

La Gruyère region : beyond cheese and chocolate

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **80 (2014)**

Heft [5]

PDF erstellt am: **30.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943968>

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La Gruyère Region

Beyond Cheese and Chocolate

The natural beauty and human history of the La Gruyère region, from the Lac de la Gruyère and its many tributaries, into the hills and pre-alps, offers plenty to experience for discovery and tramping.



Lac de la Gruyère, facing south-east

The main feature in the north of the district is the Lake of Gruyère (French: Lac de la Gruyère). This is in fact not a lake, but a reservoir formed by the Rossens Dam on the Sarine River between the cities of Bulle and Fribourg. The remains of the castle of Pont (or Pont-en-Ogoz) and a chapel are located on the Ile d'Ogoz, one of the five islets in the lake – reminiscent of an ancient loch in Scotland.

In the south, the Intyamou Valley guides the Sarine (Saane) River towards the Lac de la Gruyère. Its wild character and pastoral landscapes have remained unchanged over the years. Meadows, pastures, forests and houses blend harmoniously, seemingly belonging to another age. There are a number of themed trails both in the valley itself and higher up

in the Gruyère Pays-d'Enhaut Regional Nature Park. This includes the Path of the Poyas and that of the Counts of Gruyères, following the Sarine River, taking in the natural sights but also ancient farmhouses with their respective poyas. The Gruyère Pays-d'Enhaut Regional Nature Park illustrates the botanical richness and alpine pastoral culture of the Pre-Alps of the region, offering many historical and nature trails.

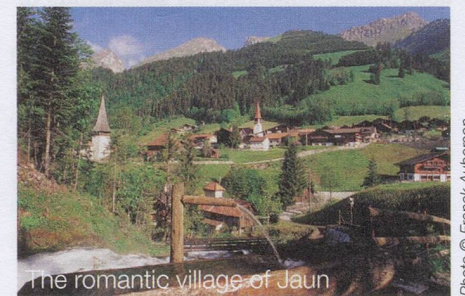
In the east of the region, the land gently slopes towards the Lac de la Gruyère and is covered by meadows and fields. Here Bulle, the capital of the region lies, with its very own castle. Bulle has a large farmer's market every Thursday in July and August, where fine local produce is on offer. Bulle is also the starting point of the seven

kilometre long Poor People's Path. This path was originally built in 1307, at the same time as the nearby Monastery of Part-Dieu, and was used by the monks and their oxen to descend to the Trème River to find rocks for the construction of the monastery. In the early 1600s, the poor used this path to attend mass at the monastery, to be rewarded by a bowl of soup and a piece of bread.

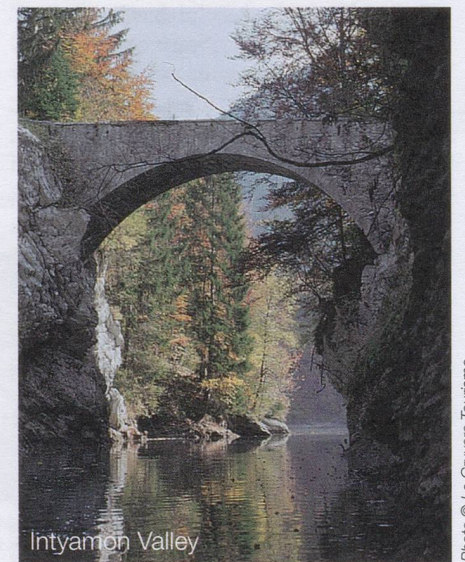
In the very far eastern corner of the region lies the village of Jaun, a romantic mountain village amidst majestic summits, including the impressive Gastlosen range. Jaun is the only German speaking village of the region, just beyond the "Röschti-graben" (the French-Swiss language border). As everywhere in the region, Jaun offers a series of themed paths, seducing its visitors to explore the place. The people of Jaun speak „Jaundeutsch“ or „Jütüttsch“: a most unusual and rare Swiss dialect, characterised by ancient words and sounds from the Old High German, combined with the nasal pronunciation of many a- and o- sounds.

All in all, the La Gruyère region offers a huge diversity of landscapes, impressions, experiences and sights that is well worth exploring.

Sources: www.la-gruyere.ch/, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_of_Gruyère, <http://www.jaundeutsch.ch/dialekt/jaundeutsch>



The romantic village of Jaun



Intyamou Valley

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