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# The Swiss Observer

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## Spring in the Ticino

This month's covers show scenes  
from Switzerland's "Sun Balcony",  
the Ticino.

Weather statistics justify this  
description: Lugano enjoys on an  
average 2,250 to 2,800 hours of  
sunshine a year. The Ticino has,  
thanks to its exceptionally mild and  
sunny climate a luxuriant, subtrop-  
ical vegetation and in Spring the air  
is heady with the fragrance of orange  
blossom, mimosa and other flowers  
and palm trees flourish alongside  
oleander, agaves and magnolias.

But even the Ticino has bad  
patches of weather. I remember one  
particular holiday spent mostly in  
dank clothes, huddled in rugs on our  
hotel balcony or in various *grottos*,  
emptying a considerable number of  
*boccalinos* in order to escape from  
the constant heavy downpour. But  
the locals were very friendly and  
most sympathetic towards the unfor-  
tunate wet *turisti*.

The Ticino has an abundance of  
attractions for the tourist and can  
offer something for every inclination,  
with its lakes and mountains, its  
picturesque towns, gardens and  
art-treasures. Almost every kind of  
outdoor activity is available.

The number of tourists is likely to  
increase further when the great  
north-south motorway from Basle to  
Chiasso through the Gotthard will be  
completed in September.

But not all Ticinesi profit from the  
tourist-business. In the valleys  
above the lakes the old villages have  
preserved their character. Their  
inhabitants lead a sober life, earning  
very little by tilling their small, stony  
fields or their vines. In order to  
prevent the young from deserting  
their native villages, factories have  
been built in some of those valleys  
and old handicrafts, such as spin-  
ning, weaving and braiding straw  
have been reintroduced.

As distinctive as the scenery of  
southern Switzerland is the gracious  
hospitality of its people. The Ticino  
has often been described as a  
harmony of contrasts: a carefree  
Latin attitude, combined with the  
Swiss sense of order.

After the grey, dull winter months  
a little Italian sunshine, flower-  
scented air and joy seem to be just  
the right tonic for the city-dweller  
who is lucky enough to get away for  
a spring holiday in the Ticino.

mhm

### This month's covers

Front cover: Ponte dei Salti near Lavertezzo in the Verzasca Valley (Ticino)

Back cover: Summer evening in the Ticino (upper left)

The Pilatus railway between Alpnachstad and Pilatus Kulm (Central Switzerland) (upper right)

Morcote on Lake Lugano (Ticino) (bottom of page)

We apologize for the late appearance of the April and May issues of the SWISS OBSERVER, due to events beyond our control (industrial action at our printer's).

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