

# The future means quality holidays

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Annual Report / Switzerland Tourism**

Band (Jahr): - **(1997)**

PDF erstellt am: **29.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-630182>

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perhaps also in our hearts. It must be fought for and monitored every day. In respect of quality assurance, the UBS study asserts that there are «considerable shortfalls in Swiss tourism». This statement makes clear what our commitment to holidays instead of tourism means in this context, a commitment which we are backing up with a significant advertising campaign: we as those proving the holiday experience must monitor, improve and underpin the quality of our product, measuring it at all times against the expectations of our guests. The quality standard which we set cannot be high enough: Switzerland, as a brand, is the absolute measure of quality in holidays. We have already taken the first step on this path by launching the Quality Label for holidays in Switzerland.

## Switzerland needs a holidays policy.

If we are to reach our ambitious target, we need more than a convincing advertising campaign combined with the professional marketing of Swiss tourism and of all the providers of products under the Switzerland brand name. Switzerland as a holiday destination needs the same basis as Switzerland in its role as a financial centre. Just like every other branch of

industry in this country, it needs targeted political measures to optimise the economic, cultural, social and technical environment within which it operates. This means, in particular, that the holiday industry must ensure that it is recognised as one of the essential pillars of the Swiss economy and that it is seen and respected as such. Switzerland as a holiday destination also needs public discussion of Switzerland's role as a host country. As a matter of principle, there should be a unit called «The friendly host» as part of the basic curriculum at elementary school level, at least as a subsidiary subject.

If we are serious about our leadership role as regards the provision of holidays, it is not enough for us to twist and turn like a slalom skier in pursuit of the newest international trends in the mass tourist market. We must take an example from the inventive spirit of our pioneering years and maximise our potential to innovate. Perhaps Switzerland even needs a Holidays University; initially it could be implemented as a virtual institution on the Internet but with real «field trials». Because the world must know where it should go to experience the difference between tourism and holidays.

And one more point in conclusion. As the figures for 1997 show, business in the area of holidays is on the way up

again. So why do we need to reposition Switzerland as a brand? Why do we need an advertising campaign? And why do we need a strategy to emphasise the difference between tourism and holidays? The answer is simple. The economic environment is only half of the story. How would it have been at the beginning if we hadn't understood the signs of the time, hadn't built all those roads, hotels and viewing platforms? If we hadn't created the «hardware» for the holidays product and hadn't also trained ourselves to meet the requirements of our guests, Switzerland as a holiday destination would never have come into existence.

## A question of quality.

The difference between holidays and tourism is primarily a question of quality. The word «(mass) tourism» has so many unflattering connotations, while «holidays» are always associated with happy memories. Switzerland as a holiday destination and as a brand is therefore positioning itself on the right side. We take pride in the «little» difference: others may be content to provide tourism, but we are offering holidays.

