

Swiss Holiday Scene

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Swiss Holiday Scene

Compiled by the Swiss National Tourist Office



Dancing in the grape harvest

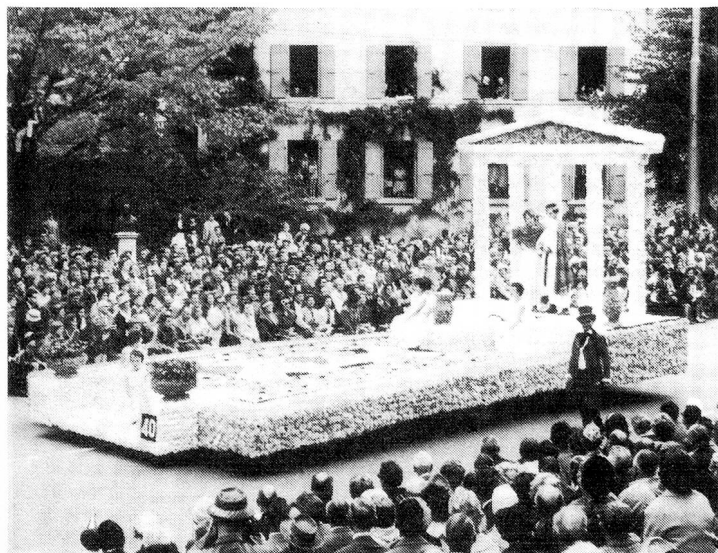
GRAPE harvest time in the wine-growing areas of Switzerland is a busy but cheerful time of the year.

The festivals of Sierre in Canton Valais and Morges, on the Lake of Geneva, certainly rank high on the list, while in the Ticino, Lugano stages an event which gets more popular every year. As at Sierre and Morges, the central feature is a well-organised festive parade.

The grape harvest festival at Neuchâtel is one of the popular

major festivals held in different cities. The parade, here also the central feature of the tradition, was first held in 1902 and has been constantly improved.

Nowadays the confetti battles and masks, and the amusements and dancing on Saturday and Sunday evenings are also big attractions. Market stalls and little booths serving drinks are put in the streets, and some of the city's fountains are even transformed into novel "wine-shops".



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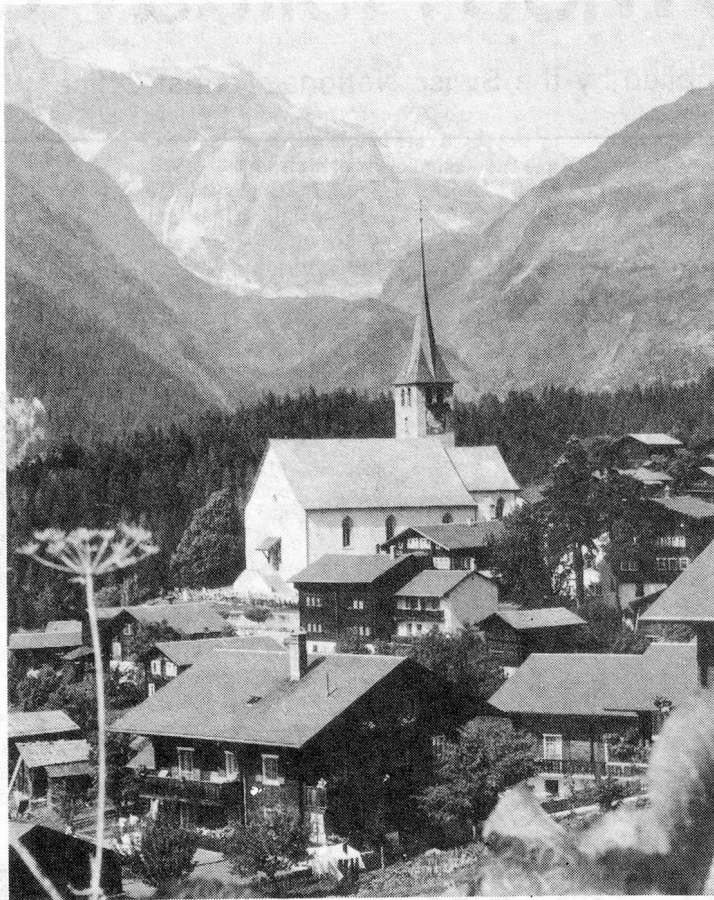
The singing bells of Ernen

ON Sundays and holidays a very special set of bells, the carillon, peals forth an invitation to worship in Ernen, a prim little village in the Goms valley.

The art of bell ringing by hand was once known throughout the Valaisan valleys. Today machines have virtually taken over. An exception, Ernen is the home of the last bellringer, a farmer, to play the carillon by hand.

The bellringer sits in the belfry of the church, often exposed to wind and weather. In front of him are the ropes and pedals connected to the individual clappers. The bell ropes are then set in motion, the tempo based either on a musical score or the bell ringer's own inclination. The whole installation, built by joiners and blacksmiths, is the simplest imaginable.

From time immemorial



Ernen . . . home of the last carillon player

three artistic forms of carillon playing have been known in the Valais, just as diverse dialects have also been spoken.

In the Lower Valais, a melodious form prevails — the slower country dances and folk tunes — while in the area around Sion and Sierre the ringer sets a striking,

varied pattern of rhythm.

In the Upper Valais the melody of the carillon is enriched by the vibrant tones of a single bell swinging in an even beat.

The richly-ornamented altars of the church in Ernen, the hand-carved choir stalls and a 300-year-old organ with towering lateral pipers

are genuine works of art. The treasury of the church is also well worth a visit.

Ernen is in a strikingly beautiful rustic setting. The main square is distinguished by charming historic buildings now housing public offices. The Tell House is decorated with folkloric representations, such as Tell's Shooting the Apple, the Oath on the Rütli, the Death of Gessler.

The Zendenrathaus, the old "hundred court" council house, was built as a court of law and a prison. An outer fresco depicts a banneret, or standard bearer.

Ernen can be reached by car when driving from Brig along the Goms Valley towards the Furka Pass. Those travelling on the Glacier Express can get off at Fiesch and take the post coach to Ernen.



Prelude to melody . . . the bell rope is attached.

The large clock face of the Church of St. George carries heraldic figures from Ernen's historic families.



Ski school directors' course

THIS year's Swiss Ski School directors' course will be held at Grindelwald from December 6 to 13 and December 13 to 20.

In addition to the refresher course for the 200 directors of Swiss ski schools there will be the usual guest instruction. A local weekly package is available from Sfr. 630 including seven nights half board, seven days local ski pass and six days ski instruction.

Further information and booking through the Swiss Ski School Association at Andermat.

An all-inclusive arrangement, combining air travel, transfers and the above package, can be booked through Sunset Tours, 171 High Street, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1AH.

Guide to youth hostels

WHEN young people travel they look for good, inexpensive lodgings where they can meet others of the same age. If at the same time the accommodation has a touch of old-world romance or offers something different from home in their own country, so much the better.

In Switzerland, they will find just what they are looking for. There is no age limit for Swiss hostels — though should there be a rush for places the under 25-year-olds have first call.

The Swiss National Tourist Office has published a new edition of the Swiss Youth Hostel Guide. A map of Switzerland shows the 99 locations where youngsters can find accommodation in youth hostels, plus detailed information and useful travel hints. The publication is available free of charge.

Advice on youth-hostelling is

New air-rail link is approved

THE go-ahead for a rail connection to Geneva's Cointrin Airport has been given by the Swiss Government. The project — which will cost 189 million Swiss francs — is to begin in 1982 and is expected to take five years to complete.

It will be a double-track branch off the main Geneva Cornavin - La Plaine line which will run for 2.5 kilometres in cuttings and tunnels to Geneva-Cointrin where it will terminate in an underground station.

Geneva Airport will then act as a railhead terminus for some 130 inter-city, express and regional trains connecting the airport to the Vaud and Valais regions as well as to the Fribourg-Berne-Zurich and Neuchâtel-Bienne lines.

All trains will continue to pass through Geneva-Cornavin, which will remain Geneva's main station. Consequently all major towns and resorts in western Switzerland will ultimately have direct rail links to the airport.

given by the Youth Hostels Association, 14 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HY.

Cycle tours — by train

THE Swiss Federal Railways are showing a good example of promoting energy-saving in tourism. More and more people discover touring by bicycle. Dozens of specially marked cycling routes are available in many parts of the country and indicated on maps.

An appropriate booklet is issued by Swiss Federal Railways and can be obtained free of charge at any station.

Bicycles can be hired at 619 railway stations at Sfr. 9 when presenting a rail ticket, and at Sfr. 12 if the cyclist is not in possession of a ticket.

It is not necessary to return the bicycle to the original station, as it will be returned from any station free of charge.

Engadine Ski Marathon

EACH year in early March about 10,000 enthusiasts gather in the Engadine area of Switzerland to compete in the Ski Marathon, Switzerland's biggest cross-country skiing event.

The season's event, the 13th Engadine Ski Marathon, is open to those born before 1961. The route is Maloja (5,960 ft), Isola, Sils, Surlej, Silvaplana, St. Moritz, Pontresina, Samedan, Bever, Zuoz and S-chanf (5,487 ft).

Applications must reach the organisers by February 1. Forms are available from: 13th Engadine Ski Marathon, 7504 Pontresina, Switzerland.

Special ski marathon training weeks are organised from January 17 to 24, February 28 to March 7 and March 7 to 14, with seven nights' accommodation (full board) at Zuoz.

Prices from Sfr. 415 also

include a welcome drink, four hours Langlauf training daily on the Engadine Ski Marathon course, transportation, badge, and a farewell dinner.

Information and enrolment: Zuoz Tourist Office, 7524 Zuoz, Switzerland.

An all-inclusive arrangement from March 8 to 16 (eight nights) combining scheduled air travel to Zurich, rail transfer, half board at the two-star Hotel Scaletta at Schanf near Zuoz, tuition and training, as well as the entry fee for the Marathon on March 15 (but not equipment), is available from £235 from: Waymark Holidays, 295 Lillie Road, London SW6 7LL.

Choice of winter packages

THIS winter, 47 British tour operators are offering inclusive holidays and "city breaks" to no less than 45 destinations in Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

For example, prices are from £139 for eight days half board at Villers or from £211 for eight days full board at Wengen.

The booklet "Winter Holidays in Switzerland 1980/81 arranged by British Tour Operators" lists resort destinations and price examples.

Ski Show is biggest yet

THE eighth Daily Mail Ski Show is to be held at Earls Court, London, in November. And the organisers claim it will be the biggest and best yet featuring stands from Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Norway, the USA, Scotland, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

The Swiss stand is a recreation of a Swiss hotel reception area of the 1890s and personnel will be dressed up in costumes of the period.

Local festivals in October

Oct 2	Adelboden	Autumn market	Oct 18/19	Châtel-St-Denis	«Bénichon», ancient custom
Oct 3-5	Rheinfelden	October festival	Oct 18/19	Rapperswil	Autumn fair
Oct 3-5	Sörenberg	Children's festival	Oct 19	Bendern FL	Harvest festival
Oct 4/5	Morges	Wine festival	Oct 19	Hergiswil	Alpine herdsmen's fête
Oct 4/5	Rheinfelden	Rheinfelden annual fair	Oct 22	Baden	Cordula fête
Oct 5	Wil	«Steckliträge», ancient custom	Oct 24	Engelberg	Alpine herdsmen's fête
Oct 7/8	Appenzell	Cattle and goat show	Oct 25	Andermatt	«Waldmannli», folklore procession
Oct 10-12	Oberiberg	Bazaar	Oct 25	Lucerne	Jazz band ball
Oct 11	Klosters	SC Klosters centenary: ball	Oct 25/26	Châtel-St-Denis	«Recrotzon», ancient custom
Oct 11	Leukerbad	Folklore evening	Oct 25/26	Rolle	Féchy: wine festival
Oct 12	Locarno	Chestnut festival	Oct 26	Interlaken-	«Chüechli» day
Oct 12/13	Spiez	«Läsetsunnig», wine festival. —		Unterseen	
		«Spiezmarit», market	Oct 26	Beckenried	Fête and bazaar
Oct 18	Solothurn	Yodelling and entertainment evening	Oct 27	Kreuzlingen	Fair

FURTHER DETAILS

about any of the items reported here can be obtained from Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, London W1V 3HG. (Tel: 01-734 1921).