

Some more other Swiss walks!

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Another collection of walks from Lester which proved so popular the last time. As in the previous articles take note of the advice.

I have put together this further collection of Swiss walks all of which I have enjoyed during my times in Switzerland over the years. A reasonably fit individual should be able to undertake any of them. I should mention that, because many of the walks in this series depend upon Postal bus services, it is wise to check timings in the *Kursbuch* or in timetables obtainable from Post Offices in the area.

In Switzerland virtually all footpaths are clearly marked by signposts, of which there are two main categories - I give the German version - namely, *Wanderwege* (walking/pedestrian paths), with plain yellow pointers, and *Bergwege* (mountain paths), where the yellow pointers display horizontal red and white stripes. With a few exceptions, the former are suitable for almost anyone wearing 'sensible' shoes. Users of the latter, however, are urged to have suitable footwear and to carry food and drink and some form of weather protection as well as a map. There can also be tricky and/or hazardous patches. Here again, there are notable exceptions. Signposts point the way to one or more destinations, and about 95% of them also give the time required (without halts along the way) to reach the various points, e.g., 1^{1/2} Std. (1^{1/2} hours). Nowadays there are additionally, in some areas, separate bikers' paths with signposts to match.

ZUGERBERG / UNTER- & OBER-ÄGERI

From Zug SBB+, leave the station by the subway exit to the Baarerstrasse and board the ZVB No. 11 bus (on the station side of the street) to Schöneegg and thence via the funicular to Zugerberg ZBB+. On the Zugerberg there are myriad tracks and paths and it is important to be fairly clear about the route. At the time of writing (06/00) there is construction work making my normal route impossible. However, upon leaving the funicular upper station turn left then later right until a very minor road is reached. Turn right here and continue to Pt. 946 (marked on a signpost). Here take the left-hand track over a cattle grid (the signpost does not mention Unterägeri), but continue towards Buschenschappeli climbing slightly towards Hinter Geissboden. Continue lightly uphill, ignoring paths to the left that may be signposted to Ägeri via Gerstenrüti or Ramselbachbrücke over difficult terrain. At Vorder Bannholz take the intersecting track to the left leading through the Elsiried (although



Unterägeri.

Photo: Lester Weeks

this translates literally as a bog or marsh the track is perfectly OK) to Buel and eventually Unterägeri+. From Buel onwards the route is again on a very minor road. Much of the walk is through woodland, although there are some glimpses of the Ägerisee. Total walking time 1^{1/2} hours. A pleasant extension is a stroll taking about 3/4 of an hour along the lake shore to Oberägeri+. ZVB bus No. 1 runs back to Zug SBB+ from Oberägeri and Unterägeri.

SERTIG-DÖRFLI/CLAVADEL

From Davos-Platz RhB+ board the No. 8 VBD bus to Sertig-Dörfli+. (A yellow Postal bus usually operates this route and Swiss Passes are valid. They are not valid on normal VBD buses.) From the bus terminus walk back along the road and take the footpath on the right which climbs steeply. Never fear as almost immediately take a left fork and follow this path climbing gently in open country and through woods crossing various streams flowing down to the Sertigbach. A high point, about 130 metres above Sertig is reached when the path crosses the Witibach. From here on it is basically downhill to Clavadel+, before which the path joins a minor road. Two hours walking time is needed. Return to Davos-Platz by VBD bus No. 8.

BALLENBERG



The Brienzwiler entrance restaurant at the Ballenberg Museum. Photo: Lester Weeks

Switzerland's Open-Air Museum of Rural Living and Culture occupies an extensive area at Ballenberg+ near Brienz BE+. The museum opened in 1987 with a large collection of vernacular buildings re-erected there from various parts of Switzerland. Since then the collection has grown steadily. There are two entrances: the west entrance at Hoffstetten and the east entrance at Brienzwiler. Both are served by Postal bus from Brienz+ SBB. Walking between the two entrances by a fairly short route would probably take less than an hour

but, as there is much to see, one should allow up to about three to four hours. Fortunately there are plenty of places to sit and take a rest! Country arts and crafts, such as milling, baking, weaving, spinning, basket making, cheese making etc. are demonstrated in various buildings throughout the site. Farm animals are also to be seen. Restaurants are situated at both entrances and within the museum, which now incorporates an open-air theatre. The entrance price for the year 2000 is SFr14.00 for adults - less for children. Opening is from mid-April until the end of October daily 10.00 hrs. to 17.00hrs. Ballenberg has the potential for a very different day out.

LAUTERBRUNNEN/MÜRREN

From Lauterbrunnen+ BOB use the subway to reach the base station of the BLM funicular to Grütschalp. Upon leaving the upper station, take the steeply-inclined path on the other side of the tracks, which shadows the BLM railway line to Mürren. The route is basically up-hill in varying gradients until a high point is reached where the path crosses the Staub-Bach. From there on it is mostly downhill, past Winteregg+ (a good restaurant here) until Mürren+ is reached in about 1^{1/2} hours walking time. You could return via the Schilthorn cableway to Stechelberg and then by Postal bus to Lauterbrunnen+ BOB. (There is a fairly level path between the BLM station and the Schilthorn cableway, but you won't find it by following the signposting!!)

HABKERN/WALDEGG

To reach the starting point, travel on the Postal bus from Interlaken West+ BLS to Habkern+, but alight at a stop called Gruebi just before coming to Habkern Post. Looking back towards Interlaken take the minor road signposted to Bort which branches off to the right. When you reach another minor road turn right again, uphill and still towards Bort. At Bort turn left on to a path crossing the

Büelbach and continue with fine mountain views. The path becomes a minor road again before reaching Waldegg+ (a good restaurant here). Two hours walking time is needed. At Waldegg there is a choice of return travel.

1. The Postal bus back to Interlaken West+ BLS

2. The Postal bus to Beatenberg+. From here the TBB funicular descends to Beatenbucht for BLS ships or STI buses to Interlaken West (buses also to Interlaken Ost + SBB/BLS) or Thun SBB+.

for just one hour's walking time. The walk to Niederrickenbach+ however needs 2^{1/2} hours, although it is relatively easy going. The route to be followed is quite straightforward via Stafel+, Bärenfallen (where a series of zigzags ameliorate a steep drop), Marchboden and Ahorn. When I was last there the cableway from Niederrickenbach Dorf down to Niederrickenbach LSE had just two very small cabins. Don't despair, however, as the cabins run continuously when there is demand. Dallenwil+ LSE is another ten minutes walk away.



On the path from Klewenalp to Niederrickenbach. Photo: Lester Weeks

KLEWENALP/NIEDERRICKENBACH

The base station of the Klewenalp cableway is at Beckenried+ which is accessible by SGV ships from Luzern SBB+ or Flüelen+ SBB or by Postal bus from the latter or from Stans+ LSE. At Klewenalp+ there is, of course, a restaurant with a terrace. For those wishing just a short walk there is a signposted round-route

SCHWÄGALP/ROSSFALL/URNÄSCH

The starting point at Schwägälp is reached by Postal bus from Urnäsch+ AB or from Nesslau-Neu St. Johann+ BT/SBB. A good path commences at the base station of the Säntis cableway. No, you don't have to go up there! It continues via Steinhütten and Aueli before reaching the main road at Steinfluh. Don't go out to the road, but continue on the



View of the Säntis near Urnäsch.

path beside the Urnäsch River until it reaches the road again at Rossfall+. Here the road crosses the river and the riverside path continues via Gruenau to Urnäsch+ AB, which is, by the way, a very attractive village. Walking time from Schwägalp to Rossfall (Postal bus from here to Urnäsch) is 1 1/4 hours, and on to Urnäsch an additional 1 3/4 hours.

LENZERHEIDE (and Alp Scharmoin)

Lenzerheide+ (Lai in the local dialect of Romansh) can be reached by Postal bus from Chur SBB/RhB+ or from Davos-Platz RhB+ .

I am not going to describe a walk in the normal sense, but rather point the way for a stroll. From the Bus Station, walking towards Chur, there is a rather good café/restaurant set back slightly on the left. From here a street slopes down towards a church. After the church take the initially-paved path to the right leading through woods to a lake marked on maps as Igl Lai, which translates as Heidsee. There are lots of paths and lots of seats for just relaxing and

View of Parpan from Alp Scharmoin.



Photo: Lester Weeks

enjoying the area. At one point, on a causeway across the lake, there is a restaurant with an outside terrace and at another spot a kiosk for drinks and snacks, etc. One side of the lake runs beside the main road where a subway under the road leads to the Parpaner Rothorn cableway. For a wonderful outlook one does not need to go to the Rothorn, but rather to the halfway station,

Alp Scharmoin+, where there is a restaurant with a terrace. For those so inclined, a meandering pathway takes you down to Lenzerheide in about an hour. The hour-long journey by Postal bus from Davos is quite spectacular and the shorter ride from Chur is very pleasant. Both are worthy of a trip in themselves.

Notes:

+ = Food and drink available.

+ After railway designation, e.g., Zug SBB+ = a station restaurant. There is good signposting on all of the above walks, added to which, one is unlikely to be alone even on weekdays. A map is always useful. One of the sheets in the BfL Landeskarte der Schweiz 1:25000 or 1:50000 series is recommended. Smaller scale maps are of little benefit.