

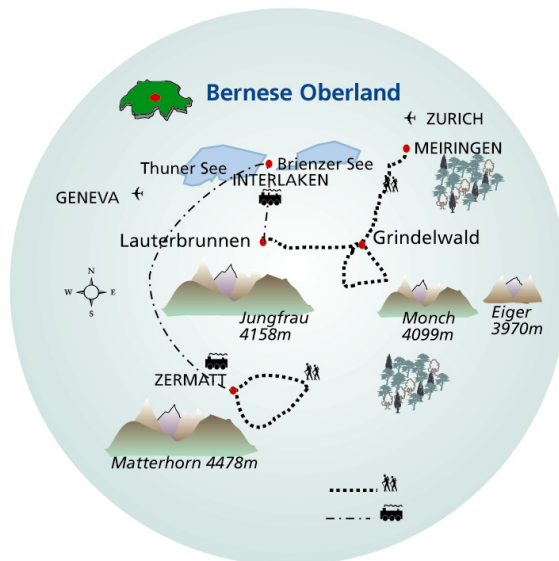
Switzerland: The Bernese Oberland

Tour code: JBO

Revised: October 08

This tour is the ideal walking introduction to the Swiss Alps, offering you each day a range of walks often with differing grades and distances, so you can decide the nature of the walking, whether it be a high mountain trek along a Berweg mountain path, or a chalet stroll on a Wanderweg lower level trail. There are many opportunities for spending time sightseeing and utilizing the extensive mountain transport system to shorten walks, leaving you with plenty of time to enjoy good fayre in the valley towns and mountain villages.

You travel to the two most spectacular and classical postcard regions of the Swiss Alps. The peaks of the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau overlook the valley towns of Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen while the celebrated mountain town of Zermatt lies just below the towering Matterhorn. Our programme of walks allows you time to take the mountain railway to the Jungfraujoch the highest rail station in Europe at nearly 12,000 feet. The flower-strewn alpine meadows in summer around the villages of Wengen and Murren and upon the Schynige-Platte walk are an unforgettable experience.



Travel Information

Season: July to mid-September.

The first Hotel: At Meiringen, which is easily reached by train from Zurich. The station at Zurich is at the airport. Train services from Zurich are normally hourly to bi-hourly throughout the day and the journey time is approx. 3.25 hours, normally changing in Luzern. Clients should aim to arrive in Meiringen by 6pm. Our 3* hotel is centrally located in the town of Meiringen.

Nearest airport: Zurich.

End of Tour: The tour ends on Day 8 at Zermatt. There are train departures from Zermatt to Zurich hourly throughout the day. Journey time is about 4 hours to Zurich.

What's Included

The price is based on two people sharing a twin or double room and includes bed & breakfast accommodation on 7 evenings plus 3 evening meals. Evening meals are at your own expense in Grindelwald and on your second nights in Lauterbrunnen and Zermatt. Also included is the transfer of baggage on days where you walk to the next hotel (days 2 and 4). Please note that Sherpa pays for one piece of luggage per person to be moved (allow approx. SFR20 per extra bag per move). Cost of the train transfer from Lauterbrunnen to Zermatt (approx 39CHF with Swiss Travel card and approx 78CHF without)

is not included nor is the other local train or cable car services within Switzerland. Also whilst you are moving from Lauterbrunnen to and from Zermatt you must carry your baggage with you.

Swiss Travel Cards

Allow free travel from your airport of arrival to your first hotel and from the last hotel back to the airport. In between you enjoy half price travel on trains, postbuses, lake steamers and many cable cars too. They are a good investment for around £96 even if you are just doing this tour and have no other travel plans within Switzerland.

Consult your nearest Swiss Tourist Office for full details.
www.switzerlandtravelcentre.com

Travel options from the UK

There are daily flights on British Airways from London Gatwick to Zurich. Flights from Manchester are available with supplement. For UK-based 'Land-only' customers there are also low cost flights by Easyjet from London Luton to Zurich.

Level of Difficulty

Fitness: We grade this tour as 'Moderate'; anyone used to hill walking with a daily height gain/loss of up to 3,300 feet (1000 metres) should find the tour within their capability. Most days are a lot easier than this.

Day Stages: Average duration of walking per day is 6 hours. Many of the walks can be shortened if desired by the use of cable cars and local postbuses.

Waymarking: As one would expect in Switzerland the trails are very well marked and often signposted but it is advisable to carry and be able to use a compass in case of mist.

In late June and early July there can be snow patches on higher trails (above 1800m), while new snowfalls are possible in September.

General Information

Baths: it is not normal for your room to have a bath, the main reason being that it takes up a lot of space, some hotels/guesthouses may have a separate room in the house where a bath is available to guests, but in the main it is showers.

Breakfast: in countries such as Switzerland/Norway/Germany/Austria they are usually buffet style, please don't offend your hosts by making up a picnic lunch from the breakfast buffet unless it has been specifically organised for you. It is important for you to tell us if you have any dietary requirements when you book your holiday so that we can inform everyone that you are staying with.

Single Supplements: are payable on most of our tours. **1)** The single supplement guarantees the privacy of your own room, however, rooms can at times be small and in some places may not enjoy the same facilities as double/twin rooms.

Luggage: When staying in hotels, sometimes your luggage will have been taken to your room awaiting your arrival. However don't be surprised if your luggage is waiting for you to take it up to your room.

Accommodation & Meals

Accommodation is on a half board basis for 3 nights (3 evening meals included) and bed & breakfast on the other nights; in hotels of 2 & 3 star standard. All rooms have en suite facilities. Lunches are not included in the tour cost. However, picnic materials can be readily bought on weekdays in each of the towns and villages we stay at. Packed lunches can also be provided by the hotels if requested the evening before. In addition, there are numerous inns and cafes along the way, which serve lunches.

□ **Night 1: Meiringen.** Our 3* hotel is centrally located near shops and the station. It has modern facilities and has received praise from previous customers.

□ **Nights 2&3: Grindelwald.** Here we stay at a cosy chalet-hotel with a spectacular view of the Eiger and the surrounding peaks. All rooms facing south have balcony, shower and WC. The hotel is a short walk from train stations and the Firstbahn gondola station.

□ **Nights 4&5: Lauterbrunnen.** Our recently modernised 3-star hotel, only two minutes' walk from the train station, provides views of the famous Jungfrau Mountain and of the waterfalls on both sides of the valley. The ensuite rooms are tastefully furnished and decorated.

□ **Nights 6&7: Zermatt.** Our hotel in Zermatt is a typical Swiss chalet type building. This hotel is very comfortable, informal and family run. It has a pleasant terrace garden and a sauna as well as spacious rooms with private facilities. The excellent restaurant has views out to the Matterhorn and a nice bar.

Outline Itinerary

□ **Day 1:** Arrival in Meiringen. The train journey from Zurich is spectacular, passing Lake Luzern and The Brienzsee. Settle into hotel and explore the resort town in the evening if time allows.

□ **Day 2:** Meiringen to Grindelwald. There are three possibilities for today's adventure. (a) Begin the walk to Grindelwald, up to the spectacular Reichenbach falls en route. Be prepared to be overawed by the towering Wetterhorn and yet to be soothed by the lush green valley of Grindelwald as it yawns before you. This scenery is then contrasted by the glacial activity prevalent around Grindelwald. (b) The second alternative is to take the train to Brienz, followed by a cruise on the Brienzsee. For those waterfall lovers, Brienz is an alluring place. If the shimmering green sea of the Brienzsee does not catch your eye, then the magnificent Giessbachfall waterfall will not fail to demand your attention. (c) The third route is the most popular. Take the train to Wunderswil, then the mountain train to Schynige Platte, and walk to Grindelwald via the Faulhorn. The long descent from Faulhorn to Grindelwald is made easier by using the Firstbahn 'gondola' cable car.

□ **Day 3:** In Grindelwald. Although expensive and very busy, today you could take the Cog railway ride using the highest railway in Europe to reach the Jungfrauoch (not included in tour price), stopping at the Eigerwand en route. An impressive and daring start to the day is offered to clients who wish to walk from the train to a lookout cut into the very centre of the Eiger north face. Both glaciers and mountains make for fantastic viewing. On this free day, one might also choose to walk the ridge route from First to Faulhorn then to Bussalp, or to do the complete ridge to Schynige Platte. The First gondola allows an incredible view of the main wall of the Bernese Oberland and the Jungfrau view is one you will long remember. A third alternative for this day is to cable car / walk to Mannlichen summit, with views all round to the Eiger, Jungfrau and Wetterhorn (7 hours). The two glaciers' trip is your fourth option, offering spectacular views of moraine, crevasses and glacier (6 hours). A must for the avid geologist! For those desiring a rest from the walking, there is still plenty on offer including boat trips or train rides.

□ **Day 4:** Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen. Ascend to Kleine Scheidegg, descend to Lauterbrunnen via the car free boutique town of Wengen. You will walk right under the North Face of the Eiger and get some fantastic views once again over the Bernese peaks. You can make the day slightly harder by taking the Eiger trail from Alpigen to Kleine Scheidegg and make it easier by taking the train to Alpigen, and then once again down from Wengen (21kms/ 13 miles / 5 hours).

□ **Day 5:** In Lauterbrunnen. This valley boasts spectacular waterfalls and is a popular tourist attraction. From here you can visit Murren, the highest village in the Bernese Oberland and then you can take the cable car up to the Schilthorn, where you can witness the famous 360 degree panorama extending from the Jura to the Black Forest. There are again plenty of walks to choose from and all routes are well signposted.

□ **Day 6:** After breakfast in Lauterbrunnen, take the early train to Zermatt to allow yourself a good afternoon's walking or relaxing there. Zermatt is the quintessential Swiss tourist town, the mountain-lover's magnet.

□ **Day 7:** Various inspiring walks await you today - the only difficulty is deciding which one to choose. Detailed in our notes are: A walk in the shadow of the Matterhorn (9kms/3-4 hours), views of Monte Rosa, Switzerland's highest peak (10kms/4 hours), the Trift valley leading to Trift and the

Mettelhorn as well as other Zermatt luxuries to entice and please.

☐ **Day 8:** Depart from Zermatt.

On this Self Guided Tour we provide you with Route notes and maps.

Escorted Departures 2009

EJBO18 Sat 18 Jul - Sat 25 Jul

EJBO29 Sat 29 Aug - Sat 5 Sept