

GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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

Dear Subscriber...

1994 HOTEL OF THE YEAR

**Pension Altstadt
Vienna**

The differences between a pension and a hotel aren't important to the average vacation traveler. A hotel usually has a restaurant and occupies its own building. A pension, on the other hand, typically rents two or three floors of a building housing other businesses. It seldom serves meals other than breakfast.

So it is of little consequence that our 1994 Hotel of the Year — Vienna's Pension Altstadt — is technically not a hotel. Regardless of its official designation, the Altstadt was an easy choice. It combines a high level of personal service, fashionable ambiance and, during a time in which the price of an ordinary double room in a stylish hotel in a major European city is seldom less than \$250, excellent value.

Former computer executive, Otto Wiesenthal, has conceived and executed a lodging of great style. Bits and pieces of modern art are scattered throughout the Altstadt's 25 spacious, art nouveau guest rooms (ask for Number 14 or 31), no two of which are alike. From a chair by the fire in the main salon guests can enjoy the view across the rooftops to St. Ulrich's church.

Herr Wiesenthal and his staff recommend good neighborhood restaurants and can also run down theater and opera tickets.

The Altstadt is located in a

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THE BEST OF 1994

8TH ANNUAL "G" AWARD WINNERS

This is the final issue of our eighth year of publication and, as always at the year's end, we select those establishments which best epitomize *gemütlichkeit*, that untranslatable, difficult to pronounce German word we chose for the title of this newsletter.

The concept of *gemütlichkeit* has something to do with hospitality; a sense of warmth, coziness and friendliness. It has more to do with people than with things. The best way to understand *gemütlichkeit* is to experience it.

Choosing our annual "G" Award winners is neither science nor art but a feeling that involves the heart, mind and gut. We do not present our 1994 honorees as the best of their countries — although we heartily recommend all of them —

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10 FAVORITE TRAIN TRIPS

Associate Editor, Bruce Woelfel, lives to ride the trains of Europe. He loves to eat, sleep and do all manner of life's activities aboard them. To Bruce, the plight of "Charlie," the mythical MTA commuter who had to "ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston," is a fate devoutly to be wished. Here are his 10 favorite train trips involving Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

1. Swiss Crystal Panoramic Express: Montreux - Zweiz- immen (narrow gauge)

This exquisitely small-scaled train has uniquely designed front and rear cars with large glass windows through which tracks and preceding or receding landscapes can be viewed. There is also a delightful lounge car where one can enjoy a light snack of tea and pastries while scanning the passing sights. The trip takes only an hour and a half and rises precipitously above Lake Geneva from Montreux, snaking back and forth through hairpin turns past tiny hamlets, with panoramic views of

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DEAR SUBSCRIBER

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fairly upscale neighborhood of shops and apartments, a few blocks beyond the Ring and a short walk from the Neu Rathaus. The center of the old town is only 15 minutes on foot or five minutes by underground.

Perhaps in part because it is in Vienna, *Gemütlichkeit* has received more favorable letters and comments about the Altstadt than any other hotel we reviewed in 1994.

(For prices, phone numbers and other particulars on the Altstadt see listing on page 8.)

* * * *

BEST HOTEL VALUES OF 1994

Here, are the 11 best hotel values of the past year. They are listed in alphabetical order and include the approximate price for a standard double room with private bath.

Gasthof Pöchlacher \$62
Gasthof Pöchlacher, Sieringerstrasse 122, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/63173.

Haus Sarstein \$58
Haus Sarstein, A-4830 Hallstatt 83, Austria, phone 06134/217.

Hotel Adler \$100
Fuggerstrasse 1, D-87561 Oberstdorf, Germany, phone 08322/30 59, fax 08322/81 87

Hotel Lichtsinn \$110
Hotel Lichtsinn, Rembertistrasse 11, D-28203, Bremen, Germany, phone 0421/36 80 70, fax 0421/32 72 87.

Hotel Mader \$80
Stadtplatz 36, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/53358-0, fax 07252/533506.

Hotel Rebenhof \$85
Hotel Rebenhof, Weinstrasse 58, D-76534, Neuweier (Baden-Baden), Germany, phone 07223/5406, fax 07223/52321.

Hotel Ohnime \$75
Purbergstrasse 56, A-8044, Graz, Austria, phone 0316/39 11 43 19, fax 0316/39 11 43 19.

Hotelschiff Elbresidenz \$89
Hotelschiff Elbresidenz, Terrassenufer 12, D-01069, Dresden, Germany, phone 0351/459 50 53, fax 0351/459 51 37.

Pension Altstadt \$110
Pension Altstadt, Kirchengasse 41, A-1070 Vienna, Austria, phone 1/526 33 99-0, fax 1/523 49 01.

Pension Aviano \$105
Pension Aviano, Marco d' Avianogasse 1, A-1010 Vienna, Austria, phone 1/512 83 30, fax 1/5312 81 65-65.

Schwechater Hof \$78
Schwechater Hof, Sieringerstrasse 122, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/53067, fax 07252/5477054.

* * * *

BEST HOTELS OF 1994

In addition to our Hotel of the Year we saw some hotels that without respect to price were outstanding. Here are the very best in alpha order along with the price for the cheapest double room.

Brenner's Park-Hotel & Spa \$290
Lavish guest rooms, elegant public rooms, good food and top-class service in a magnificent park setting. The finest spa facilities. Few are in this class. Brenner's

Park-Hotel & Spa, Schillerstr. 6 D-76530 Baden-Baden, Germany, phone 07221/9000, fax 07221/38772 Rating: 18.5/20.

Hotel Beaufort \$207
Neuchâtel, Switzerland. See "G" awards story. Rating: 18/20

Hotel Walter au Lac \$145
Very large double rooms, many with huge lakeside terraces, are the leading feature of this three-star hotel. Ideal location on Piazza Rezzonico. Hotel Walter au Lac, Piazza Rezzonico 7, CH-6900, Lugano, Switzerland, phone 091/227425, fax 091/234233. Rating: 16/20

Kneippkurhaus Christliches Hospiz \$220
Oberstdorf, Germany. See "G" awards story. Rating: 18.5/20

Park Hotel Bremen \$275
An outstanding five-star hotel, regally situated in the middle of Bremen's 350-acre Bürgerpark with access to footpaths, cycle tracks, meadows, streams and lakes. Park Hotel Bremen, Im Bürgerpark, D-28026, Bremen, Germany, phone 0421/34 08 611, fax 0421/34 08 602. Rating: 17/20

Privathotel Quisisana \$195
Updated 19th century villa on a hill above the town. Elegant interior, especially the public rooms. Fine spa facilities. Privathotel Quisisana, Bismarckstrasse 21, D-76530, Baden-Baden, Germany, phone 07221/3440, fax 07221/38195. Rating: 16/20.

Romantik-Hotel Der Kleine Prinz \$195
A little too cute but there's no argument that this is a tremendous small hotel. Guestrooms are extraordinary and service is five-star. Romantik-Hotel Der Kleine Prinz, Lichtentaler Strasse 36, D-76530 Baden-Baden, Germany, phone 07221/3464, fax 07221/38264. Rating: 16.5/20

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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%

1994 "G" WINNERS

Continued from page 1

only that they have qualities that set them apart; qualities that can never be measured and only sketchily defined.

1994 "G" Awards

Pension Altstadt Vienna, Austria

Also our hotel of the year. See story, page one.

Pension Aviano Vienna, Austria

Frau Sabina Kafka, an energetic, thirtyish wife and mother, owns and operates several Vienna *pensionen*. This one is her flagship. The Aviano occupies a premier central location inside the Ring and several of its spacious, almost luxurious, guestrooms have views up and down the Kärntnerstrasse, Vienna's main strolling and shopping street. Excellent facilities, a businesslike but warm welcome and superior value make the Aviano a 1994 "G" winner. Try rooms Number 413 or 304.

Pension Aviano, Marco d' Aviano-gasse 1, A-1010 Vienna, phone 1/512 83 30, fax 1/5312 81 65-65. MOD.

Kneippkurhaus Christliches Hospiz Oberstdorf, Germany

One of the 15 best hotels we've ever reviewed. Extraordinarily beautiful interior decor and friendly management. A genuinely elegant hotel.

Kneippkurhaus Christliches Hospiz, Ludwigstrasse 37-41a, D-87561 Oberstdorf, Germany, phone 08322/701-0, fax 08322/701 516. EXP.

Walter au Lac Lugano, Switzerland

An ideal location, friendly service and very large double rooms, many with huge lakeside terraces, make this three-star hotel a best buy and a great place to spend a few days in the

agreeable climate of this urbane Swiss-Italian city.

Hotel Walter au Lac, Piazza Rezzonico 7, CH-6900 Lugano, Switzerland, phone 091/227425, fax 091/234233. MOD-EXP

Waldhotel Forellenhof Baden-Baden, Germany

Excellent value and rustic charm in a wooded setting about three miles outside of Baden-Baden. The Huber family's welcome is exceptionally warm. Ask for a room in the hotel's newer section and order trout in the restaurant.

Waldhotel Forellenhof, Gaisbach 91, D-76534, Baden-Baden, phone 07221/9740, fax 07221/974299. MOD.

Hotel Rebenhof Neuweier, Germany

Great prices and a wonderful vineyard location in a small wine village about 10 minutes from Baden-Baden qualify this little gem for a "G" award. A double room with a broad window overlooking the vineyards is about \$85, making the Rebenhof our top hotel value of 1994. Ask for room Number 11.

Hotel Rebenhof, Weinstrasse 58, D-76534 Neuweier, phone 07223/5406, fax 07223/52321. INX-MOD.

Elbresidenz Dresden, Germany

This unusual hotel's identical ship's cabin rooms are small but the location, looking out on the Elbe River and the nighttime lights of old Dresden, is elegant. Prices are moderate for this hotel-scarce city. Other bonuses are a swimming pool and a pleasant restaurant with outdoor terrace.

Hotelschiff Elbresidenz, Terrassen-ufer 12, D-01069 Dresden, phone 0351/459 50 53, fax 0351/459 51 37. INX-MOD.

Beaufort Hotel Neuchâtel, Switzerland

This exquisite "boutique hotel" has been constructed within a 19th

century shell on a stunning lakeside location. Large and luxurious top floor doubles, lavishly complete with walk-in closets, segmented marble baths, bars and safes — lacking only the larger windows of rooms on lower floors costing twice as much — are available on weekends for two for about \$160.

Hotel Beaufort, 1, Esplanade du Mont-Blanc, 2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland, phone 4138/24 00 24, fax 4138/24 78 94. EXP.

Haus Sarstein Hallstatt, Austria

This small pension on the edge of Hallstatt's lake provides friendly reception, homelike atmosphere and very reasonable prices in a tiny town which lacks deluxe hotel accommodations.

Haus Sarstein, A-4830 Hallstatt 83, phone 06134/217. INX

Hotel Mader Steyr, Austria

This "G" winner, in out-of-the-way Steyr, is located directly on the town's main square. Newly renovated guestrooms are large, well-equipped and have sparkling, well-lit bathrooms. Like the other two Steyr "G" winners, the Mader was chosen for its friendly management and the fact that it is in this charming city.

Hotel Mader, Stadtplatz 36, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/53358-0, fax 07252/533506. MOD.

Schwechater Hof Steyr, Austria

The accommodating Pötzl family — Otmar, Elfriede and Eva — and their seven room hotel are about as *gemütlich* a combination as we found in 1994. Ask for room Number 12.

Schwechater Hof, Sieringerstrasse 122, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/53067, fax 07252/5477054. INX

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1994 "G" WINNERS

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Gasthof Pöchlacher Steyr, Austria

The homey Gasthof Pöchlacher is what European inns were like 30 years ago; cozy, comfortable, inexpensive and welcoming, with no TV and little English spoken. Guest rooms are large and comfortable with standard amenities. Try Number 28.

The Pöchlacher's *stuberl* serves some of the best food in the region with entrees priced from \$7-\$10. Later in the evening you might ask for some of the house's special apricot schnapps.

Gasthof Pöchlacher, Sieringerstrasse 122, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/63173. INX.

Hotel Lichtsinn Bermen, Germany

Like liberal politicians, moderately-priced city hotels in Europe, are a dying breed. Add distinctive charm and sophistication to the Hotel Lichtsinn's surprisingly low rates and you have a "G" winner. Most guestrooms are like small suites, each with a sleeping alcove and separate sitting area furnished with both a love seat and an upholstered wing chair. Deep leather chairs, antique armoires and Persian carpets dot the Lichtsinn's public rooms and its magnificent bar is decorated with ornately carved wood and stained glass.

Hotel Lichtsinn, Rembertistrasse 11, D-28203, phone 0421/36 80 70, fax 0421/32 72 87. MOD.

Restaurant Vetta Lugano, Switzerland

A ride up two funiculars brings one to this yellow Victorian building perched on the top of Mount St. Salvatore. A great place to contemplate life over a glass of Fendant and a trout from Lake Lugano. The Vetta's breezy, open dining rooms and terraces offer sweeping views of Lugano and its lake.

Restaurant Vetta, Paradiso stop (Mt. Salvatore funicular), Lugano, Switzerland, phone 091/543701. MOD.

Italian Village Cafe Albertinum Hall Dresden, Germany

This elegant gilt and frescoed Baroque room, with its array of fresh baked pies and other sweet delicacies, is set among Dresden's many restored museums, palaces and churches; all impressive examples of the resurrection of this once ruined city.

Albertinum Hall, in the center of old Dresden, looks on the Elbe River from Petersburger Strasse at Rathenauplatz.

Italian Village Café, Albertinum, Brühlsche Terrasse, Dresden, Germany. MOD.

Restaurant-Hotel du Marche Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Neuchâtel is a taste of Paris in Switzerland: French language, food and vitality, all without the drawbacks of big city crowding. Restaurant-Hotel du Marche serves bistro food (steak with herb butter, pommes frites and Merlot wine) amid the medieval grandeur of this beautifully preserved city. Cars are banished underground and the real Paris is just a few hours by train. (TGV EC422 leaves Neuchâtel daily at 7:33 a.m., arrives Paris Lyon at 11:24 a.m. The return, TGV EC529, leaves Paris Lyon at 3:53 p.m., and arrives Neuchâtel at 6:49 p.m..)

Hotel Restaurant du Marche, Place des Halles 4, Neuchâtel, Switzerland. MOD.

Zur Hohen Brücke Gastätte Vienna, Austria

This ordinary neighborhood *beisl* is authentic old world Vienna and slightly off the tourist track. The stock-in-trade simple Viennese food and good beer, served by correct, uniformed waiters in a pleasant room are a powerful invitation to linger for an hour or two, anytime. Zur Hohen Brücke Gastätte, Wipplingerstr. 23, Vienna, Austria. INX.


Austrian Train Ride Selzthal to St. Valentin & Linz

A single daily run which goes all the way from Selzthal to Linz, this exciting trip along the Enns river valley takes the rider from rough water, a la "River Wild" to the transition of the taming power installations which illuminate the big city. The ride curves along a madly rushing river through a peaceful narrow rural valley of farms and small picturesque villages squeezed between jagged mountains.

Train #3602 with all second-class seating leaves Selzthal Monday through Friday at 9:40 a.m. and arrives Linz at 1:07 p.m.

Jaquet-Droz Automaton Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Three two-foot high clockwork figures built in the 18th century perform humanlike tasks (writing, drawing, playing the piano) upon command. Fascinating for adults and children.

Museum of Art and history, Neuchâtel. The automaton performs only on the first Sunday of each month. 

More Bests of 1994

Best New Public Transportation: Vienna's Underground. A little over \$10 for a three-day pass and the city is yours.


Best Breakfast Room: Hotel Einstein, St. Gallen, Switzerland. Great half-round window under a Doric peak.

Best Dining Room View: Romantik-Hotel Minichmayer, Steyr, Austria. Over the rivers and the town.

Best Church: The huge Abbey at Ottobeuren near Memmingen in Southern Germany. Breathtaking.

Best Hot Drink: *Weihnachtspunch*, a red wine-tea-rum-orange-spice Christmas concoction. The best we had was at Pension Altstadt, Vienna.

Best Unusual Museum: (tie) Textile Museum in St. Gallen, Switzerland, and the Zeughaus (Arsenal) in Graz, Austria. Amazing embroidery and a warehouse of medieval weaponry.

Best Half-Day Tour: The salt mines in Hallstatt, Austria. Slides better than any playground. 

10 FAVORITE TRAIN RIDES

Continued from page 1

the lake and snow covered Mont Blanc beyond, then continues through high meadows and forests to Zweizimmen where a standard gauge connection to Spiez is available. "Crystal" is limited to first-class passengers.

The more conventional Panoramic Express, with attractive first and second-class cars with large windows, but no lounge or other special features, travels the same route. "Crystal" makes the trip twice per day in each direction from July 3-October 31, and runs exclusively on Sundays the remainder of the year. "Panoramic" runs daily all year. Both accept Eurailpass and Swiss Pass. Other local trains run hourly.

Schedule: Lv Montreux 8:21 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Arr Zweizimmen 10:49 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. Lv Zweizimmen 10:43 a.m. and 4:53 p.m., Arr Montreux 12:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 10/10; FOOD AND DRINK 7/10; VIEW 10/10; TOTAL SCORE 27/30

2. Austrian Robert Stolz and Transalpin: Zürich - Vienna; Zürich - Graz

Two equally excellent trains running between Zürich and Innsbruck, carry Swiss-built "panorama" cars with raised floors and very large curved windows. The route passes spectacular Austrian scenery: graceful bridges across perpendicular rock gorges, ancient castles, quaint and colorful little villages, and narrow valleys opening up to green forests and pristine alpine lakes. Transalpin ends in Vienna and the Robert Stolz train takes a different route after Innsbruck to end in Graz.

Eating aboard can be a delightful experience. Transalpin has a somewhat formal Austrian restaurant and Robert Stolz has a Swiss diner (housed in a German restaurant car), with more menu choices and a number of lighter options.

Recently aboard Transalpin, the chef reserved places for early and late lunches (before and after the stop at Innsbruck). The diner has large windows looking out on the mountain landscape and a quiet, cordial

atmosphere: dark blue walls, blue carpet, light blue brocaded drapes, and subdued lighting. Two fixed-price luncheons including dessert and coffee were offered. The more elaborate meal — soup, smoked salmon on toast, beef burgundy with noodles, Camembert cheese and vanilla pudding — cost about \$21.

To obtain seats in the observation cars (choice of smoking or nonsmoking), reservations are recommended aboard both trains.

EC 162/3 Transalpin Schedule: Lv Zürich 8:42 a.m., Arr Innsbruck 1:16 p.m. Lv Innsbruck 2:44 p.m., Arr Zürich 6:50 p.m.

EC 168/9 Robert Stolz Schedule: Lv Zürich 11:20 a.m., Arr Innsbruck 3:13 p.m., Arr Graz 9:00 p.m. Lv Graz 11:00 a.m., Arr Innsbruck 4:53 p.m., Arr Zürich 8:41 p.m.

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 8/10, FOOD AND DRINK 9/10; VIEW 9/10; TOTAL SCORE 26/27

3. Swiss Ticino: Zürich - Milan

The enhanced opportunity to enjoy this route's craggy scenery between Zürich and the Italian border because of "Ticino's" "panorama" cars (similar to those on Robert Stolz and Transalpin), make this the most interesting trip on standard gauge rail within Switzerland. The most exciting part of the journey south comes after completing passage through the nine-mile St. Gotthard Tunnel, which pierces a mountain barrier that formerly divided Italian-speaking Ticino from the North.

The route negotiates the famous "triple spiral" section, which circles in and out of the mountains and observes the same mountain village from three different vantage points.

Ticino is the best of several good trains along this busy route and the only one to carry "panorama" cars. It also conveys a full-service Swiss diner. Reservations are advised for seats in the observation car.

EC 51/6 Ticino Schedule: Lv Zürich 8:53 a.m. (Airport 11 minutes earlier), Arr Milan 1:30 p.m. Lv Milan 3:00 p.m., Arr Zürich 7:28 p.m. (Airport 17 minutes later)

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 9/10; FOOD AND DRINK 7/10; VIEW 9/10; TOTAL SCORE 25/30

4. Pablo Casals Zürich, Bern, Lausanne and Geneva - Barcelona (overnight)

A luxurious "hotel-train" with restaurant, bar and roomy compartments, which runs three days per week, "Casals" is currently Europe's best overnight train. Its elegant Spanish restaurant serves several choices of freshly prepared main courses. For a main dish of steak or sea bass with soup, salad, cheese, pastry, wine and coffee the cost is about \$90 for two, including wine and tip. Lighter fare and beverages are available from the bar.

Innovatively designed compartments, the largest being similar in size and amenities to cruise ship staterooms, provide a variety of sleeping arrangements. Approximate prices: four-passenger second-class sleeping compartments with sink, \$70/person; two-passenger first-class compartments with sink, \$100/person; and "Grand Classe" suites for one or two with separate toilet and shower, \$300/total. Separate fare or Eurailpasses plus supplements for reserved compartments.

EN 272/4 Pablo Casals Schedule: Lv Zürich Mon, Wed, Fri 7:33 p.m., Bern 8:47 p.m., Lausanne 9:57 p.m., Geneva 10:49 p.m., Arr Barcelona 9:10 a.m. next morning. Lv Barcelona Franca Tue, Thu, Sun 8:15 p.m., Arr Geneva 5:52 a.m., Lausanne 6:40 a.m., Bern 7:51 a.m., Zürich 9:15 a.m. next morning.

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 10/10; FOOD AND DRINK 9/10; VIEW 5/10; TOTAL SCORE 24/30

5. Swiss Glacier Express: Zermatt, Brig, Chur - St. Moritz (narrow gauge)

A beautiful ride, surely one of the most scenic in Europe, this is the most famous of the privately-run Swiss railways, a charming journey with fantastic views and a very good Swiss restaurant. Although lacking the innovative design features of Crystal Panoramic Express, first-class coaches are comfortably air-conditioned and have very large windows. The little red train winds up and down and around mountains and valleys, over and through the picturesque Swiss landscape, taking seven and a half-

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hours to cover the 165 miles between Zermatt and St. Moritz. Other, less celebrated narrow gauge trains, travel the route throughout the day.

Lunch in the dining car is a particular treat, with very friendly service in a rustic/modern atmosphere: light-grained wood trim, wide windows, tables set with crisp linen and the famous bent-over wine glasses (given to passengers as souvenirs), which can be turned to keep the wine from spilling during the many banked curves. There are two separate servings of a set lunch; a satisfying meal of consume, spaghetti with tomato sauce, veal cutlet in mushroom gravy, cheese, fruit and coffee was about \$50 for two. Reservations are essential in summer because of the popularity of this special train. Eurail-passes not accepted.

Glacier Express Schedule: Lv Zermatt 8:54 a.m., Arr Chur 2:18 p.m., St. Moritz 4:58 p.m.. Lv St. Moritz 7:05 a.m., Chur 9:03 a.m., arrives Zermatt 2:45 p.m..

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 5/10; FOOD AND DRINK 9/10; VIEW 10/10; TOTAL SCORE 24/30.

6. Swiss Intercity Lutetia: Geneva, Lausanne, Brig - Milan

"Lutetia" has an enchanting, intimate air — small with especially comfortable open corridor cars — and is best among a number of interesting trains which travel this pleasurable route. It was formerly famous as a TEE (Trans Europe Express), reserved exclusively for first-class passengers. Although later modified to include second-class cars, it has retained its distinctive appearance as well as the TEE logo.

Traveling south from Geneva, lakeside views during the early portion of the ride are followed by a mountainous ascent and passage through the 12-mile Simplon Tunnel which divides Italy and Switzerland. On a recent trip, the small dining car was run by a single attendant who

hurried aboard with fresh croissants, then served continental breakfast (\$10) and a light lunch (\$20-25) on the four and a half-hour journey. Reservations required.

IC 330/3 Lutetia Schedule: Lv Geneva 1034 a.m. (Airport 10 minutes earlier) Arr Milan 2:40 p.m. Lv Milan 9:10 a.m., Arr Geneva 1:16 p.m. (Airport 10 minutes later).

Rating: Accommodations 8/10; Food and drink 7/10; View 8/10; Total Score 23/30.

Munich, Frankfurt, and other major German cities.

Well before departure, on a recent morning trip from Zürich, tables in the dining end of the restaurant/bistro car were set with white linen and orange-accented china. Decor is strikingly modern and deceptively spacious-looking with pale-tinted walls, an arched wood lattice ceiling, enlivened by wooden trellises and brass trim. A kitchen in the center served both the diner and bistro.

Breakfast included orange juice, scrambled or boiled eggs, ham and cheese, a basket of fresh croissants, coarse-grained bread and pumpernickel rolls. Reservations advised.

ICE 76/7 Panda Schedule: Lv Zürich 6:45 a.m. (Airport 20 minutes earlier), Basel 7:51 a.m., Arr Hamburg 2:34 p.m.. Lv Hamburg 12:37 p.m., Arr Basel 7:11 p.m., Zürich 815 p.m. (Airport 20 minutes later).

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 9/10; FOOD AND DRINK 9/10; VIEW 5/10; TOTAL SCORE 22/30

8. French L'Arbalette: Zürich and Basel - Paris

The two fast trains on this route, L'Arbalette and Le Corbusier, have traditional compartments as well as corridor-style seating for first-class passengers. But L'Arbalette carries a sleekly modern French restaurant car while Le Corbusier serves distinctly mediocre airline-style, in-place meals. L'Arbalette is the clear choice, with its restful ambiance and gracious service, and excellent though expensive French meals (\$40-50 per person including main course, dessert and a small bottle of wine). Reservations advised.

EC 114/5 L'Arbalette Schedule: Lv Zürich 7:12 a.m., Basel 8:23 a.m., arrives Paris Est 1:12 p.m.. Lv Paris Est 5:00 p.m., arrives Basel 9:40 p.m., Zürich 10:47 p.m..

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 6/10; FOOD AND DRINK 9/10; VIEW 6/10. TOTAL SCORE 21/30.

WHAT IT COSTS TO RIDE

Individual Tickets*, Per Person, First-Class, One Way
(Meals and beverages extra)

Crystal Panoramic Express: Day Montreux-Zweizimmen	\$32.
Robert Stolz: Day Zürich-Graz	\$156.
Ticino: Day Zürich-Milan	\$88.
Pablo Casals: Overnight Zürich-Barcelona	\$203.
(plus \$75-\$150/pers dbl occupancy)	
Glacier Express: Day Zermatt-St. Moritz	\$153.
Lutetia: Day Geneva-Milan	\$94.
Panda: Day Zürich-Hamburg	\$278.
L'Arbalette: Day Zürich-Paris	\$120.
Bernina Express: Day Chur-Tirano	\$68.
Orient Express: Overnight Paris-Budapest	\$305.**
(plus \$100/pers dbl occupancy)	

(* Most of these trains accept Eurail passes, though reservations and sleeping compartments are charged extra.)

(** Compare with the famous "cruise-train" Venice-Simplon-Orient Express, traveling once a week London - Venice from March to November, which costs \$1570 per person, double occupancy including meals. Beverages are extra.)

7. German ICE Panda: Zürich and Basel - Hamburg

With its separate diner and wide, comfortable and very quiet coaches, the 155 m.p.h. German ICE is our favorite among European fast trains, the only one where it is possible to eat restaurant-style meals in a location separate from one's seat (others have small snack bars and serve in-place meals). Coaches combine corridor seating — large armchairs with soft head-cushions — and glassed-in compartments seating five. Commodious and secure spaces are provided for carry-on luggage. Panda is one of three daily runs of these luxurious trains between Zürich and Hamburg. ICE trains also serve

9. Swiss Bernina Express: Chur - Tirano, Italy (narrow gauge)

Sharing a portion of its route with Glacier Express, this ride of nearly 90 miles twists back and forth up a glacier past treeless slopes between 11,000 foot mountains, then descends to the lovely town of Poschiavo, before continuing into Tirano, which has a rail connection to Milan. The coaches are comfortable, albeit conventional in design. Food service is from a cart.

Except for Bernina Express, which runs once per day each way, service over this route consists of separate hourly segments with convenient transfers. Although Eurailpasses are valid on this privately-owned railroad, a prior reservation and payment of 6 Sfr. is required prior to boarding.

Bernina Express Schedule: Lv Chur 8:57 a.m., Arr Poschiavo 12:03 p.m., Tirano 12:40 p.m. Lv Tirano 3:05 p.m., Arr Poschiavo 3:52, Chur 6:55 p.m..

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 5/10; FOOD AND DRINK 5/10; VIEW 10/10; TOTAL SCORE 20.

10. Orient Express: Budapest - Vienna and Salzburg - Paris (overnight)

On a cold Salzburg evening, bound for Paris, our sleeping compartment seemed an especially cozy haven, made up for day use with its three-seater couch of green plush upholstery. Although not as elegant as the refurbished and privately run Venice-Simplon-Orient Express (Eurailpasses not valid), this Orient Express provides good overnight comfort for much less money.

Our room contained the usual convertible desk-sink. Toilets and a small food-service area were down the hall. We were cautioned to keep both inside bolts locked during the night.

It was a long journey through many cars to reach the dining car, then...suddenly!...a Hungarian restaurant; brightly lit and lively, with red-coated waiters, glowing red shaded lamps, red lace tablecloths, white lace curtains, striped seats, and an international clientele. The imaginatively written menu had some

intriguing Hungarian and continental selections: "Transylvanian Goulasch;" "Paprika Chicken with Gnocchi." We had a salad of pickled cabbage with hot green peppers, lettuce and cucumber; then roast beef with mushrooms and green parsley sauce with rice and fried potatoes and, for dessert, a sort of Hungarian "Twinkie;" chocolate-covered cake with chocolate cream filling (\$37 including wine and tip). Eurailpasses accepted, sleeping compartments approximately \$100/person additional.

EN 466/7 Orient Express Schedule: Lv Paris Est 7:43 p.m. (diner added in morning), Arr Salzburg 5:53 a.m. next morning, Vienna 9:25 a.m., Budapest 1:28 p.m.. Lv Budapest Keleti 3:30 p.m. (with diner to Salzburg), Arr Vienna 7:40 p.m., Salzburg 11:07 p.m., Paris Est 9:31 a.m. next morning.

Rating: ACCOMMODATIONS 6/10; FOOD AND DRINK 8/10; VIEW 5/10; TOTAL SCORE 19.

Using European Trains

General Suggestions

First-class, of course, is preferable, mainly because it is less crowded and more spacious. For individual trips reserve (\$10/seat DER Tours 800-782-2424) 30-60 days ahead, specifying smoking preference. During summer and holiday times, popular trains such as the German Panda (Zürich-Hamburg) will be nearly full, even in first-class. In the more crowded second-class it is even more important to reserve. If boarding without a reservation, check the sign outside each compartment to see if there are vacant seats, or look for the "non-reserved" sign on a seatback in corridor cars. Within Switzerland no seats are reserved except on trains with international destinations (i.e. Transalpin: Zürich - Vienna) and special trains such as the Glacier Express.

Handling Baggage

Although checking is possible, it is usually more convenient to carry bags. Try to limit baggage to one suitcase with wheels which can be carried up and down stairs. Although some cities have free luggage carts and some have escalators, stairs in others will challenge your stamina if your load is too great. When the


trip ends, be ready with bags by the exit door because many stops are only for one or two minutes.

Eating Aboard

One of the greatest pleasures of train travel is "dinner in the diner." Food on European trains is better and more expensive than on Amtrak. Expect to pay about the same as in a moderately expensive restaurant in your destination city: \$25-\$45 for a three-course meal without beverages. Within Switzerland if you order a meal you can stay in the dining car for the entire journey. Elsewhere there may be two sittings (reserved ahead of time), and if you choose the first you will have to vacate for the next group of diners. Between meals the diner is usually open for light snacks, beverages and socializing.

Railpasses

Purchase one of the many Eurailpass variations before leaving the US or Canada. While it is possible to order individual tickets in the U.S. or pay at the station before boarding, if your travels include one or more long trips in first-class a railpass will probably be cheaper. In addition, you won't have to wait in line and it is convenient to just flash your pass to the conductor rather than pull out your tickets each time.

Traveling entirely within one country is the least expensive, Switzerland charges \$222 first-class and \$148 second-class for three days of travel in 15; Austria is \$153 first and \$103 second for four days of travel in ten; Germany is \$260 first and \$178 second for five days travel in one month. Next cheapest is a Europass which allows five days travel in three countries over two months for \$280 first-class, \$198 second-class. Countries of choice do not include Austria, but that can be added for \$35 first-class, \$25 second. The flexipass, allowing five days first-class travel in two months for \$348 is another option. If your plans include more than five days travel and you are accompanied by another person, a Eurail Saverpass provides 15 days unlimited travel for two or more for \$430 each. (Many other plans are available, check with DER or Rail Europe for details.) 



"G" Winners at a Glance 1987-1994

Expense Code:

INX	=	Inexpensive
MOD	=	Moderate
MEXP	=	Moderate to Expensive
EXP	=	Expensive

These are subjective assessments made within the context of 1993 costs for European hotels and restaurants.

Hotels

Albergo Gardenia, Via Valle, CH-6987 Caslano, Switzerland, phone 091/711716, fax 091/712642. EXP.

Albergo Giardino, CH-6612 Ascona, Switzerland, phone 093/35 01 01, telex 846 223, fax 093/36 10 94. EXP.

Atlas Hotel, CH-8024 Pontresina, Switzerland, phone 082/663 21, fax 082/679 92. MOD.

Berghotel Latscheneck, Kaffeefeld 1, D-8102 Mittenwald, Germany, phone 08823/14 19, fax 08823/10 58. MOD.

Falken-Hotel, CH-3823 Wengen, Switzerland, phone 036/56 51 21, fax 036/55 33 39. MOD.

Gartenhotel Tümmlerhof, A-6100 Seefeld/Tirol, Austria, phone 05212/2571-0, telex 3522350. EXP.

Gasthaus and Hotel Zur Weserei, Hauptstrasse 70, D-7842 Kandern, Germany, phone 07626/7000, fax 07626/6581. INX-MOD

Gasthof Bammes, Bucher Hauptstraße 63, D-8500 Buch 90, Germany, phone 0911/ 38 13 03, fax 0911/346 313. EXP.

Gasthof Fraundorfer, 24 Ludwigstraße, D-8100 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, phone 08821/21 76, fax 08821/71073. INX.

Gasthof Pöschacher, Sieringerstrasse 122, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/63173. INX.

Gasthof Zur Stadt Mainz, Semmelstrasse 39, D-8700 Würzburg, Germany, phone 09 31-5 31 55, fax 09 31-5 85 10. MEXP.

Grand Hotel Victoria-Jungfrau, CH-3800, Interlaken, Switzerland, phone 036/271111, fax 036/273737. EXP.

Grüner Baum, Kötschachtal, A-5640 Badgastein, Austria, phone 06434 25 160, fax 06434 25 16 25. EXP.

Gutshotel des Weingutes, Balduinstraße 1, D-5507 Neumagen-Dhron, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, phone 06507/ 20 35, fax 06507/ 5644. MOD.

Haus Hirt, An der Kaiserpromenade, A-5640 Badgastein, Austria, phone 06434 27 97, fax 06434 27 97 48. MOD.

Haus Sarstein, A-4830 Hallstatt 83, Austria, phone 06134/217. INX.

Hostellerie Bon Accueil, CH-1837 Château-d'Oex, Switzerland, phone 029/4 63 20, fax 029/45126. MOD.

Hostellerie du Débarcadère, CH-1025 Saint Sulpice, Switzerland, phone 021/691 57 47, fax (021) 691 50 79. MOD.

Hotel Abtei, Abteistraße 14, D-2000 Hamburg 13, Germany, phone 040/449595, fax (040) 449820. EXP.

Hotel Alpenrose, CH 9658 Wildhaus

(Obertoggenburg), Switzerland, phone 074/52121, fax 074/51052. MEXP

Hotel Andrea, Hölzweg 10, D-8373 Bodenmais, Germany, phone 09924/3 86, fax 09924/7474. MOD.

Hotel Anker, Obertorstraße 6, Postfach 106, D-8772, Marktheidenfeld, Germany, phone 09391/60040. fax 09391/600477. MOD.

Hotel Bären, CH-3812 Wilderswil, Switzerland, phone 036/22 35 21, fax, 036/22 35 44. MOD.

Hotel Bavaria, Kienbergstraße 62, D-8962 Pfronten-Dorf, Germany, phone 08363/50 04, fax 08363/6815. MOD.

Hotel Beaufort, 1 Esplanade du Mont-Blanc, 2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland, phone 038/24 00 24, fax 038/24 78 94. EXP.

Hotel Benen Diken Hof, Süderstraße, Postfach 20, D-2280 Keitum/Sylt, Germany, phone 04651/31035, fax 04651/35835. MOD-EXP

Hotel Brandenburger Hof, Eislebener Strasse 14, W-1000 Berlin 30, phone 030/214050, fax 030/20405 100. EXP

Hotel Cappella, 39030 Colfosco, Val Badia (Prov. BZ) Italy, phone 04 71/83 61 83. MOD-EXP.

Hotel de la Poste, CH-1936 Verbier, Switzerland, phone 026/316681, fax 026/313401. MOD.

Hotel der Bär, A-6352 Ellmau, Tirol, Austria, phone 53 58/23 95, fax 53 58/23 95-56. EXP

Hotel Des Vignes, CH-1958 Uvrier-Sion, Switzerland, phone 027/311671, fax 027/313727. MOD-EXP

Hotel Domus, Uhlandstrasse 49, D-1000 Berlin 15, phone 030/88 20 41, fax 030/882 0410. MOD

Hotel Erzerzog Johann, Sackstraße 3-5, A-8011 Graz, Austria, phone (0316) 81 16 16, fax (0316) 81 15 15. MOD.

Hotel Exquisit, Pettenkoflerstraße 3, D-8000 Munich 2, Germany, phone 089/551 99 00, fax 089/551 99 499. MOD-EXP.

Hotel Florhof, Florhofgasse 4, CH-8001 Zürich, Switzerland, phone 01/261 44 70, fax 01/261 46 11. MOD.

Hotel Geiger, Stangas, D-W-8240 Berchtesgaden, Germany, phone 08652/9653, fax 08652/965400. EXP.

Hotel Goldfassan, Stauffeneggstr. 2, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria, phone 0662/431436. MOD.

Hotel Hecht, CH-9050 Appenzell, Switzerland, phone 071/87 47 80, fax 071/87 10 47. INX-MOD.

Hotel Hirschen, CH 3350 Langnau im Emmental, Switzerland, phone 063/2 15 17, fax 063/256 23. INX-MOD.

Hotel-Pension Heim, Aufmberg 8, D-8959 Seeg, Germany, phone 08364/258, fax 08364/1051. INX

Hotel Klarer, CH-7524, Zuoz, Switzerland, phone 082/7 13 21, fax 082/7 12 14. MOD.

Hotel Kronprinz, Kronprinzenndamm 1, D-1000 Berlin 31, phone 030/89 60 30, fax 030/893 1215. MOD.

Hotel Lichtsinn, Rembertstrasse 11, D-28203, Bremen, Germany, phone 0421/36 80 70, fax 0421/32 72 87. Moderate.

Hotel Mader, Stadtplatz 36, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/53358-0, fax 07252/533506. MOD

Hotel Opera, St.-Anna-Strasse 10, D-8000 Munich 22, phone 089/225533, fax 089/225538. EXP.

Hotel Petrisberg, Sickingenstrasse 11, D-5500

Trier, Germany, phone 0651/4 11 81. INX-MOD.

Hotel Rebenhof, Weinstrasse 58, D-76534 Neuweier, phone 07223/5406, fax 07223/52321. INX-MOD.

Hotel Reichs-Küchenmeister, Kirchplatz 8, D-8803 Rothenburg o.d.T., Germany, phone 09861/2046, fax 09861/86965. INX-MOD.

Hotel Rheinfels, CH-8260 Stein am Rhein, Switzerland, phone 054/41 21 44, fax 054/412 522. INX-MOD.

Hotel Römischer Kaiser, Annagasse 16, 3, A-1010 Vienna, phone 0222/ 51 227 51-0. MOD-EXP.

Hotel Sacher, Philharmonikerstraße 4, A-1015 Vienna, phone 0222/ 51 456. EXP.

Hotelschiff Elbresidenz, Terrassenufer 12, D-01069 Dresden, phone 0351/459 50 53, fax 0351/459 51 37. INX-MOD.

Hotel Trumer Stube, Bergstrasse 6, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria, phone 0662/74776, fax 0662/74326. MOD.

Hotel-Pension Wolf, Kaigasse 7, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria, phone 84/24 230. MOD.

Hotel Walter au Lac, Piazza Rezzonico 7, CH-6900 Lugano, Switzerland, phone 091/227425, fax 091/234233. MOD-EXP.

Hotel Wörtz zur Weisteige, Hohenheimer Str. 30, D-7000 Stuttgart 1, Germany, phone 0711/236 7001, fax 0711/296 940. MOD-EXP.

Kneippkurhaus Christliches Hospiz, Ludwigstrasse 37-41a, D-87561 Oberstdorf, Germany, phone 08322/701-0, fax 08322/701 516. EXP.

L'Auberge De Chernex, CH-1822 Chernex, Switzerland, phone 021/ 964 41 91, fax 021/ 964 6857. MOD.

Landgasthof Ruedihus, CH-3718 Kandersteg, Switzerland, phone 033/ 751580, fax 033/751828. INX.

Landhaus Hubertushof, Puchen 86, A-8992, Altausseel/Steiermark, Austria, phone 06152/71280. MOD

Landhaus Sommer am See, Weidachstrasse 74, D-8958 Füssen, Germany, phone 08362/2481, fax 08362/2074. INX-MOD

Parkhotel, Villastrasse 21, D-7000 Stuttgart 1, Germany, phone 0711/28-01-0, fax 0711/286 4353. EXP.

Pension Altstadt, Kirchengasse 41, A-1070 Vienna, Austria, phone 1/526 33 99-0, fax 1 523 49 01. MOD.

Pension Aviano, Marco d' Avianogasse 1, A-1010 Vienna, phone 1/512 83 30, fax 1/5312 81 65-65. MOD.

Romantik Hotel Bierhütte, D-8351 Hohenau, Germany, phone 08558/3 15, fax 08558/23 87. MOD.

Romantik Hotel Guardaval, CH-7550 Bad Scuol, Switzerland, phone 084/864 1321, fax 084/864 9767. MEXP.

Romantik Hotel Lindner, Marienplatz 5, D-8202 Bad Aibling, Germany, phone 08061/4050, fax 08061/30535. MOD.

Romantik Hotel Löwen, Engsteinstrasse 3, CH-3076 Worb bei Bern, Switzerland, phone 031/83 23 03. fax 031/839 58 77. MOD

Romantikhotel Tennerhof, Griesenauweg 26, A-6370 Kitzbühel, Austria, phone 05356/31 81, fax 05356/31 81 70. EXP.

Savoy Hotel Baur en Ville, Am Paradeplatz, CH-8022 Zürich, phone 01/211 53 60, telex 812845, fax 01/221 14 67. EXP.

Schloß Haunspurg, A-5411 Oberalm bei Hallein, Austria, phone 6245/80662, fax 6245/85680. MOD.

Schlosshotel Castell, CH-7524 Zuoz, Switzerland, phone 082/7 01 01, fax 082/7 31 20. MOD.

Schwechater Hof, Sieringerstrasse 122, A-4400, Steyr, Austria, phone 07252/53067, fax 07252/5477054. INX.

Waldhotel Doldenhorn, CH-3718 Kandersteg, Switzerland, phone 033/751818, fax 033/751828. MOD-EXP.

Waldhotel Forellenhof, Gaisbach 91, D-76534 Baden-Baden, phone 07221/9740, fax 07221/974299. MOD.

Restaurants/Taverns

Alt Hamburger Bierstube, Gerhofstrasse near the Gänsersmarkt, Hamburg, Germany, INX.

Bratwursthäusle, Rathausplatz 1, D-8500 Nürnberg, Germany, phone 0911/22 76 95. INX.

Brauerei Schlenkerla, Dominikanerstrasse 6, D-8600 Bamberg, Germany, INX.

Café Hengstler, Karlstraße 45, D-0771 Donaueschingen, Germany, phone 0771 22 32.

Gasthof Hirsch, Kirchplatz 3, D-8959 Seeg, Germany, phone 08364/353. INX

Heurigen Restaurant, 47 Rennweg, A-1030, Vienna. INX.

Hotel Bahnhof Restaurant, CH-3792 Saanen, Switzerland, phone 030/4 14 22. INX.

Hotel Restaurant du Marche, Place des Halles 4, Neuchâtel, Switzerland. MOD.

Italian Village Café, Albertinum, Brühlsche Terrasse, Dresden, Germany. MOD.

Käpt'n Hahn, Trift 10, D-2280 Westerland/Sylt, Germany, phone 04651/54 61. MOD-EXP.

Le Gitan, CH-3920 Zermatt, Switzerland, phone 028/67 10 98. MOD-EXP.

Smutny, Elisabethstraße 8, A-1015 Vienna, Austria. INX.

Ratskeller Restaurant, Markt 1, D-3509 Spangenberg, Germany, phone (05663) 3 41. INX to MOD.

Restaurant Kronenhalle, Rämistrasse 4, 8001 Zürich, telephone 01/251 02 56 or 01/251 66 69. EXP.

Ristorante Stazione, CH-6655 Intraigna (near Ascona), Switzerland, phone 093/81 12 12. MOD.

Restaurant Vetta, Paradiso stop (Mt. Salvatore funicular), Lugano, Switzerland, phone 091/543701. MOD.

Zur Hohen Brücke Gäststtte, Wipplingerstr. 23., Vienna, Austria. INX.

Other

Betten Rid, Theaterstraße 47, D-8000 Munich 2, phone 089/21 11 0. (Shopping)

Höllrigl, Sigmund-Haffner Gasse, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria. (Shopping)

Jaquet-Droz Automats, Museum of Art and History, Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Ka De We, 21-24 Tauentzienstraße, Berlin, phone 24 01 71. (Shopping)

Raimund Theater, Wallgasse 18, A-1060 Vienna.

Swiss National Museum, Museumstraße 2, CH-8023 Zürich, phone 01/221 10 10. Open every day but Monday from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.