

GREAT SCENIC RAIL JOURNEYS OF SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA

- the stunning scenery of rail journeys through the alps -

Saturday 9 June to Thursday 4 July 2024



Join us for a twenty-three 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 lovely 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).

Sunday 9 June 2024 (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, Etihad via Abu Dhabi, 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.

Monday 10 June 2024 (B) – Zurich and to Lucerne

Depending upon your flight choice, a morning or lunchtime arrival into Switzerland's very efficient Zurich Airport. We will meet those arriving off the morning Singapore and Etihad Airlines flights, and lunchtime Emirates and Qatar flights. We transfer by train to Lucerne, a short distance from Zurich for our first three night's accommodation. Our hotel is located adjacent to the rail station, and a few minute's walk to the edge of the lake. Enjoy a relaxing afternoon sightseeing in Lucerne, possibly visiting 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 there are a range of dining options at and close to our hotel. Overnight Luzern.

Tuesday 11 June 2024 (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 12 June 2024 (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** – its museums, historic foot bridges, churches, **world-famous Chapel Bridge and Water Tower**, the Musegg Wall, Jesuit Church, Mill Bridge, the **Swiss National Transport Museum** and more. This evening dinner is at leisure and overnight Lucerne.

Thursday 13 June 2024 (B/L) – Brunig Pass to the Jungfrau region, Interlaken & Lake Thun

This morning we join the Brünig express to travel across the only narrow-gauge line of the Swiss Federal Railways. It was built as a combined adhesion and rack railway (the first in Switzerland). The line links the Bernese Oberland and Interlaken with Lucerne. The railway was built in 1888, when it linked Brienz with Alpnachstad, and in 1889 it was extended to Lucerne. The next extension was in 1913, where the Brienz-Interlaken "lake line" was built. 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. In fact, the Harder Kulm Panorama Restaurant is reminiscent of a castle, and those who wish can enjoy a drink or light evening repast. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Interlaken.

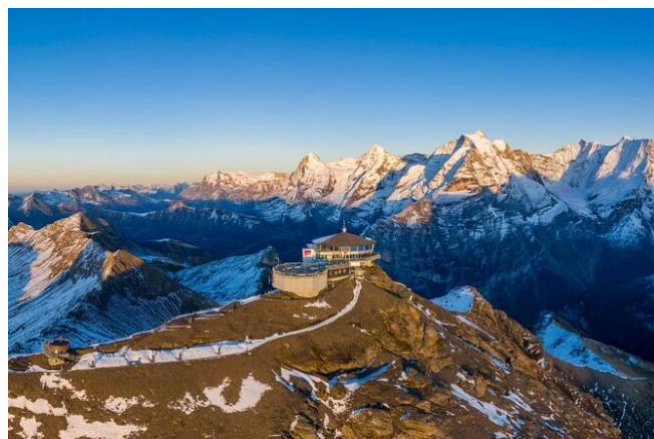


Friday 14 June 2024 (B/L) – Jungfrauoch

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. Descend to Lauterbrunnen, return via a different route to Grindelwald, for a walk in this pretty village in the afternoon light, before a return to Interlaken. Alternatively experience the new Eiger Express tricable car – which will take you from Grindelwald to the Eiger Glacier station in just 15 minutes. You can travel to or return from the Jungfrauoch – Top of Europe - 47 minutes faster than before. Dinner at leisure and overnight Interlaken.

Saturday 15 June 2024 (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 of Mürren. Its decorative wooden houses exude warmth and rustic charm. A combination of cable car, isolated mountain railway, and ropeway makes it a tremendous experience. Alternatively explore the village of Grindelwald or around Interlaken itself. There is much to see and do in this picturesque alpine region. Dinner at leisure and overnight Interlaken.



Sunday 16 June 2024 (B) – the Golden Pass to Montreux

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. A short cruise on Lac Lemman, or a visit to Castle Chillon, a splendid edifice on the edge of the lake, with a fascinating history and an excellent historical presentation – it 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 17 June 2024 (B/D) – Aigle, Les Diablerets , Lac Lemman and the Lavaux

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 via Montreux**, and board a ship on Lac Lemman for a sixty minute cruise to **Lausanne for a short afternoon walking on the lake's edge**. We then travel up hill to **Puidoux**, and change for the scenic journey through the middle of vineyards, with splendid views over the lake. At **Grandvaux** we break our journey for a simple repast, before heading on to Vevey, and back to Montreux. Dinner is included tonight and overnight Montreux.

Tuesday 18 June 2024 (B) – Lake Lemman, Chaplin Museum, Evian, Rocher-de-Naye

There is a range of sightseeing options today, and we will provide details for your choice, and lead the most popular. For those who enjoy the mountains and cog railways, join the **private railway that ascends to Rocher-de-Naye (O)**. In just one hour, you climb by rack railway from the palm trees on the shore of Lake Geneva (Lac Lemman) to the mountains above. The cog railway meanders between lake, forests and high mountain pastures to reach the summit of more than 2,000 metres – a light lunch is available at the café. From **Lausanne** enjoy a **short boat journey across Lake Lemman to Evian, France, with beautiful views of the mountains in both directions**. Explore Lausanne, home to the Olympic Museum, or from nearby **Vevey**, visit the excellent **Chaplin Museum** - 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 visit the lakeside city of **Geneva**, home to multilateral institutions, a worldwide centre for diplomacy due to the presence of numerous international organisations, including the headquarters of many agencies of the United Nations and the Red Cross. Geneva hosts the highest number of international organisations in the world. On the return enjoy an early evening drink and light refreshment aboard the train as you travel along the edge of Lake Geneva in the late afternoon light – the train journey itself is most picturesque - and the light reflects in Lac Lemman on the Swiss Riviera. Dinner at leisure and overnight Montreux.



Wednesday 19 June 2024 (B/D) – 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 experience 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. The journey continues with 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-meter-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 is included tonight. Overnight Zermatt.



Thursday 20 June 2024 (B) – the Gornergratt and Matterhorn Glacier Paradise

Today we 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 first 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, we 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. Enjoy this car-free village, and in the evening dinner is at leisure at one of a number of nearby restaurants to our hotel. Overnight Zermatt.



Friday 21 June 2024 (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

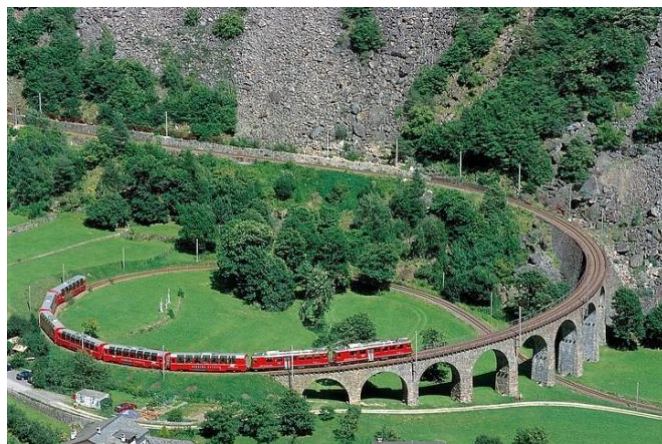
corners of the world at long last discovered the rustic charms of the Swiss Alps - previously remote mountain villages such as Zermatt and St Moritz were transformed into chic health resorts. The three railway companies of that period (VZ – later BVZ, RhB and FOB) successfully took advantage of the tourism 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 is also the option to experience the most recent innovation on the Glacier Express – Excellence Class – designed obviously for excellent people ! It also attracts an excellent supplement of CHF470 (currently about \$810 per person.) Let us now if you are interested and we will do our best to accommodate you, reducing the supplement by the cost of the included meal in First Class.) You can see more at this link - <https://www.glacierexpress.ch/en/offers/excellence-class/>

Saturday 22 June 2024 (B/MT) – 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.

Sunday 23 June 2024 (B/D) – 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 **OBB Austrian Railways 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 included and overnight Innsbruck.



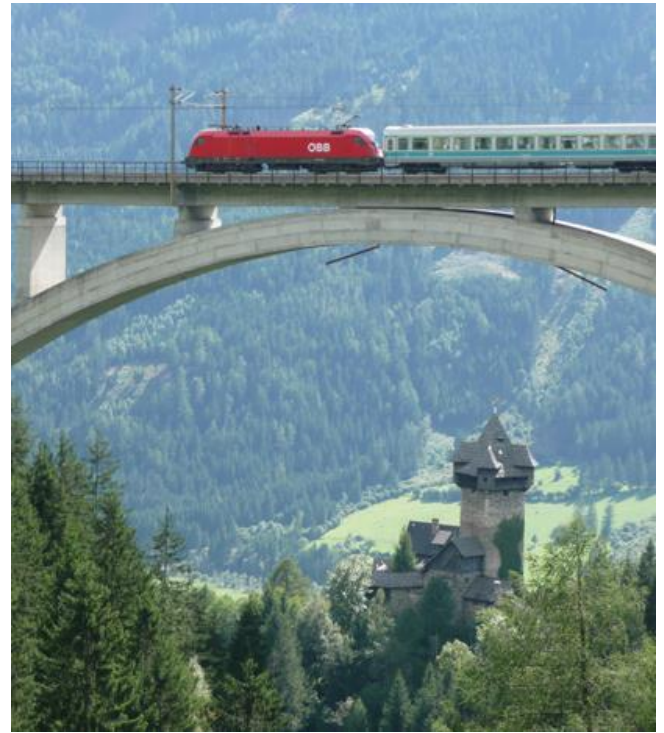
Monday 24 June 2024 (B) – the Achenseebahn, Lake Achen and Innsbruck

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 advice and suggestions for those who wish a break from mountain railways. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Innsbruck.



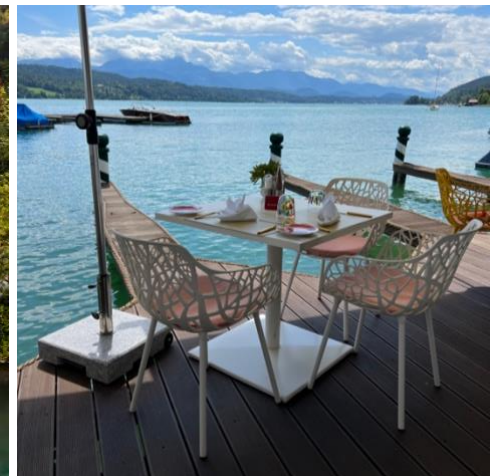
Tuesday 25 June 2024 (B/D) – the Tauernbahn and to Pörschach am Wörthersee, Carinthia

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 Emperor 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 Griessen Pass and then drops in to the Pinsgau 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 **Pörschach am Wörthersee** and transfer the short distance to our hotel for the next 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 to 28 degree pool enclosure within the lake itself ! Dinner is included tonight and overnight at Pörschach am Wörthersee.



Wednesday 26 June 2024 (B/D) – 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 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. Today we cruise on the lake, from Velden to Klagenfurt, enjoying a relaxing time viewing the mountain and lake scenery. Alternatively the nearby villages of Velden and Pörschach 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. For those who wish to be more adventurous, we will offer a rail option to see more of the Carinthian countryside from the train. Dinner is included tonight.



Thursday 27 June 2024 (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 Pörtlach 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, fantastic 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 – an apple after the last two nights – and overnight Wien.



Friday 28 June 2024 (B/L) – cruise the Danube, the Wachau, Melk Abbey or Dürnstein

Today we take to the water, and enjoy a cruise along the Danube and through the splendid Wachau Valley – home to some of Austria's finest Grüner Veltliner grapes. When the rising sun illuminates Melk Abbey, a colossal and wonderfully beautiful monument is brought to life. Melk Abbey is the symbol of the Wachau Valley and its steep, terraced vineyards overlooking the Danube. Abbot Berthold Dietmayr and his architects Jakob Prandtauer and Joseph Munggenast left no stone unturned in their quest from 1701 to 1736 to construct a sacred palace upon the foundations of a medieval monastery. The centrepiece of this complex is the library, its main hall boasting 16,000 volumes and graced with a ceiling fresco by Paul Troger. A spiral staircase leads to another set of 12 library rooms not open to the public but containing more than 100,000 volumes, some of which are extremely valuable. It is easy to understand why the Italian writer Umberto Eco drew inspiration from this site for his novel "The Name of the Rose" in which a monastic library plays a key role. It is an impressive place. Dürnstein is a small town of just over 900 people best known for its grape growing, historic character, and castle that imprisoned English King Richard the Lionheart. Dürnstein has a long history, stretching back to at least 1019, but it wasn't actually recorded as a town until 1347. We plan to enjoy luncheon aboard our cruise, time to explore Melk and/or Dürnstein, then return to Wien in the late afternoon and dinner is at leisure and overnight Wien.



Saturday 29 June 2024 (B) – exploring Wien or the Mariazellerbahn

Today you have the option to 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. Or just wonder Stephanplatz and admire the Dom, explore the narrow alleys, take lunch in a café, and be Viennese for the day. Alternatively join us for a trip to the Mariazellerbahn mountain railway, opened in 1907, it connects the Lower Austrian capital St. Pölten with the Styrian town of Mariazell. For the first few kilometres, the narrow-gauge railway crosses mainly agricultural hill country and switches into the Pielach Valley south of St. Pölten. Above the village of Erlaufboden, view the 1893-metre-high Ötscher for the first time. The route leads over picturesque viaducts, through steep forests and past the idyllic waters of the Lassing reservoir. Considered the scenic highlight of the Mariazell railway, you then see the "Zinken", as the rugged gorge is known, between a series of short tunnels. Mitterbach am Erlaufsee is the last stop in Lower Austria, and shortly afterwards the narrow-gauge railway reaches its destination: the pilgrimage site of Mariazell in Styria. Mariazell has made a name for itself with its magnificent basilica, but also with its traditional gingerbread, and attracts thousands of pilgrims every year. We return to Wien and dinner at leisure and overnight Wien.



Sunday 30 June 2024 (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 Frgenstein 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 finest hotels, a spa resort set in the midst of the Tyrol**. With probably **the most beautiful and luxurious spa in the Alps, 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 to the outside in the heated 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**. The multi course meal features a selection for each, including an extensive salad and cheese buffet, served in the elegant wood panelled restaurant rooms or in the light-filled indoor winter garden. Overnight at the five star Interlpen Hotel Tyrol.



Monday 1 July 2024 (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.



Tuesday 2 July 2024 (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. Those continuing on the SJR Great scenic rail journeys of Britain fly to London. 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 has yet to finalise their 2024 programme. We are working with them to include some special experiences for our tour, such as chartered special carriages and dining experiences aboard. 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 20 participants, with bookings confirmed in order of receipt of a deposit of \$3,000 per person. **The tour fare is \$19,850* per person (twin share) plus airfares from Australia, with a \$6,850* 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 cheque, payable to St James Rail, along with the booking form, to:

SJR, PO Box N400, GROSVENOR PLACE, 1220

You can also pay the deposit by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):

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

If paying by EFT, include the reference above and your surname, and email to sjr@digitor.com.au to advise you have paid. Please forward the booking form to the postal address above.

Debit/credit card payment is available, with merchant fees of 1.00% 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 licensed travel agent, Travel Associates, Paddington. 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, 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 9 June to Thursday 4 July 2024

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:

Frequent Flyer No: Airline No:

Passenger 2 Name:

Date of Birth: Passport No: Expiry Date:

Frequent Flyer No: Airline No:

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

PAYMENT

..... I have enclosed \$ as deposit (\$3,000 per person) for the above booking. Please make cheques payable to St James Rail.

..... 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'

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 9 June 2024, and from Zurich on Tuesday 2 July 2024.

(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 Saturday 9 June 2024

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Single rooms:

Double rooms:

Twin (two bedded) rooms:

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

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.

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, upon request. It is your responsibility to obtain appropriate travel insurance for your personal circumstances.

Telephone +612 9326 9660
Email sjr@digitor.com.au

Mobile +61 418 585 838
Web www.stjamesrail.org

August 2023