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TOURIST NEWS

BERNESE OBERLAND – FIRST SALTWATER BATH

The Bernese Oberland's first salt-water bath was opened shortly before Christmas at Schönried near Gstaad. The indoor and outdoor swimming pool has a water temperature of 33°C and will stay open throughout the year. The pool is owned by the Hotel Ermitage Golf at Schönried.

OFFICIAL SWISS TIMETABLE

The winter edition of the Official Swiss Timetable, which shows the railway, steamboat and postal motor coach services throughout Switzerland, as well as many aerial cableway, chairlift and funicular timings, is on sale at the Swiss National Tourist Office at a charge of £2.00. The winter edition is valid until 31st May, 1980.

Further features of the timetable are international connections, ticket and luggage rates and general information in English, French, German and Italian.

GENEVA – GUIDED TOURS THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS

Daily guided tours are available through the United Nations at the Palais des Nations in Geneva which was built in 1936 for the League of Nations.

Admission: Sw.Fr. 3.50 for adults. Reduced rates for groups of 20 or more visitors are available, and advance arrangements should be made at Chief of the Visitor's Service, Office E-2002, United Nations, 1200 Geneva, Switzerland. Tel: (022) 34 60 11, Ext. 4539.

LUGANO – WINTER PACKAGE ARRANGEMENT

"Winter in Lugano" is a weekly package which is available until 29th March, 1980 and includes accommodation, a welcome drink, one admission to an indoor swimming pool as well as admissions to various night clubs, unlimited journeys on Lake Lugano, the funicular to Monte Brè, buses to Tesserete and Sonvico, the railway Lugano-Ponte Tresa, and on Saturdays and Sundays the chairlift to Monte Lema.

Prices range from Sw.Fr. 140 for bed and breakfast to Sw.Fr. 805 for full board in a luxury hotel.

Information and bookings: Ente turistico Lugano ed dintorni, Riva

Albertoli 5, Casella postale, 6901 Lugano, Switzerland.

SEEWEN – PRIVATE MECHANICAL MUSIC APPARATUS COLLECTION OPENS

The best privately-owned collection of mechanical music apparatus in Europe has been opened to the public at Seewen in Canton Solothurn. It contains 300 items from matchbox-size music boxes to pictorial clocks, box and secretary organs, orchestrions and androiden which the collector, Dr. Heinrich Weiss, restored to working order. He devoted 1,500 hours of work to the showpiece, the big "Welte" concert organ. This organ can be played manually, but is also provided with mechanism for automatic playing. One thousand three hundred music rolls are available for this instrument. The emphasis of the collection lies on the organs made by the Bruder dynasty of Waldkirch in the Black Forest with their rich tones. Also fascinating are the figures which move their eyes, heads, arms and legs. The collection, at Bollhuebel 293, Seewen, is open from Tuesday to Saturday from 14.00 to 17.00 hours and by special request. Seewen can be reached by postal coach from Grenchen railway station (main line Basle-Delémont).

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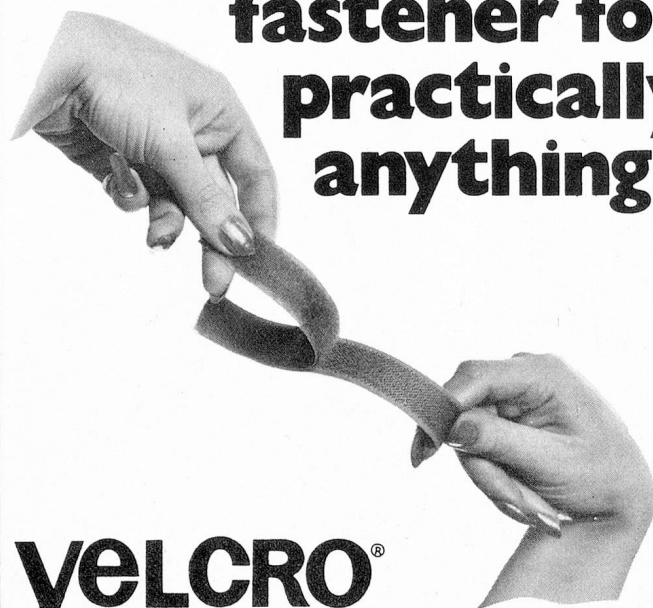
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OVER THE ALPS – BY BALLOON

The Canton Vaud holiday resort of Château-d'Oex (situated on the Montreux–Bernese Oberland rail route) has an unusual new attraction – an Alpine “balloonport” for flights by hot-air balloon. In addition to passenger flights, courses for pilots are also organised. Another new attraction is the opening to the public of the eighteenth-century Chalet de l'Etambeau, which has been maintained in its original state. Features include the chalet's spacious cheese cellar and a permanent photographic exhibition devoted to old architecture. The Chalet de l'Etambeau is open on Saturdays from 14.00 to 17.00 hours, and on Sundays from 11.00 to 12.00 and from 14.00 to 17.00 hours.

GRINDELWALD – EUROPE'S LONGEST AERIAL CABLEWAY

The aerial cableway from Grindelwald–Grund (3,094 ft) to the Maennlichen (7,317 ft) has been in operation since last winter. With its 220 cabins seating four people each, the total carrying capacity amounts to 800 persons per hour.

There is parking space for 1,200 cars at the starting point in Grindelwald–Grund.

A brochure giving details of the winter sport tariffs in the Jungfrau Region including the above cableway is available from the Swiss National Tourist Office.

CULTURAL INTEREST IN NYON

Already known in Roman times, the town of Nyon, on Lake Geneva, has many points of interest for tourists. The thirteenth-century castle houses a museum in which Roman finds and a craft speciality, porcelain and stoneware, are exhibited. Also interesting is the “Musée du Léman” in which the emphasis is on fishing and navigation. Until November the Museum is showing models of famous ships like the “Cutty Sark” and of Venetian gondolas, Norwegian fishing boats and Lake of Geneva sailing vessels.

DISCOVERING EASTERN SWITZERLAND – BY POSTAL COACH

Visitors to eastern Switzerland may now discover this attractive holiday region in a new and leisurely way – by horse-drawn postal coach. The eight-seater coach, drawn by four horses, was in regular use until 1921 over the Alpine passes of the Grisons region. Now it may be hired in St. Gall for half-day or whole-day excursions to such destinations as Appenzell, Rapperswil or Frauenfeld. Brochures are obtainable from the St. Gall Tourist Office.

VISITING GOTTHELF IN LÜTZELFLÜH

In the village of Lützelflüh (railway station on the Langnau-Burgdorf line), in the Emmenthal region of Canton Berne, visitors can follow in the footsteps of Gotthelf. It was there that Albert Bitzius, known by his pen-name of Jeremias Gotthelf, was parson from 1830 to 1854. His grave, the writer's museum in the “Gotthelfstube” and his memorial can all be seen. The trip to Lützelflüh can now also be combined with a walk along the new nature lore path. Thirty panels provide information about bird and animal life, flora, geology and the history of settlement in the surrounding area.

ON THE ROOF OF EUROPE BY POSTCOACH

In Switzerland the continental watershed, the dividing line between the catchment areas of the Atlantic and Mediterranean follows the line of the Alps and is appropriately known as the “roof of Europe”. The great watersheds can also be reached or crossed by postcoach and combined with a walking trip, starting in the west with the Col des Mosses, which runs from Château-d'Oex in the Pays d'Enhaut to le Sépey. From Sion the yellow postbus takes travellers to the cofferdam shortly after the Sanetsch Pass, from where – only for people on foot used to the mountains – there is a steep descent to Gsteig, near Gstaad, while the journey from Sion to the Rawil Pass, which leads travellers on foot over to Lenk, ends below the pass summit. Another deep cleft is the 7,100 ft high Furka Pass from Oberwald to Andermatt, from where another postbus service goes over the Gotthard Pass to Airolo in Canton Ticino. The Lukmanier Pass, from Disentis to the Ticino's Val Blenio, is not only a watershed but a linguistic dividing line. Other watershed crossings are the San Bernardino, Splügen, Julier and Flüela.

NATURETUM IN THE ALETSCHE FOREST

The Aletsch Forest Nature Protection Centre in the Villa Cassel on the Riederfurka has been given another attraction: a Naturetum. This is a very special alpine garden in which the visitor is introduced to the natural vegetation of the area. The plants bloom in their natural rhythm, so that the garden changes its appearance every month. At the same time the Naturetum is a nature lore area with the aim of helping people get to know nature and the animal world that is part of it. A valuable aid to the visitor is the guide, obtainable in the nature protection centre, with information about plants, trees, animals, geological formations, etc.

SPORTING ATTRACTIONS IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND

The Bernese Oberland is offering an extensive range of exciting new sport facilities this winter. Interlaken is opening a new artificial ice rink, Kandersteg now has the most modern ski-jumping installation in Europe. Heimberg is operating a tennis centre, and Aeschi introduces a new indoor swimming pool. Saanenmöser's extensive new facilities – including a cable railway, two chairlifts and a ski-lift – has opened up an attractive new ski-ing area, while Lenk is offering a new 15 km (9-mile) cross-country track. For the really advanced skier, Hasliberg is offering a special arrangement which includes off-the-beaten-track 1,500 m downhill ski-ing supervised by top local instructors. In Zweisimmen winter visitors can now combine ski-ing, cross-country, tennis and rambling weeks to their individual requirements. And for the first time, all-inclusive winter holiday arrangements offered by the many Bernese Oberland resorts are now included in one compact and comprehensive brochure.

WINTER HOLIDAYS IN SWITZERLAND 1979/80

The Swiss National Tourist Office has again published its useful booklet “Winter Holidays in Switzerland 1979/80 arranged by British Tour Operators”.

Over 42 British Tour Operators are arranging winter sports holidays and “winter breaks” in 51 resorts and towns in Switzerland and Liechtenstein at attractive prices from £122 for eight days half board at Wilderswil and from £240 for eight days full board at Wengen.

SWITZERLAND AND HER GLACIERS

“Switzerland and her Glaciers” – a touring exhibition tracing this country from the Ice Age to the present – has been attracting great interest nationwide. This impressive spectacle (sponsored jointly by the Swiss National Tourist Office and the Swiss Society for Natural History) has already been on tour for more than a year. It will continue next year at Geneva (8th to 26th February), St. Gall (10th to 18th May) and Basel (25th July to 5th August) in conjunction with the “Green 80” event. The scientific and illustrative material used for the exhibition has already been incorporated into a 200-page book of high artistic quality, commissioned by the Swiss National Tourist Office from publishers Kümmerly & Frey of Berne. Visitors to the exhibition may obtain this outstanding work from the SNTTO stand at a price of Sw.Fr. 29.50.