

GREAT SCENIC RAIL JOURNEYS OF SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA

- the stunning scenery of rail journeys through the alps -

Saturday 4 to Thursday 30 September 2027



Join us for a twenty-five day tour to experience the beauty of the Swiss and Austrian alps by rail during the summer months – we journey on some of the most scenic and spectacular rail lines of Europe; cruise on century old paddle steamers; enjoy mountain rack railways and cable cars; dine on the move; and swim in beautiful lakes. Delight in the wonderful mountain railways to the 'top of the world' and stay in some splendid hotels - as we travel by rail through the remarkably beautiful mountains, valleys and lake districts of Switzerland and Austria. We have also planned the tour to provide some 'rest' days for those who wish, as well as a number of alternative activities on certain days, to explore a range of other historic, cultural or cosmopolitan activities, as well as special rail experiences.

ITINERARY

The itinerary for the tour is shown below, with the key activities and highlights of each day. On some days additional activities will be possible at no extra cost. Optional additions to the tour (at extra cost) when shown below are followed by (O). Meals included are shown as Breakfast (B), Lunch (L) and Dinner (D).

Saturday 4 September 2027 (in-flight meals) – Australia to Zurich

Depart Australia for Zurich. There are options of one-stop flights with Singapore Airlines via Singapore, Emirates via Dubai, Qatar through Doha and more - or have an overnight stop in Asia or the Middle East en route. We'll discuss your air travel preferences and make the appropriate arrangements.

Sunday 5 September 2027 (B) – Zurich

Depending upon your flight choice, a morning or lunchtime arrival into Switzerland's very efficient Zurich Airport. Transfer to our hotel, and the remainder of the day is free for sightseeing in Zurich, Dinner is at leisure and there are a range of dining options at and close to our hotel. Overnight Zurich.

Monday 6 September 2027 (B/L) – Zurich and to Lucerne

After breakfast enjoy a **morning exploration of the city of Zurich** and then **board one of the lake vessels for a cruise south to Rapperswil** – a beautiful lake with high peaks surrounding us. Enjoy luncheon aboard in the restaurant, before a late afternoon rail journey on the first of many of the **wonderful SBB rail services for the short trip to Lucerne**.

Walk the short distance to our hotel then enjoy an evening meal at one of many eating options. **Stroll around the edge of the lake, enjoy the glimmering lights of the hotels and restaurants that sparkle and reflect in the placid waters.**

Tuesday 7 September 2027 (B/L) – Mt Rigi, Gotthard Panorama and Lake Lucerne

Well over a hundred years ago, countless incorrigible adventurers and romantics, including one Mark Twain, journeyed to Central Switzerland specially to see the legendary sunrise on Mt. Rigi. Today we **cruise across Lake Lucerne** to Vitznau and then **join the Vitznau-Rigi Railway to Rigi Kulm**. Swiss engineer Niklaus Riggerbach masterminded the construction of the Vitznau-Rigi Railway in the mid-19th century. In his own words: "I want to take everyone up into the mountains, so they can all enjoy the beauty of our glorious country". Riggerbach's invention, which would guide trains across steep climbs by means of cogwheels and toothed racks, was patented in France in 1863. Today we climb from the lake below to the top of Rigi Kulm in comfort. After exploring the mountain peak, descend by cog railway on the eastern side of Mt Rigi to Arth Goldau. From here we experience the Gotthard Railway as we travel south to Lugano or Locarno, the second highest standard gauge railway in Switzerland – with construction started in 1872, the extreme differences in altitude necessitate the use of long curved and ramped approaches on each side of the Gotthard Pass, together with seven spirals. We return **to Fluelen on the edge of Lake Lucerne and join a vessel of the Lake Lucerne Navigation Company for a "Welcome to Switzerland" three-hour cruise to Lucerne – with a late luncheon included aboard**. Dinner tonight is at leisure. Overnight Lucerne.



Wednesday 8 September 2027 (B) – Pilatus and Lucerne

Today we cruise on Lake Lucerne, ride the steepest cog railway in the world, and descend on a cable car with views across Rigi. We join a vessel on Lake Lucerne and cruise to Alpnachstad to board the famed Pilatus Railway - a masterpiece from the 19th century. The steepest cogwheel railway in the world, with a gradient of 48% and a length of 4'618 metres, the railway links Alpnachstad with Pilatus Kulm at an altitude of 2'132 m. The engineer Eduard Locher developed its very particular ingenious rack-and-pinion solution: he dealt with the gradient by using two horizontally rotating cogwheels. The first trip took place in 1889. The masterpiece was also presented at the World's Fair in Paris that same year. From the top of Pilatus, the view can be so clear that you can see every mountain from the Säntis to the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, and over the Jura to the Black Forest. The winding Lake Lucerne and five other lakes in Central Switzerland sparkle in the sun. Leaving Pilatus Kulm in the aerodynamic "Dragon Ride" aerial cableway you now catch a last glimpse of the mighty rock formations before stopping at Fräkmüntegg. Then to Drachenalp and the base at Kriens, where we join a bus back to the city centre. In the afternoon **explore the sights of Lucerne** – choose between its museums, historic foot bridges, churches, **world-famous Chapel Bridge and Water Tower**, the Musegg Wall, Jesuit Church, Mill Bridge and the **Swiss National Transport Museum**. A must is the impressive Lion Monument - a rock relief designed by Bertel Thorvaldsen and hewn in 1820–21 by Lukas Ahorn. It commemorates the Swiss Guards who were massacred in 1792 during the French Revolution, when revolutionaries stormed the Tuileries Palace in Paris. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Lucerne.

Thursday 9 September 2027 (B/L) – Brunig Pass to the Jungfrau, Interlaken & Lake Thun

This morning join the Brünig Express to travel across the only narrow-gauge line of the Swiss Federal Railways. Built as a combined adhesion and rack railway (the first in Switzerland,) the line links the Bernese Oberland and Interlaken with Lucerne. Built in 1888, the line runs from Interlaken to Meiringen along Lake Brienz, then climbs to Brünig-Hasliberg and 1200 metres. The line then drops to Giswil where the rack part of the line starts to Alpnachstad. There are great views from the train as we first climb to Brünig-Hasliberg then descend to Meiringen. On arrival in **Interlaken** we transfer the short distance to our hotel, located in the centre of town, and there is the opportunity this afternoon to **join us on Lake Thun for a cruise from Interlaken West to Thun**.

Enjoy the delights of Lake Thun, from Interlaken West to the village of Thun on the western shore. There is **a restaurant aboard and we will organise an included luncheon**. If Interlaken had a king or queen, he or she would reside on the Harder Kulm. From the viewing platform at 1,322 metres above sea level they would graciously look down upon Lake Brienz and Lake Thun, or admire the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau. The Harder Kulm Panorama Restaurant is reminiscent of a castle, and those who wish (O) can enjoy a drink or light evening repast. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Interlaken.

Friday 10 September 2027 (B/L) – Jungfrauoch



A day **exploring the Jungfrau** – Lauterbrunnen to Kleine Scheidegg, the Jungfrauoch and Grindelwald. This unique round-trip by modern cogwheel railway takes us to Kleine Scheidegg, altitude 2061 metres, at the foot of the notorious Eiger North Wall. Here the Jungfrau Railway climbs to the Eigergletscher station, well known for its mountain restaurant and polar dog kennels. The trip continues through the **Eiger tunnel**, to Eismeer station, with a five minute halt to admire the view. **Enjoy spectacular sightseeing through large observation windows, hewn from solid Alpine rock**. Then the arrival on the Jungfrauoch, in the heart of a glorious glacier world on the very roof of Europe! Superb views extend as far as the summits of the Vosges Mountains in France and the Black Forest in Germany. The Great Aletsch Glacier, at 22 km the longest ice-stream in the Alps, begins directly on the **Jungfrauoch - Top of Europe**. Enjoy **lunch at the highest restaurant in Europe** – one of the rare occasions where the quality of the food is not inversely proportional to the height of the restaurant. We return on the Eiger Express tricable car – which takes us from Eiger Glacier station to Grindelwald in just 15 minutes. Explore Grindelwald at leisure, then return to Interlaken for dinner overnight Interlaken.

Saturday 11 September 2027 (B) – Schynige Platte and Winteregg-Mürren

The Schynige Platte railway was built in 1893, providing a means of ascent from Wilderswil to the Schynige Platte with its wonderful views. On the 7.3 km ride, the rack-and-pinion railway climbs 1420 m. Along the way you can admire a natural idyll encompassing lakes Thun and Brienz and a panorama of mountains. After a morning exploration we descend and head to Mürren, with the option to then ascend to the Schilthorn Piz Gloria. Mürren was the film location for Bond's 'On her Majesty's Secret Service' and is prized as a car-free alpine village. Its decorative wooden houses exude warmth and rustic charm. A combination of cable car, isolated mountain railway, and ropeway makes it a tremendous experience. There is much to see and do in this picturesque alpine region. Dinner at leisure and overnight Interlaken.



Sunday 12 September 2027 (B) –Golden Pass to Montreux and Castle Chillon

This morning we experience the **Golden Pass** rail journey and travel from Interlaken Ost through Spiez to Zweisimmen, where the change to narrow gauge is now done enroute aboard the **Golden Pass Express** with new technology that enables the train to operate on a narrow gauge without the need for passengers to change trains. In the style of the grand Venice-Simplon Orient Express, this smart blue and gold train weaves through the Bernese Oberland to Gstaad and on towards Montreux, where we descend steeply into Montreux and Lac Lemman (Lake Geneva) below. Leaving Interlaken we hug the edge of Thunersee, before climbing into the Simmen Valley. Enjoy stunning vistas across Lake Geneva as the train twists and descends quickly to Montreux with the mountains behind. The best preserved of the Lake Geneva resorts, with palm trees, magnolias and cypress along its waterfront promenade, it is a lovely place for strolling. Our accommodation is at the Grand Hôtel Suisse-Majestic opposite the station, where we leave our luggage before setting out on an afternoon exploration. Visit Castle Chillon, a splendid edifice on the edge of the lake, with a fascinating history and an excellent historical presentation – it and has been a popular tourist site for over two centuries. Lord Byron's poem 'The Prisoner of Chillon' tells the story of Francois Bonivard, who was imprisoned in Chillon in the 14th century. An evening stroll in the early twilight, dinner at leisure and overnight Montreux.

Monday 13 September 2027 (B) – Aigle, Les Diablerets , Lac Lemman, Chaplin Museum or Evian



After breakfast we travel the short distance to **Aigle** to experience the Aigle-Le Sépey - Les Diablerets railway - a most impressive journey with circular tunnels, viaducts at dizzying heights, tracks hugging steep precipices and breathtaking views. Starting from Aigle (415m) the trains stop at 12 stations before reaching Les Diablerets (1,260m). The ascent takes 50 minutes, crosses villages, meadows and forests with spectacular views of the Alps and the Rhone plain. We then **return** to Aigle and head to **Vevey** or **Laussane**. Choose between the excellent **Chaplin Museum**, where you embark on an extraordinary adventure across time and through the magical world of cinema. Through three different spaces, be prepared to be moved by one of the most surprising artists of the 20th century. Or from **Laussane**, cross by ferry to **Evian, France** with beautiful views of the mountains. Return to Montreux with dinner at leisure and overnight.

Tuesday 14 September 2027 (B/D) – Lake Lemman, Geneva and Rocher-de-Naye

Today we visit the lakeside city of **Geneva** - one of the world's most important international cities, serving as a global centre for diplomacy, humanitarian work, finance, and scientific collaboration. It hosts the European headquarters of the United Nations as well as major organisations such as the World Health Organization, the World Trade Organisation, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Known for its tradition of neutrality, Geneva provides a trusted location for international negotiations, peace talks, and the development of global agreements. In addition to its political significance, the city is a major financial hub, a centre for innovation and research, and an attractive destination for tourism, making it a key player in addressing global challenges and fostering international co-operation.



In the late afternoon we join the Montreux–Glion–Rochers-de-Naye railway - a scenic cogwheel railway that climbs from Montreux on the shores of Lake Geneva to the summit of Rochers-de-Naye at 2,042 metres above sea level. The journey passes through vineyards, forests, and alpine meadows before reaching dramatic mountain scenery with panoramic views of the lake, the Swiss Alps, and, on clear days, even distant peaks in France. Using a rack-and-pinion system to tackle the steep gradients, the railway is both an engineering achievement and one of Switzerland's most spectacular mountain train journeys. Enjoy dinner together tonight and overnight Montreux.

Wednesday 15 September 2027 (B) – to Zermatt



This morning we travel along the edge of Lake Geneva to Brig. In Brig we transfer to the modern narrow-gauge **Matterhorn Gotthard Railway**, which arrives in Zermatt after an hour and a half ascent through the rugged and romantic **Nicolaital Valley**. As we climb higher we leave the cars behind at Tasch and enter the **car-free mountain village of Zermatt**. We'll leave our luggage at our hotel, and then enjoy the first of two of our ascents to view the Matterhorn. The Sunegga-Rothorn experience offers what many say are views of the Matterhorn best seen from this ascent, as they reveal its perfect form ... our mountain trip commences with the underground funicular to Sunnegga and continues with the gondola to Blauherd. Finally, a large cable car takes us to the Unterrothorns summit – from where stunning views comprise many of the 38 four-thousand-metre-high-peaks surrounding Valais. Descend at leisure and enjoy the afternoon and evening light as you wander the car free streets to the sounds and sights of horse drawn carriages and evening lights. Enjoy the lovely swimming pool and spa in our hotel, and dinner at one of the town's eateries. Overnight Zermatt. (Note that weather conditions can affect the operation of funiculars and cable cars.)

Thursday 16 and Friday 17 September 2027 (B) – Zermatt, the Gornergratt and Matterhorn Glacier Paradise

We have two days to explore the **Gornergratt and the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise** (3,883 metres above sea level) - **the highest sightseeing point in Europe, accessible by cableway!**. We travel on the famous rack railway - built in 1898 and incidentally the first electric railway of its kind in Switzerland - which winds its way up the mountain letting the Matterhorn appear ever larger and more magnificent, while the village of Zermatt appears more and more like a collection of doll's houses. After a morning refreshment, head for the **Matterhorn Glacier Paradise**, using a series of cable cars, including the eight-seater Matterhorn-Express cable railway that takes us up to Furi station. From here the cableway takes you further up to Trockener Steg, where we'll find a restaurant for lunch. The highest cableway in Europe then transports us up past giant crevasses to the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise and into a breathtaking mountain landscape of glaciers and permanent snow. We return to Zermatt, and this afternoon you can **visit the Zermatt Museum** that depicts the history of attempts to climb the Matterhorn. Our hotel offers lovely swimming and spa experiences, and is a place to relax and take in the alpine atmosphere. Enjoy this car-free village, and in the evening dinner's are at leisure at one of a number of nearby restaurants to our hotel. Overnight Zermatt.



Saturday 18 September 2027 (B/L) – Zermatt to Pontresina on the Glacier Express

This morning we travel from **Zermatt** to **Pontresina** via Brig, Andermatt and Chur **on the famed Glacier Express** – considered one of the most scenic and spectacular rail journeys of the world - (my gosh there are a lot of them !) In the roaring 1920s, and because of adventurous reports from alpine enthusiasts, the travel-keen upper-class from all four corners of the world at long last discovered the rustic charms of the Swiss Alps - previously remote mountain villages such as Zermatt and St Moritz were transformed into chic health resorts. The three railway companies of that period (VZ – later BVZ, RhB and FOB) successfully took advantage of the tourism potential at hand with the opening of the route between the Valais and Graubünden in 1926, and with the introduction of through coaches Brig – Chur and Brig – St Moritz exclusively in summer.



But it was to take more than 50 years before the trains were able to also cross the impassable Furka alpine route in winter. **Today we enjoy travel in a first class panorama car, with a quality meal served at your table for luncheon, as you watch the amazing vista surround you.** As we ascend and descend, and then follow the river valley, the snow-capped peaks are a reminder of the dramatic nature of the landscape through which we are passing. From Chur we climb the **Albula Line across the impressive Landwasser viaduct**. The train crosses the high arched viaduct and then plunges headlong into the tunnel carved deep into the cliff wall. The line is listed amongst the **UNESCO world heritage sites** because of its unique engineering features. At Samedan we change for the short five-minute connecting rail journey to Pontresina. Our hotel is fifteen minutes away on foot, although a transfer will be provided to assist with our luggage. Our 4½ star-superior **Hotel Saratz in Pontresina** is an elegant yet informal, modern yet charming property. A contemporary lifestyle merges with Engadine hotel tradition, grandezza with design, nature with architecture. The hotel sits in unique surroundings in the midst of the Engadine mountain world, boasting excellent cuisine, a spacious pool and beautiful spa facility. Overnight at the Hotel Saratz, Pontresina.

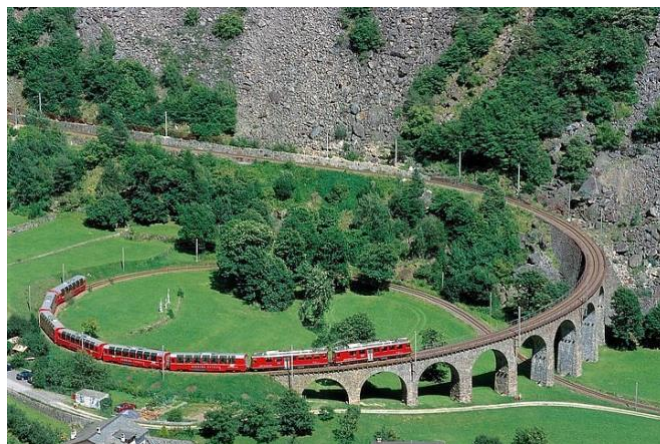
GLACIER EXPRESS UPGRADE – there may be the option to experience – Excellence Class – designed obviously for excellent people ! It also attracts an excellent supplement of \$850 per person. Let us know if you are interested and we will do our best to accommodate you. You can see more at this link - <https://www.glacierexpress.ch/en/offers/excellence-class/>

Please note the popularity of Excellence Class makes booking challenging, and if you are interested to experience this journey, the booking must be made before 1 October 2026, and the payment is non-refundable.

Sunday 19 September 2027 (B/MT/L) – the Bernina Express – Ospizio Bernina and Tirano

Life does not always run in a nice, straight line. There are also bends, curves and the occasional obstacle to negotiate. And sometimes you come across things in life that really do make you realise how good it is to be alive. **The Bernina Express** is such an experience. Some things are so magical that they leave you speechless. Wonderful valleys, mountains that tower above the valleys and the eternally icy summit of Bernina. Cross graceful viaducts, through galleries hewn into the sheer rock, through switch-back tunnels, along rushing mountain streams, glaciers and even an alpine garden.

Technical buffs will enjoy knowing the train climbs up to the 2253-metre-high Bernina Pass without the help of a rack-and-pinion mechanism. See why these railway lines are catalogued as UNESCO world heritage sites. We'll enjoy the day in the Bernina region, and depending upon energy and desire, explore along the way. We'll travel one way on the famed Bernina Express with its panorama cars and modern luxury, and the other on the regular services that stop more frequently and allow you time to admire the scenery. We plan on a stop in the mountain peaks, and some opportunities for photographers to capture the train as it twists through the Italian Alps. Today we also experience the famed Brusio spiral viaduct - a single-track, nine-arched stone spiral railway viaduct constructed in the open – many spirals are inside mountains. We also traverse the main street as we enter Tirano – an exciting day of scenery and much more. Remember to take your passport as we arrive in **Tirano, Italy for lunch**. We then return to Pontresina, with dinner at leisure, and overnight at the Hotel Saratz, Pontresina.



Monday 20 September 2027 (B) – Pontresina, St Moritz, Scuol Tarasp, Chur or more

A free day to enjoy a range of experiences in and around Pontresina. Spend a quiet day in the village of Pontresina, exploring its small shopping precinct, and visit the nearby village of St Moritz with its sophistication and chic. Stroll down through the mountain village and enjoy window shopping – the clothing and jewellery you can purchase if you sold your home ! Or visit the Engadine villages of Scuol, Bad Tarasp-Vulpera, Sent and Ftan – the region is truly spoiled for sunshine as it lies cradled between the peaks of the Silvretta range and the Engadine Dolomites. Geological features allow hot gases from the bowels of the earth to pass through a gas-permeable layer of rock and reach the upper rock strata. This turns groundwater into **thermal water at over 25° C, used as mineral springs in the Scuol-Tarasp-Vulpera region**. Enjoy a round trip on the **scenic railways of the Engadine**, through the Vereina tunnel linking the Engadine directly with Chur. Chur is an historic city rich in culture - visit Chur Museum and explore its fascinating cathedral. It may be possible to experience a meal in the Gourmino Nostalgie dining car of the Rhaetian Railways today (depends upon the rail scheduling at the time.) Return to Pontresina and dinner at leisure and overnight.

Tuesday 21 September 2027 (B) – Pontresina to Chur, Sargans and Arlberg to Innsbruck

We descend from Pontresina along the Albula Line to Chur, then change for Sargans and to an **ÖBB Austrian RailJet service for Innsbruck**. The scenery along the Austrian Arlberg Line is spectacular - stretching from Bludenz in Vorarlberg via Langen am Arlberg (1217 metres above sea-level) to the Tyrolian town of Landeck, the line has a maximum gradient of 3.1% making the **Arlberg Line** one of the steepest railway lines on which there is regular passenger and goods traffic. Especially impressive is the "Trisanna-Bridge" in Tyrol near castle Wiesberg, which accentuates with a length of 211 m and a height of 87 m, the Paznaun valley and the "Arlbertunnel" with a length of 10.2 km. The valleys and rivers of western Austria are dramatic, with peaks on both sides of the line. In the late afternoon we arrive at Innsbruck. The 800 year old Tyrolean capital on the River Inn sits at the base of the jagged rock spires of the Nordkette range and overlooked by the Karwendel mountains – it is in many ways Austria in microcosm: its late-medieval Altstadt is picture-book stuff, presided over by a grand Habsburg palace and baroque cathedral, while its Olympic ski jump makes a spectacular leap between the urban and the outdoors. **Enjoy an early evening stroll in this historic and colourful city**, with dinner at leisure and overnight Innsbruck.



Wednesday 22 September 2027 (B) – the Achenseebahn, Lake Achen and Innsbruck

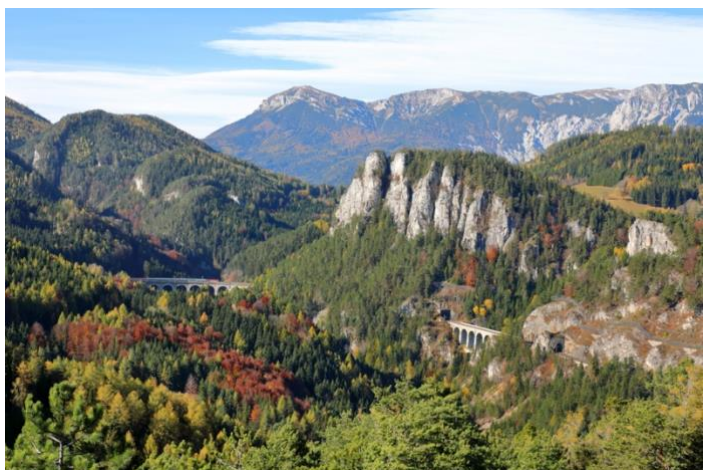
We head the short distance to Jenbach to visit Achensee – Lake Achen, just north of Jenbach in Tyrol. Lake Achen is also called the "Fjord of the Alps" and the "Tyrolean Sea" as it is the largest lake within the federal state. We access the lake by the 130-year-old Achensee Cog Railway, which is still steam operated, from the station at Jenbach up the mountain to pretty Achensee Lake. Locomotives by the name of Hannah, Georg, Hermann and Theodor make a ride on Europe's oldest coal-fired steam engine a true adventure. The steepest section of the line is just a few minutes from the train station in Jenbach, Inntal Valley. After successfully climbing a short but sharp pitch of 16% the locomotive continues its journey up towards the shores of Lake Achensee, past flower-filled meadows and sections of shady forest. Though just seven kilometres in length, the line climbs an impressive 440 vertical metres from start to finish. On arrival at the lake's edge, we continue our journey on one of the sightseeing boats criss-crossing Lake Achensee. We return to Jenbach and Innsbruck, and in the afternoon there is time to explore the city. The **Goldenes Dachl Museum (Golden Roof)**, explicitly created to commemorate the wedding of Emperor Maximilian I to Bianca Maria Sforza from Milan. Built in 1500, the golden roof's elaborate decoration with 2657 fire-gilded copper shingles attracts many photographers and visitors from all over the world. The Imperial Palace is one of the three most important cultural landmarks in Austria, built by Archduke Siegmund in Gothic style in around 1460, the castle was once the seat of the Tyrolean sovereigns. The **Hofkirche** is a Gothic church erected by Ferdinand I in memory of his grandfather Emperor Maximilian I, whose cenotaph bears an astonishing collection of German Renaissance sculpture. The most interesting amongst them are the 28 bronze statues of "black men" standing beside the tomb. Tyrol's national hero, Andreas Hofer is also buried in the church. For those interested you can also take a ride on the Stubaitalbahn – an 18.2 km long narrow gauge interurban tram from Innsbruck to Fulpmes in Tyrol. There are also many other options to enjoy today, and we will provide advise and suggestions for those who wish a break from mountain railways. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Innsbruck.



Thursday 23 September 2027 (B/D) – the Tauernbahn, to Pörschach am Wörthersee, and Carinthia, Austria

From Innsbruck we follow the original rail line towards Salzburg. Express trains now head north into Germany, before crossing back to the Austrian city of Salzburg, but the original route is far more scenic. From Worgl we head south along the **Giselabahn** to Schwarzach- St Viet. The railway is named after the second daughter of Austrian Emporer Franz Josef I. As the line curves through this glorious green countryside, there are fine view of the Kitzbuhel Alps as the train climbs east towards the Griesen Pass and then drops in to the Pingsgau region. We pass pretty Zell am See, a popular lakeside resort town, before continuing down the Salzach Valley. At Schwarzach- St Viet we change for the journey south east through to Villach – immediately on departure from Schwarzach St Veit the train will begins to ascend as it traverses the **Tauernbahn** to Spittal. The Tauern Railway is an Austrian railway line connects Schwarzach-Sankt Veit in the state of Salzburg and Spittal an der Drau in Carinthia. It is part of one of the most important north-south trunk routes in Europe and also carries tourist traffic for the Gastein Valley. The railway line climbs the High Tauern range of the Central Eastern Alps crossing the Alpine crest through the 8,371 m long Tauern Tunnel. It is one of the highest standard gauge railways in Europe and the third highest in Austria.





The scenery on ascent and descent is spectacular, with perhaps the highlight of the journey when the train exits the tunnel and begins to descend to Spittal - for around 25 mins there are stunning birds-eye views across the valley. After departure from Villach we alight at **Pörtschach am Wörthersee** and transfer the short distance to our hotel for our two nights. Our stay on the edge of **Wörthersee** is one of the two special hotels we've selected for our tour – fine hotels in beautiful locations. Perched on the edge of the lake, with beautiful views over the Wörthersee, the hotel boasts a fine spa/sauna/steam area, as well as offering swimming in the lake, with a warmed pool enclosure within the lake itself ! Dinner is included tonight and overnight at Pörtschach am Wörthersee.

Friday 24 September 2027 (B) – the Wörthersee – relax, cruise on the lake or explore

Plan to enjoy breakfast, seated on the terrace overlooking the Wörthersee, and with a selection we are sure will impress – you certainly won't need lunch. After a relaxing start to the day, you may like to relax in and around the hotel, with the option to swim, enjoy the spa, or read a book looking over the beautiful garden and lake. Alternatively join us as we cruise on the lake, enjoying a relaxing time viewing the mountain and lake scenery. Alternatively the nearby villages of Velden and Pörtschach am Wörthersee, as well as the larger city of Klagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia, offer places to explore. Klagenfurt offers a taste of provincial Austria, rather like Innsbruck and Salzburg, without the crowds. The old town is especially worth exploring. Dinner is at leisure in one of the hotel restaurants, or taxi to nearby Pörtschach for further choices. Overnight Pörtschach am Wörthersee.



Saturday 25 September 2027 (B) – the Semmering and to Vienna (Wien)

After a relaxed breakfast in this spectacular location, and a lazy start to the day, we transfer to Pörtschach am Wörthersee station, and join an OBB RailJet service to Vienna (Wien.) Today we cross the Semmering Pass and experience the famed Semmering Railway - over 160 years old. But what makes the 41-kilometre-long railway line from Gloggnitz to Mürzzuschlag special is not only its proud age: it was the first mountain railway in the world in 1854 and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998. The Semmering, pass and town of the same name, was an extremely popular and elegant summer resort in the 19th century. In order to make it easier for guests, who mainly came from Vienna, to get there and at the same time to create a continuous railway connection from Vienna to Trieste, the bold plan was made to open up the mountain region with a railway. Up to 20,000 men and women worked on the construction, under working conditions that are unimaginable today and in a demanding terrain. On its core route from Gloggnitz to Mürzzuschlag, the railway overcomes 457 metres in altitude, the average gradient is a remarkable 20 per thousand. It runs through 15 tunnels, over 16 viaducts, over 100 arched stone bridges and winds its way up the mountain in large arches.

The scenery is stunning. On arrival in Austria's capital we walk the short distance to our hotel. We've chosen to stay near the main railway station, and although not in the centre of the city, excellent public transport takes you there in a few minutes. As our arrival and departure each day involves access to the station, we consider this the most practical. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Wien.

Sunday 26 September 2027 (B/D) – Wien

Today we explore Wien with all its beauty – its artistic and intellectual legacy was shaped by residents including Mozart, Beethoven and Sigmund Freud. The city is also known for its Imperial palaces, including Schönbrunn, the Habsburgs' summer residence. In the Museums Quartier district, historic and contemporary buildings display works by Egon Schiele, Gustav Klimt and other artists. Wander Stephanplatz and admire the cathedral, explore narrow alleys, take lunch in a Viennese café, and be a local for the day. Join for dinner at a simple local café for a traditional Vienesse meal, and overnight Wien.

Monday 27 September 2027 (B/D) – the Mittenwald Railway and to the Tyrolean Alps

This morning we join an OBB RailJet service for the journey west through Linz and Salzburg to Innsbruck. We change for the Mittenwald, or Karwendelbahn railway. Opened in 1912, the Karwendelbahn railway was Austria's first fully electrified railway. The line stretches from Mittenwald to Innsbruck. Over a distance of 32.1 km, the train leads through 16 tunnels and over 18 high bridges and viaducts. In March 1910, the first cut was made into the legendary Martinswand rock face. The Martinswand, which rises sheer and craggy from the Inn Valley, and the rugged rocks of the Schlossbachgraben posed the greatest challenges. At a height of around 60 m above the water table, the line negotiates the Schlossbach stream by means of a 66 metre-long arched, iron-girder bridge. The Finstertal viaduct was built on the barren slopes of the Hechenberg mountain; hanging viaducts were constructed over the Schlossbachgraben gorge and the Kaiserstand viaduct stands beneath the ruins of Fagenstein castle. The Gurgelbach viaduct was constructed near the village of Reith bei Seefeld, and the Isar bridge near Scharnitz. On arrival at Seefeld in Tirol, we transfer to our hotel for the next two nights – sitting high in the Tyrolean Mountains, and in a National Park, our final two nights are enjoyed in one of **Austria's excellent mountain hotels, a spa resort set in the midst of the Tyrol. With a luxurious spa, it has everything to help you relax.**

Spanning an area of over 5,000 m², the spa area features a panorama pool for indoor and outdoor swimming with a view onto the surrounding mountain scenery, and a **luxurious Tyrolean sauna village.** You can **swim from the inside pool to the outside in the swimming pool, and relax in a warm spa.** Tonight we **enjoy a first class meal in the hotel's restaurant - the hotel chef has been awarded three stars by the Gault Millau gourmet guide.** Overnight at the five star Interlpen Hotel Tyrol.



Tuesday 28 September 2027 (B/D) – a walk in the forest and a horse drawn carriage ride

A day in the Tyrolean Alps provides an opportunity to relax in and around the hotel and explore the national park, and prepare for our journey back to reality. **Enjoy a lavish breakfast buffet as you look out through glass at the slopes of the Tyrolean Alps.** After the excitement of mountain tops, cable cars and rack railways, we'll enjoy a more relaxed day - a mid morning walk in the forest, and then an afternoon treat in the forest. We experience **a horse drawn carriage ride through the forest to a local inn where the publican offers refreshments - a cleansing ale, hot coffee or chocolate, and his famous apple strudel.** Then return to the hotel, and perhaps indulge in a spa, sauna, massage or swim. Tonight we enjoy our last dinner together in the hotel's fine dining restaurant. Overnight at the Interlpen Hotel.



Wednesday 29 September 2027 (B) – Seefeld in Tyrol to Zurich and to Australia

After another fabulous breakfast buffet, we transfer late morning to Innsbruck railway station and catch our rail service to Zurich. The rail journey sees us travelling again along the Arlberg line through Landeck, St Anton and Bludenz and is particularly scenic as we traverse narrow gorges and cross deep viaducts. Enjoy our final rail journey before we arrive at Zurich, where we then travel the short distance to Zurich Airport, where the tour concludes. Return to Australia or other destinations. Evening flight departures to Australia. We trust you enjoyed your time with us on our Swiss and Austrian scenic rail tour.

ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND GENERAL COMMENTS

Accommodation is generally in 4 – 4 ½ star hotels. In some locations we have chosen simpler accommodation due to its proximity to the station, and in some locations we have selected superior hotels as they are part of the experience of the location. Whilst we will do all possible to ensure the room quality (size, perspective, outlook, features) are shared equitably through the tour, some hotels will have no room exactly the same as others. All are comfortable, clean and well located hotels for our tour. Breakfast is included almost every morning, and dinners as identified in the itinerary. Where there is a range of lunch and dinner options, we have not included these in the itinerary to provide choice in style and time of dining. Travel will be by a combination of first class rail, light rail, mountain railways, cable cars, funiculars and lake cruises.

PERSONAL SERVICE AND MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

SJR prides itself on its personal service and attention to detail. The tour is escorted by the organiser/s of the itinerary. You are assured of the utmost service and our commitment to your satisfaction. We recognise that each passenger has different interests, and we will aim to provide the opportunity to allow you to rest from the group, explore by yourself or visit special sites you've read about – if you wish. Detailed advice and assistance will be given to help you, and many travel requirements can be made for you.

RAILWAY EXPERIENCES

A feature of the tour is to experience a selection of scenic and special rail operations in Switzerland and Austria. Many of these have yet to finalise their 2027 programme. Exact details of these may not be known until closer to the time, and we may adjust the tour programme to accommodate where possible.

FARES AND BOOKING PROCEDURES

The tour is limited in size, with a maximum of 16 participants, with bookings confirmed in order of receipt of a deposit of \$3,000 per person. **The tour fare is \$24,850* per person (twin share) plus airfares from Australia, with a \$8,750* single supplement for hotels.** The tour fare includes all hotels and sightseeing, rail and coach travel as indicated, all bus, tram, metro and light rail transfers when part of the group; all accommodation on a double/twin share basis (single accommodation is available on payment of the single supplement); sightseeing and entrance fees to sites as indicated, and meals as shown in the itinerary for each day. The fare does not include meals not identified, drinks, excess baggage charges, gratuities, telephone calls, laundry, any items of a personal nature, travel outside the organised group. Due to the variety of interests of individuals, and the range of sites, museums etc. available for inspection on some days, we have included key features in the tour cost. Inspection and entry fees when not part of the planned group activity are not included in the tour cost. Additional or optional activities or entrance fees (shown as (O) in the itinerary, are not included in the cost. Bookings should be made on the attached form. The deposit of \$3,000 per person should be forwarded by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) and the booking form scanned and emailed to sjr@digitor.com.au - bank account details are:

Account Name: Scenic Journeys by Rail
BSB: 033364
Account Number: 612826
Reference: Your name and 'Swiss'

Debit/credit card payment is available for Visa/MasterCard. Please call us to make payment by debit/credit card.

BOOKING, CANCELLATION AND TRAVEL CONDITIONS

Bookings will be accepted on the attached form. Cancellation fees apply as follows: the initial deposit is non-refundable. After payment of further deposits towards the final tour cost, costs for tickets, accommodation, sightseeing etc made on your behalf will incur cancellation charges equal to the cancellation charges incurred to us, imposed by suppliers/operators, plus a fee to cover administrative costs – more than three months prior to departure, \$2,000 per person; within three months, \$3,000 per person. No refund will be made two months prior to departure from Australia. Cancellation fees for hotel, rail, coach and other travel components apply in accordance with the terms and conditions of the providers. (Note conditions relating to Government restrictions below.) All cancellation or administration charges imposed by the suppliers/operators of components of this tour must be borne by you, the passenger. **Responsibility** - St James' Rail acts as the organiser of the tour. Some transportation, accommodation and other tour arrangements are made by our travel agent, MTA Travel. On acceptance of tickets and travel documents for this tour, which may be evidenced in writing by a ticket, voucher, letter, or other document, you accept that neither St James' Rail nor representatives from any other firm supplying services in conjunction with this tour programme, shall be liable in contract or in tort (actionable wrong) for any injury, loss, damage, accident, sickness, delay or additional expense to you or your possessions arising directly or indirectly by force majeure or other events which are beyond our control, or which are not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part, including, but not limited to, civil disturbance, fire, floods, acts of God, acts of Governments or other authorities, changes in itinerary, weather, strikes, war, transportation disruption, failure of machinery or equipment, industrial action, pandemic, quarantine or any other cause. Where travel is by scheduled carrier, or charter service, that carrier's responsibility is limited in accordance with their conditions of carriage. Similarly, all luggage is your responsibility, and we cannot be held liable for any loss or delay however caused. The care of your travel documents are your own responsibility. All expenses incurred by loss must be borne by you. Airline regulations and conditions are written on the airline tickets and are issued to passengers subject to their acceptance of these conditions. Changes in exchange rates, taxes and any land arrangements costs may alter the price of the tour, and St James' Rail reserves the right to change, amend or cancel this tour and/or itinerary if necessary. We reserve the right to amend the itinerary en-route to account for unforeseen changes or conditions, or to improve the tour experience for the majority, as determined by the tour leader. Passports and visas – a valid passport with six months validity from the end of the tour is required. St James' Rail cannot accept responsibility for any losses or expenses incurred as a result of a passenger not holding valid and necessary passport or visa documents. Full details of terms and conditions: if you would like a copy of the full terms and conditions applicable to all SJR tours please contact us and we will forward a copy to you. **Special conditions relating to Government imposed restrictions** – if the tour is unable to proceed due to Government restrictions, SJR may at our election: postpone your travel arrangements to a future date, in which case we will issue you with a credit note equal to amounts paid at the time of postponement; or cancel your travel arrangements, in which case our contract with you will terminate. If we cancel your travel arrangements and our contract terminates, neither of us will have any claim for damages against the other. However, we will refund payments made by you less unrecoverable third-party costs and less fair compensation for work undertaken by us up until the time of termination and in connection with the processing of any refund. SJR will refund payments it is able to recover or not incur from the various suppliers of services to this tour. Refunds will be made when the funds have been received by SJR from third party suppliers. **Full details of terms and conditions:** if you would like a copy of the full terms and conditions applicable to all SJR tours please contact us and we will forward a copy to you.

INSURANCE

We strongly advise that you have a comprehensive travel insurance policy to protect yourself against cancellation fees, health and other travel risks. On receipt of your booking, an insurance policy can be sent to you from our travel agent, Sarah Manche, MTA Travel, for your consideration. Please let us know if you would like us to send it to you. Obtaining insurance cover for the tour is your responsibility.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please call us on (02) 9326 9660, 0418 585 838, email at sjr@digitor.com.au or visit www.stjamesrail.org

GREAT SCENIC RAIL JOURNEYS OF SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA

Saturday 4 to Thursday 30 September 2027

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Name:

Address: Suburb: Postcode:

Home tel: Work tel: Mobile:

Email:

BOOKING DETAILS (Full passenger names EXACTLY as shown in the passport – please include a scan of the data page of your passport, either with the booking form, or after)

Passenger 1 Name:

Date of Birth: Passport No: Expiry Date:

If asking us to book flights - Frequent Flyer No: Airline No:

Passenger 2 Name:

Date of Birth: Passport No: Expiry Date:

If asking us to book flights - Frequent Flyer No: Airline No:

FOR ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS PLEASE PROVIDE THE ABOVE DETAILS ON A SEPARATE SHEET

PAYMENT

..... I have paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) as described previously. Please email SJR to advise and send this form.

Account Name: Scenic Journeys by Rail
BSB: 033 364
Account Number: 612826
Reference: Your name and 'Swiss'

..... I wish to pay the deposit by credit card. Please call me to obtain details.

A letter will be sent acknowledging receipt of your deposit and providing further details.

AIR TRAVEL TO/FROM EUROPE

..... Please book me/us to travel to Zurich on Saturday 4 September 2027, and from Zurich on Wednesday 29 July 2027.

(Departing from which Australian city?:)

We will call to advise of the best fare option at the time of booking.)

..... Economy class air travel Premium Economy class air travel Business class air travel

..... Please call me to discuss air travel options.

..... I will make my/our own air travel arrangements and meet you in Zurich on Sunday 5 September 2027.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Single rooms:

Double rooms:

Twin (two bedded) rooms:

A single supplement is payable for sole use of rooms in hotels.

GLACIER EXPRESS EXCELLENCE CLASS

Please indicate if you would like us to book a set if it is possible. As there are only 20 seats on the train, they sell out quickly. Also note the supplement of \$850 for the journey is non-refundable from the Swiss Railways once booked.

.....

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please indicate any dietary or any other sort of special request :

.....

.....

INSURANCE

..... Please send an insurance policy from our travel agent, Sarah Manche, MTA Travel.

YOUR SIGNATURE

I have read the reservation conditions outlined above and accept them on behalf of myself and my party by whom I am authorised to make this agreement.

Signature of person making reservation: Date:

Cancellation charges will apply as advised in this itinerary. An insurance policy can be forwarded from our travel agent Sarah Manche, at MTA Travel, upon request. It is your responsibility to obtain appropriate travel insurance for your personal circumstances.

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Web www.stjamesrail.org

September 2026