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DEAR SUBSCRIBER

March 30, 1994

Do As I Say...

Today we hauled out that collection of exhausted canvas duffels, duct tape and plastic bags we call luggage. It's time for another airplane ride. And the lovely folks at Swissair, bless them, — anything to check, sir? — will apply the necessary baggage tags and send our shabby collection gently on its way without so much as a twitch of an eyebrow. Hand them a Hefty bag and they treat you as though it was a \$2500 Louis Vuitton two-suiter.

Bad luggage notwithstanding, a trip to Europe is to us still a great adventure. But contemplating the adventure at hand would be more appealing if it didn't, like several that have preceded it, have a schedule. Adventures, almost by definition, cannot have a schedule. So do as I say, not as I do. And what I say is don't over-plan your trip. The best we've ever taken — in season or out — have been unstructured to the extent that we once landed in Frankfurt and didn't decide whether to first head north, south, east or west, until we were in the rental car. Take *Michelin Red Guides* (in Austria you'll have to make do with a *Fodor's* or a *Frommer's*) for hotels, restaurants and the dozens of other ways the *Red Guides* aid the auto traveler in Europe; *Michelin's Green Guides* to tell you what you're looking at, and maps of sufficient detail (scale 1:400,000 o.k., 1:200,000 much better) to guide you far from the Autobahn, down backroads connecting villages devoid of Big Macs and tourists. You really don't need

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GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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

BREMEN

Our duo of Claudia Fischer and Roger Holliday (now known on legal documents as Mr. & Mrs. Holliday) recently ventured where Americans seldom go, to Northern Germany. There they find an historic old seafaring town and plenty of good seafood.

The German port city of Bremen is in fairy tale country. The town is at the very start...or finish, if you prefer...of Northern Germany's picturesque *Deutsche Märchenstrasse*, The Fairy Tale Road — a fact that is, of course, played to the hilt by the city's tourist officials and merchants. The Bremen Town Musicians — a brave foursome of donkey, dog, cat and cockerel who, according

to the Brothers Grimm, outwitted wicked robbers — emblazon everything from coffee mugs to matchboxes. But it's all done a notch above the usual tourist hype, in part due to the presence of sculptor Gerhard Marcks' acclaimed bronze statue of the animals that has graced the west side of the Rathaus on the Marktplatz since 1951.

Also standing proudly in the center of the square with a watchful eye fixed

on the modern Parliament Building, is the 30-foot statue of Roland, ancient protector of Bremen, nephew of Charlemagne and powerful symbol of the city's fiercely guarded sovereignty. As long as Roland remains in the Square, the story goes, Bremen will remain free and independent. Needless to say, during the heavy bombing of the city in World War II, extreme measures were taken to protect the statue of Roland, while all about him fell.

Between the Marktplatz and the River Weser is Böttcherstrasse, a narrow cobbled pedestrian street constructed early this century as a cultural center for the city. The thirty-year project was the brain-storm of Bremen coffee merchant, Ludwig Rose-lius, who bought up the buildings and hired the architects to create this charming 100 or so yards of rustic red brick facades and simple gables that now house museums, shops, restaurants

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GREAT SWISS TRAIN TRIPS

Travel writer and photographer, Bruce Woelfel, specializes in the trains of Europe, particularly Switzerland. Here he discusses two routes from Zürich, one across Switzerland into Italy and the other to Hamburg via Basel and Frankfurt.

Zürich - Goschen - Bellinzona - Lugano - Chiasso
Recommended trains: *Ticino* and *Gottardo*:

Perhaps the most interesting "long" trip which can be taken on standard gauge rail within Switzerland: outstanding scenery throughout it's 200-mile length.

Ticino, has Swiss-built "panorama" cars with raised floors and very large curved windows and narrow side support for first class passengers, greatly increasing the pleasures of traveling this beautiful route. The train also carries a diner, conventionally designed, without the large windows.

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DEAR SUBSCRIBER

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much else: maybe some good books and walking shoes. You might miss a few museums and famous buildings but you'll meet Germans, Swiss and Austrians who still get a little excited over American tourists.

Clearing the desk...

The **German National Tourist Board** has a new publication for inexpensive accommodations, *Bed & Breakfast in Germany '94/'95*. It doesn't list the individual establishments (that roster might rival the New York phone book), rather it summarizes what is available, and at what price, in about 500 towns and villages. The guide gives the address of the local tourist office booking service for bed and breakfast or garni (no restaurant) hotels. Most accommodations are in private homes. Many offer rooms with private toilet and shower or bath. A quick perusal of the book indicates most rooms with private facilities cost from 50 DM (\$30) to about 140 DM (\$84). Prices drop sharply if you're willing to share a bath. Through symbols the guide also shows the recreational opportunities available in each town. Write or call the German Tourist Office, 11766 Wilshire Blvd. #750 Los Angeles 90025, phone 310-575-9799, fax 310-575-1565

The **Swiss Tourist Office** has several free publications of interest. *E & G Hotels* is a guide to about 220 small guest houses. Most are in the countryside. *Hotels Specially Suitable for Families* lists about 100 hotels which cater to families by offering such facilities as supervised children's playroom, play area or garden, children's menu served before normal meal times and organized family activities. A special hotel guide for the disabled traveler is ready for distribution this spring and a fact sheet with travel tips for the disabled is now available. The brochure *Swiss Farm Holidays* is self-explanatory.


Contact SNT0, 222 No. Sepulveda Blvd., #1570, El Segundo CA 90245, phone 310-335-5980, fax 310-335-5982.

While we recommend using credit cards (best exchange rate and transactions sometimes don't appear on your credit card bill for several weeks — an interest-free loan) as much as possible when traveling in Europe, you still, of course, need local currency. We advocate purchasing travelers checks in foreign currency before you leave the U. S. They are accepted readily at hotels, restaurants and even gas stations. The question is, what do you pay for them? American Express might offer no-fee checks but what is the exchange rate? Though your bank may charge a fee for foreign currency traveler's checks its exchange rate will probably be substantially better than American Express or Cook's, thus saving you money on the total transaction. Not all banks provide this service so you may have to shop to find the best deal. **Ruesch International**, a company which specializes in foreign currency exchange assures *Gemütlichkeit* that it offers the best exchange rates. The company charges \$2 per currency, per person for traveler's checks in several currencies including German marks and Swiss francs. Sounds good but compare the exchange rate. Call Ruesch at 800-424-2923.

Budget-minded travelers should also know about inexpensive travel opportunities through **Hosteling International-American Youth Hostels**. For example, an eight-day adult cycling tour along the Danube that includes room, dinner and breakfast is just \$475. Fourteen days of backpacking in Switzerland's Bernese Oberland, staying at hostels and Alpine huts is \$825, including breakfasts and dinners. You must be a member. The cost for adults is \$25. If you're 55 or older it's \$15. Contact Hosteling International-American Youth Hostels, 733 15th Street, N. W., #840, Washington DC 20005, phone 202-783-6161.

Dr. Fredric Kratina has written *Gemütlichkeit* to inquire about "any family or couples who would be willing to take in an American interested in German language enhancement, or to live close by, have constant contact and basically not speak English except in the most dire of circumstances." I have two suggestions: **American International Home Stays** places travelers in families in several countries including Germany — contact them at 800-876-2048 — and the nonprofit **Goethe Institute**, which offers German language classes in Germany. The institute can arrange for the student to stay with a German family while enrolled in the classes. Goethe Institute, 530 Bush Street, San Francisco CA 94108, phone 415-931-0370, or Goethe Institute, 1014 5th Avenue, New York NY 10028, phone 212-439-8700.

A year or so ago, Chuck Moore retired from a large Southern California company. He and his Swiss wife Ingrid bought a place in Leuk halfway between Zermatt and Lake Geneva which they call the **St. Barbara Bed & Breakfast Chalet**. For rent are two lower level bedrooms which have a shared toilet and bath. The price for two persons, including breakfast, is just \$45 plus local tax. Though I haven't yet seen their place, you're sure of a warm welcome. For information or reservations write Charles or Ingrid Moore, St. Barbara 136 CH-3953 Leuk, Switzerland, phone 27-634738.

Finally, Richard Davidson, president of **Austria Ski**, strongly recommends a different kind of travel book, *The Whole is More* (ISBN: 0-533-10398-3) by Austrian scholar, Heide Gondek. Mr. Davidson says the book "is not the usual travel guide; yet, it is a wonderful philosophical guide to all travel. I truly wish all my company's guests could adopt this book's viewpoint and profit more from their travel experience." Contact Vantage Press, 516 West 34th St., New York NY 10001, phone 800-882-3273. 

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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%

BREMEN

Continued from page 1

and galleries.

Roselius' other contribution to humanity? He invented decaffeinated coffee in 1907!

An even more atmospheric area in Bremen is The Schnoor, where 15th and 16th century houses and fishermen's cottages have recently been restored under the auspices of the local preservation society. The colorful district encompasses a small patchwork of narrow streets and passageways lined with high quality artists' studios, shops, cafés and inns.

Hochzeit Haus

The Schnoor is a fine place for browsing at any time but our favorite, and least expected, find was the Hochzeit Haus, proudly touted as the world's smallest hotel. With just one bedroom, it has to be!

In the Middle Ages, the Hochzeit Haus, or Wedding House, served an important function for couples who came in from the countryside to be married in the cathedral and needed a temporary address in the city. In keeping with tradition, owner Herr Fritsche still gives booking priority to guests either honeymooning or celebrating important wedding anniversaries.

A bit of a gimmick to be sure, but the 'hotel' is actually quite lovely, spread out over three floors and smartly decorated in light colors and stylish Italian furniture. The ground floor has a high-tech kitchen and eating area. The next level up provides a small bit of living space but also includes a big bathroom with a whirlpool tub built for two. On the top floor is an elegant four-poster bed and a great view of the entire Schnoor.

Address: Wüste Stätte 5, D- 28195

Reservations: Book through the Konditorei im Schnoor (phone

BREMEN

Population: 552,287

Altitude: 10 meters

Approximate distances from:

Frankfurt	446 km	279 miles
Hamburg	120 km	75 miles
Cologne	316 km	197 miles
Munich	753 km	470 miles
Berlin	391 km	244 miles
Stuttgart	642 km	401 miles
Konstanz	180 km	112 miles

Bremen Tourist Office:

Central Railway Station (Hauptbahnhof) Bahnhofplatz

Phone: 0421/30-80-00

Fax: 0421/3-08-00-30

Mon-Wed & Fri 9:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Sunday 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

There is a smaller Tourist Information office at Liebfrauen Kirchof near the Marktplatz.

Annual Events-1994:

May 19-22 : Breminale and Town Festival

Aug. 26-Sept. 4: International Bremen Summer

September 2-4: Wine Fest on the Hillmanplatz

October 10-30: Bremen Frei Market
Advent: Bremen Christmas Market

Sight-seeing:

Harbor Cruise: From the end of March to the end of October at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 3:15 p.m., 4:40 p.m.. The cruise lasts 75 minutes and costs 11 DM.

Circular Bus Tour: Daily at 10:30 a.m. from platform #2 at Central Bus Station adjacent to the Hauptbahnhof. From November to April-Sundays only. Two hours. 20 DM.

Weser River Boat trip to Bremerhaven: From Easter to September on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from the Martini Dock. Depart Bremen 8:30 a.m., arrive Bremerhaven 12 noon. Return trip departs Bremerhaven 3:15 p.m., arrive Bremen 7 p.m..

0421/32-45-32), the Bremen Tourist Office (phone 0421/3-08-00-0) or through any of Bremen's leading hotels.

Location: The Schnoor

Rooms: One three-level suite

Proprietors: Family Fritsche

Prices: Single 420 DM (\$248), double 560 DM (\$331), extra bed 40 DM (\$23). Weekend special for wedding and anniversary couples 666.66 DM (\$394).

Meals: Champagne breakfast daily.

Facilities: Patrons who book through one of Bremen's leading hotels have full use of that hotel's guest facilities.

Disabled: Not suitable

Closed: Never

Parking: Street or at certain other hotels (see facilities)

Rating: In a class of its own.

Separating the old town from a newer part of the city that extends northeast to the railway station and beyond, is a beautiful green belt of open park land, canals and lakes. Called the Wallanlagen or Wall Parklands, the 200 meter wide strip of greenery follows the line of the medieval fortifications and moats that were dismantled in the beginning of the 1800's.

Near the point where the main city gate penetrated the old ramparts is a windmill whose long sails still sometimes turn gently in the wind. Once there were over a dozen such windmills in Bremen, providing flour for everyone who lived inside the city walls. The view of the windmill from the Herdentorsteinweg bridge as you walk from the Marktplatz to the railway station is quite picturesque.

Hotel Lichtsinn

This favorite of U.S. Astronauts Ed Gibson, Joe Allen and others is a short 100 meters from the Wallanlagen and a perfect example of the difficulties of hotel rating systems. The Lichtsinn gets just one 'roof peak' in the venerat-

EDITOR'S CHOICE

BREMEN HOTELS

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ed *Michelin Red Guide*, a rating which in no way reflects the distinctive charm and sophistication of this relatively unknown hotel. We suspect the modest rating is largely due to the lack of an elevator — the installation of which is currently underway.

Public rooms are lovely with fresh white walls, deep leather chairs, antique armoires and Persian carpets throughout. The magnificent hotel bar could have been lifted straight out of an English pub with its ornately carved wood and stained glass lighting. The overall effect is one of grace and comfort.

Most of the guest rooms are like small suites with a sleeping alcove and separate sitting area furnished with both a love seat and an upholstered wing chair. The ceramic tile bathrooms in each room are fully equipped...and pristine.

Address: Hotel Lichtsinn, Rembertstrasse 11, D-28203

Phone: 0421/36 80 70

Fax: 0421/32 72 87

Location: 100 meters from the Wallanlagen

Rooms: 33 rooms

Prices: Singles 140-150 DM (\$82-89), doubles 170-180 DM (\$100-107), apartment with kitchen 140-180 DM (\$82-107), suite from 200 DM (\$118). Breakfast buffet included.

Meals: Breakfast only

Facilities: Free fitness room, free bicycle loans, solarium 5 DM (\$3)/30 minutes.

Credit Cards: All

Disabled: Not suitable.

Closed: Never

Parking: 10 DM (\$6) per day

Rating: EXCELLENT 16/20 G \$

Hotel Zur Post

The main tourist office and several hotels surround the busy Bahnhofplatz, a convenience for those arriving by train.

The Hotel Zur Post, noted

particularly for its Michelin one-star restaurant, *L'Orchidée*, is a good choice for overnight accommodations. The hotel was originally built in the late 1800's but has been extensively remodeled in recent years. The rooms are designated as economy or first class, depending primarily on size, but all have private bath or shower, minibar, phone and color-TV. The management is both efficient and friendly and all the services expected in a large hotel are available.

Address: Hotel Zur Post, Bahnhofplatz 11, D-28195 Bremen 15

Phone: 0421/30-59-0

Fax: 0421/30-59-591

Location: Opposite Bremen Hauptbahnhof

Rooms: 194 rooms, some non-smoking

Proprietor: Fritz Rössler and son

Prices: Singles 157-197 DM (\$93-116), doubles 187-257 DM (\$111-152).

Meals: Breakfast 20 DM (\$12) extra. Three full-service restaurants.

Facilities: Sauna, indoor swimming pool, fitness center 15 DM (\$9)

Credit Cards: All major cards

Disabled: Limited access

Closed: Never

Parking: 15 DM (\$9) per night

Other: The Post is a Best Western Hotel

Rating: ABOVE AVERAGE 15/20

Park Hotel Bremen

Bremen's most luxurious hotel is regally situated at the far end of a formal reflecting pool in the middle of the city's 350-acre Bürgerpark. Before World War II a little-used community center stood on the site and it wasn't until after the war and its resultant bomb damage that the decision was made to build a hotel with public rooms grand enough for important functions.

The Park is a brisk 30-minute walk from old Bremen and perhaps better located for people traveling

by car than by train. Whatever your mode of transport, the setting is magnificent with footpaths and cycle tracks, meadows, streams and lakes.

The standard guest rooms open from wide hallways and are well furnished with all the usual amenities, including plenty of space to store luggage. Especially noteworthy are the bathrooms with heated towel bars, high-powered hair dryers and magnifying mirrors for makeup and shaving. And, of course, just about every room has a wonderful view of the park and its forests of native oak, beech, ash and maple.

There are, in addition, six junior suites and seven full suites stylishly appointed with various combinations of fine furnishings, double sinks, marble bath tubs, walk-in closets, televisions and phones in every corner and multiple wet bars.

The public rooms, including restaurants and bar, are elegant indeed and surely everything the founding fathers could ever have hoped for. Also at a high standard is the courteous and well-trained staff, from the reception desk to the cleaning crew.

One interesting touch: the elevator carpeting provides unique assistance to the temporarily challenged. The day we were there the carpet proclaimed, "Today is Wednesday." One hopes they never forget to change it.

Address: Park Hotel Bremen, Im Bürgerpark, D-28026 Bremen

Phone: 0421/34 08 611

Fax: 0421/34 08 602

Location: In the Bürgerpark behind the train station.

Rooms: 150 rooms, including six junior suites and seven full suites

Prices: Singles 290 DM (\$172), doubles 420-490 DM (\$248-290), junior suites 550 DM (\$325), full suites 850-1,500 DM (\$502-887).

Meals: Three full-service restaurants and a bar

Continued next page

Facilities: (No pools, saunas, etc.)

Credit Cards: All

Disabled: Not suitable

Closed: Never

Parking: Free in parking lot, 25 DM (\$15) per day in covered garage.

Other: Member of The Leading Hotels of the World.

Rating: EXCELLENT 17/20

Hotel Residence

On a quiet residential side street near the train station and the Bürger Park is the much smaller **Hotel Residence**, family run and very cozy with just 40 rooms. The ceilings of the lobby and lounge area are crisscrossed by dark Art Deco wooden beams that were carved especially for the hotel in 1898. The floors are scattered with richly-toned oriental rugs and big, green plants sit in every corner.

Upstairs the guest rooms all have private facilities, many with tub, shower and bidet. The rooms have TV, phone and minibar and are comfortably furnished. On the down side, the bedside lighting is poor and rather undistinguished artwork detracts from some rooms.

Address: Hotel Residence, Hohenlohestrasse 42, D-28209 Bremen

Phone: 0421/34 10 29 and 34 10 20

Fax: 0421/34 23 22

Location: Near Hauptbahnhof, Stadthalle and Bürger Park, 20-minute walk to old Bremen.

Rooms: 40 rooms, 24 with bath or shower

Proprietor: Herr U. Straten

Prices: Singles with bath 105-115

DM (\$63-68), doubles with bath 145-175 DM (\$86-104), twins with bath 190 DM (\$112), including breakfast.

Meals: Breakfast only.

Facilities: Sauna and solarium

Credit Cards: All major cards

Disabled: Not suitable

Closed: December 15 to January 5

Parking: 10 DM (\$6) per day


Rating: AVERAGE 11/20

Beer: A Bremen Tradition


Beer and Bremen just seem to go together. Perhaps it's because the first German Brewer's Guild was organized there in the 15th-century. Or because beer has been exported from the city's port for more than 600 years. Or maybe it's that some very well known brewhouses are still operating there, the most familiar to U.S. imbibers being **Beck's** and **St. Pauli Girl**, both fairly light pilsners by German standards.

A lesser known brewery, **Haake-Beck**, uses traditional copper vats to produce a complete range of beers, each one served in its own distinctive glassware. For something unusual order **Kräusen Pils**, a cloudy, unfiltered beer that arrives in cracked-glass pattern glasses. In summer, **Bremer Weisse**, a beer brewed with wheat rather than barley, is a tart and slightly fruity hot weather favorite. Expect a bowl-shaped glass.

Other labels to look for are **Hemelinger Spezial**, somewhat sweet, and a malty flavored, **Remmer Altbier**.

The newest entry on the scene is a brewpub where a fresh, real ale is produced naturally on the premises. The tavern, **Schüttinger**, is appropriately located on Wachstrasse behind the Schütting, the medieval guildhall on Marktplatz, and open every day for food and drink from 11:00 am to 2:00 am. 

Bremen is not only a pleasant, busy city with reasonably priced hotels and restaurants, but offers a good, real-life mix of commercial enterprise, historic significance and well-maintained green space. And its location at the center of both rail and highway hubs make it an excellent choice as a base city for touring northern Germany.

That it is often overlooked by tourists only heightens its appeal as a destination. 

EAT HEARTY IN BREMEN

Throughout the centuries The Free Hanseatic City of Bremen has fought to protect its autonomy from a succession of emperors, bishops, archbishops, prince bishops and assorted foreign powers, and to achieve its present status as Germany's smallest self-governing state. That determination was so fierce, in fact, that Bremen didn't even join the Hanseatic League, of which they are now so proud, until 1358 when political and economic pressures finally prevailed.

It is hardly surprising then that Bremen has clung dearly to its own special cuisine.

Many of the favorite dishes, of course, involve sausage, cabbage and potatoes. For the adventurous, *Knipp* is sausage made of pork meat, head, lungs, heart, groats (similar to grits) and herbs, stored in bowls and fried just before serving.

Bremen's true national dish comes complete with its own set of rituals. From

the middle of November until early March groups can be seen heading into the countryside on Kohl-and-Pinkel Walks, a tradition which seems to involve a great deal of hilarity, odd costumes and a barrel organ. At any rate, the ultimate goal is a hearty meal of Kohl and Pinkel — brown cabbage and a spicy sausage — at a country inn. The key to the success of this event is green cabbage that has been hit by a hard frost so it turns brown when cooked.

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SWISS TRAIN TRIPS

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Gottardo, like the *Lutetia*, which runs between Geneva and Milan, is a former first class TEE (Trans Europe Express) of unified design, redesigned for Eurocity service with first and second-class seats and a dining car. *Gottardo* requires prior seat reservations.

Night train: New Euronight *Roma*; Zürich - Florence - Rome, and #295 Basel - Bologna - Florence - Rome, with one and two-passenger sleeping compartments and six-passenger couchettes.

EC51 Ticino's Schedule:

Zürich to Milan: Leave Zürich 8:42 a.m., Arrive Milan 1:30 p.m.

Milan to Zürich: Leave Milan 3:00 p.m., Arrive Zürich 7:28 p.m.

EC57 Gottardo's Schedule:

Zürich to Milan: Leave Zürich 1:26 p.m., Arrive Milan 5:35 p.m.

Milan to Zürich: Leave Milan 7:25 p.m., Arrive Zürich 11:24 p.m.

Route Description:

Beginning at Zürich and traveling south, the tracks skirt the edge of Lake Zürichsee for six miles before entering a tunnel and emerging for a short distance for more lakeside views between Zug and Arth Goldau. Then in and out of tunnels past a third lake, the southern end of Verwald Statter See, between the towns of Brunner and Altdorf. An interesting sight occurs as the train climbs upward toward Gotthard Pass through spiral tunnels, passing the same church on three occasions from increasing heights, before continuing to Goschenen (3,336 ft).

From Goschenen a 10-15 minute connection is available to the *Glacier Express* route, St. Moritz to Brig. After Andermatt (4,744 ft) the train goes through the 7.5 mile long Gotthard Tunnel, coming out at Airolo (3,853 ft). In the next 29 miles are four more spiral tunnels and views down mountainsides as

the tracks descend to Biasca (987 ft), and down the side of the valley 12 more miles to Bellinzona where a change of trains and 12 miles takes one to Locarno, and with another change and 34 miles of narrow gauge travel, to Domodossola on the Italian Swiss border.

After Bellinzona, passing lakes for 18 miles, the train stops at Lugano and 16 miles farther crosses into Italy at Chiasso, continuing past Lake Como, and 32 miles later, reaches Milan.

Other recommended trains to Italy from Zürich:

Zürich - Rome

Day: *Raffaello*, with Swiss/Italian rest-stops at Milan, Bologna, Florence. Leave main station EC55 8:03 a.m., with restaurant. Arrive terminal station at 5:50 p.m.

Night: *Roma*, with couchettes, compartments, stops Florence 6:31 a.m. Leave main station, EN303, 9:40 p.m., no food service, arrive terminal station at 9:23 a.m.

Zürich - Venice

Day: *Canaletto*, with rest-stops. Lugano 10:06 a.m., Milan 11:35 a.m.

Leave main station IC351 7:03 a.m., with restaurant, arrive S. Lucia station, 3:32 p.m.

Zürich - Basel - Frankfurt - Hamburg

Recommended trains: ICE's *Panda*, *Helvetia* and *Joanna Spyri*

Local trains between Zürich and Basel leave every 30 minutes. Among international trains, the ICE's are the newest and most interesting: capable of 155 m.p.h., large and luxurious with a smooth, stable and very quiet ride. Within Switzerland their speed is limited to about 90 m.p.h. by the curving right of way.

Coaches combine corridor 2-1 seating — large armchairs with head cushions in soft red and blue patterned fabric — with glassed-in compartments for five. A coat closet in the center divides compart-

ments and aisle sections.

The dining end of the restaurant/bistro has modern decor: pale-tinted interior with an arched wood lattice ceiling, and wooden trellis with brass trim behind the 24 seats. A kitchen in the center serves both diner and bistro on opposite sides. The diner had white table linen and dishes already in place on *Panda* before our 6:45 a.m. departure from Zürich.

Breakfast (about \$9) included orange juice, scrambled or boiled eggs, ham and cheese, and a basket of fresh croissants, coarse grained bread and pumpernickel roll, and American-style coffee, in a large mug.

The overnight connection is #472 *Komet*, Zürich-Basel-Hamburg, with six-passenger couchettes and one and two-passenger sleeping compartments: Leave main station #472 10:15 p.m., with buffet, arrive main station 8:31 a.m.

ICE76 Panda's Schedule:

(Arrives/Departs Zürich Airport) Leave Zürich 6:45 a.m., Basel 7:51 a.m., Arrive Frankfurt 10:47 a.m., Hamburg 2:21 p.m.

Leave Hamburg 12:23 p.m., Arrive Frankfurt 4:10 p.m., Arrive Basel 7:11 p.m., Zürich 8:15 p.m.

ICE70 Helvetia's Schedule:


(Arrives/Departs Zürich Apt) Leave Zürich 10:45 a.m., Basel 11:51 a.m., Arrive Frankfurt 2:47 p.m., Hamburg 6:21 p.m.

Leave Hamburg 10:37 a.m., Frankfurt 2:10 p.m., Arrive Basel 5:11 p.m., Zürich 6:15 p.m.

ICE270 Joanna Spyri's Schedule:

Leave Zürich 7:17 p.m., Basel 8:20 p.m., Arrive Frankfurt 10:27 p.m., Hamburg 11:18 p.m.

Leave Frankfurt 5:42 a.m., Arrive Basel 8:41 a.m., Zürich 9:45 a.m.

(Ed. Note: To subscribe to Mr. Woelfel's quarterly train guides, write to him at P. O. Box 1846, Aptos CA 95001, or phone 408-662-1864.) 

Budget Corner

A new contributor to *Gemütlichkeit* is John Plunkett. His first budget recommendation, the *Villa Eva* in Prague, has earned the praise of several subscribers who have stayed there. Here are more ideas from Mr. Plunkett.

Hotel Pension am Karlstor Munich, Germany

The key here is price and location. We have stayed at the Karlstor four times and been very happy. It is safe, very clean and run by two nice people. The new owners speak German and English. Double room with shower is 115 DM (\$68). Doubles with the shower and toilet down the hall are 91 DM (\$55) plus 5 DM (\$3) each for a shower. Not a bad price considering it includes breakfast and is just a short walk from three of the most famous saloons in Germany: **Mathäer Bierstadt**, **Zum Pschorrbräu**, and the **Hofbräuhaus**. Fifty meters from the Karlstor is another great beer restaurant, the **Augustinerbräu**. Cost of meals in these places is about \$10-\$15, the same as at an inexpensive to moderately priced restaurant in the U.S.

If going to the city from the airport, take the S-8, S-Bahn from the new airport direct to the Karlsplatz/Stachus stop (cost \$6). From there it's a three-minute walk to the hotel. Riding the escalator out of the underground you'll spot the huge Karlsplatz Fountain on your left and the three arches of the Karlstor Gate straight ahead. The hotel entrance is just inside the smaller arch on your right.

Auto travelers will find it a little tricky getting to the Karlstor requiring some map reading. Park the car two blocks away in the parking garage (\$15 for 24 Hrs.), or find a parking space on the street.

By rail, walk the six blocks from the Hauptbahnhof or take the S-

Bahn one stop (Karlsplatz/Stachus).

Hotel am Karlstor, Neuhauser Str. 34, D-80331 Munich 2, phone 089/59 35 96, fax 089/523 46 81.

Pension Wendelsteinblick Bayrischzell, Germany

The toll road (3 DM/\$1.80) connecting the town of Degerndorf to highway # 307 is a beautiful drive. (Once on #307 go right/west to Bayrischzell.) The surrounding alps and developed ski areas give this resort village real zest. Beautiful mountains form a background for this valley village of classic Bavarian houses with a profusion of flowers and paintings as decoration.

Very clean, nothing special, no English spoken. The proprietor is Frau Adden. Doubles with shower, toilet, breakfast are 90 DM (\$54). This pension is nice but its true appeal is the **Deutsches Haus** restaurant across the street.

Pension Wendelsteinblick, D-83735 Bayrischzell, phone 08023/447.

Haus Kathrin Hof bei Salzburg, Austria

In a tiny village halfway between Salzburg and St. Wolfgang and an excellent base camp to run day trips in all directions. Especially beautiful, well decorated home. House is on a highway so the front rooms get some traffic noise but they also have a lovely view. A double room with shower — toilet across the hall — is about 600 OS (\$52).

Frau Enzersberger is friendly and gracious. She serves a great breakfast in a dining room with a

fireplace, a collection of hunting guns and some trophies. No English spoken.

Haus Kathrin, A-2322 Hof bei Salzburg, telephone 06229/2208.


Gasthof Hallberg Hallstatt, Austria

One of Austria's most picturesque towns is Hallstatt. It is small and can be walked end to end in just 20 minutes but its charm has you lingering and looking for hours. The appeal is the manner in which the village is built into the steep hillside overlooking the Halstattersee. The houses are seemingly stacked one atop the other so that none seems more than a few hundred feet from the lake. Winding stairs and walkways between homes and shops take you from one level to another.

We stayed at the Gasthof Hallberg, run by one of the more popular restaurants. Our room was huge and clean as a pin and cost only 700 AS (\$71). The furniture was wonderful old pine and the view from the corner window awesome.

One reason to stay at the Hallberg is the museum and the display area on the second floor landing. The landlord is a delightful, gruff guy who also runs a diving school. The museum's display shelves and cabinets hold many decades of booty raised from the bottom of lakes and rivers throughout Europe. The collection includes vases, huge urns from Roman times, arrowheads, tons of memorabilia from both World Wars, and one of every type of munition used by both sides.

Also recommended in Hallstatt is a visit to the salt mine.

Gasthof Hallberg, c/o Tourist Office Post Office Box 7, A-4830 Hallstatt, phone 06134/208, fax 06134/352. 

BREMEN EATS

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Proximity to the sea has traditionally brought all kinds of fish into the market place and restaurant menus today continue to reflect that abundance and easy accessibility. Every fish the North Sea has to offer can be baked, fried, poached, broiled, steamed, sauteed or stewed to your specifications but one local item to try is Bremen *Aalsuppe* (eel soup). A combination of eel with groats, carrots, peas and fourteen different herbs, the Bremen version is *not* to be confused with the Hamburg *Aalsuppe* which pairs eel with dried fruit, red wine and cinnamon.

Something else to look for are granat, small shrimp caught with special tug nets, cooked on board the boat and purchased for immediate consumption from stalls in the market place.

Beck's In'n Snoor

Good local cuisine and beer is served up every day at **Beck's In'n Snoor** on the main street of the historic Schnoor district. In spite of its wood paneling, old-world ambience and 600 year-old foundations, the building itself isn't that old. Still the atmosphere is cozy and casual and the prices reasonable. Cream of Tomato Soup — a thick broth topped with unsweetened whipped cream and laced with gin — costs 8.50 DM (\$5). Also delicious, the White Herring Rolls on apple slices accompanied by cranberry-horseradish sauce and black bread,

8.50 DM (\$5).

A main dish that appears frequently on local menus is *Labskaus*, simple sailors' food that makes a sustaining meal even for non-seafaring types. *Labskaus — Bremer Art*, of course — is a chunky hash of corned beef, herring and potatoes garnished with sour pickles, beets, bits of cooked pumpkin and a fried egg, 17.50 DM (\$10.35). Another hearty entree is the Herring Pot with white herring, shrimp, leeks and cucumber all in herb cream with boiled potatoes alongside, 22.50 DM (\$13.30). A full range of pork, veal, lamb and beef items are also available.

Breads at Beck's are wonderful and come with a ramekin of *Schmaltz*, a concoction of lard drippings and butter, that takes the place of plain butter as a spread. Not recommended by the American Heart Association but quite tasty.

Beck's in'n Snoor, Schnoorgasse 34-36, Bremen, Germany, phone (0421) 32 31 30. Open every day 11 am to 1:30 am. Moderate. Major Cards.

Rating: ABOVE AVERAGE 14/20

Bremer Ratskeller

More elegant — and more expensive — is the Bremer Ratskeller on the Marktplatz, an historic wine bar since 1405 that boasts 600 different German wines hidden away in its cellars, perhaps the most complete selection of German wines in the world. No beer is served at the Ratskeller.

The enormous restaurant is divided into three separate vaulted areas, the first of which features several antique wine barrels and a long wall of *priöken* — tiny individual dining rooms or alcoves. Sort of a cathedral crypt with food.

The main dining room is lovely with crisp, dusty peach linen tablecloths, fresh flowers, tall thin-stemmed wine glasses placed beside silver serving plates and napkins so intricately folded as to be reminiscent of the Sydney Opera House.

An assortment of bread and three colorful herb butters arrives with the drink order, both much needed for sustenance during a serious study of the menu...not to mention the lengthy wine list.

Typical appetizers on the a la carte menu are two kinds of melon with prosciutto for 18 DM (\$10.65) or a plate of assorted smoked fish at 19 DM (\$11.24).

Also on the menu is Bremer Chicken Ragout, an upmarket version of a local speciality that's made up of crayfish, veal sweetbreads and tongue, mushrooms and sausages, served with vegetable risotto for 38 DM (\$22.48).

Red Snapper Filet with Mango, Papaya Sauce at 37 DM (\$21.90) and Fillets of Beef and Veal in a creamy morel sauce for 42 DM (\$24.85).

On Tuesday evenings there's an extensive and well-prepared fish buffet that's a good value at 42 DM (\$24.85) but only if you're really ravenous. Highlights of the first course table included *gravlax*, poached salmon and caviar, smoked dog fish with various mustards and horseradishes, cream of shrimp soup and a court bouillon fortified with mussels, tiny shrimp and julienne vegetables. The salad of fresh spinach and four kinds of leaf lettuce was good but the featured fish of the evening, whole salmon baked in puff pastry and served on a rich cream sauce, was the least interesting part of the meal. For anyone still vertical, the dessert table offered an array of puddings and mousses as well *rote grütze*, a thick mixture of various red berries that's popular with the local citizenry.

Ratskeller, in the Rathaus, D-28195, phone 0421/32 16 76, fax 0421/3378121. Major cards. Moderate to Expensive.

Rating: ABOVE AVERAGE 15/20

Coming Soon: Classified Advertising

Gemütlichkeit will soon 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.