



INTERLAKEN – what a wonderful world!

It's not unusual for a town to be on a river, lake or an ocean. But for it to sit between two lakes may well be unique. Interlaken - between Lake Thun and Lake Brienz - can boast such a privileged position. And there's more. Interlaken is also in the heart of the magnificent Jungfrau Region mountain world and affords views of the world-famous icy icons, the Eiger, Mönch & Jungfrau.

INTERLAKEN's around 55 hotels are dotted throughout the whole resort but the Höhweg is undoubtedly the focal point. This boulevard, along which guests from all over the globe stroll or ride in horse-drawn carriages, runs from Interlaken West to Interlaken Ost and is lined by numerous hotels, restaurants, stores of all kinds, souvenir shops and flower-adorned green spaces. At its heart is the Höhematte meadow, in summer the landing place for paraglider pilots – their colourful canopies providing a vibrant attraction in the centre of Interlaken. From here, the view sweeps across the Höhematte to the imposing Jungfrau massif, displayed in all its glory. The wide promenade with shady trees and restaurants offers an invitation to rest and relax. With the telescope, the white summits seem almost close enough to touch.

Renovated several times, the Kursaal, with its splendid gardens and much-admired flower clock, has been the town's cultural focal point since 1859. Entertainment evenings, concerts and theatre performances in the magnificent art-nouveau rooms and folklore events in the homely Spycher restaurant provide enjoyment for an international public. The more adventuresome can try their luck at boule in the casino. Discos, restaurants with musical entertainment and bars are found throughout Interlaken.

Interlaken – gateway to the Jungfrau

Interlaken's trump card as a holiday resort is without doubt its privileged position in the heart of the Bernese Oberland with its numerous sightseeing attractions. Interlaken, easy to reach by rail and road, is the starting point for an array of excursions: cruises on Lakes Thun and Brienz; outings to the many summits and vantage points in the Jungfrau Region and Alpine foothills made accessible by mountain railways and aerial cableways; train trips, for example to Lucerne, Bern and Montreux, and spectacular bus tours over Alpine passes. The two highlights of every stay in this region have to be an excursion to Europe's highest-altitude railway station, the

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Jungfrauoch-Top of Europe at 3,454 metres above sea level, and a trip in the footsteps of 007 James Bond, taking the longest aerial cableway in the Alps to the Schilthorn summit with its Piz Gloria revolving restaurant. The Ballenberg Open-Air Museum near Brienz, St. Beatus Caves above Lake Thun, Trummelbach Glacier Falls and Schynige Platte with its Botanical Alpine Garden are only a few of the countless other attractions.

Three anniversaries and one premiere

The year 2012 in Interlaken is marked by three anniversaries. First and foremost, the history-steeped Jungfrau Railway celebrates its centenary. The opening 100 years ago made a definitive contribution to the touristic development of the region. Now famous far and wide, William Tell Open-Air Theatre can also celebrate its 100-year-old success story. The Jungfrau Marathon, considerably younger but equally of major importance to Interlaken, celebrates its 20th edition in September 2012. It rates as probably the most beautiful mountain marathon in the world. And extremely promising is the Interlaken premiere of the International Firefighter's Fest in May 2012. This first Code 3800 event is an absolute must for all fans of hot action and spectacular heroics.

Sport for enthusiasts and adventure addicts

No other resort in Switzerland offers almost every type of active leisure pursuit within a compact 20-kilometre radius. There are even two lakes to discover - both ideal for an action-packed holiday in Interlaken. Sailing, surfing, swimming and scuba diving are here for the taking on Lakes Thun and Brienz. A variety of sailing, surfing and scuba diving schools make sure that novices can also get in on the fun. And anyone who wants to take things a little easier will find a choice of vessels – including two splendid lake steamers – at their service. Interlaken's range of offers for active recreation is rounded off by an idyllically situated 18-hole golf course, total length 6,110 metres, alongside the Weissenau nature reserve on Lake Thun.

In addition to the two lakes, Interlaken also has plenty to offer when it comes to mountains. The Eiger, Mönch & Jungfrau seem almost close enough to touch and many other summits have attractive, well-prepared hiking trails. It's just 30 minutes by train to the glacier village of Grindelwald, where challenging mountain climbs and glacier tours offer authentic adventure. Cycling and biking fans will also be in seventh heaven in Interlaken as two routes of the national cycling network actually pass the town. Well-signalized stretches, such as along deep-blue Lake Brienz to the Giessbach Falls, are tours that also promise fun for biking beginners. But even the

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most ardent mountain bikers will be in their element in the region. Biking buffs say that the ride from Interlaken alongside Lake Thun and over the Grön to Beatenberg is one of the most beautiful bike tours in the whole of Switzerland. Created in 2010, a new bike map suitable for all levels of ability provides detailed information on routes in the region. Tours especially suitable for E-bikes are also indicated.

In recent years, Interlaken has become a veritable mecca of adventure sport. The topographical features make it possible for guests to get a rush of pure adrenaline in the air, on water and on the ground. Paragliders circling over Interlaken to land on the Höhematte meadow are now almost part of Interlaken's everyday scene. And no wonder – the mountains around the Bödeli offer numerous, easily reached take-off points. Anyone who fancies being even more of a high-flier can book a sky-diving session and admire the scenery from a greater height. River rafting, canyoning and hydrospeeding are cool offers on the region's rivers. Zorbing promises fun and action rolling over pastures in a transparent plastic ball.

Alpine Herdsmen's Festival & William Tell Open-Air Theatre

The Unspunnen Alpine Herdsmen's Festivals in 1805 and 1808 marked the actual beginning of tourism on the Bödeli. The centenary celebrations in 1905 recalled the spirit of Unspunnen. The tradition was revived after the Second World War and thousands of spectators enjoyed the Swiss National Costume & Alpine Herdsmen's Festivals in 1946, 1955, 1968, 1981 and 1993. Schiller's freedom play, 'William Tell' has been performed on the natural stage in the Rugen forest since 1912. After breaks because of the Second World War, the open-air theatre performances by amateur actors have been staged every summer since 1947, each time delighting audiences of between 30,000 and 40,000. Performances can take place in all weathers thanks to the covered tribune with 2,200 seats.

INTERLAKEN as a congress and conference venue

Good traffic links and the wide choice of excellent accommodation have long made Interlaken a popular conference venue. In 1980, a congress centre was finally built in the town and an extension to the Kursaal transformed it into an all-year-round operation. The many hotels in a central location, wealth of entertainment attractions and top-class restaurants, peaceful position and wide range of relaxation and excursion options create an ideal environment for successful congresses, conferences, seminars and all kinds of major events. On 1 May 2010, Interlaken

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received another upgrade as a congress venue when the doors to the new congress hall of Casino Kursaal Interlaken AG were opened for the first time. Until then, the existing rooms had offered the possibility of holding events for up to 1,300 persons. The new building increases this capacity by 1,200 persons with concert seating and 600 persons with seminar seating.

Sounds, stars, dinner cruises and much more

In the summer months, Interlaken sets the scene for culture as well as sport. Several events already enjoy a long tradition and are as much a part of Interlaken as the acclaimed view of the Jungfrau massif. For example Friedrich Schiller's dramatic play about national hero William Tell, which has been performed on the stunning natural stage in the Rugen forest in nearby Matten since 1912. A variety of concerts, from classical to rock, traditional to trendy, in an elegant ambience or under open skies, delights audiences of all ages. One particularly popular highlight is provided by the free open-air concerts under the motto «Timeless Swissness». Jazz fans are also well catered for from July to September. Every Thursday evening, jazz bands take the stage and treat their audience to free performances of «Timeless Jazz».

Switch off! Escape daily routine, unwind and clear your mind; all possible with a wonderful Dinner Cruise on Lake Brienz, starting from Interlaken Ost. During the cruise, guests enjoy incomparable views of the imposing mountain world and the picturesque fishing villages dotted along the side of the lake. Brand-new Arabian halal delicacies as well as Indian specialities or a crisp barbecued kebab with cool drinks will cater for culinary treats.

Idyllic retreats

At the entrance to the two Lütschine Valleys, the village of Wilderswil offers guests cosy hotels and gourmet cuisine. The attractive resort was once home to the Barons of Unterseen and the ruins of their castle can still be seen today. The holiday village of Beatenberg sits on a supremely sunny terrace high above Lake Thun. The summit of the Niederhorn, Beatenberg's 'own' mountain, offers truly sensational views of the Eiger, Mönch & Jungfrau and the exciting downhill trip can then be made by scooter bike. For those who prefer to enjoy the Interlaken summer in a quieter manner, we recommend the neighbouring villages. Only ten minutes' drive from Interlaken, Bönigen offers balmy summer nights by the lake and wooden chalets with wonderful carvings. Brienz, at the other end of the lake of the same name, is THE picture-postcard carving villages. Another must is the extremely popular Ballenberg Open-Air Museum just outside Brienz. The tiny mountain village of Habkern has fascinating moorland landscapes to explore - and is off

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the beaten tourist track! Back on Lake Brienz, the idyllic fishing village of Iseltwald is renowned for its fine fish dishes. And last but not least, Ringgenberg-Goldswil offers an inviting chance to cool off on hot summer days. The Burgseeli natural lido, a tiny lake in an idyllic setting between the two villages, is the perfect place for a refreshing swim.

Soft mobility tourism

Interlaken is focusing specifically on sustainable tourism. As a member of Alpine Pearls, Interlaken ranks a holiday resort with highest demands on environmentally friendly, conscious and stress-free recreation. The free guest bus service as well as the free ski bus promote the use of public transport in the region. E-mobility is trumps in Interlaken with the comprehensive offer of E-bikes, Segways, electric cars and electro filling stations. The aim is to offer guests a complete e-mobility holiday package. Three new hybrid buses are being purchased for this purpose, and these will be used on the Guest Card route network. The entire range of offers on the topic of sustainability is summarized in a new info flyer.

Winter holidays in INTERLAKEN

Interlaken is undoubtedly a summer holiday resort par excellence. But the holiday region in the heart of the Bernese Oberland has plenty to offer in winter too. Guests have the choice of no fewer than three top ski regions – all easy to reach with the free skibus. The small but superb ski areas of Beatenberg and Habkern are especially suitable for families, and winter-walkers and sledging fans will also be in their element Offers for Interlaken's winter guests are rounded off by a varied range of excursions as well as attractive winter rates in hotels and holiday apartments.

Current Information and high resolution images are available on our website at the login to our **picture-gallery** on www.interlaken.ch

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