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DEAR SUBSCRIBER

February 26, 1994

What They're Saying...

We keep a close watch on what is written about travel to Germany, Austria & Switzerland. Here are a few useful and interesting excerpts we've clipped recently from various sources:

R. H. Growald, Copley News Service

To the outside world, Demel's and the Hotel Sacher are the best known of Vienna's coffeehouses. You'll mainly see tourists at the tables there. Both charge \$5 to \$8 for a cup of coffee (the range at most other places is about \$2 to \$5).

Other coffeehouses to include in your Vienna itinerary:

Cafe Landtmann (1 Dr. Karl Lieger Ring 4) — Favorite of actors and politicians (next door to City Hall and the City Theater), with 20-foot ceilings...

Cafe Central (corner of Herrengasse and Strauchgasse) — A favorite of lovers, writers and diabetics — its glass display case includes some cakes made without sugar. Probably Vienna's most elegant coffeehouse with marble pillars and a pianist. Leon Trotsky once hung out at the Central.

Cafe Museum (Opern Gasse 7) — Favorite of painters, writers, political dreamers, chess players and Dr. Sigmund Freud.

Hawelka (Dorotheergasse 6) — A smaller café but jammed with painters and yuppies trying

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GEMÜTLICHKEIT

The Travel Letter for Germany, Austria, Switzerland & the New Europe

TOURING GERMANY'S BAROQUE CHURCHES

Here's a suggested two-day drive — complete with directions and recommended hotels — to some of southern Germany's grandest Baroque churches.

If you can't pass even the tiniest village church without at least a quick look inside, this short tour could be for you. Along its route are three massive Baroque edifices considered to be the finest of their kind in southern Germany. All are in small towns, so except perhaps for the best-known of the three, the one at Ottobeuren, you'll be well away from the summer tourist crush. For information on these,

as well as other churches in the region, we recommend the *Michelin Green Guide for Germany*.

Hotel Chäseren

The journey begins from the Hotel Chäseren, in tiny Wald-Schönengrund, less than 20 kilometers southwest of the town of St. Gallen in northern Switzerland. For those flying into Zürich, the Chäseren is a perfect stop for the first couple of nights to begin the jet-lag recovery

process. Though the drive from the airport takes little more than an hour, the hotel is so much in the country and so removed from anything industrial or urban, that when you awaken on your first morning it will be as if you've stepped through the looking-glass.

Though very country, the Chäseren is spanking new. It's wood exterior has a fresh-cut look and guestrooms and public

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RELYING ON A CREDIT CARD FOR CDW INSURANCE

We recommend it, but be sure to read the fine print.

When renting a car in Europe, by all means use your Visa Gold, Mastercard Gold, Diner's Club or American Express card to avoid the expensive collision damage waiver (CDW) insurance charged by rental companies. You can save anywhere from \$10 to \$18 per day provided your card includes such coverage.

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CHEAP EATS IN VIENNA

In Vienna, a beisl is a not-too-expensive neighborhood place for a beer, a read, a chat and home-style Viennese cooking.

Restaurant Boheme

Owner Otto Wiesenthal directed us to a restaurant near his excellent **Pension Altsadt** (see *Gemütlichkeit*, January 1994). Cozy, little Boheme is on Spittleberggasse, an alley of offbeat shops in an agreeable neighborhood just beyond the *Neue Rathaus* in the 7th district.

The restaurant's theme, naturally, is opera. Walls are hung with

signed photos of operatic performers and background music is opera tapes and CDs.

We were shown to a tiny room (not a place for those who don't tolerate cigarette smoke) consisting of just three tables at the rear of the restaurant. Overheard snatches of conversation in several languages from the table next to us indicated one of it's occupants, a woman, had recently

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DEAR SUBSCRIBER

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to be bohemian in their tailored clothes. Like most coffeehouses in central Vienna, Hawelka serves meals.

Café Tirolerhof (Tegetthoffstrasse 8) — A sort of neighborhood club for people who don't care who you are, peopled with serious newspaper readers and almost as silent as a library.

Griensteidl (Michaeler Platz 2) — Established in 1847, this is one of Vienna's oldest coffeehouses. It features 18-foot arched windows and whispered chats between conservatively dressed Viennese who seem so respectable they might be spies.

Associated Press report

Prince Leopold von Bayern, a dashing aristocratic race driver, revels in whooshing along Germany's Autobahn at 155 mph. "The speeds on the city racecourses are limited by tight curves, so you can't get up to top speed. The autobahn is mostly straight so you can," he said, adding that it is also more dangerous. "On the racetrack, everyone knows what he's doing. This is not so on the Autobahn. Not everyone should be driving so fast."

In Germany, no one is granted a driver's license until he or she has successfully completed 33 hours of driver's training in the classroom and 18 more on the road.

Drunk-driving laws are rigidly enforced on every German road and sobriety checkpoints are a common sight along the Autobahn. Passing on the right is strictly forbidden, as is tailgating. All trucks are restricted to the right lanes of the Autobahn.

"The most dangerous stretch of road is

between Nürnberg and Munich," said Alfons Jung, Commissioner of the Autobahn police. "The road goes up and down and the weather is often foggy. You can be driving at 240 kilometers (149 mph) and suddenly, you can't see."

Paul Eisenstein, Hemispheres Magazine

German Autobahns account for about 4 percent of all German roads, but 30 percent of the miles Germans drive. On the average, each year 7,900 people are killed in motor accidents, but only about 700 deaths occur on the Autobahns. That's about 10%. In the United States, 30 percent of the motor vehicle deaths occur on the freeways. In fact, the statistics show that despite their high speeds there are fewer deaths per mile driven on the Autobahn than on the American interstates. And the German death rate is falling faster than in the United States.

Janet Fullwood, Sacramento Bee

Ms. Fullwood writes about some of the everyday-life differences Americans traveling in Germany can expect to encounter. They may be old hat to veteran travelers but her observations should enlighten others.

Escalators: If you spot an escalator from a distance and it is not moving do not assume that it is broken and start looking for the stairs. Most escalators in Germany (and elsewhere in Europe) operate on electric eyes. If no one is on them, they don't move.

Lights on Timers: Hallway lights in apartment buildings and modest hotels are almost always on energy saving timers. Flip the switch at the end of the hallway and the overhead light will come on just long enough to get you inside your door. Look for a switch near the door when you are headed in the opposite direction.

More Energy Savings: In inexpensive hotels and guest houses, a manually oper-

ated, 5 or 10 gallon water heater is provided for the shower, sink or bath. Remember to turn it on, or you'll stand there wondering why the water doesn't heat up.

Floor Numbers: If you are handed a key to room Number 101, don't look for it on the ground floor. The first floor in German buildings (and in most of the world outside North America, for that matter) is what Americans call the second floor.

Nifty Grocery Gadget: Shopping for produce in German grocery stores is also different than at home. In many stores, customers select and bag their own fruits and vegetables, then place them on an electronic scale located at the produce department. Attached to the scale is a panel of buttons, each bearing a drawing of a particular product. Push the picture that corresponds with what you are weighing and bingo - out pops a self stick label with the product's name, weight, price per kilo and price to be paid.

Different Packaging: You won't see as much fancy, wasteful packaging in Germany as in America. And some packaging is intriguingly different. Mustard, mayonnaise and tomato paste for example come in tubes, like toothpaste, as well as in jars. Fruit juice is packaged in 1 liter paper containers, like quarts of milk are packaged here.

Bring your own Bag: Few German grocery stores provide free bags at checkout. Customers either bring their own or buy one at the store. Most shoppers we saw packed their goods in canvas totes, but a good many, mostly women, shopped with old-fashioned wicker baskets over their arms.

Beds: Double and king sized beds are not the norm in German hotels and guest houses. What a couple gets instead are two twin beds pushed together. Nor are covers

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HOTEL RESTAURANT RATING KEY

| Rating Category | Scale | Hotel Rating Criteria | |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------------|-----|
| Unacceptable | 0 - 3 | People/Service | 30% |
| Adequate | 4 - 7 | Location/Setting | 15% |
| Average | 8 - 11 | Guestrooms | 30% |
| Above Average | 12 - 15 | Public rooms | 5% |
| Excellent | 16 - 20 | Facilities/Restaurant | 20% |

Special Designations

G By virtue of location, decor, special charm, warmth of management, or combination thereof, an especially pleasant establishment.

\$ Offers significant value.

Restaurant Criteria

Food 65%
Service 20%
Atmosphere 15%

BAROQUE DRIVE

Continued from page 1

spaces are bright with shiny tile and spotless fixtures. From many of the somewhat simple rooms is a wonderful view across the valley to the sharply ridged, gray stone of the Säntis.

Our pine-walled room, Number 16, was spotless, comfortable, well-lit and had the Säntis view. There was remote cable-TV, minibar and a gleaming bathroom equipped with an excellent stall shower, hairdryer, washcloths and good towels. The room had two moderately comfortable chairs and a small table but not much of a separate sitting area.

The Chäseren's restaurant serves better than average hearty, country fare that bows from the waist toward the region's cheese-making renown. *Cordon bleu Appenzellerart* (28 Sfr./\$19.50) came filled with sharp Appenzell cheese and a variety of vegetables including broccoli, cauliflower, turnips and carrots that still had a little crunch. *Chäschnöpf* is a type of *spätzle*

cooked with Appenzell cheese. It can be ordered alone (Sfr. 12/\$8.50) or with various meat and vegetable dishes. *Chäschnöpf* with turkey schnitzel cost 21 Sfr (\$15). *Appenzeller Käsesuppe* is a marvelously rich broth of cheese and butter, but is probably not recommended by your cardiologist. *Appenzeller Geissenkäse* turned out to be cubes of cheese on a bed of romaine lettuce hearts with an oil and vinegar dressing. There

were hefty slices of a rugged dark bread with which to sop up the remains of the dressing.

The Chäseren's lone drawback is its price. Though delightful, this is a small, country hotel with few guest facilities. At \$80 per night double it would be a bargain but at 150 to 210 Sfr. (\$103 to \$145) its charm is somewhat muted.

Address: CH-9105, Wald-Schönengrund, Switzerland

Phone: 071/57 1751

Facilities: Restaurant, but no lift

Credit cards: All

Disabled: Not suitable

Parking: Outdoors, free

Other comments: Very quiet hotel

HOTEL RATING: ABOVE AVERAGE 14.2

RESTAURANT RATING: ABOVE AVERAGE 12.6

Abbey Church at Weingarten

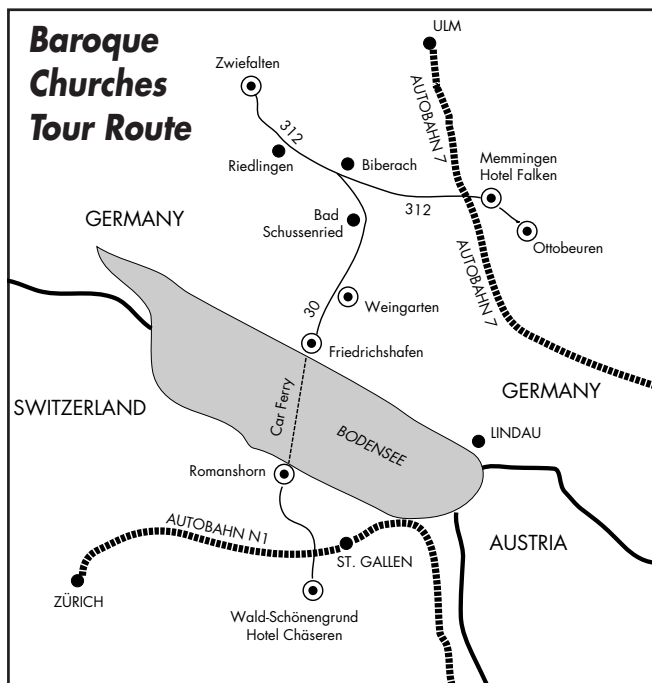
For this part of the drive you need a detailed map such as *Mairs' Die General Karte #1* for Switzerland (scale 1:200,000). To begin the tour,

turn left (northeast) when leaving the Chäseren on Red Road #8 toward Herisau. Follow the signs to Gossau and go under the Autobahn toward Bischofszell. Take the yellow road right to Sitterdorf then join Red Road #14 turning right toward Romanshorn. Here you will take the car ferry to Friedrichshafen on the German side of the Bodensee.

The crossing costs 21 Sfr. (\$15) for the car and 6.4 Sfr. (\$4.50) per person. Boats leave Romanshorn at 36 minutes past the hour from early morning until early evening between March 27 and November 5, arriving 41 minutes later. The winter schedule is less frequent.

Change maps to *Mairs' Die General Karte #25* for Germany. You will leave the boat and immediately go through the border checkpoint. Set your odometer to zero and go straight ahead leaving the checkpoint, following signs to Ailingen, though that is not your destination. You are heading toward the abbey church at Weingarten and at about

Continued on page 4...



Fax: 071/57 17 59

Location: Near Herisau, south of the Zürich-St. Gallen Autobahn

Rooms: Approximately 18 rooms, all with remote cable TV and phone.

Proprietor: Peter Bruderer

Prices: Singles 95 to 125 Sfr. (\$66-\$86), doubles 150 to 210 Sfr. (\$103-\$145)

Meals: All, buffet breakfast included, halfboard 25 Sfr. (\$17).

Finding the Hotel Chäseren

From Zürich's Kloten Airport follow the N1 Autobahn signs toward Winterthur and St. Gallen. Go approximately 40 kilometers to the Wil exit and turn south on Red Road #16. In about 15 kilometers turn

left at Lichtensteig and proceed east on Red Road #8. Wald is approximately another 15 kilometers. If you come to Schönengrund you have gone too far. The Chäseren is on your left, above the road. The sign to it is very small. Drive up the hill through the pasture.

BAROQUE DRIVE

Continued from page 3

1.8 kilometers you will turn right at the sign to Ravensburg. Continue to follow the Ravensburg signs and you will be heading north on Red Road #30. Pass through Meckenbeuren and Untereschach. Ravensburg is a little tricky to get through but you must stay on #30. At 21.6 km you should be in the center lane and note the sign to Ulm. At the traffic signal observe the tower straight ahead. At 23.2 km turn right toward Ulm and Weingarten and then at 24.2 km go left toward Ulm and Weingarten.

At 25.4 km follow the *Stadtmitte* signs to the center of Weingarten and look for signs to the *Basilica*. The church is on a hill, amidst a bustling college atmosphere and parking is not easy. You may have to walk a few blocks. Michelin gives this church two stars, "worth a detour."

The Church at Zwiefalten

Leaving Weingarten, reset your odometer to zero and stay on Red Road #30 north toward Bad Waldsee. Change maps again to *Mairs' Die Generalkarte #22* for Germany.

At 14.2 km follow the Bad Waldsee sign and go under Red Road #30. Then at 15.7 km turn left toward Bad Schussenried. Just beyond the turn note an interesting church facade. At 16.2 km, still in Bad Waldsee, veer left, again toward Bad Schussenried. Then at 16.5 km it's another left. After the village of Schlupfen the road widens and goes through a deciduous forest.

At 27.7 km veer left toward Riedlingen and Bad Buchau, then straight to Bad Schussenried. Pass through Bad Buchau and at 51.7 km turn left on Red Road #312 to Riedlingen. Stay on #312 through the town, turning straight north toward Zwiefalten. The last few kilometers are quite lovely and the church dominates the approach to the town.

The churches on this drive are magnificent but Zwiefalten's is a little newer (1753 vs. 1724) and more grand than the Weingarten abbey. Like all Baroque churches, it is that first look inside that takes the breath away. Parking is no problem.

Memmingen

Return to Riedlingen and make the cross country run east on Red Road #312, through Biberach and Ochsenhausen to Memmingen where you will stay overnight.

Ancient gates stand at the entrances to the old town which is divided by canals. The Marktplatz has several architecturally interesting buildings including the arcaded, 15th century Steuerhaus and a Rathaus in the Rococo style. Many of the narrow streets are restricted to pedestrian traffic and the town is certainly worth half a day of sightseeing.

Hotel Falken

The Falken is centrally located in the inner city. Walk through the passageway under the hotel sign and take the elevator on your right up one floor. Light wood paneling, stone floors and oriental rugs set the tone in the hotel's handsome reception area. We arrived without reservations and were cordially welcomed. Our big double room on a corner, Number 306, was trimmed in knotty pine and had several windows, including one in the large, airy bathroom, remote cable TV, radio and telephone. The only missing element of importance was a separate sitting area. We paid 170 DM (\$97) for the room and 8 DM (\$5) to park our car in the underground garage.

Address: Rossmarkt 3, D-87700, Memmingen, Germany

Phone: 08331/47081

Fax: 08331/47086

Location: In the old town

Rooms: 40 rooms, all with cable TV, minibar, direct dial phone and radio.

Prices: Singles 95 to 115 DM (\$55-\$66), doubles 145 to 170 DM (\$83-\$98)

Meals: Buffet breakfast (included).

Facilities: Lift

Credit Cards: All

Disabled: Not suitable

Closed: August and 20 December to 8 January

Parking: Underground garage, 8 DM

HOTEL RATING: ABOVE AVERAGE 12.7/20

Restaurant Weber

The Falken has no restaurant so the pleasant young woman at the desk directed us to the **Restaurant und Weinstube Weber am Bach**, along one of the canals.

We found good service, decent food and a warm atmosphere. Our dinner for two, including soup, main dish, cheese course and dessert, cost 88 DM (\$61) without beverages. For those who like it, *tafelspitz* (boiled beef) was very good, the meat not too dry and served with lots of horseradish. A carafe of Beaujolais Nouveau, the first wine of 1993 from France's Beaujolais region, was 14 DM (\$8) and delicious.

Restaurant Weber, Untere Backgasse 2, D-87700 Memmingen, Germany, phone 08331/2414. Moderate. Major cards.

RESTAURANT RATING: ABOVE AVERAGE 11.6/20

The Abbey at Ottobeuren

The pinnacle experience of this little tour is the visit to the gigantic, ornate and spectacular church in the tiny town of Ottobeuren. Leave Memmingen on Augsburgstrasse following signs to Kempten. Very soon comes the town of Benningen and about 10 km from Memmingen is the right turn into Ottobeuren.

Dead ahead you will see the "Jewel of German Baroque." Of the three churches on this drive, it is the only one with any exterior decoration. And, while it appears large from the outside, it is not until one is inside that the full force of its

Continued on page 8...

VIENNA RESTAURANTS

Continued from page 1

returned from a singing tour of several countries. The rack near their table was hung heavily with full-length fur coats.

Not many tourists accidentally stumble onto Boheme's almost hidden location in a narrow street outside the Ring, so it's clientele is mostly from the neighborhood.

While examining the menu over a Trumer Pils *vom fass* we were served a basket of large, soft, warm pretzels and rye bread.

Schafkäsesuppe (cheese soup) was a perfect starter for a pair of bedraggled travelers who had spent an entire afternoon and early evening tramping Vienna's snowy streets and was the best dish of the night. Two rich, highly-salted main dishes — *Schweinmedallions* and sliced loin of wild pork — were less successful than the soup, though we both ate every morsel on our plates.

The three medallions were piled with sliced tomato and cheese, then broiled and served with scalloped potatoes. The wild pork came with a dark sauce of reduced juices, tart red cabbage and pan-fried potatoes with sage, all of which were sprinkled with crisp bread crumbs.

Though our food didn't measure up to the Boheme's cozy charm, it has lots of atmosphere, an offbeat location and decent service and prices. Our dinner for two, not including dessert or beverages, was 469 AS (\$38). A carafe of Austrian red wine was 156 AS (\$13) and a small (1/3 liter) beer was 28 AS (\$2.30). The bread and pretzels cost 8 AS (65¢) each.

Restaurant Boheme, Spittleberggasse 19, phone 0222/933173. No credit cards. Moderate.

RATING: ABOVE AVERAGE 13.2/20

Zur Hohen Brücke Gästatte

Another place you'll not find many tourists is at this neighbor-

hood *beisl* on Wipplingerstrasse. It's inside the Ring, just far enough from the Hofburg-Staatsoper-Graben-Kärntnerstrasse center of activity that tourists seldom wander by. A simple lunch for two of soup, *wurstl* and beer was 175 AS (\$14). The Hohen Brücke, with its correct, uniformed waiters and local clientele, has the feel of old Vienna. Food, beer and service were above average for a restaurant of this type. Zur Hohen Brücke Gästatte, Wipplingerstr. 23, Inexpensive.

RATING: ABOVE AVERAGE 12.6/20

S'Müllerbeisl

On Seilerstätte near the **Hotel Römischer Kaiser**, S'Müllerbeisl is typical of Vienna's many casual restaurants where lunches, dinners and snacks are served from mid-morning until midnight or later. It is the sort place where one expects

This touristy stop near the Staatsoper has live Schrammelmusik and bored waiters.

to find an extensive menu — including properly prepared *Wiener Schnitzel* (it is said you should be able to sit on the plate where a correctly cooked Schnitzel has rested, wearing a silk dress without staining it) — good beer, fresh white wine from the *Wienerwald*, and a kind of "reading room" atmosphere where it's o.k. to hunker for an hour or two with only a beer or cup of coffee and a book or newspaper.

The Schnitzel was suitably crisp and greaseless and a bowl of broccoli soup was welcome on a winter night. A salad of tomatoes and mozzarella cheese drizzled with olive oil was also tasty.

Decor is ho-hum but our waiter was quick and friendly. He also spoke flawless English, which is a dead-giveaway that this place, like most restaurants in the very center of Vienna, gets a lot of tourists.

S'Müllerbeisl, Seilerstätte 15,

phone 0222/5129347. Inexpensive-Moderate.

RATING: AVERAGE 10.7/20

Smutny

For seven years we enthusiastically recommended Smutny, a small *beisl* on Elisabethstrasse near the Staatsoper that serves big plates of plain, but delicious Viennese food at good prices, accompanied by the Czech beers Pilsner Urquell and Budweiser. A December 1993 visit disappointed us, however. Our experience confirmed negative comments recently received from several subscribers. The place looks the same as ever, the beer, of course, is still nonpareil and the service affable and efficient; but what is on the plate is now ordinary. Salads had obviously been made ahead of time and came with weak dressing. *Zwiebelrostbraten* (pan-fried steak


with onions) was just passable, though the oven roasted potatoes were very good. The price is still right; dinner for two without beverages or dessert was 345 AS (\$28). A half-liter of Pilsner Urquell is 35 AS (\$2.85).

Restaurant Smutny, Elisabethstrasse 8, phone 0222/5871356. Inexpensive-Moderate.

RATING: AVERAGE 10.2/20

Augustiner Keller

This touristy stop, also near the Staatsoper, has live *Schrammelmusik* and bored waiters. We stopped late one evening for an after-dinner *Weihnachtspunch* (Christmas punch), a restoring combination of red wine, rum, orange juice and tea. The cellar atmosphere is a little hokey and prices seem higher than at comparable restaurants.

Augustiner Keller, Augustiner Strasse 1, phone 0222/52 17 46. Moderate. Un-rated. 

CDW INSURANCE

Continued from page 1

However, you should know that if you rely on a credit card for CDW, and the car is damaged, you will be required to pay for that damage. You then ask your credit card company for reimbursement and there is plenty of fine print that can disqualify you. Here is language, some of it paraphrased, from an American Express notice on the subject:

- You must decline the CDW or similar option offered by the car rental company to activate coverage for a particular rental.

- Coverage is limited to cars rented from a "commercial car rental company," which, in the U.S. is 15 specifically designated companies. Outside the U. S. commercial car rental company means "any commercial car rental agency which regularly rents rental autos, expect those in Italy and New Zealand, where no coverage is provided."

- Car Rental Loss and Damage Insurance covers most rental cars including many foreign cars, when they are rented on a daily or weekly basis for no more than 31 days (*ed. note: this means if your rental contract is for 32 days or more [or, in the case of Mastercard, which has a limit of 15 days, 16 days] you have zero coverage for the entire rental*). The card member must provide appropriate documentation that the damage/loss was incurred within the applicable time period above, under an agreement from a commercial car rental company.

- Certain vehicles are not covered such as off-road vehicles, motorcycles, mopeds, recreational vehicles, trucks, campers, trailers, certain vans and four-wheel drive sport/utility vehicles when driven off-road. Minivans are covered when used for personal or business use.

- Coverage does not extend to "losses caused by or contributed to by operation of the rental car in

violation of the terms and conditions of the rental car agreement (including but not limited to losses occurring when a person not permitted to operate the vehicle pursuant to terms of the rental agreement was in possession or control of the vehicle); intentional damage; illegal activity; preexisting conditions, damage or defect; being under the influence of intoxicants or drugs; war or military activity; radioactivity; confiscation by authority" and on and on.

- A card member must notify American Express's Car Rental Loss and Damage Claims unit within 48 hours or as soon as reasonably possible following a loss. If such notification is not received, coverage may be denied. Written proof of loss, including completion of a claim form provided by American Express, must be received by American Express within 60 days of the date of loss or coverage may be denied.

- Among the items required to document the loss:


1. Copy of the driver's license of card member or authorized driver.
2. Copy of card member's auto insurance coverage.
3. Itemized repair bill.
4. Claim form.
5. Copy of the rental agreement.
6. Police report if the damage exceeds \$500.

- If the foregoing documentation is not received within 180 days of the date of loss (except for documentation which has not been furnished for reasons beyond card member's control), coverage will be denied.

And, finally, this disclaimer:

"This document is not the policy or contract of insurance. The benefits described in this document are subject to all of the terms, conditions and exclusions of the policy issued by the underwriter. This document replaces any prior description of coverage under the

policy which may have been furnished to the card member. The coverage may be changed or terminated."

Other card companies have similar rules. We suggest you become familiar with them. 

EUROPE TRAVEL BRIEFING

Swiss Bike Rental

Bicycles can be rented at more than 200 railway stations in Switzerland. Reserve a day in advance. You may return the bike at another station for an additional charge of about \$3.50. Rates below are in U.S. dollars at an exchange rate of 1.45.

Rental Rates

| <u>Bike</u> | <u>1/2 day</u> | <u>day</u> | <u>week</u> |
|----------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|
| City bike (7 gears) | \$10 | \$13 | \$52 |
| Kid's bike (7 gears) | \$8 | \$9 | \$36 |
| Mountain (21 gears) | - | \$21 | \$86 |

A family of three can rent two city bikes and one child's bike for 52 Sfr. (\$36) per day or 208 Sfr. (\$143) per week.

Accompanied bicycles can be transported on local trains (not Intercity or Eurocity trains) for 5 Sfr. (\$3.50) per bike.

Brochures, maps, route descriptions and mileage charts related to bicycling in Switzerland are available through **Touring Club Suisse** (TCS), 11-13 Chemin Riantbosson, Case postale 176, CH-1217 Meyrin 1, phone 022/785 1222, fax 022/785 1262.

Self-Catering Rentals

Gemütlichkeit's best advice for renting an apartment or chalet in Europe remains the same: go directly to the tourist office of the region or town of your choice and request a list of accommodations for rent. Usually that will include photographs and detailed information about each accommodation, including the rental price. At this point the tourist office gets out of

the middle and if you wish to pursue a rental you must contact the property owner directly. In this way you cut out at least one and perhaps two middlemen — a U. S. sales representative and possibly a property manager in Europe. By the way, it is said that Europeans would rather conduct this sort of business in writing rather than by phone, so begin the process early.

In case this all sounds too complicated, or you don't have enough lead time, several subscribers report positively about **Interhome, Inc.**, perhaps the largest U. S. booker of European vacation properties.

Their catalogs contain color photographs, descriptions and prices on thousands of rentals.

Contact: Interhome, Inc., 124 Little Falls Road, Fairfield NJ 07004, phone 201-882-6864, fax 201-808-1742.

Lugano Deal

Lugano, the sunny lakeside capital of Italian-speaking Ticino, offers promotional packages for short stays. Per person prices for three nights in a double room with shower/bath and breakfast begin at 138 Sfr. (\$94). That, of course, is in a Spartan two-star hotel. Prices for better accommodations are 219 Sfr. (\$150) per person in a three-star hotel, 297 Sfr. (\$203) in a first-class, four-star hotel and 426 Sfr. (\$292) per person in five-star luxury hotel. The package includes unlimited travel on urban public transportation, a funicular ride to Monte Bré, a roundtrip train ticket to Ponte Tresa, a boat ride to Morcote, and entrance to several museums. Though this is a winter deal similar

packages are usually offered during spring and summer, albeit at higher prices. Contact: Lugano Tourist Office, Riva Albertolli 5, CH-6901 Lugano, phone 091 21 46 64, fax 091 22 76 53.

Affordable Austria

Two years ago, several *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers came back with high praise for *Affordable Austria*, a

her native country (this year from April 29 through May 20). Those who enjoy the security of a guided tour, but still want to travel at a leisurely pace and experience the people and their cultural, *Affordable Austria* may be the answer. The first seven days are at the **Hotel Gallspacherhof** in the town of Gallspach (population 2,800). From there, the group moves to the Alpen village of Lofer for six nights at the **Hotel St. Hubertus**. A week in Vienna at the **Hotel Stefanie** finishes the trip. All land costs including breakfasts and most dinners are included in the \$2,300 per person price tag. *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers get 3% off. Throughout the tour many optional excursions are offered.

Also in the works for Giselle is an *Affordable Italy* tour for three weeks in September that will include Merano, Monte Cattini, Urbino, Assisi and Rome. Giselle can be reached at 916-488-6000.

Switzerland on Track

Another tour that has many of the advantages of independent travel is operated by *Gemütlichkeit* contributing editors Claudia Fischer and Roger Holliday. This 18-day, 17-night Swiss jaunt includes airfare, three nights in Vevey, three in Locarno, four in Interlaken, three in Samedan, three in Lucerne and a 15-day first-class Swiss Pass. The cost is \$3,095 per person. Since tour members carry the Swiss Pass, they can travel when and where they wish. Both Fischer and Holliday

accompany the group. They are great traveling companions who fear only a good night's sleep. Your editor speaks from personal experience. Call the Hollidays at 419-352-8096, fax 419-352-1480. ☐

Airfare Update

With some industry experts doubting there will be a significant transatlantic fare war this spring, many of you who are planning to visit Europe this summer are scrambling to find good airfare deals.

The best summer fares we've seen to date are through **DER Tours** on **Lufthansa**. This special "Lufthansa Charter" is aboard Lufthansa's regularly scheduled Tuesday flights out of eight gateway cities to Frankfurt. Return travel is also limited to Tuesdays.

There are restrictions and the sale will not last long. Here are the fares:

| | 4/1-5/31 | 6/1-9/27 | 10/4-10/25 |
|---------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Atlanta | 598 | 699 | 598 |
| Chicago | 598 | 739 | 598 |
| Dallas | 598 | 699 | 598 |
| Los Angeles | 678 | 799 | 678 |
| Miami | 598 | 759 | 598 |
| New York | 508 | 649 | 508 |
| San Francisco | 678 | 799 | 678 |
| Washington DC | 508 | 659 | 508 |

DER also has an arrangement with **United Airlines** for travel to many European destinations for more than 150 U. S. cities. Below are some sample high-season, midweek fares:

| | Germany | Paris | London | Zürich | Rome |
|---------------|---------|-------|--------|--------|------|
| Atlanta | 785 | 840 | 718 | 840 | 852 |
| Chicago | 807 | 852 | 729 | 829 | 863 |
| Dallas | 918 | 918 | 796 | 874 | 829 |
| Los Angeles | 929 | 941 | 785 | 918 | 941 |
| Miami | 829 | 874 | 707 | 840 | 874 |
| New York | 763 | 774 | 618 | 774 | 807 |
| San Francisco | 929 | 941 | 774 | 918 | 941 |
| Washington DC | 785 | 807 | 685 | 796 | 840 |

Travel agents can book for you by calling 800-782-2424.

three-week sojourn with Rudy and Giselle Bialuski. Though now out of the retail travel business, the effervescent and indefatigable Giselle still leads this annual trek to

READERS' FORUM

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shared in common; instead each person gets his or her own down comforter covered in sheeting fabric.

Stephen Kinzer, New York Times

Visitors seeking dining experiences not normally found in Europe should visit *Lucky Strike Originals*, a new Berlin restaurant that specializes in Cajun Cuisine. Service can be brusque, reminding diners more of the Big Apple than the Big Easy, but the jambalaya and the gumbo are authentic. Live bands perform in an adjacent night club. *Lucky's*, as it is known, is opposite the Pergamon Museum in Eastern Berlin, at 177-180 Georgenstrasse. Res. 030/30 84 8822.

English speakers who want an irreverent look at Berlin life should buy a new guide book called *Berlin: What's Cool* (Syndicate Publishing, about \$5), written by an American expatriate and sometime performance artist named David Tabatsky. He describes it as "not exactly the book for mom and dad," and it won't help you find a luxury hotel, but it is a witty and offbeat guide to some of the city's quirks and wonders.

Eastern Germany is the destination of many people who visit the country these days. There is a dearth of good hotels, but a new one, the *Trihotel am Schweizer Wald*, opened recently in the Baltic Port of Rostock, a good jumping off point for visits to the wind-swept coast and its historic Hanseatic cities (including Lübeck, where a new museum dedicated to the authors Heinrich and Thomas Mann has been open since May at 4 Mengstrasse). The hotel offers all modern conveniences as well as a small theater where music, dance, cabaret and pantomime performances are to be staged. Reservations: 0381/65970; rooms are about \$145 for two. ☐

BAROQUE

Continued from page 4

enormous size and stunning ornamentation are felt. This is the same architect, Johann Michael Fischer, who built the church you saw yesterday at Zwiefalten. Ottobeuren, said to be Fisher's masterpiece, is one of only a handful of individual sights in Germany to which Michelin gives three stars, "worth a journey." ☐

Swissair Reduced Fare Program for Subscribers

Swissair has established a special computer reference number to better serve those seeking the airline's special subscriber price reductions. To obtain fares and the current price reductions, call the main Swissair reservation number, 800-221-4750, and ask the reservationist to access "G-star, reference QL2JLQ." This will enable the reservationist to access the area of the Swissair computer which contains information regarding the *Gemütlichkeit* program.

Currently *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers are eligible for the following:

- \$50 off any roundtrip winter sale fare.
- \$100 off any roundtrip economy class fare.
- \$400 off any roundtrip business class fare.
- \$600 off any roundtrip first class fare.

Please be aware that you must book and purchase your ticket directly with Swissair to obtain the price reduction.

For more info call *Gemütlichkeit* at 800-521-6722 ☐

Coming Soon: Classified Advertising

Next month *Gemütlichkeit* will add a separate classified advertising section (the newsletter itself will remain unchanged). Those who wish to reach *Gemütlichkeit's* approximately 8,000 readers, travel book & map buyers and car rental customers can now do so. Our loyal subscribers are frequent travelers to Europe and elsewhere.

Rates: 75 cents per word, minimum charge \$20. No charge for zip code. **Boldface** or ALL CAPITAL words, 20 cents additional. **Deadline:** 15th of each month. **For information or to place an ad contact Andrew Bestor, 800-521-6722.** ☐

Vienna Opera Schedules

Vienna State Opera

April, 1994

01. Closed
02. Der Fliegende Holländer
03. Parsifal
04. Ballet
05. Der Fliegende Holländer
06. Tosca
07. Ballet
08. Ariadne auf Naxos
09. Die Entführung aus dem Saal
10. Parsifal
11. Ballet: Manon
12. Il Barbiere di Siviglia
13. Die Entführung aus dem Saal
14. Ballet: Manon
15. L'Italiana in Algeri
16. Cavalleria Rusticana/Ragliacci
17. Die Entführung aus dem Saal
18. Il Barbiere di Siviglia
19. L'Italiana in Algeri
20. Cavalleria Rusticana/

- Ragliacci
21. Ballet: Manon
22. L'Italiana in Algeri
23. Manon Lescaut
24. Cavalleria Rusticana/Ragliacci
25. Ballet
26. Die Zauberflöte
27. Ballet 2
28. Manon Lescaut
29. Tosca
30. Ballet
- May 1994**
01. Manon Lescaut
02. IPuritani
03. Tosca
04. L'Elisir d'Amore
05. IPuritani
06. Ballet: Romeo and Juliet
07. Tosca
08. IPuritani
09. Idomeneo
10. Ballet: Romeo and Juliet
11. IPuritani
12. Idomeneo
13. Ballet: Manon
14. Die Zauberflöte
15. IPuritani
16. Der Rosenkavalier
17. Ballet: Manon
18. IPuritani
19. Der Rosenkavalier
20. Ballet: Romeo and Juliet
21. Der Zauberflöte

22. Don Giovanni
23. Andrea Chenier
24. Ballet: Romeo and Juliet
25. Don Giovanni
26. Der Fliegende Holländer
27. Andrea Chenier
28. Ballet: 2. Symphonie/La Chambre/Der Wunderbare Mandarin
29. Aida
30. Der Fliegende Holländer
31. Il Barbiere di Siviglia
- June 1994**
01. Ballet: 2. Symphonie/La Chambre/Der Wunderbare Mandarin
02. Aida
03. Cardillac
04. Salome
05. Das Rheingold
06. La Boheme
07. Cardillac
08. Salome
09. Don Carlo
14. La Boheme
15. Ariadne auf Naxos
16. Don Carlo
17. Cardillac
18. Siegfried
19. Ariadne auf Naxos
20. Cardillac
21. Die Hochzeit des Figaro
22. Les Contes d'Hoffman
23. Cardillac

24. Die Hochzeit des Figaro
25. Les Contes d'Hoffman
26. Goetterdämmerung
27. Tosca
29. Les Contes d'Hoffman
30. Tosca

Vienna Volksoper

April 1994

01. Closed
02. Die Fledermaus
03. My Fair Lady
04. Don Giovanni
05. Die verkaufte Braut
06. Im Weissen Rössl
07. Giuditta
08. Die Zauberflöte
09. My Fair Lady
10. Das Schlaue Fuchslein
11. Die verkaufte Braut
12. Eine Nacht in Venedig
13. Eugen Onegin
14. Die Hochzeit des Figaro
15. Der Vogelhändler
16. Gräfin Mariza
17. Die lustige Witwe
18. Eugen Onegin
19. Ballet: Coppelgia
20. Die Hochzeit des Figaro
21. Dantons Tod
22. Eugen Onegin
23. Im Weissen Rössl
24. Die verkaufte Braut
25. Nabucco

26. Ballet: Coppelgia
27. Lady Macbeth
28. Dantons Tod
29. Die Perlenfischer
30. Die lustige Witwe
- May 1994**
01. Wiener Blut
02. Lady Macbeth
03. Die Perlenfischer
04. Der Vogelhändler
05. Gräfin Mariza
06. Lady Macbeth
07. Die Zauberflöte
08. Die Fledermaus
09. Die Sache Makropoulos
10. Das Schlaue Fuchslein
11. Die Zirkusprinzessin
12. Im Weissen Rössl
13. Das Land des Lächelns
14. Die lustige Witwe
15. Die verkaufte Braut
16. Das Schlaue Fuchslein
17. Dantons Tod
18. Die Perlenfischer
19. Der Zigeunerbaron
20. Eine Nacht in Venedig
21. Die Fledermaus
22. Im Weissen Rössl
23. Wiener Blut
24. Die Hochzeit des Figaro
25. Die Zirkusprinzessin
26. Die lustige Witwe
27. Nabucco
28. Der Mann von La Mancha

29. Dantons Tod
30. Ballet: Coppelgia
31. Der Mann von La Mancha
- June 1994**
01. Wagner's "Ring" (Highlights)
02. Die Zauberflöte
03. Der Mann von La Mancha
04. Die Fledermaus
05. Im Weissen Rössl
06. Der Mann von La Mancha
07. Robert Stolz "Servus Du"
08. Don Giovanni
09. Die Perlenfischer
10. Der Mann von La Mancha
11. Der Hochzeit des Figaro
12. Die lustige Witwe
13. Die Sache Makropoulos
14. Robert Stolz "Servus Du"
15. Die Zirkusprinzessin
16. Der Mann von La Mancha
17. Der Zigeunerbaron
18. Die Fledermaus
19. Das Land des Lächelns
20. Der Mann von La Mancha
21. Nabucco
22. Wiener Blut
23. Das Schlaue Fuchslein
24. Im Weissen Rössl
25. Das Land des Lächelns
26. Das Schlaue Fuchslein
27. Eine Nacht in Venedig
28. Giuditta
29. Die Zauberflöte
30. Der Mann von La Mancha ☐