

Colin Farmer's dispatch from Berne

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COLIN FARMER'S DISPATCH FROM BERNE

INTER-HOTELS SWITZERLAND CONTINUE TARIFF 'FREEZE'

Inter-Hotels Switzerland has announced that its price "freeze" is to continue for the seventh successive year — until the end of 1980. The decision by the 33-member group means that Inter-Hotels will next year be offering the same basic rates as in 1974.



Said group marketing director Martin Buehler: "This unanimous decision by our members is a demonstration of our determination to remain highly competitive — both nationally and internationally. "We also hope it will help to disprove something of Switzerland's reputation in Britain and elsewhere abroad as an expensive holiday destination". The Berne-based Inter-Hotels group is the first hotel group or chain in Switzerland to announce publicly its price policy for 1980 — "but no doubt others will follow our lead", claimed Mr. Buehler. Inter-Hotels Switzerland offer uniform individual rates nationwide, starting from Sw.Fr. 35 per person for bed/breakfast (double room occupancy) and from Sw.Fr. 45 per person for a single room. Special rates are available for tour operators and group bookings.

BRITISH TRAVEL AGENTS VISIT SWITZERLAND

Inter-Hotels Switzerland is hosting a series of educational study visits this spring for British travel agents.

One group of 20 has just completed a tour of Berne, Lausanne and Zermatt, and 40 more agents are visiting Lugano, Lucerne and Kandersteg. Further visits are planned for later this year.

The number of British bookings at Swiss hotels last year rose 13 per

cent to more than one million — despite a general drop in foreign visitors. And a recent survey by the Berne-based Inter-Hotels group has revealed Britain to be its third most important market after West Germany and the United States.

The educational visits are being co-sponsored by the Swiss National Tourist Office, London tour operator Good Times Holidays, independent British airline Dan-Air and regional tourist offices throughout Switzerland.

LENK LAUNCHES FAMILY HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

The Swiss alpine resort of Lenk — which specialises in family holiday arrangements — is launching a major campaign to boost British tourism to the region.

Says Mr. Forrer, Lenk tourism director: "Because of the problems of the pound, many Swiss resorts are neglecting the British market. I think they are very wrong. British bookings in Switzerland increased last year by more than 12 per cent, and in the Bernese Oberland region by more than 33 per cent. And it was the British who discovered Switzerland — and in particular the Bernese Oberland — as a tourist destination."

Lenk claims to offer "one of the most extensive year-round programmes of genuine family holidays and facilities available anywhere in Switzerland". The resort's hotels total some 800 beds, with half

pension prices ranging from Sw.Fr. 38 per person for individual bookings and from Sw.Fr. 28 per person for group bookings. And prices are guaranteed until the end of 1980. Lenk's extensive programme features a wide range of holiday courses for children, including painting, pantomime and pony-riding, modelling and music, films shows and folk dancing.

Local hotels and restaurants are offering special-priced accommodation and menus for children, and the resort even organises baby-sitting services and special holidays for the handicapped. As a leading health spa, Lenk also offers some of Europe's finest alpine springs, sauna, massage and mineral bathing facilities.

DAN-AIR FLIES TO BERNE DAILY

British independent airline Dan-Air has increased to seven the number of weekly return flights on its London-Berne-London route this summer. And the company will continue to offer "the lowest excursion fare on any scheduled service between Britain and Switzerland" (return fare £78) since last month.

All flights depart London (Gatwick) at 0910, arriving in Berne at 1135. The return flight departs Berne at 1212, arriving in London at 1440.

Dan-Air launched the Berne route seven years ago — and is still the only airline operating between Britain and the Swiss capital.

