the **Bleisius Garten** and the **Deutscher Hof**, both in Trier, were reviewed in November '03 issue and are still recommended.)

Märchenhotel Bernkastel-Kues

Located on the Bernkastel side of the river, the Märchenhotel is a unique little family-run hotel in a historic half-timbered building dating from 1640. Each of its 17 romantic rooms is decorated in a different style, based on a classic fairy tale: Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty,

Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Snow White, the Frog King, etc. A small, nicely appointed restaurant is nestled on the ground floor, and the tasty breakfast buffet is served in two other rooms connected by old exposed wooden beams. A fanciful hotel with a friendly staff.

Contact: Märchenhotel, Kallenfelstrasse 27, 54470 Bernkastel-Kues, tel. +49/6531-96550, fax 1432, info@anno1640.com, www.anno1640.com

Daily Rates: Doubles €80-180 (contact hotel for single rates). Prices vary according to room size and category, and all include the breakfast buffet. Parking €4/day.

Rating: QUALITY 14/20, VALUE 14/20

(Note: The four-star-superior **Weinromantikhotel Richtershof** in Mühlheim, just south of Bernkastel-Kues was reviewed in August '03 issue and is still recommended.)

Jugendstil Hotel Bellevue Traben-Trarbach

When I lived in Traben-Trarbach in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the legendary Clauss-Feist Hotel was closed, its handsome facade (and presumably interior as well) greatly in need of repair. In 1990 it was restored to former glory, with richly renovated rooms and new amenities, including a spa and pool. Today it's known as the Jugendstil Hotel Bellevue, a privately owned, four-star-superior beauty located directly on the bank of the Mosel River.

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The original *Jugendstil* (Art Nouveau) building constructed in 1903 houses the ornate restaurant, bar, salon, and lobby, with a massive wooden staircase (and elevator) leading up to the 35 rooms and suites, some of them decorated in elegantly modern style, others completely romantic and old-fashioned, with plenty of antiques. Each room is different, and the staff tries to match guests' tastes with the style of rooms available.

In the main building, three rooms in the round tower overlook the Mosel. All have round sitting rooms, and each is furnished in a different antique style; two of the tower rooms also have a balcony. Other buildings near the main hotel house 25 spacious holiday apartments and suites, some with wood-burn-

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Anne McAlpin spent 280 days on the road last year and averaged 25 flights per month doing it. Anne's been traveling like this for years and her experiences have led to the design of her very own line of handy travel accessories. She has shared her packing tips on Oprah, CNN, The View and HGTV. Hop over to www.TravelEssentials.com to see all her products and her new book & DVD, *Pack it Up*.

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EURAILPASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.	
15 consecutive days	\$756	\$641	\$491	
consecutive days	\$980	\$832	\$636	
1 month	\$1218	\$1032	\$793	
2 months	\$1719	\$1461	\$1118	
3 months	\$2120	\$1809	\$1382	
EURAIL FLEXIPASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.	
10 days in 2 months	\$893	\$758	\$583	
15 days in 2 months	\$1173	\$999	\$763	
EURAIL SELECTPASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.	
3 adjoining countries				
5 days in 2 months	\$479	\$407	\$312	
6 days in 2 months	\$529	\$451	\$346	
8 days in 2 months	\$628	\$536	\$407	
10 days in 2 months	\$727	\$615	\$470	
4 adjoining countries				
5 days in 2 months	\$536	\$453	\$348	
6 days in 2 months	\$586	\$500	\$381	
8 days in 2 months	\$684	\$582	\$444	
10 days in 2 months	\$782	\$663	\$506	
5 adjoining countries				
5 days in 2 months	\$591	\$501	\$384	
6 days in 2 months	\$641	\$544	\$415	
8 days in 2 months	\$740	\$627	\$479	
10 days in 2 months	\$835	\$708	\$541	
15 days in 2 months	\$1059	\$901	\$689	
AUSTRIAN RAILPASS	1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Child 1st	Child 2nd
3 days in 1 month	\$201	\$140	\$101	\$71
Avg. Extra Rail Day (5 max.)	\$28	\$19	\$14	\$10

AUSTRIA-CZECH PASS

	Adult 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
4 days in 2 months	\$243	\$207	\$158
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6 max.)	\$ 33	\$ 28	\$ 21

CZECH-GERMANY PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
5 days in 2 months	\$377	\$310	\$310	\$266	\$266
6 days in 2 months	\$419	\$344	\$344	\$296	\$296
8 days in 2 months	\$491	\$408	\$408	\$352	\$352
10 days in 2 months	\$566	\$471	\$471	\$410	\$410

EUROPEAN EAST PASS

Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia		
5 days in 1 month	\$299 (1Cl)	\$209 (2Cl)
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6 max.)	\$36	\$28

FRANCE RAIL PASS	Adults 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Senior 1st Cl.	Youth 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.
3 days in 1 month	\$293	\$250	\$268	\$217	\$186
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6 max.)	\$45	\$37	\$40	\$33	\$28

FRANCE SAVER PASS	2 Adults*	
	1st Cl.	2nd Cl.
3 days in 1 month	\$249	\$215
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6 max.)	\$ 39	\$ 31

FRANCE-ITALY PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
4 days in 2 months	\$351	\$307	\$307	\$271	\$232
5 days in 2 months	\$391	\$341	\$341	\$301	\$258
6 days in 2 months	\$432	\$377	\$377	\$332	\$283
7 days in 2 months	\$473	\$410	\$410	\$360	\$313
8 days in 2 months	\$513	\$448	\$448	\$394	\$341
9 days in 2 months	\$554	\$483	\$483	\$426	\$366
10 days in 2 months	\$595	\$519	\$519	\$454	\$396

FRANCE-SWITZERLAND PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
4 days in 2 months	\$376	\$319	\$265
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6 max.)	\$ 42	\$ 35	\$ 29

GERMAN RAILPASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.	Twin Pass* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.
3 days in 1 month	\$364	\$277	\$222	\$280
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6)	\$ 45	\$ 30	\$ 17	\$ 23

AUSTRIA-GERMANY PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
5 days in 2 months	\$390	\$332	\$332	\$285	\$285
6 days in 2 months	\$429	\$365	\$365	\$315	\$315
8 days in 2 months	\$510	\$433	\$433	\$372	\$372
10 days in 2 months	\$593	\$504	\$504	\$433	\$433

GERMANY-BENELUX PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
5 days in 1 month	\$405	\$305	\$305	\$247	\$247
Avg. Extra Rail Day (5 max.)	\$43	\$33	\$33	\$24	\$24

GERMANY-FRANCE PASS

	1 Adult 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
4 days in 2 months	\$430	\$388	\$388	\$350	\$301
5 days in 2 months	\$475	\$428	\$428	\$386	\$333
6 days in 2 months	\$520	\$468	\$468	\$418	\$366
8 days in 2 months	\$611	\$550	\$550	\$479	\$428
10 days in 2 months	\$701	\$632	\$632	\$550	\$496

GERMANY-SWITZERLAND PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
5 days in 2 months	\$452	\$385	\$318
6 days in 2 months	\$498	\$424	\$350
8 days in 2 months	\$589	\$503	\$414
10 days in 2 months	\$681	\$582	\$479

ITALY RAIL PASS	1 Adult 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	2nd Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
3 days in 2 months	\$244	\$199	\$208	\$169	\$161
Avg. Extra Rail Day	\$30	\$24	\$25	\$20	\$19

AUSTRIA-SWITZERLAND PASS	Adults 1st Cl.	Saver* 1st Cl.	Youth 2nd Cl.
4 days in 2 months	\$366	\$311	\$257
Avg. Extra Rail Day (6 max.)	\$ 41	\$ 35	\$ 28

SWISS SAVERPASS & SWISS PASS	1 Adult		Saver*		Youth	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class
4 consec. days	\$399	\$266	\$340	\$226	\$299	\$200
8 consec. days	\$576	\$384	\$490	\$328	\$432	\$290
15 consec. days	\$697	\$465	\$593	\$395	\$523	\$350
22 consec. days	\$805	\$536	\$685	\$457	\$604	\$403
1 month	\$885	\$590	\$753	\$503	\$664	\$443

SWISS SAVER FLEXIPASS & SWISS FLEXIPASS	2 or more Adults*		1 Adult	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
	Class	Class	Class	Class
3 days in 1 month	\$326	\$217	\$383	\$255
4 days in 1 month	\$395	\$263	\$463	\$309
5 days in 1 month	\$457	\$305	\$536	\$358
6 days in 1 month	\$519	\$347	\$609	\$407

SWISS CARD	1 month - 1 round trip	\$261 (1-Cl)	\$187 (2-Cl)
plus 50% discount on rail tickets			

SWISS TRANSFER TICKET	1 month - 1 round trip	\$196 (1-Cl)	\$130 (2-Cl)
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(*Prices per person, based on two or more traveling together at all times. **Junior & Youth fares apply only to passengers under 26. Where senior fares are offered, 60 is qualifying age. Children 4-11 pay half the adult fare including Saverpass fares except Switzerland where kids under 16 are free with a parent.)

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PRICES: The US dollar prices on this page are based on the euro and are subject to change with currency fluctuation. Pass orders will be processed in dollars, but amounts charged may vary from prices shown on this page.

Product	# Days	1st/2nd Class	Circle one	Passenger Name (First and Last as on Passport)	Country of Residence	Price
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				Mr./Mrs.		
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ing fireplaces.

Breakfast is served in the hotel's beautiful **Clauss-Feist Restaurant**, illuminated by its Art Nouveau stained-glass windows and skylight. The restaurant is known for high-quality meals at moderate prices: soups and appetizers (€7-13.50), vegetarian main dishes (€13-17), meat and fish main dishes (€18-26), desserts (€7.50-10.50), with a wine list of 200 selections. Fixed-price, multi-course menus are available, too, with reduced prices for guests staying at the hotel.

Contact: Jugendstil Hotel Bellevue, An der Mosel 11-12, 56841 Traben-Trarbach, tel. +49/6541-7030, fax 703-400, info@bellevue-hotel.de, www.bellevue-hotel.de

Daily Rates: Singles €80-120, doubles €135-170, junior suites €150-190, tower rooms and suites €160-380. Parking €10/day.

Rating: QUALITY 18/20, VALUE 16/20

Hotel-Restaurant Schloss Zell Zell

For a romantic Mosel getaway, one could do worse than Hotel Schloss Zell in the "Black Cat" wine village of Zell. Housed in a medieval castle, the hotel has 13 simple, but comfortable rooms located in one tower of the building. All open onto pleasant sitting areas on each floor, furnished with antiques; the lobby, breakfast rooms, and restaurant are also decorated with antiques. Rooms one, six, and seven ("historic," or category two, rooms) are suites with vaulted ceilings and frescoes.

The room price includes a welcome drink and a large breakfast buffet served in two beautiful dining areas filled with ornate antiques and lighted by chandeliers and stained-glass windows.

In another castle wing, the **Restaurant Schloss Zell's** stone walls, vaulted ceilings—and more antiques—are all lighted entirely by candles for evening meals. The interesting, eclectic menu includes soups and appetizers (€4.50-12.50), meat and fish main dishes (€12.50-22.50), and desserts (€4.50-6.50). An extensive wine list offers many reasonably priced local wines and provides helpful descriptions of the grape varieties grown along the Mosel. A large stone-paved terrace in the front courtyard is a pleasant place to dine or just to sip wine

in pretty weather.

Contact: Hotel-Restaurant Schloss Zell, Schlosstrasse 8a, 56856 Zell/Mosel, tel. +49/6542-988-60, fax 988-690, hotel@schlosszell.de, www.schlosszell.de

Daily Rates: Singles €65, doubles €95, historic (category 2) rooms €115

Rating: QUALITY 12/20, VALUE 16/20

Hotel Lipmann "Am Klosterberg" Beilstein

The Lipmann family owns several lodgings and restaurants in the tiny town of Beilstein, an historic Jewish community that features a medieval castle, a Carmelite abbey, and several fine half-timbered buildings. The Hotel Lipmann "Am Klosterberg" is on a narrow street on a hill just behind the Carmelite church. Most of the rooms in this modern, comfortable lodging have a balcony overlooking the 12th-century Metternich castle ruin and the steep cobblestone streets of the town known as "the Sleeping Beauty of the Mosel."

The breakfast buffet is served on a large terrace facing the castle and in an antique-filled dining room, its heavy wooden tables graced with lighted candles, pretty china, and green-stemmed wine glasses for morning fruit juice.

Contact: Hotel Lipmann "Am Klosterberg," Auf dem Teich 8, 56814 Beilstein, tel. +49/2673-1850, fax 1287, lipmann@t-online.de, www.hotel-lipmann.de

Daily Rates: Doubles €70-90 (reduced rates for four- or five-day stays, Monday through Friday). Garage and street parking available.

Rating: QUALITY 14/20, VALUE 15/20

(Note: The Lipmanns also own the **Hotel "Altes Zollhaus,"** a nice, smaller hotel in a historic half-timbered 15th century building on the Mosel. Double rooms: €66-90 with breakfast.)

Hotel Trierer Hof Koblenz

Conveniently situated in the center of Koblenz, the modern, three-star Trierer Hof is in a building constructed in 1786. Across the street from the massive Electoral Palace, it is only five minutes' walk from the Rhine, the Mosel, and the Deutsches Eck, the famous park where the two rivers converge.

Family owned and operated, the

Trierer Hof offers 36 clean, simple, non-fussy rooms with standard amenities (telephone, television, radio, internet). Rooms on the street side can be noisy if the windows are open, but the toiletries basket in the bathroom includes earplugs along with the soap and shampoo. The halls and rooms are decorated with vibrant modern art, and the plentiful breakfast buffet is served in a pleasant dining room.

Contact: Hotel Trierer Hof, Clemensstrasse 1, 56068 Koblenz, tel. +49/261-100-60, fax 100-61-00, info@triererhof.de, www.triererhof.de

Daily Rates: Singles €66-80, doubles €82-105, three- and four-bed rooms, €118-124. Parking in a nearby public parking garage at a reduced rate.

Rating: QUALITY 12/20, VALUE 15/20

Mosel Wine Route Restaurants

The Mosel region certainly bears out the old saying "Where there's good wine, there's good food." One can eat well at a wide range of restaurants, from small wine taverns and rustic inns to posh hotels with renowned chefs. Mosel wine is of course an important ingredient in many of the regional specialties, such as river trout or Mosel eel in Riesling sauce, chicken braised in Riesling, vineyard snails fried in wine batter and served with a Mosel wine sauce, and boozy desserts including Riesling cream pudding and sweet strawberry-rhubarb soup made with, you guessed it, Riesling.

Doctor Weinstube Bernkastel-Kues

Named for the famous "Bernkastler Doctor" wine of this region, Doctor Weinstube serves good German food in a plush Old World setting inside a historic tithe house built in 1668. Soups and appetizers range from €4.50-12.50; the terrine of venison and wild boar, with cranberry-horseradish sauce and apple-walnut salad is highly recommended. Fish dishes (€13.50-17.50) include baked lemon sole with Riesling butter sauce and risotto. Also recommended is the pork steak with herb sauce and fresh vegetables (€11.50); other hearty meat dishes are €11.50-19.50. For dessert, don't miss the "Eiskreation Mosella," a huge serving of

EDITOR'S
CHOICE

vanilla, pistachio, and peach ice cream with raisins, grapes, and whipped cream (€6.50), large enough for two people. An extensive list offers wines by the glass and by the bottle.

Contact: Doctor-Weinstube, Hebegasse 5, 54470 Bernkastel-Kues, tel. +49/6531-96650, fax 6296, info@doctor-weinstuben.de, www.doctor-weinstuben.de

Rating: QUALITY 15/20, VALUE 15/20

Alte Zunftscheune Traben-Trarbach

Country atmosphere and good food combine in this cozy restaurant on several levels in a former guild granary. The Niedersberg family has filled every available space with antiques and artifacts from flea markets and grandmothers' attics. The extensive menu offers many good regional specialties, well prepared and served in large portions, along with wines from local vintners.

**Editor's
Choice**

Start with a Riesling soup with leeks and cream, garnished with smoked salmon strips (€6.30), or an appetizer of sheep's cheese with wild garlic pesto (€6.40). Other soups and starters range from €4.10-8.80. Potato and pasta dishes are popular here (€6.90-9.70), as are dinner-size salads garnished with meat, fish, or cheese (€9.20-12.50). A large selection of interesting meat and fish main dishes are priced from €8.30-18.80, including several served in iron grill pans. Save room for dessert (€2.20-7); the wine cream pudding with green grapes, warm cinnamon foam, and whipped cream (€7) is especially recommended.

Open Tuesday-Friday, 6pm – 11pm; Saturday-Sunday, 5pm– 11pm; also Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, in season (May through October), 11am– 3pm

Contact: Alte Zunftscheune, Neue Rathausstrasse 1, 56841 Traben-Trarbach, tel. +49/6541-9737, fax 814-2808, info@zunftscheune.de, www.zunftscheune.de

Rating: QUALITY 14/20, VALUE 16/20

(Note: In Traben-Trarbach, the **Restaurant Goldene Traube**, reviewed in the August 2003 issue of *Gemütlichkeit*, and the new **Harry's Vinotek and Restaurant**, are both also recommended.)

Wirtshaus Alte Stadtmauer Beilstein

One of the Lipmann family's many successful enterprises in Beilstein, the Wirtshaus Alte Stadtmauer is a very nice small restaurant located in a historic half-timbered building overlooking the Mosel. Delicious soups and appetizers range in price from €3.80-12.60; try the excellent house-made leek cream soup with Riesling (€4) and the slices of wild boar ham with cranberry sauce and salad (€9.80). Most main dishes featuring Mosel specialties are in the €8-11 price category. For dessert, be sure to try the Mosel-Riesling Sekt (sparkling wine) with raspberry sorbet.

Wines from the Lipmann family's own vineyards are featured, as well as at their beautifully decorated **Zenthauskel-ler**, a nearby wine bar/restaurant in a separate, medieval slate-stone edifice that also includes a small wine museum.

Contact: Wirtshaus Alte Stadtmauer, Weingasse 8, 56814 Beilstein, tel. +49/2673-1850, fax 1287, lipmann@t-online.de, www.hotel-lipmann.de

Rating: QUALITY 14/20, VALUE 16/20

Restaurant-Cafe Blumenhof Koblenz

On a courtyard near the tip of the Deutsches Eck, the new Restaurant-Cafe Blumenhof is housed in a historic building dating from the 1500s. Its sleek, modern decor contrasts nicely with the thick stone walls and vaulted ceilings. The young chef, Steven Doll, emphasizes the use of local, seasonal, high-quality ingredients to produce dishes from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, cooked and presented in innovative ways.

Prices are reasonable for such a stylish restaurant. Soups range from €4.50-6.50, and appetizers are €8.50-12.80. Try the spicy curry-cream soup with scallops (€6.50) or the excellent rabbit terrine (€10.90). Meat, fish, and vegetarian main dishes are priced from €11.20-26.50, with most in the €15 range. The light, airy, pike dumplings with Riesling sauce (€14.90) and the equally light Königsberg meat dumplings with crayfish tails in caper sauce (€13.90) are highly recommended. Nicely garnished cheese selections and desserts cost €4.90-8.90,

and the wine list has a good selection of moderately priced wines by the glass or the bottle.

Open Wednesday through Monday (closed Tuesday), noon – 11:30pm

Contact: Restaurant-Cafe Blumenhof, Deutsches Eck (Danziger Freiheit 3), 56068 Koblenz, tel. +49/261-97-33-268, fax 13-39-579, blumenhof-koblenz@t-online.de, www.deutsches-eck-koblenz.com

Rating: QUALITY 16/20, VALUE 16/20

Ferrari Auf Der Festung Koblenz

High above the confluence of the Rhine and Mosel rivers, the family-owned Ferrari auf der Festung restaurant is located in a historic building inside the courtyard of the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress. Start with a beer or wine under the big chestnut tree on the pleasant terrace outside, then order one of the heaping, well-prepared dishes from a menu featuring tried-and-true German and Italian specialties. Salads, including dinner-size plates garnished with grilled meats, range from €5.20-14.70. Baked potatoes with a variety of fillings are €5.20-9.60, and steaks cooked to order cost €11.30-16.50. During the day, it's fun to ride a ferry across the Rhine to the Ehrenbreitstein side of the city, then take a chair lift up to the fortress—but you'll need to take a taxi to and from the restaurant if you plan to eat there after 5pm.

Open daily, 11am– 11:30pm.

Contact: Ferrari auf der Festung, Festung/Oberer Schlossplatz, 56007 Koblenz-Ehrenbreitstein, tel. +49/261-973-0916, fax 974-331-50, info@ferrari-koblenz.de, www.ferrari-koblenz.de

Rating: QUALITY 14/20, VALUE 14/20

(Note: For an excellent version of Turkish *döner kebab*—one of Germany's favorite fast foods—made while you wait and served inside a yeasty, freshly-baked, thin flatbread, go to **Deniz Kebab Pizza Haus** on Rheinstrasse 32 in downtown **Koblenz**. For wonderfully rich cakes and pastries served in an elegant Old World setting, be sure to stop at **Konditorei-Cafe Baumann** on Oberer Löhrrstrasse 93, near the massive neo-Romanesque Herz-Jesu church in the central part of the city.) ■

SWISS RAIL TOUR

Continued from page 1

ary is available four or five times daily, depending on the day of the week, but the train-bus itinerary is available *at least* hourly from 6:04am to 8:04pm.

The Swiss are committed to public transportation. Their response a few years ago to a slight decrease in ridership was to add frequency and quieter, smoother rolling stock. Service from Bern to Zürich service, for example, starts at 4:21am and by noon 21 direct trains have departed the capital city. You can also get to Zürich from Bern on 13 other departing trains, though you will have to make one or two changes.

Another typical example of the frequency of service is the Zürich-Lausanne route. In the seven hours from 5:21am and 12:32pm, 25 trains depart Zürich for Lausanne, 11 of them are direct and require no change. Schedules are much the same among other Swiss cities. The service is so fast and frequent that, in some cases, your “last night” hotel could be almost anywhere in the country. Trains from Lugano in the deep south to the Zürich Airport start at 5:12am and take three hours. From Interlaken, one can be in the Zürich Airport before 8am. Lucerne has a 4:55am direct train that arrives at the airport at 6:13am. A 7:10am direct train arrives at 8:13am.

For many North Americans, Swiss trains are more than a means of getting from place to place, they are an attraction as much as the Alps, cheese, and chocolate. One wonders how many travelers’ main purpose in visiting Switzerland is to ride its trains. The wide variety of rail passes offered by the SBB (Schweizerische Bundes Bahn), and sold in North America via Rail Europe, reflects that phenomenon.

A new pass this year is the “Tops of Europe” which combines rail travel and hotel nights. The second-class “Tops” pass offers four nights in a three-star hotel, plus five rail trips, for two persons. Swiss Rail chooses your hotels and determines the itinerary. At \$1,360 it’s a good deal for two persons (purchase at www.gemut.com), though you might do as well or better on your own. Here’s an eight-day suggested itinerary for a

couple. It incorporates both city and country travel, solid three-star hotels, and some great train rides. It is for travelers who enjoy riding on trains, so you won’t be spending a lot of time in one place and the suggested routes may not be the most direct. Travel light because there will be train changes.

You’ll need an eight-day **Swiss Saver Pass** (\$328 per person second-class, \$490 first-class). For eight consecutive days you and your companion can ride as far as you want and as long as you want on the Swiss trains, lakeboats, and postal buses of the Swiss Transportation System. The pass is also valid for free entrance to 400 Swiss museums—including nearly all the majors—plus discounts on private rail lines and cable cars.

Day #1: Zürich Airport to Iseltwald

Begin at the rail station in Terminal B. Validate your pass and then board the train for Iseltwald by way of Interlaken. IC 822 departs at 11:40 for Bern where you’ll change to a fast ICE for the 53-minute run to Interlaken. You have seven minutes in Bern and eight minutes in Interlaken before the short bus ride to Iseltwald. You arrive at 2:45pm.

Your hotel, **Chalet du Lac**, has a wonderful location on the lake. A double room is CH180. Fresh fish is the main attraction in the hotel’s warm and lively *Stube*. We recommend the *Zanderfilet*.

Day #2 Iseltwald

Today a variety of activities are possible. Use your pass to board a lakeboat at the village landing and cruise the Brienzensee, perhaps visiting **Giessbach** to see the falls and the impressive Victorian-era hotel. Then continue on a later boat to Brienz and Interlaken to shop before returning to Iseltwald via bus or boat.

Another option is to explore the Jungfrau region by rail, perhaps taking the **cable car** to Grütschalp above the Lauterbrunnen valley and then the mountain railway to Mürren, where the Eiger and Jungfrau views are spectacular.

Yet another possibility is to take advantage of your railpass 50-percent discount and ride the train to the Jungfrauoch, at 11,332 feet, Europe’s highest rail station.

Day #3 Bern-Neuchâtel

Ride a morning bus to Interlaken

and then the train to Bern, spending a few hours wandering this lovely old city, a UNESCO World Heritage site. For a view of the town, walk up to the **Rosegarten**. Use your railpass to visit the prestigious **Museum of Fine Arts**, the **Einstein House**, and the **Swiss Rifle Museum**. Have lunch at **Ristorante Lorenzini**, Theaterplatz 5.

When you’re ready, walk the few blocks back to the rail station for the short ride to the mainly French-speaking city of Neuchâtel, on the northern shore of the lake of the same name. If you catch the 3:54pm train the trip is 33 minutes. It’s a three-minute taxi ride to the modern **Hotel Des Arts**, where your double room will cost CH165 to CH187.

Walk the old town and admire its narrow alleys and 16th and 17th century architecture. Once again use your railpass to visit the **Museum of Art and History**, and see the remarkable **Jaquet-Droz automata**, three amazing robots created in the late 18th century. In the evening dine at **La Maison des Halles**, a vast brasserie at 4 Rue du Trésor.

Day #4 Chateau d’Oex

Though just two hours in duration, today’s train journey, Neuchâtel to Chateau d’Oex in the Vaudois Alps, by way of Lausanne and Montreux, is extraordinarily scenic. It passes through the vineyards of Lavaux with sweeping views of Lac Léman, **Castle Chillon**, and then finishes in the mountains. If this relatively short ride isn’t enough, it’s easy to add a stopover in Geneva. From Neuchâtel, take the 9:37am to Geneva, arriving at 10:46am. Leave luggage at the rail station and walk the old town. Three kilometers north of the station, near the UN Office, is the inspiring **Red Cross Museum** where your railpass is good for entrance and also where you can eat lunch. Then catch the 2:36pm train, change in Montreux, and arrive Chateau d’Oex at 4:42pm via the famed Montreux-Oberland Railroad (MOB). In a bit of splurge, your overnight accommodations are at one of Switzerland’s finest mountain inns, **Hostellerie Bon Accueil**. Double rooms start at CH220.

Day #5 Zermatt

Chateau d’Oex to Zermatt requires at least two train changes and a retrace of your steps to Montreux. But if you’re

game for three changes, continue northeast at 9:49am on the **Golden Pass Panoramic** through Gstaad to Zweisimmen. Change there for Spiez to catch the IC 1069 at 12:05pm for the 26-minute run through the new 35-kilometer Lötschberg-Basistunnel to Visp, connecting to R 235 for Zermatt, arriving at 1:52pm.

Car-free, touristy Zermatt is worth it if only for a gander at the Matterhorn, a peak whose unique shape makes it the world's most immediately recognizable mountain. The best place to view it is from the **Gornergrat**, an alpine ridge reached via rack railway from Zermatt. The trip takes 38 minutes and the Swiss Pass is good for a 50-percent discount off the CHF71.50 fare. Interesting, too, is the **Alpine Museum**, which documents local mountaineering history.

Tonight's hotel is the no-frills **Admiral**, whose double rooms range in price from CHF125 to 145, depending on season. Take an electric taxi from the rail station.

For dinner try the lamb at **Lé Gitan** on Bahnhofstrasse in the **Hotel Darioli**.

Day #6 Airolo

The most direct way to Airolo from Zermatt is via the 10am D 910, the famed **Glacier Express** (though you won't be taking it all the way to St. Moritz, you'll still need a seat reservation). At 12:48am change in Andermatt for Göschenen and the connection there through the Gotthard Tunnel to Airolo, arriving at 2pm.

Airolo is a pleasant village of 1,800 in the steep-sided Leventine valley of the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino. Though the town has a gorgeous setting, there isn't a lot to see without a car. No matter, you are here to enjoy the imaginative Italian dishes created in the kitchen of tonight's hotel, the **Forni**, across the street from the rail station. Double rooms are CHF150-196. We discovered Airolo and the Restaurant Forni a few years ago when we couldn't find a hotel in Bellinzona. The food was so good we stayed an extra night. Try the loin of lamb with citrus butter and whatever else your server suggests.

Day #7 Appenzell

Today's route includes portions of the **William Tell Express** and the **Voralpen Express**. With hourly service, there

is flexibility in your departure time. Since we recommend a fairly early Appenzell arrival, departing Airolo aboard IR 2276 at 9:58am seems a good choice for the three-hour and 29-minute trip, perhaps the most scenic of this itinerary. After Göschenen the train descends through a series of spiral tunnels, passing some of the same landmarks more than once from different altitudes. Then comes **Aldorf**, where William Tell is said to have shot the apple off his son's head, and after that the train runs along the shore of the Verwald-Stättersee. Change at 11:13am at Arth-Goldau to IR 2415, the Voralpen Express. From there it's over the tip of Lake Zürich to Rapperswil and into the green hills of northeastern Switzerland. At 12:54pm at Herisau comes the change to the bright red narrow-gauge trains of the Appenzeller Bahn and 30 minutes later is the charming village of Appenzell.

Perhaps no Swiss town clings more to the old ways than this one. Traditional dress is the norm and women weren't allowed to vote until 20 years ago. The intricately painted buildings lining the narrow streets of the small business district are festooned with wrought-iron signs, flower boxes and not a few Swiss flags.

Take the 12-minute bus ride to Stein for a visit to the **Appenzeller Volkskunde Museum**, where farmers make Appenzeller cheese over an open fire. After that, go next door to the **Appenzell Schaukäserie** (Showcase Cheese- Dairy) to see the same process done the modern way.

Hotel Appenzell, located directly on Landsgemeindeplatz, the main square, rates three-stars but offers upscale amenities and a good restaurant. Double rooms are CHF200-220.

Day #8 Return to Zürich

The trip back to Zürich is less than two hours so there's time to take the train to Wasserauen at the end of the valley and walk back to Appenzell along the river that runs by the track. You can lunch in Weissbad and if you want a three-mile walk instead of a five-mile walk back to Appenzell, exit the train at Weissbad instead of Wasserauen.

Trains to Zürich via St. Gallen

leave Appenzell every 30 minutes.

Tour Cost

Assuming high-season travel and higher rates, the hotel cost is CHF1,328 or about \$1,222. Add \$328 per person for the eight-day second-class Swiss Saver Pass, and the total is \$1,578 or about \$225 per night vs. \$340 for the Tops of the World pass. There are advantages to doing this independent of the "Tops" pass: First, you select your itinerary and hotels; second, the Swiss Saver pass allows unlimited travel all day for eight days, not just five specific trips and, finally, the pass provides entrance to all those museums plus the private train/cable car discounts. ■

DEAR SUBSCRIBER

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ternet connection. I have zero interest in going back to the Thomas Cook days.

Technology has also removed some of the stress from European travel.

Every so often on one of the travel listservs I follow, someone will opine that getting lost is part of the fun. While I understand the sentiment, I can't agree. Using a map to find a small hotel on a rainy night in the narrow streets of an ancient European town is not my—or my wife Liz's—idea of fun (driving around in the rain when I could be having a beer?). Our Garmin Nuvi GPS with Europe maps has taken the tension out of this particular travel activity.

One of the more worrisome elements of European travel in the old days for me was how my business would fare in my absence. Given the nine-hour time difference and the high cost of transatlantic phone calls, it was difficult to stay in touch. With email I am almost immediately aware of problems that arise and can quickly deal with them. With a laptop, I can update our website from anywhere and even access our network and main business files.

Declaring that technology has changed the planning and execution of a European vacation in the last 15 years is obvious and a big understatement. And while there may be a few negative aspects to these changes, I suggest you take advantage of those that make travel easier; in some cases much easier.—RHB ■