

**INFORMATION ABOUT WENGEN, SWITZERLAND  
AND SURROUNDING AREAS  
July 2022**

**Table of Contents**

INTRODUCTION .....	2
BEFORE YOU GO .....	3
Weather .....	3
Locations and Tourists .....	4
Language .....	5
Clothing .....	5
Food .....	6
Money .....	6
Phone and Internet .....	7
TRANSPORTATION .....	7
Overview .....	7
Mountain Transports .....	10
Discount Cards – A Must! .....	10
Transport From Zurich Airport to Wengen .....	12
Luggage Service .....	14
Transport to Wengen Area via Auto .....	14
GENERAL WENGEN INFORMATION .....	15
Tourist Information .....	15
Business Hours .....	15
Medical .....	15
Laundry .....	16
Food Shopping .....	17
LODGING IN WENGEN .....	18
DAY HIKES FROM WENGEN BASE .....	21
Moderate to Challenging Hikes .....	22
Easy Hikes .....	30
MULTI-DAY HIKES .....	33
EXCURSIONS AROUND WENGEN .....	37
THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS .....	41
RAINY DAY ACTIVITIES .....	43
WENGEN RESTAURANTS .....	44

## INTRODUCTION

My husband and I are Americans in our late 60s that love good food, good wine, and active vacations. We've traveled extensively, but Switzerland is our most favorite vacation destination – we've been on hiking vacations there 23 out of the last 25 years for anywhere from 2 weeks to 3 months at a time. We are quite active but have outgrown our desire to “rough it”. When staying in hotels we like those that are well-appointed and comfortable with local character and charm vs. a chain or a luxury hotel (which tend to look and feel the same from country to country). However, we typically stay in chalet apartments due to the duration of our visits. (More info in “Lodging” section of the document.)

We've traveled extensively throughout Switzerland and have even hiked the entire span on the Alpine Pass Route, beginning on the Austrian border and ending on the French. Although pretty much everywhere you go in this stunning land is wonderful, Wengen (pronounced “VEHN-gehn”) is our hands-down favorite. “Yes, \_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with Saas Fee, Lucerne, Vevey, Montreux, Locarno, Zermatt, etc.) is great, but it's not Wengen!”

This document provides our perspective of the Jungfrau Region, written from a Wengen base. I began putting it together many years ago at the request of friends that like challenging hiking so it is written from that angle. However, those desiring a more leisurely vacation will find descriptions of easier hikes as well as many outings in the region. It is focused on summer travel only, although winter travelers may find some of the ideas useful as well.

Please let me know if you have questions or would like additional information.

Have a wonderful trip!

Kim Hawley  
[Kimhawley60@gmail.com](mailto:Kimhawley60@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

## BEFORE YOU GO

For a good general overview of travel in Switzerland look through <http://wikitravel.org/en/Switzerland>. This site has particularly good information about train travel (much more in section below) as well as driving in the country.

A quite comprehensive view of Swiss travel along with many suggestions can be read at [www.myswitzerland.com](http://www.myswitzerland.com).

Most of the villages have websites that are the town names with either a .ch or .com suffix. For example:

Wengen is at [www.wengen.ch](http://www.wengen.ch)

Mürren is at [www.muerren.ch](http://www.muerren.ch)

Adelboden is at [www.adelboden.ch](http://www.adelboden.ch)

and so on. This is a good way to see some pictures and get some local color in advance of your trip.

There is also a very informative blog post with amazing pictures at <https://lauterbrunnenhiking.wordpress.com/> Seeing the photos will be quite motivating!

## *Weather*

From a weather standpoint, mid-June through mid/late-September is the ideal time to visit Wengen and the Bernese Oberland (BO) region for summer activities. Just be aware that higher elevation hikes may still be closed due to snow until at least June 15, sometimes later. The busiest months are July and particularly August. We have found September to usually be the best time of all for a visit. Typically the days are warm with highs in low 70s F and an occasional late afternoon thunderstorm. (We call these “Happy Hour Storms” as they typically show up around 5:00 pm and pass through an hour or so later.) The weather usually begins to become wetter and cooler around mid to late September, but can also be very fine until the end of the month. Many businesses (retail, bars, hotels, restaurants) in the mountain villages (Wengen and Mürren) close beginning early to mid-October until ski season begins in December, then again from March until mid or late April.

Rain is always a possibility and weather conditions are unpredictable and change frequently in the mountains. You should plan to dress in multiple thin layers and be sure

to bring a waterproof shell, ideally one with a hood since this will give you more flexibility than an umbrella.

Do not rely on your smart phone weather app nor even [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) for forecasts as these often default to weather at the ski peaks or nearby valley towns and not in the mountain villages. Or are just completely wrong. For example, a couple years we were enjoying a beautiful 70F afternoon in Wengen and weather.com told us it was snowing! To complicate matters, forecasting weather more than one to two days in advance in mountainous areas is largely folly. Mountains create their own weather. As of 2022 the most favored weather websites (and their associated apps) for locals are meteoswiss.ch and meteoblue.com. Another good site to check is meteocentrale.ch/en. However, the forecast for Wengen defaults to the weather stations atop Männlichen where weather is significantly different. If you choose to use meteocentrale you will need to manually select the station at Mürren, where the weather is usually a couple of degrees C cooler.

See the following webcams for a look at what's going on in real time, weather-wise. Also total eye-candy!

- A good live webcam from Hotel Bellevue in Wengen village is at <https://bellevue.roundshot.com>
- Live webcams of Männlichen, Kleine Scheidegg, Jungfrauoch, and First at <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/live/webcams/>
- Webcams for Mürren, Grindelwald, Interlaken, and other towns around the area at <http://www.the-webcam-network.com/Switzerland/Lauterbrunnen/2538094.html>
- Webcams for Schilthorn, Birg, and Allmendhubel (all over on the Mürren side of the valley) at <https://schilthorn.ch/en/Infos/Live>

## ***Locations and Tourists***

Summer visitors to the Bernese Oberland will encounter many tourists during July and August high season. Grindelwald and Interlaken can be positively overrun. The sidewalks in Grindelwald are often packed and car traffic is heavy. Interlaken is jammed with tour busses and large groups a good portion of the year. And, although Interlaken is a major railway center, it is not a well-developed town – full of souvenir shops, fast food outlets, and other “un-Swiss” features. We try to avoid it whenever possible – it’s a place to change trains and that’s about it.

Lauterbrunnen, being the last village on the valley floor that allows car traffic, sees a lot of business in July and August as well but is certainly a better choice than Interlaken or Grindelwald. Lodging is less expensive here than in the mountain resorts as it sits down in the valley under imposing cliffs and has fewer amenities (although several restaurants, a grocery store, and a butcher). There is more of a “back-packers” vibe here and the village is attractive to extreme sports enthusiasts (parasailing, face-jumping, and so on).

Even the car-free mountain villages of Wengen and Mürren are quite busy during July and August but don't have as many crowds as the other areas do. September is the very best time to visit both from a weather and crowd standpoint.

The region is very popular with a quite diverse set of visitors. Tourists from Asia, India, Japan, Middle East, Great Britain, and The Netherlands predominate with fewer visitors from United States and central European countries.

### ***Language***

The BO is in the German-speaking section of Switzerland but, given that the British popularized the area as a vacation destination, pretty much everyone speaks English except the staff in the huts around the high mountain pass areas such as Sefinenfurge, Höhturli, etc. But, if you do pass through these areas, you will do just fine at a lunch stop without speaking the language. The menus at these places are very limited (soup, cheese, ham sandwiches) and you can't go wrong with anything. If all else fails, just point at something on the menu and you'll probably like what you get. They don't serve weird food like jellyfish or monkey brains anywhere in the BO.

### ***Clothing***

Having the right gear is essential to a pleasant hiking holiday. Buy your shoes in your home country and break them in. Any of the walks in the "Easy Hikes" section can be accomplished with gym shoes/trainers as long as they have sturdy soles with good grip (no Keds, for example). For more aggressive hikes you will need full-on hiking shoes or boots. We like the low topped, lightweight shoes with sturdy lugs the best (Vibram soles are super). If you don't own hiking shoes/boots nor have a need for them back home you can rent them at sports shops in all the larger towns and villages including Wengen.

Hiking poles are strongly recommended for any hikes with meaningful altitude change (for example, those listed in the "Moderate to Challenging Hikes" section below). Any will do, but generally the lighter the better. If you don't want to travel with poles (since you can't carry them on flights this may trip you over into checking luggage rather than going with carry-on only) you can rent some at Wengen Central-Sport right in the middle of the village.

We think that Osprey now makes the very best backpacks as they are sturdy, comfortable, lightweight, full of well-thought-out features, and usually have a built-in rain cover you can deploy when need be.

Dress in layers and always carry waterproof outerwear unless you are only going for a short stroll on a clear day. Storms blow up quickly in the mountains.

## ***Food***

The quality of food nearly everywhere in the BO is exceptional. Many restaurants have similar menus of traditional foods: soups, salads, wurst (sausages), rösti (similar to hash browns but better), pork cutlets and pork steaks, chicken, veal dishes, pasta with red sauce, and outstanding cheeses and other dairy products. Any previous love affair you've had with butter will be re-ignited. Vegetarians can do fine with cheese-based foods, risotto, pasta, salads, tomato soup (ubiquitous) and the occasional fish dish. In fact, many restaurants in the area now feature vegetarian and/or Asian sections in their menus. Unexpectedly, salads in the region are usually fantastic with super-fresh produce although some "Gemischter" (mixed) salads feature canned green beans and beets in addition to fresh fare. Other than salads, the Swiss tend to view vegetables as condiments rather than the focus of a meal.

## ***Money***

Switzerland is not a member of the Euro zone and has its own currency, the Swiss Franc (CHF). Some businesses in large cities and the long-distance inter-city trains will accept Euros (paper money only, no coins) but will give you change in Francs and a lousy exchange rate as well. As a general rule, businesses and trains in smaller cities and villages will not accept Euros. You can change currencies at the airports, the main train stations in Zurich and Geneva (via an automated machine), or at banks. However, a less costly approach is to simply withdraw Francs from an ATM, which are pretty much everywhere.

The ATMs work just as they do in the US; this is the least expensive and most convenient option for getting Francs. Your US bank will likely charge you \$5 - \$10 per withdrawal and the Swiss banks usually charge a base rate, too, regardless of the amount of cash you withdraw. Therefore, you should plan on making fewer and larger withdrawals. Before you leave the US, **call your bank** to inform them of your travel plans (virtually all banks shut down ATM access when they see a foreign transaction) **and** get your maximum daily withdrawal amount increased to the highest level the bank will allow. ATMs are plentiful at both the Zurich and Geneva airports and throughout the country. There are even two ATMs in Wengen village.

An important note - if you withdraw money from a US bank account on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, the withdrawal usually isn't posted until Monday afternoon Swiss time when the US banks open. So if you have withdrawn to your maximum limit you will not be able to withdraw cash on each of those days. Plan ahead!

Credit cards (Visa and Mastercard) are accepted nearly everywhere other than in small restaurants/huts/inns in the high Alps and a few small shops in villages. Some credit card issuers still add a foreign transaction fee (up to 5%) to all international credit card purchases. Check to see if yours does and, if so, apply for one that doesn't well before your departure date.

Also, you must **advise issuers of the credit cards you plan to use** to let them know where and when you will be travelling. Due to extensive fraud, credit card issuers routinely deny foreign transactions if they aren't informed in advance. Many issuers now provide a notification feature on their websites.

Finally, if you are using a card from a US-based bank, nearly all credit card readers will default to US dollars rather than Swiss Francs and automatically add a 3.95% transaction fee for the "convenience". If you are using a card with no foreign transaction fees CHF is the best choice. Most readers will display a question asking about USD or CHF so simply make the change (typically by pressing "2" on the reader).

### ***Phone and Internet***

Cell service is excellent throughout the country, but, depending on your phone and carrier, calls and data usage can be very expensive. For example, it's not unusual for iPhone data and voice users to receive bills over \$500 without a special international package! For our ATT iPhones we like the International Day Pass <https://www.att.com/international/day-pass/>.

Most hotels or holiday apartments now have wifi available (usually called "WR-Lan" or "V-Lan") which can be used for data and for Skype or Wifi-Calling voice calls.

Other options include mobile wifi hotspots and SIM cards. See <https://www.myswissalps.com/simcard> for an informative overview.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### ***Overview***

I am offering some pointers of my own in this section but, without a doubt, the best website I've ever encountered to make sense of rail travel in Europe is [www.seat61.com](http://www.seat61.com). Mark Smith's explanations make it simple to sort out the complexity one encounters when dealing directly with the rail websites of various countries. His section on Switzerland is fantastic and great place to start. See [http://www.seat61.com/Swiss-trains.htm#Swiss\\_train\\_tickets](http://www.seat61.com/Swiss-trains.htm#Swiss_train_tickets).

The rail system in Switzerland is pretty much beyond belief. Everything runs on time to the minute about 99% of the time. I think it is worth the trip just to see the variety of trains that go places you can't imagine trains could go. The public bus system is also fantastic. Most of the buses in the Bernese Oberland are run by the Post Office and are, naturally, called Post Buses. They are bright yellow, ultra-clean, and modern large Mercedes buses. In some regions the BLS rail line runs the public buses, these are bright green with the blue BLS emblem. In some other regions (such as the Emmental) private

companies run buses as well. Everything runs on time to the minute. Most of the larger train stations have bus stops/stations on the same property or sometimes directly across the street. Although the bus and train schedules are well-coordinated, busses go where trains don't and vice versa.

The Swiss national rail system is called the SBB, then each region has its own rail system. SBB is the long-haul carrier; the local train companies run the cogs, cable trains, and other formats that are needed for short hauls and steep grades. Around the Wengen area you will encounter the BOB (Berner Oberland Bahn) and the WAB (Wengernalp Bahn) and a few others. Not to worry, though, they are all well-coordinated and any station can give you a complete and accurate timetable for any journey using any of the trains throughout the whole system. Note that you will need to ask for a *timetable*, not an itinerary. Everyone at the train stations speaks English, but their proficiency is largely limited to the words they have been taught. Apparently no one at the Bahn training centers has ever heard the words *itinerary* or *schedule*.

The Swiss rail system is very punctual; it even makes the Deutsche Bahn in Germany look rather sloppy. Connections can be very tight, often as little as 5 – 7 minutes. Not to worry as literally thousands of people make these connections every day. However, there are two important things you need to know to make this do-able for visitors (particularly those not accustomed to public transportation).

First, for journeys involving multiple changes (when traveling to/from mountain villages nearly all of your trips will involve multiple trains) you must know which track (or platform) you are arriving on and which track your next train departs from. You don't have time to figure it out after you've arrived. There are two ways to get this information. One way (as mentioned above) is to request a printed timetable from ticket window staff when you buy your tickets. Another, perhaps even better, way is to download the excellent SBB app to your smartphone. Here you can check on timetables, arrival/departure tracks, get up to the minute updates for schedule changes or construction delays, and buy tickets – literally while you are jumping on the train! I highly recommend that you download the app, fill out traveler profiles, enter your billing information, and practice a bit to get the hang of the app before arriving in Switzerland.

Second, you, your traveling companions, and all of your luggage need to be standing at the train exit door when it pulls into the station. If your group has lots of luggage, I recommend that one person get out onto the platform then receive the luggage being handed down by another.

In the higher mountain areas you may see some stops that are request only. To request a stop, press the "Halt Verlangen" button or the red button located near the train door.

In addition to the SBB mobile app, the SBB website ([www.sbb.ch](http://www.sbb.ch)) is a good way to check on timetables, trip durations, and prices for the entire network. (Tip: if your destination includes both train and gondola transport options, the letters "BLM" indicate the gondola option.) However, you do not need to book in advance nor reserve seats other



than on the Golden Pass, Glacier & Bernina Express Routes, and travel from Kleine Scheidegg to Jungfrauoch. Simply buy your ticket at the window, from the automated machines, or via the SBB mobile app before boarding. (Bus passengers can also buy tickets from the driver before boarding.) It is important that you do so as passengers without a valid ticket will be charged full fare for the route (regardless of whether you are holding a discount pass or not) AND a 100 CHF fine payable on the spot. Unlike other countries, public transportation (train, bus, boat, lift, gondola, cable train, etc.) passengers are checked about 90% of the time. If you are traveling with a discounted ticket you must also present your discount pass (e.g., Half Fare Card) upon request (which is most of the time)

An important point when using the SBB app or website site to research route pricing or buy tickets is to be aware that pricing defaults to half price as virtually all travelers (and all Swiss residents) have at least a Half Fare Card or other pass. If you do not have a Half Fare or other discount travel card your trip will cost double the amount initially displayed in the “prices from” column.

Families or small groups travelling together often wonder if they will be able to find seats together on Swiss trains. When using the SBB app/website to consult schedules you will see some little figures of people beneath the First and Second class designations in the “Information” column, just to the left of the “Price” column. One figure means very light passenger load, two a heavier passenger load, three a crowded train. This is SBB’s prediction from past experience and it’s pretty accurate. If you choose trains with a light load, families and small groups (4 – 5 people) are almost guaranteed to be able to sit together. And, since it is often not more than half an hour between stops on many trains, if you aren’t able to sit together when you board you may well be able to move and do so as other passengers disembark at intermediate stops. Choosing trains outside of commuting hours will help as well. However, be aware that mountain transports (for visitors with destinations Wengen, Mürren or Grindelwald this means any transports beyond Interlaken Ost) are much smaller and you may not find seats together nor can seats on these transports be reserved. Most tourists are happy to move/make room for families with small children. And, if you don’t find seats exactly next to each other, rarely will you be more than a few seats apart. All that said, during high tourist season (July and August) sometimes smaller trains such as the route from Lauterbrunnen to Wengen are standing room only.

Another thing families traveling with children need to be aware of is that some of the cars in First Class are Silent Cars. There will be a clear sign on the carriage – a face with a finger to the lips. This really does mean silent. No talking, no jumping around, no seat kicking, no rattling of papers, no headphones, no cell phones, no cameras, no clickity-clack of fingers on keyboard. Nothing that makes noise *at all*. It’s taken very seriously. Most kids cannot be totally silent (nor live without their electronics) for more than a few minutes. So be alert and take this into careful consideration.

## ***Mountain Transports***

Many of the funiculars, gondolas, and ski lifts (which operate in summer as well) in the Jungfrau region are operated by the Jungfraubahn. This includes the gondola to Mürren and up the Schilthorn, the lifts at First, the cog train to Harder Kulm, and, of course, the train up to the Jungfrauoch.

The most comprehensive resource for transport operating dates in the entire region is at <https://www.regionalpass-berneroberland.ch/de/verkehrsmittel/>

Many of the higher elevation trains and cable cars close during low season, generally early April through mid-May or early June, and then again mid-October through early December. The trains to the Jungfrauoch run year-round (weather permitting).

Männlichenbahn operating information (from Wengen and from Grindelwald) is at <http://www.maennlichen.ch/en/home.html>.

Schilthorn gondola information at [https://schilthorn.ch/en/Infos/Timetable\\_\\_and\\_\\_Tariff](https://schilthorn.ch/en/Infos/Timetable__and__Tariff)

Allmendhubel cable train timetables and fares are at <https://muerren.swiss/en/summer/see-and-do/excursions/trip-destinations/allmendhubel/>

Schynige Platte train information at <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/schynige-platte/>

Note that the hikes that these transports provide you access to may or may not be open when the transports are scheduled to begin running. Often the paths are still closed for days or even weeks later due to mud or snow; most re-open around June 15 (although Schynige Platte to First hike usually opens July 1 or shortly thereafter). Also, be aware that early in the season both the transports and open hiking trails may close again at any time due to weather.

As an aside, I have had several questions about health issues related to travelling up to the Jungfrauoch, which sits at over 10,000 feet. You can get detailed information via the following link <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/faq/#7048>

## ***Discount Cards – A Must!***

The transport systems are managed by private operators and are not government-subsidized so are very expensive. This is also why the systems are clean, safe, and run perfectly. If you are headed to the BO mountain areas, public transport is your very best alternative. Renting a car is not a good option; most of the places you want to go cannot be accessed via auto. (Wengen, for example, is only accessible via cog train, helicopter, or on foot.)

The good news is that you can buy discount Passes that significantly reduce your costs. The challenge is that there are a mind-boggling array of Passes and SBB, for some reason, chooses to change Pass names, validity areas, and prices on an annual basis. “What Pass is best for me?” is the number one question I receive. The “proper” answer is to advise everyone to “do the maths” – plot out every trip you plan to take on public transport, price out the tickets at [www.sbb.ch](http://www.sbb.ch) (remembering that the site defaults to half price), add it all up, do a thorough review of all the Pass options and their prices, then buy the one that provides you the most value and convenience.

If you wish to go through this brain-twisting exercise I recommend heading straight over to <https://www.myswissalps.com/train/ticketspasses> . Use their which-pass-to-buy worksheet, excellent descriptions of the various passes, and where to buy them. Most vendors offer a print-at-home function which is the best choice. You will receive an email with a printable PDF attachment

If you want to save yourself the work and resulting headache, buy the Half Fare Card (HFC). The myswissalps.com site does a great job of summarizing the various vendors, delivery mechanisms, and pricing. You can buy directly on the site. They also have a forum moderated by local experts that will quickly answer any question you post.

Why not “the best” (as the sellers of Passes invariably claim since it is the most expensive) Swiss Transport Pass (STP)? Several reasons. The STP (and watch out, they change the name and rules around this one annually) is very expensive. It is valid for a set number of days which may or may not fit with your trip. It’s promoted as “free travel across the country” which is not true. In all fairness, there is fine print about “mountain transport exclusions” but you have to be looking for that and know what it means. For visitors to the Bernese Oberland, this exclusion is very important. It means that many of the trips you will want to take are not free; rather, they are only discounted by 50% (anything above Wengen, Mürren, and Grindelwald, for example) or as little as 25% (Jungfrauoch). These high mountain excursions are extremely expensive, far more costly than the routes that the STP covers for “free” (for which you pay dearly). The advantage to the STP is that it’s a hop-on, hop-off Pass, which means that you do not need to buy tickets for any routes that the STP covers. The trick is that you need to know which routes are covered for “free” and which are not. Then you must buy tickets for those routes -- which happen to be some of the most popular high Alps routes in the region. For these you will pay the same price (or more, in the case of the Jungfrauoch excursion) than holders of the much-less-expensive HFC.

Why do I further recommend the HFC? It’s easy. Every form of public transport (trains, boats, busses, funiculars, gondolas, cable trains, etc) is discounted by 50%. Choose First class, Second class, doesn’t matter. It’s all half off. The HFC is good for a month, so no concerns about fitting in with your travel plans. (Well, unless you stay three months – which we have done – but then you can just buy three HFCs!) No mental gymnastics around validity areas nor which days your Pass is valid/not. The drawback? You have to buy tickets for your journeys. This has never posed a problem for us. One of the beauties of the Swiss transportation system is that transport tickets are valid for one destination to

another. They are valid for the entire day, not linked to a specific time (except for SuperSaver tickets – typically on long hauls -- which are valid only for a specific train). That means that while you are having breakfast you can figure out what you want to do that day then go to the train station or use the SBB mobile app to buy all the tickets you need for the entire day.

Although you can purchase most Passes at staffed train stations in Switzerland, you should do your research ahead of time so you don't waste any of your holiday time trying to figure out which one to buy once you get there. Every adult (16 and over) in your party will need their own pass. Children under 16 can travel for free with one or more parent with the upon-request Family Card. (Children 6 and under travel for free.) The Family Card is free but you MUST request it at the same time that you purchase a HFC or any other Swiss Travel System card/pass.

As mentioned earlier, the best place to research passes then buy is [www.myswissalps.com/train/ticketspasses](http://www.myswissalps.com/train/ticketspasses). The best delivery option is email. Your pass will arrive in a printable PDF format. You can print out as many copies as you like. I like to print multiple copies and stash them in different pieces of luggage/backpacks. Some passes can be stored to your phone as well, instructions on the myswissalps site. I strongly recommend also having printed copies in case your phone battery dies or, heaven forbid, you lose your phone.

You must keep your HFC or other travel Pass with you at all times when using public transport. You will need to show them to buy discounted tickets if you buy at ticket counter, and also when train staff checks your tickets. As mentioned earlier, you will be charged full fare and face a stiff fine if you don't have your Card/Pass with you.

### ***Transport From Zurich Airport to Wengen***

The SBB trains depart directly from the Zurich airport ("Flughafen"). When you get off the plane and clear customs, simply follow the "Bahn" signs to get to the station which is downstairs. Buy your ticket(s) and ask for a printed timetable for your trip to Wengen or use the SBB mobile app. Trains connecting to Wengen leave at least once an hour. You don't need reservations as the trains departing from the airport are usually pretty empty. They pick up lots of passengers along on the way, many at the main train station ("Hauptbahnhof") which is your first stop. Food and drinks are available on all long haul trains, or you can buy something to take on-board with you at one of the many markets at the Zurich airport. *Tip: take the escalator up one level from the ticket windows to find a nice large supermarket where the selection is better (and the prices less) than the smaller shops and stands in the airport station. This is also a great place to buy food for your first night if you are renting a chalet and arriving after the stores in Wengen are closed.*

The train journey to Wengen takes approximately three hours and requires either three or four train changes depending on routing. The three-change route involves a change at either Bern or Spiez and always at Interlaken and Lauterbrunnen. The four-change route

adds a change at Zurich main station. It's worth it to wait for the three-change route, especially if you have lots of luggage. The journey is beautiful, particularly the last 90 minutes when you travel right by Lake Thun (it's amazing how close the tracks are to the water, sometimes it looks like you're floating!) and then up into the mountains. There are a couple of spots that are a bit tricky. The first tricky spot is Interlaken, where there are two stops – Interlaken West and Interlaken Ost (East). Stay on the train until you get to Ost, which is the last stop for the SBB. There you will change to the BOB train bound for Lauterbrunnen. This is the second tricky spot as the same train is also bound for Grindelwald; it stops and splits in a little place called Zweilütschinen ("Two Rivers"). One half of the train proceeds to Lauterbrunnen, where you want to go, and the other half goes to Grindelwald, where you don't. So, you need to make sure you get on the correct end of the train in Interlaken. Destination will be displayed on every train car and also on the platform itself. Once you get to Lauterbrunnen, switch to the WAB with destination Wengen (all uphill trains pass through Wengen so there's no confusion here!), about 15 minutes up the hill. I recommend that you sit on the right side (facing forward) of the train so you can get the best views. There's a nice (but old) 14 minute YouTube video of the ride (which also includes footage of the gondola ride from Wengen to Männlichen and the lifts from Männlichen down to Grindelwald) at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fTFJUrD1Bw&feature=related>. The station and rail cars (and video quality!) have been significantly updated since this video was taken but it's still a fun watch and full of good advice on where to sit on the train, when the best photo-op view spots will appear, and other good commentary

Another 52 second video of the spectacular ride from Wengen down to Lauterbrunnen is at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whzGDFFSz58&feature=youtube\\_gdata](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whzGDFFSz58&feature=youtube_gdata). Many more searchable at youtube.com

Many hotels and apartments in Wengen are within walking distance of the train station. However, you can get a lift if you have lots of luggage. Two ways to do this but both require advance booking via phone with your arrival time at Wengen station. (As of July 2022 there is no longer a private taxi service in the village.) Since you never know exactly when your plane will arrive and how long it will take to clear customs/collect luggage, you won't know arrival time of your train to Wengen until you actually get on the train at Zurich airport. So keep contact numbers handy!

- Nearly all the hotels and rental agency services will pick up you and your luggage at no charge.
- Book the village transport service at +41 79 346 76 83. Service is available from 8am to 8pm at a cost of 25 CHF per trip. Note that only one person can ride along in the van, others will need to walk to your lodging.

## ***Luggage Service***

There is usually plenty of room on the trains to stow luggage, see this link for more information <http://www.myswissalps.com/train/practical/luggage>. This link also provides an overview of train station lockers, luggage storage services, and luggage transport/delivery services.

The SBB offers several luggage transfer services that are convenient if you are traveling with lots of bags and/or lots of people. The big drawback is it usually takes two days for your luggage to be transported to your destination. But it's a great way to get your luggage from start to end points on multi-day hikes if you want to hike with just a day pack and catch up with your luggage every few days. See the variety of services at <https://www.sbb.ch/en/station-services/before-your-journey/luggage.html>

Be sure to check how late the luggage area of your destination station is open so you don't arrive and find your luggage locked up. You can check opening hours at <http://www.sbb.ch/en/station-services/am-bahnhof/railway-stations/bahnhof-finden.html>. Be sure to check baggage hours and not just station operating hours.

Most of the larger train stations also provide lockers for short-term storage of luggage for day-trippers. They are coin-operated so be sure to have some 1, 2, and/or 5 CHF coins with you. You can use the SBB website to determine which stations provide lockers, their sizes, and pricing. Use this link <http://www.sbb.ch/en/station-services/am-bahnhof/railway-stations/bahnhof-finden.html> then fill in the name of the station for which you need the information. If no lockers are listed, see if "Baggage" or "Left Luggage Office" is listed and the hours. This means that the baggage area is staffed and generally you can leave your luggage with them. Just be sure to pick it up during luggage opening hours.

## ***Transport to Wengen Area via Auto***

If you plan to arrive in the Bernese Oberland area via car be aware that virtually all the top sites are reachable only by public transport. Wengen, Kleine Scheidegg, Jungfrauoch, Mürren, Gimmelwald, Almendhubel, Schilthorn, Schynige Platte, First, Harder Kulm, Rothorn, Sulwald are all car-free and can be reached only by trains, gondolas, lifts, etc. There is a large covered parking structure at the Lauterbrunnen train station where you can leave your car. More information including pricing and minimum number of days is here <https://www.jungfrau.ch/shop/de/parkticket> You do not need reservations during the summer months, only during the peak of the ski season.

## GENERAL WENGEN INFORMATION

Wengen is perched about halfway up the mountainside overlooking Lauterbrunnen Valley. Lauterbrunnen Valley is like the Yosemite Valley of Switzerland – a glacier-formed valley but one that is nearly twice as deep as Yosemite. The distance from the valley floor to the mountain peaks is nearly 10,000 feet. It is truly stunning. Wengen sits on a shelf (4180 feet up) at the mouth of the valley and, in my opinion, sports the best views in all of Switzerland. There are no roads that lead to Wengen. The only way to get here is to walk, take the WAB cog train or charter a helicopter. There are about 1050 full time residents.

### ***Tourist Information***

The Tourist Information Office is a good resource for maps and advice on local events, excursions, hikes, and weather forecasts. It is located just set back on the east side of the main street near the tennis courts and the Männlichen cable car station. Current opening times are 7 days a week from 9:00 am – 6:00 pm. See <https://wengen.swiss/en/summer/region/wengen/services/wengen-inside/> for more information and “Offnungszeiten” link for current opening hours (includes English translation).

### ***Business Hours***

Be aware that most retail shops, banks, etc. keep mountain hours. This is true in most of the villages including Wengen and Mürren. Opening times are usually 8 am to 12 noon, then 2 pm until 6 pm. (Everyone is supposed to be in the restaurants or at home having lunch from 12 – 2!) Some, but not all, retail establishments re-open from 8 pm – 10 pm during high season. During high season a handful of Wengen retail shops will also open for a bit on Sunday. Mürren is pretty well shut down on Sundays.

### ***Medical***

The pharmacy in Wengen closed in 2020 due to the owner’s retirement. The nearest pharmacy is now in Interlaken, next to the very large Coop store across the street from Interlaken Ost station. See [https://dropa.ch/dropa-drogerie-apotheke-interlaken-ost?utm\\_medium=yext&utm\\_source=gmb](https://dropa.ch/dropa-drogerie-apotheke-interlaken-ost?utm_medium=yext&utm_source=gmb), opening hours Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 6:30 pm, Saturdays 8:00 am to 5:00pm

The Dr Portmann pharmacy in Interlaken is open 7 days a week and also offers after hours emergency services. See <https://www.portmann.ch/>



There is a medical center in Wengen village with very competent and responsive English-speaking staff of doctors and physician assistants. It is easy enough to find. Simply consult the large black way-finding signs around the village and follow the “Artz” (“Doctor” in German) arrows. Summer opening hours as of July 2022 are 7:30 – 12:00 then 2:00 – 6:00 Monday – Friday, Saturdays 8 – 12. During winter the clinic is open Monday – Friday continuously from 7:30am – 6:00 pm, with same Saturday hours.

Health center Wengen

Haus Arba

3823 Wengen

Telephone: 033 856 28 28

wengen@xundheitszentrum.ch

<https://xundheitszentrum.ch/standort/we>

They will also summon helicopter medical evacuation service for serious issues they can't address. Although helicopter service is less expensive in Switzerland than in the US (and perhaps other countries) it's still quite pricey. We have been REGA members for years just to be on the safe (and economical) side. For 70 CHF per year per family, REGA members are evacuated for free if the service is requested by the local emergency responders. Of course, this is not medical insurance and does not cover treatment costs. Before traveling, check with your private or public health insurer to determine if costs for treatment outside of your home country are covered. If not, I recommend that you consider buying a supplemental international traveler health coverage policy. I use a very well-organized health insurance search engine, [www.squaremouth.com](http://www.squaremouth.com), to find the best policies at the best price.

## ***Laundry***

There is a small public laundromat in Wengen behind the Intersport Alpia store (across from the Eiger Residence, near the train station) that is open 8:00 am to 10:00 pm daily. Follow the signs to the hair salon. The Laundromat (“Waschsalon”) is located directly across from the entrance to the hair salon behind a brown door (sometimes there is no sign). There are two washers that take four 1 franc coins only (wash time approximately 40 minutes) and one dryer that takes 1, 2 and 5 franc coins (2 francs per hour). If you don't have correct change you can get some at Hotel Silberhorn which is just south of the Intersport Alpia store and next to the Coop. (The Silberhorn manages the laundry facility and is also the place to go if you run into trouble with any of the machines.) The dryer doesn't work particularly well but if you don't overload it you can get a load dry in an hour. There are instructions printed on the machines in English. There is no detergent available there so you will have to buy some at one of the markets in town. (In a pinch, check the area just behind the washers. That's where a number of frequent visitors stash their left-over detergent for the next “in the know” visitor.) It's best to go early since there's often a line at other times. And given the limited public laundry services, be on time to retrieve your laundry from the machines. Otherwise, expect to find your things piled up on one of the tables. Alternatively, most hotels provide laundry service. There is no dry-cleaner in town, but most of the larger hotels can provide this service as well.



Many of the rental apartments/chalets in town also feature a washer (and sometimes dryer) in a common laundry area in the building and sometimes even have facilities in individual apartments. Laundry facility availability is included in the search feature of each of the agencies' websites.

## ***Food Shopping***

*Opening days and times as of July 2022*

If you choose to rent a chalet or apartment you will be responsible for your own breakfast and other meals that you prefer eat in rather than out. We find it great fun to go food shopping in Wengen, it makes one feel more like a local. Groceries in Switzerland, and particularly in the mountains, are likely much more expensive than in your home country. You can see get an idea of prices at <http://www.coopathome.ch>.

There are two food markets in Wengen. The largest market, **Coop**, is located directly across from the train station, opening hours are 8:00 am – 6:30 pm seven days a week. The Coop has a surprisingly wide range of goods for such a small village. The breads here are very good, even better than the bakery in town IMO. Produce is very nice, there is a good selection of coffees, teas, wine, liquor, soft drinks, dairy products, breakfast items, cleaning supplies, etc. A very nice selection of fresh carry-out sandwiches and salads. They also have good quality fresh meats but they are cut and packaged into individual servings down in the "flatlands" before they come up the hill. About the only thing you can't get here (or anywhere in Wengen) are large cuts of meat such as pork roasts, etc. If you want the larger cuts you will need to go down to the Coop right across from Interlaken Ost train station. (This takes about an hour each way.) They have a very good butcher there. Alternatively you may be able to ask the staff at Coop Wengen to have larger meats sent up to you.

The smaller, local shop called Dorfladen ("village store"). It's on the main street, next to the Swiss Made Shop. They also feature amazing produce, including some from gardens in town, and other local items. Dairy, meats, extensive selection of local cheeses, wines and liquors, dry goods, and so on. They will also deliver directly to your rental chalet/apartment, delivery is free for orders over 50 CHF. See <https://www.dorfladen-wengen.ch/> for more information. Open daily from 7:45 am to 7:00 pm.

There is a bakery on the main street very close to the train station. Breads and pastries are the featured items here; they also sell walk-away coffee, sandwiches and salads. Opening hours are daily 7:30 am until 6:30 pm. <https://vincenz-wengen.ch/en/>

For the most part food shopping in Wengen is straightforward but there are a few tricks:

- To use the shopping carts at Coop, insert a 1 or 2 CHF coin in the slot in the handle to release the key to the lock. When you have finished shopping, insert the key back into the slot to return your coin. Shopping carts at Dorfladen are free.

- For produce items not sold per piece (“pro Stück”) you are expected to weigh and price purchases before proceeding to the main check out area. All produce has a distinct identifying number prominently displayed on the box or shelf next to the product. Simply put produce in the provided plastic bags (bagged separately by type), place one at a time on the scale, and press the produce’s number. The scale machine will print a tag you then stick on the plastic bag.
- You need to bring (or buy) your own bags and package your purchases yourself. A backpack (or two) is the easiest way to do this. If you have lots of heavy things, you can take the cart to your chalet but be sure to return it promptly.
- Finally, garbage (the inevitable outcome from doing your own food prep) is handled differently in Wengen than it may be where you live. Household garbage must be placed in “taxed bags” then placed in one of the marked dumpster bins around the village. Typically the apartment agent or owner will provide you with one or more bags per week. You can buy additional bags at Coop or Dorfladen (they are held behind the check out counter) for around 2 CHF each but be sure to get the taxed bags (white), not the plain bags (black). You are expected to bring plastic and glass containers to one of the recycling areas around village. Co-op also has a small area for recycling just inside the entry.

## LODGING IN WENGEN

Because our stays in Wengen are usually at least a week (and sometimes much longer) we prefer to rent an apartment rather than stay in a hotel. If you want to explore this option, I **highly** (I can’t stress this enough) recommend that you book through an agency that has full time resources in Wengen. Several reasons for this. First, if something goes awry (the hot water heater fails, the dishwasher goes on the fritz, a breaker behind a locked door trips, you lose your keys, etc) there are resources in town that can fix it right away. Second, booking through a reliable firm in town means that the agency owner’s very livelihood depends on honest and reliable communication about the apartment condition, location, and amenities and on providing top notch customer service. Booking through internet booking services (AirBnB, Booking.com, VRBO, etc) don’t provide these things. That said, some in-town agents list some of their apartments on some of these sites to increase their market reach. So if you want to use these sites to research just make very sure that there is a local agent behind the offer.

A far better way to research offerings is on the websites of the local agents:

- Wengen Apartments [www.wengenapartments.com](http://www.wengenapartments.com).
- Alpine Holiday Services at <http://www.alpineholidayservices.ch/>
- Wengen Chalets [www.wengenchalets.com](http://www.wengenchalets.com).
- Interhome, although a larger chain agency, also has extensive listings and agents/staff on the ground in Wengen, see <http://www.interhome.com/switzerland/bernese-oberland/wengen/>.

There are many hotels to choose from at <https://www.hotel-jungfrauregion.com/en/hotel-accomodation/label:10a-wengen/> . Hotels rates in Wengen include breakfast and most hotels also offer half-pension (half-board) which includes both breakfast and dinner. There are many good restaurants in town (and you can always arrange to have dinner in your hotel) so half-pension wouldn't be my choice but that's a personal preference. Many hotels assume you want half-pension (and will charge you for it) unless you tell them differently so be sure to specify.

**Hotel Berghaus** is a special and traditional place to stay. It's just off the main street in town and has lovely views. Go to their home page to see for yourself! It is a family-run hotel and restaurant with charming staff.

Hotel Berghaus  
Fam. Fontana-Fuchs  
CH - 3823 Wengen  
[berghaus@wengen.com](mailto:berghaus@wengen.com)  
[www.berghaus-wengen.ch](http://www.berghaus-wengen.ch)  
Tel: +41-33-855-21-51  
Fax: +41-33-855-38-20

The **Hotel Schönegg** is a more upscale version of a traditional Swiss hotel, beautifully outfitted with antique wood and classic Swiss decor. It is sited right in the village with nice views.

Romantik Hotel Schönegg  
CH - 3823 Wengen  
[mail@hotel-schoenegg.ch](mailto:mail@hotel-schoenegg.ch)  
[www.hotel-schoenegg.ch](http://www.hotel-schoenegg.ch)  
Tel: +41-33-855-34-22  
Fax: +41-33-855-42-33

**Hotel Bellevue** is an older property but well maintained and charming with great service. Bellevue sports the very best views of all the hotels in the village. The rooms are rather small but the lovely wrap-around verandas with the corner view-facing rooms make up for that. There is a stunning live web-cam on their home page, take a look for yourself and you'll see what I mean. For years we have the chalet directly next door (no longer available as a rental) and, although we've not stayed at the Bellevue, have been happy to have drinks in their lovely sitting area and dine at their very good restaurant (see more in Restaurant section).

Hotel Bellevue Wengen  
Judith Graf Engi  
CH-3823 Wengen

[www.bellevue-wengen.ch](http://www.bellevue-wengen.ch)

Tel: +41 33 856 66 55

Fax: +41 33 856 66 44

[info@bellevue-wengen.ch](mailto:info@bellevue-wengen.ch)

I've had good reports from other Trip Advisor members about the **Hotel Beausite Park**. It has been described as "top notch, the friendly owners are always present, the four course dinners are lovely and tasty, and the breakfast has everything anyone could ever possibly want. The rooms have jaw-dropping views and are very spacious." Quite the recommendation!

Beausite Park Hotel

Margrit & Erich Leeman-von Allmen

CH – 3823 Wengen

Tel: +41-33-856-51-56

Fax: +41-33-855-30-10

[hotel@parkwengen.ch](mailto:hotel@parkwengen.ch)

[www.parkwengen.ch](http://www.parkwengen.ch)

I've heard good reports about the **Hotel Maya Caprice** as well, another hotel on the upscale/pricey side.

Maya Caprice Hotel

CH – 3823 Wengen

<https://www.mayacaprice.ch/en/>

[hotel@caprice-wengen.com](mailto:hotel@caprice-wengen.com)

Tel: +41-33-856-06-06

Fax: +41-33-856-06-07

**Alpenrose** gets rave reviews from TripAdvisor members as well. Many families return to the Alpenrose every year for a week or two.

Hotel Alpenrose Wengen

Family von Allmen

CH – 3823 Wengen

<http://www.alpenrose.ch/>

Tel: +41-33-855-3216

Fax: +41-33-855-1518

[info@alpenrose.ch](mailto:info@alpenrose.ch)

**Hotel Edelweiss**, across the street from Alpenrose, is becoming increasingly popular as a less-expensive alternative. Many Wengen visitors have raved to me about the food and service.

Hotel Edelweiss  
Daniel and Susanne Eisenegger  
Am Acher  
3832 Wengen  
<http://www.edelweisswengen.ch/>  
Tel: +41 33 855 23 88  
Fax: +41 33 855 42 88

Finally, if you're looking for a "Fawlty Towers" type experience (with all the charisma and none of the aggravation) the **Hotel Falken** is absolutely charming. Sina Cova, the proprietor of Pizzeria da Sina (see Restaurant section) is the owner and is delightful. Even if you don't stay here I recommend visiting for a drink in the bar or a dinner (you will need to provide them a day's notice as the dining room is not public, but for half-board hotel visitors). Be sure to visit the public room and read the letter from British tourists (dated August 1914) thanking the management and staff for their graciousness during the "recent unpleasantness" – delay in travel plans due to outbreak of WWI.

Hotel Falken  
CH – 3823 Wengen  
[www.hotelfalken.com](http://www.hotelfalken.com)  
Tel: +41-33-856-51-21  
Fax: +41-33-856-33-39  
[info@hotelfalken.com](mailto:info@hotelfalken.com)

## DAY HIKE FROM WENGEN BASE

Many first-time visitors ask us, "How many miles/kilometers do you usually hike in a day?" In Switzerland, distance is not the point. Elevation gain is the key. Walking 3 – 5 miles (just to pick some numbers) on flat terrain is one thing; hiking this distance while gaining 1500 – 3000 feet (or more) on mountainous terrain is quite another. That's why Swiss hiking trail signs (which are plentiful) show "distance" in hours and minutes rather than in miles or kilometers. You will see things like "1Std 15Min", which means one hour ("Stunde") and fifteen minutes. Posted times are for experienced walkers/hikers and do not include time for food, rest, taking pictures, or just gawking in general (which you will do a lot). Times mentioned in my recommendations below are for moderately-fast to fast hikers. It's a good idea to figure out your pace relative to the posted times early in your trip.

There are two types of trails in Switzerland. "Wanderwegs" are easy trails marked with yellow stripes or triangles and are "paths for everyone" (at least according to the Swiss!) Wanderwegs are flat (or nearly so) with well-groomed wide paths and have no exposure (things like steep drop offs). These can be navigated with sturdy walking shoes, no need for boots.

“Bergwegs”, marked with red and white stripes, are more challenging mountain trails featuring uneven footing and some (or many) sections of steep inclines and descents. Hiking on Bergwegs requires hiking shoes/boots, previous mountain hiking experience, and I recommend hiking poles as the footing often requires close attention. Most Bergwegs are well-marked and reasonably well-maintained, but some (particularly those over the high passes) are nothing more than red blazes painted on rocks. Bergwegs with exposure often have a cable or rope you can use to steady yourself over the less-secure portions.

The link below takes you to a map that provides a good overview of many of the hikes in the region. It also gives you a pretty good picture of where various places are in relation to one another. This map is available at all tourist offices.

[https://www.jungfrau.ch/fileadmin/Prospekte\\_und\\_Broschueren/Wanderkarte\\_Jungfrau\\_Region.pdf](https://www.jungfrau.ch/fileadmin/Prospekte_und_Broschueren/Wanderkarte_Jungfrau_Region.pdf)

### ***Moderate to Challenging Hikes***

If you are unsure of your hiking aptitude but want to try some of the hikes described in this section I recommend you start with the Wengen to Kleine Scheidegg trek. This is one of the most visually-stunning of all the hikes in the region, has fewer super-steep segments, and features two “bail out” points where you can catch a train. Compare the sign-posted time to your actual achievement to get a good idea how much faster or slower you are than “standard”, then use this information to gauge your timing on subsequent treks.

All of the hikes in this section are Bergwegs for some or all of the distance.

**Wengen to Kleine Scheidegg** (pronounced KLINE-eh SHY-dek). This is a moderately strenuous hike – about 2700 feet of ascent over about 6 miles with a posted time of 2 hours 50 minutes to – and the views are spectacular.

There are three different routes: high, center, and low, which should be clear on a trail map or ask at the Tourist Office. The low route (trail number 42 on the hiking map available in the Tourist Office) is the most stunning of all, with richly varied terrain. To follow this route, walk on the paved road from the center of Wengen village to below the train station and continue on until you begin to see the small brown signs for “Mendelssohnweg”. Continue to follow these signs, eventually heading up hill then through a gorgeous forested section where you will have great views of Lauterbrunnen Valley, Mürren off to the right, and Wengen fading into the background. There is a lovely small waterfall along the way, a good spot for a rest and wading in the cool water. Continue to follow the Mendelssohnweg signs and eventually you will pop out into a clearing and see a wide gravel road above you. Your first “bail out” point is here: walk up to the road, turn left and walk down to Allmend station where you can catch a train back

to Wengen or on up to Kleine Scheidegg. (*Note: Allmend is a request-only stop. To make a request press the “Halt auf Verlangen” button at the small station there.*) To continue your hike, turn right on the road (following the Mendelssohnweg signs) and, as you round the corner you will come face-to-face with the Jungfrau and Mönch massif and glaciers. Stunning. Continue to follow the gravel road until you come to a fork, with Mendelssohnweg clearly marked to the right and also Mendelssonweg to the left along with the Jungfrau Marathon sign. Either gets you where you want to go but the trail to the right is more scenic (trail to the left continues on the wide gravel road). After a short uphill through forest you will come out into a clearing and see the Wengernalp Hotel and train station on your left. Continue to follow the obvious trail up to the station where you can end your journey if you wish, taking the train on up to Kleine Scheidegg or back down to Wengen.

*Note: on the entire stretch from the beginning of the gravel road to Wengernalp Hotel you will likely hear booming sounds, which are avalanches coming off the glaciers. Most of them are small and you will hear the noise long after you can see any snowfall. However, occasionally there are larger falls and if you are quick to turn and face the glaciers when you begin to hear the sounds you may be treated to an amazing visual!*

To continue the trek on up to Kleine Scheidegg follow the wide path (first gravel, then paved) up the hill, reaching your destination approximately 1 mile and an additional 600 feet of vertical ascent later.

Kleine Scheidegg is the traditional base camp for Eiger mountain climbing ascents. This is also where the trains coming up from the Wengen side going to the Jungfrauoch (pronounced “YOONG-frow-yock”) change so it can be pretty busy. But the views are positively stunning so don’t be put off by all the touristy-looking stuff. There are a handful of dining options, the most well-placed being the Restaurant Bahnhof directly by the train tracks. There is indoor dining and a patio with service and self-service areas. The wurst (sausages) are delicious, particularly the Kalbwurst (veal sausage) and the Rösti is very good. It’s a great place to sit at the large communal tables, enjoy a post-hike drink and lunch, and watch the world go by.

Alternatively, either continue your hike up to Eigergletscher station about 45 minutes further up the mountain (you can see the station from Kleine Scheidegg) or hop on the train for the brief ride. There you will find possibly one of the best lunch spots in the entire Jungfrau region – the Eigergletscher Restaurant. The classis Swiss food is remarkable and, if you’re lucky you will get a set on the veranda overlooking the glacier. <https://www.jungfrau.ch/de-ch/essen-trinken/restaurant-eigergletscher/>

**Wengen to Männlichen to Kleine Scheidegg.** Although you end up in Kleine Scheidegg again it is well worth it. Männlichen (pronounced “MEHN-leek-en, [www.maennlichen.ch](http://www.maennlichen.ch)) is the peak behind the village. This is quite aggressive and steep; about 3300 feet of vertical ascent over less than 3 milesbut the views are breathtaking.



The terrain is interesting and varied – some in lush forest, other through fields of wildflowers with open vistas.

*2022 update: check at the tourist office for trail routing. Extensive construction has changed the path since I was last on this hike.*

If the aggressive Wengen to Männlichen hike isn't your cup of tea, take the gondola ("Luftseilbahn") from the station in the center of Wengen up to the top. Check schedules at <https://www.maennlichen.ch/en/summer/information/timetable.html> From there you can catch the easy trail down to Kleine Scheidegg.

At the top, Berghaus Männlichen ([www.maennlichen.ch/berghaus/gastgeber/](http://www.maennlichen.ch/berghaus/gastgeber/)) has a large self-service cafeteria with indoor and a large outdoor seating area. They have an extensive "BergRestaurant" menu: local cheese plates, dried beef, Rösti, Wurst, Swiss-style hamburgers (no bun), Pomme Frites (french fries), delicious goulash soup ("Gulaschsuppe") plus a soup of the day, house made cakes and tarts. Table service is provided outside at the tables nearest the full service ("Bedienung") indoor restaurant and are well marked as such. The food here is pretty good, but not as good as Kleine Scheidegg and not in the same league as Eigergletscher Restaurant so you may want to just stop for a drink here. I recommend the half apple juice ("Apfelsaft" sometimes listed on menus as "Suessemost"), half mineral water, which is served just about everywhere and is very refreshing. Some places will mix it for you, others you need to buy a bottle of each and mix it yourself. Recently, I've started seeing "Apfelschoeler" listed on drink menus. The Ramseier folks that make the Suessemost brand of Apfelsaft have started bottling this half juice/half water mixture and it's very good.

After a rest and refreshment at Männlichen, take the easy trail down to Kleine Scheidegg. (Or, alternatively, simply take the gondola back down to Wengen.) The "Panoramaweg" is about three miles long with a gentle mostly downhill slope, about 500 feet of total descent (signposted at 1 hour 30 minutes). It may be crowded as it is the easiest hike with spectacular views, but it's definitely worth the trip. You will see stunning views of the Eiger, Mönch (pronounced "Mohnk"), and Jungfrau massifs and you will likely see carpets of wildflowers in July and August. You can then take the train back to Wengen from Kleine Scheidegg. Alternatively, if it's a nice day you could take the train up to the Jungfraujoch from Kleine Scheidegg (see the Excursions section for more). This will take a little more than an hour and you'll want an hour or so at the top. Then, you can take the train back down to Wengen (about 1.5 hours from Jungfraujoch).

**Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg, optional to Mürren.** This is another must-do hike as it provides a glorious trip down the entire Lauterbrunnen Valley and beyond. The first segment (Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg) is an easy, four mile long flat Wanderweg and truly a "trail for everyone". The valley is full of waterfalls – the literature claims 72 but, depending on the time of year, you may see as few as 5. Take the train from Wengen down to Lauterbrunnen, exit left from the train station, walk through town, and directly onto the wide footpath that runs down the Valley. The path is paved about half of the



total distance from Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg then turns into a wide and well-graded dirt and gravel path that parallels the Weisse Lutschine (“White River”). Soon after leaving Lauterbrunnen you will pass right by the famous Staubbach Falls. In fact, along the trail there are markers at all of the major falls enroute with interesting details about each.

About 45 minutes into the walk you will see a cut off (to the left) that leads across the Valley to Trümmelbach Falls. This is well worth doing -- these are falls that run through the center of the mountain and it is all very dramatic. Secure footing and railings let you get an up-close look. See “Excursions” section for more information. After touring there, you can either walk on the road in front of the falls down to Stechelberg (continuing south) or, preferably, cut back across the meadow and rejoin the footpath.

Another 30 minutes or so after rejoining the footpath you will come upon the Stechelberg-Schilthornbahn station where you can catch the gondola up to the Schilthorn or the bus back to Lauterbrunnen.

If you wish to continue the walk, I highly recommend heading onward to the Stechelberg Inn, which lies at the end of the Valley and is a great lunch spot. It’s usually full of locals and they have a nice patio and an extensive menu with top-notch food and desserts.

*Note: this trail is excellent for walkers, families with strollers, and mountain bikers. Once you enter Stechelberg village the path Ys off. Walkers will want to take a right (the more scenic route) to head to Stechelberg Inn. The path narrows but is still very easy and navigable. However, just before reaching the Inn there is a bridge with snow grates that is not navigable by bike or with a stroller (unless one adult carries the child and another carries the stroller). Visitors with wheels simply turn left at the Y (toward “Stechelberg Post”) and connect with the local road that takes you directly to the Inn. You can also catch the bus back to Lauterbrunnen at Stechelberg Post station.*

After lunch you have several options:

- Take the Post Bus that stops near Stechelberg Inn back to Lauterbrunnen train station then return to Wengen by train. This bus runs twice an hour during high season, once an hour otherwise; check the schedule at the bus stop before lunch so you don’t miss one by 5 minutes! If you aren’t using an all-inclusive pass buy tickets when you enter the bus (i.e., for Half Fare Card holders).
- Walk up to Mürren (see below for more info on Mürren). It’s a lovely hike with spectacular views across the valley back towards the Eiger massif and nicely varied terrain. It is a moderately aggressive hike, about 3000 feet of vertical over 5 or so miles. It is shorter but steeper than the hike from Wengen to Kleine Scheidegg therefore a bit more challenging. The first uphill bit from Stechelberg is quite a workout, with 1,000 feet of vertical ascent in a mile or less over well-groomed steps through a forest. After reaching the first large waterfall you get a short break when the trail flattens briefly. Catch your breath then head up the next

steep stage to Gimmelwald. Here, the lure of a cold drink on the incredibly scenic patio of Pension Gimmelwald is too much to resist. If you've had enough hiking, hop aboard the gondola up to Mürren. If you're intent on making it to Mürren under your own power, head up following the Wanderweg signs for the final stage which is about another mile and steeper than you want it to be (about 885 feet of ascent). Follow the signs for the Mürren gondola if you want to pop out at the south end of the village, or the signs for Mürren village and train station if you want to emerge mid-village. Walk through the charming village of Mürren to the train station on the opposite end of town, stopping for lunch along the way at either Alpenruh (located by the gondola, so follow those signs on your way up) which features average food but a dining patio with a remarkable view, La Grotte restaurant in mid-village which has the best food in town but no views (update: closed until winter season 2021/2022), or any other spot that takes your fancy. To return to Wengen, take the train to Grütschalp (or walk, it is lovely – see the “Easy Hikes” section for more details), the gondola back down to the Lauterbrunnen train station and the WAB train back up to Wengen.

- Take the gondola up to Mürren. The gondola to Mürren (and on to the Schilthorn) is about ½ mile before Stechelberg; you will have seen it in passing. You can return via the same gondola and take the Post Bus back to Lauterbrunnen. A better choice is to walk through Mürren to the train station and take the train (or walk) to Grütschalp, then switch to the gondola that goes down to the Lauterbrunnen train station, then train it up the hill back to Wengen.

**Schynige Platte to First.** This is an all-day event, but, in my opinion, is one of the most spectacular day hikes in all of Switzerland. It is long, with steep and sometimes challenging terrain in spots (the ActivityWorkshop.net folks say it's “difficult, steep, and long”) but worth it. However, you want to do this on a reasonably clear day or you will not be able to take advantage of the views.

Leave Wengen early, like at 8:00 am or before, and take the train down the hill to Wilderswil (via Lauterbrunnen) which is the last stop before Interlaken Ost. There you will catch the Schynige Platte Bahn which is a 100-year-old cog train that takes you up about 5000 feet of vertical to Schynige Platte (pronounced “Shin-nig-geh PLAH-teh”). The views of Interlaken and the lakes on the way up are breathtaking. The ride takes about an hour, the entire trip to SP from Wengen takes about two hours. There is a large restaurant and inn at SP and the fantastic views back toward the Eiger massif are different than any you will have seen. Be sure to walk around the west corner of the grounds for a wonderful view of the lakes. There is a cool video on You Tube of the views from the restaurant viewing platform at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vK94B9nsdic>.

Follow the trail signs to First (pronounced “Feerst”). The trail covers wonderfully varied terrain with frequent spectacular views of the lakes to your north and the mountains to your south. About 1/3 of the way into the walk there is a stunning large meadow full of grazing sheep and goats. You then enter a rocky terrain area (the footing is stable but

requires attention; there is no exposure) with spectacular views of the hanging meadow retreating below you. There is a quaint Berghotel (mountain hotel), the Weberhütte, about 2/3 of the way through the trip which is a grand place to stop for snacks and a refill of liquids. And, by all means, don't miss the Faulhorn, about 45 minutes further on atop a rise (you can't miss it). Built in 1832, it is the oldest Berghotel and restaurant in Switzerland. This is a good lunch spot. It's all downhill from there to First with gorgeous carpets of wildflowers, a spectacular view of the Wetterhorn peak reflected in the small Bachalpsee, and occasional sightings of marmots. There is more information about this hike along with pictures at <http://activityworkshop.net/hiking/switzerland/faulhorn.html>.

All in, the hike has a total ascent of about 3,280 feet/1000 meters over a span of about 10 miles (16 km) or so. However, virtually all of the elevation gain is getting to Faulhorn which is approximately 4 miles into the walk. So prepare yourself for some steep climbs – 3280 feet of ascent in 4 miles isn't exactly a walk in the park! If you are in good alpine hiking condition allow 6+ hours just for the hike (posted time is 6 hours 10 minutes), excluding breaks and lunch.

At First you can take the ski gondolas down to Grindelwald. This is a stunning ride, but **make sure you get there by 5:00 pm** (as late as 6:30 during peak summer season) because that's when the last gondola heads down the hill. Otherwise, you face a descent of 3,000 vertical feet on foot. The ride down takes about 30 minutes and, being a ski lift, runs continuously. See the First gondola timetable at <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/grindelwaldfirst/>

Once you reach Grindelwald turn left out of the gondola station then turn right on the main street. Walk through town (which is somewhat interesting, but too touristy and too many cars for my taste) to the train station on the opposite end of the village. Trains run back to Lauterbrunnen about every 20 minutes, you will need to switch at Zweilütschinen. (If you've arrived at the station just after a train has departed, there's a restaurant with a patio one block before the station where you can get a drink and watch the world go by.) The total train trip from Grindelwald back to Lauterbrunnen then up to Wengen takes about 45 minutes. If you leave Wengen at 8:00 am you should be back around 6:00 pm, ready for a Schnitzel and Rösti or some Pomme Frites!

*Note: you can, of course, do this hike in reverse – starting at First and walking to Schynige Platte. In this direction, most of the ascent comes between First and the Faulhorn with the remainder of the hike (the most distance) being primarily downhill. Although this may sound attractive, it is a LOT of downhill and the trail surface requires constant attention, making the descent rather tedious. Everyone I've encountered (myself included) that has hiked this direction prefers the Schynige Platte to First direction.*

**Eiger Trail.** This is a lovely hike under the imposing North Face of the Eiger. <https://www.myswitzerland.com/en-ch/experiences/route/eiger-trail-the-swiss-alpine-experience-trail>. It's approximately 2400 ft of vertical ascent over 4.5 miles. The terrain is rugged at times so good hiking footwear is required. It can also be chilly due to the

high altitude and proximity to the mountain, making it a particularly great walk on a hot day. If the weather is cool, you will definitely want to put on warm clothes topped by a windbreaker once you enter the shade of the Eiger. Take gloves, too.

Most hikers begin at Eigergletscher station and hike down to Alpiglen. We prefer to hike up (rather than down) so take the train from Wengen to Alpiglen via Kleine Scheidegg. The trail starts at the Alpiglen train station. (*Note: Alpiglen is a request-only stop, press the green or button on the train doors to make the request.*) There are a series of steep switchbacks up the mountain where probably 60% of the total ascent occurs. There are ropes for security in two very short sections that have some exposure – enough to get the attention of someone very afraid of heights (that’s me) but few others. You then reach just over 7,000 ft and begin a gradual ascent across an area just under the North Face. The trail is well outside of rockfall areas, though, so don’t be concerned. You will pass by a number of gorgeous waterfalls enroute, during most years you will need to cross some occasional very shallow water that crosses the trail downstream from these.

If you’re lucky, you’ll get to see some “face jumpers”. This seems to be Switzerland’s latest extreme sport. Jumpers are dropped at the top of the Eiger by helicopter, fling themselves off, and free fall until pulling the cords on their parasails (not parachutes) at the very last minute. It’s all quite dramatic. You’ll be surprised by how much noise a free-falling human makes cutting through the air – even when they’re not screaming!

The hike in this direction ends at the Eigergletscher station. The food at the restaurant here is quite extraordinary (especially the rösti) and, if you’re lucky enough to get a seat out on the veranda, you’ll have a stunning, up close view of the glaciers and mountaintops. From here, you can take the short walk down to Kleine Scheidegg and catch the train to Wengen, or – easier yet – take the Jungfrauabahn train down to Kleine Scheidegg, change to the WAB train there and return to Wengen.

**Lauterbrunnen to Lobhornhütte, return via Grütschalp.** This is another stunning hike that is pretty much an all day deal. Take the train down to Lauterbrunnen, then walk up to Isenfluh (pronounced EESen-flu). The trail will be marked very near the station or just ask. This is about 1000 feet of vertical and 3 or so miles via an unused road that got wiped out in a rockfall. There are a couple of nice waterfalls and the remains of the rockfall are quite impressive. There’s one nice restaurant/inn in Isenfluh where you can stop for lunch if you wish (it’s obvious).

From Isenfluh, walk up to Sulwald for some stunning views. This is quite steep, about 1500 feet of vertical over a couple of miles. If you want to opt out of this section, there’s a small lift that runs up from Isenfluh (it’s pretty obvious, but ask at the restaurant if you miss it). In 2021 the price was 8.20 CHF per person – and well worth it if you want to omit some vertical! It’s a private lift so no passes or discount cards apply

At the top of the trail/lift is the very charming Sulwald Stübli cafe, serving wurst, Bernese meat and cheese plates, soup, Alpermacaroni (divine) and such at outdoor tables

overlooking some of the most breath-taking views in the entire region. See <https://www.sulwaldstuebli.ch/> The proprietor spent several years working at Squaw Valley in Lake Tahoe, California so speaks good English. She makes a marvelous and unusual hazelnut cake (“Haesslikuchen”) – don’t miss this if she has it available.

After lunch, head up the trail to the Lobhornhütte ([www.lobhornhuetten.ch](http://www.lobhornhuetten.ch)), which is about another 1400 feet and about 2 miles. The hut is primitive, but the soups are good and it’s a view spot well worth seeing. It is very popular with the locals and with other tourists from Europe, so you will likely be surprised by how crowded this “out of the way” spot actually is, particularly since you rarely see many others on the trail. How did all these people get there? (There is a more detailed description of this portion of the hike along with pictures at [http://www.walkingswitzerland.com/walks/walk\\_descrip/8029/](http://www.walkingswitzerland.com/walks/walk_descrip/8029/))

After a rest at the Lobhornhütte, head down the hill to Grütschalp. Again, great scenery, but different views. This section is nearly all downhill and takes about 2 – 3 hours as the terrain is quite steep in places and the trail surface requires constant attention (rocks, roots, and such) at least half of the way. There is no exposure so nothing to be concerned about, it’s just a bit tedious. (However, I don’t recommend this route the day after a heavy rain as it will be very muddy – if you end up going to Lobhornhütte on such a day, simply retrace your steps to return to Wengen.) You’ll end up at the train station in Grütschalp, where you can catch the gondola down to Lauterbrunnen then return to Wengen on the WAB. Or, if you’re still ready for more walking, take the stunningly gorgeous 1 mile (flat) walk from Grütschalp to Mürrren and take the gondola down from there to Stechelberg. Take the bus back to Lauterbrunnen (or walk) and train back up the hill to Wengen.

**Meiringen to Grosse Scheidegg.** This is yet another stunning all day hike with varied terrain and majestic views of the Wetterhorn and other peaks. First, take the train from Wengen to Meiringen. You should plan to arrive at Meiringen no later than 10:00 am, it takes about 1.5 hours from Wengen.

Walk through Meiringen to the cable train up to Reichenbach Falls. (It’s fairly well marked but train station staff can also direct you.) Once you arrive at the cable train, you can take it up to the Falls which cuts about 900 feet of vertical out of the hike. More information about the lift and operating hours is at <http://www.grimselwelt.ch/grimsel-experience/transport-lifts/reichenbach-funicular/> Alternatively, take the trail just behind the café and walk up. It is a lovely, fairly steep walk largely through a forested area. The Falls are quite dramatic and achieved fame as the spot where Sherlock Holmes allegedly met his fate. See more at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichenbach\\_Falls](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichenbach_Falls)

*Note: Another alternative that cuts time and vertical out of the journey (but misses Reichenbach Falls) is to take the bus (right at the train station) to Zwirgi (direction Rosenloui/Schwarzwaldalp). This cuts about 1100 feet of total vertical ascent vs walking up the trail from under the Reichenbach Falls cable train.*

If you've taken the lift up, a series of steep (but very wide and stable) steps will take you up to Restaurant Zwirgi. You will also pass this way if you've walked up and it's a good place to stop for a drink. Continue on, following the signs to Rosenlaui/Grosse Scheidegg. You'll have a bit more climbing to do before you come upon a large hanging valley, the Reichenbachtal, with the gorgeous Aare river running through it. The path follows the river for over a mile and you'll have spectacular views of the Wetterhorn and other peaks. The flat terrain on this section is also a welcome relief!

DO NOT miss stopping for lunch at Rosenlaui, a beautiful old hotel with a lovely patio. <https://www.rosenlaui.ch/> The food here is truly exceptional and presented beautifully. Plan on at least an hour for lunch and try not to eat too much, although that's a difficult thing to do here!

After lunch, press on toward Grosse Scheidegg. There is more up and down with about 500 feet of climbing required at the very end (when it is least welcome). However, the views continue to be marvelous and the scene from atop Grosse Scheidegg is well worth your effort. Stop at the inn here for a drink (if you've eaten lunch at Rosenlaui you won't be hungry!), then take the Post Bus down to Grindelwald train station. (Be mindful of the schedule as the bus runs only hourly.) This bus ride is like a Disneyland E-Ticket with all the twists and turns! Very scenic. Take the train back to Wengen via Zweilütschinen (where you will switch) and Lauterbrunnen.

This is a fairly aggressive hike covering about 4400 feet of vertical (or 3300 to 3500 feet if you've taken the bus to Zwirgi or the lift up the Falls, respectively) and ten miles. A quick pace will yield walking time of 5 – 6 hours without public transport assists, 3.5 – 4 hours with. Of course, this excludes travel, meals, breaks and gawking stops. All the travel getting to and from the trail makes it sound like a big hassle, but the connections are really quite easy and the hike is definitely worth it.

This is also a great hike if you have a group of people with varying levels of hiking ability. After you reach the Restaurant Zwirgi atop the Falls, the trail intersects a road serviced by Post Bus at four different spots. Less aggressive hikers can take the lift to the top of the Falls, take the steps up, catch the bus at Restaurant Zwirgi, get off at the next stop, then walk to Rosenlaui (this is the flattest section of the hike). After lunch, walk from Rosenlaui to Schwarzwaldalp (another relatively flat section), then catch the Post Bus from Schwarzwaldalp to Grosse Scheidegg.

### ***Easy Hikes***

There are a number of glorious hikes for those that like a more leisurely pace – or for the real go-getters that need a bit of a break! All of these trails are Wanderwegs except where noted.

**Männlichen to Kleine Scheidegg.** This walk (the “Panoramaweg”), described in some detail in the “Wengen to Männlichen to Kleine Scheidegg” hike listed in the previous section, is likely the most stunning of the easy hikes. It is about 3 miles long with a gentle downhill descent on a very wide path. The views of the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau are breathtaking and visitors in July and August will likely see carpets of wildflowers. To start the hike, take the gondola (“Luftseilbahn”) from the center of Wengen up to Männlichen. The gondola runs every 15 minutes and the trip to the top takes about 7 minutes. From there, catch the trail down to Kleine Scheidegg. Take the train from Kleine Scheidegg back down to Wengen.

**Grütschalp to Mürren.** A trip to the village of Mürren is highly recommended and the walk there from the gondola station at Grütschalp is breathtaking. Approximately 3 miles on flat terrain, this walk provides a spectacular view of the Eiger massif, but from a different perspective than the Männlichen to Kleine Scheidegg walk. To begin, take the train down the hill to Lauterbrunnen, then cross the street (or use the underground walk) to the gondola to Grütschalp/Mürren. The trail to Mürren begins at the Grütschalp station where you depart the gondola. See suggestions for Mürren restaurants in the “Excursions Around Wengen” section, “Mürren and the Schilthorn” description.

**Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg.** This highly recommended walk, about 4 miles in length and over flat terrain, is described in the previous section under “Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg, optional to Mürren”.

**Lauterbrunnen to Wilderswil, optional to Interlaken.** *2022 update: there is now significant construction along a great deal of this walk that will continue for a couple of years. Better to choose another walk.* This is a lovely walk that parallels the river from Lauterbrunnen to Wilderswil and also covers some beautiful forested areas. This path is in two stages, both approximately 3 miles in length and on flat (or nearly) terrain. The first stage, Lauterbrunnen to Zweilütschinen, starts right at the Lauterbrunnen train station. Follow the signs to the Parking Garage and WCs east of the station and you’ll come upon the trail signs direction Zweilütschinen and Wilderswil. At the very beginning, there is a short descent over a path that can be a bit muddy and a wee bit steep but quickly puts you out onto a very wide, well-maintained Wanderweg. This stage of the trail follows directly along the river through a lovely forest; you will also see a fish ladder about half way on.

Once you reach Zweilütschinen you can catch the train back to Wengen or press on for the second stage: Zweilütschinen to Wilderswil. (Alternatively, of course, you can take the train from Lauterbrunnen to Zweilütschinen and pick up the trail here.) The local train companies have done visitors yet another favor by constructing a lovely “Nature und Bahn” (loosely translated: “Nature and Railway”) path on this stretch. Cross the train tracks (heading east) at the north end of the Zweilütschinen station and look for the signs direction Wilderswil and Nature und Bahn trail. This stage is also about 3 miles in length and passes through more forested area. One of the highlights of this segment is the charming village of Gsteigwiler, which sits up on a small knoll so there is a very gradual incline up to reach it. The village celebrated their 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1996 and features

fabulous gardens, trees laden with pears and apples, and some beautiful old chalets with complex woodwork trim. Once you pass through, continue on the Nature and Bahn trail – there are a number of other paths that also lead to Wilderswil, but the Nature und Bahn trail is the most easily navigated. Within half a mile or so you will come upon a covered bridge which marks the end of the trail and time for lunch! One good pick is Restaurant Steinbock (closed Mondays) directly at the east side of the bridge (the side you’re still on). They have a few tables out by the river and a nice indoor restaurant. This is our favorite pick. If Steinbock doesn’t suit, cross the bridge to a small square and veer off slightly to the right to Restaurant Hirschen (closed Tuesdays). Good food and a charming traditional interior are the highlights here. If you press on to the train station you will see Restaurant Christina, directly across (west) from the station. Christina offers a quite unusual combination – Swiss German and Korean food! Most of the more elaborate Korean hot plate dishes are only available after 5:00 pm. The Swiss German food is remarkably good, especially the Röstli and the Goulash Soup (“Gulaschsuppe”). The village of Wilderswil is another half mile or so west of the train station and also has very good restaurants. You can catch the train at Wilderswil back to Wengen.

If you’re ready for more walking, pick up the trail to Interlaken across the street from the Wilderswil train station. A short walk of 45 minutes will put you in town, where you can browse the shops, restaurants, and catch the train back to Wengen.

**North Face and Flower/Children’s Trails.** There are three glorious trails that are accessed via the Allmendhubel lift from Mürren. The Flower Trail is a simple 20-minute loop featuring, well, wildflowers during late June – early September blooming season. The Children’s Adventures trail takes about an hour to complete. Both are easy, suitable for families (although not pram/stroller-friendly), and feature stunning views of the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau peaks, weather willing.

The Northface Trail (not to be confused with the Eiger Trail between Alpigen and Eigergletscher Station) quite possibly has the best ‘bang for the buck’ of any trail in the Bernese Oberland. Absolutely remarkable views, varied terrain, and an opportunity to pass by a number of working dairies, many of which offer drinks, snacks, or even full meals. At several points there are signs describing the peak you are seeing and documenting the routes taken by mountain climbers that have summited in the past. The hike can be done as a loop trail beginning/ending at Allmendhubel or as a point-to-point beginning Allmendhubel and ending Mürren (or further on to Gimmelwald).

Loop trail covers about 4.5 miles, takes about 2- 2.5 hours.

Allmendhubel-Mürren is about 6.5 miles and can be completed in about 2.5 to 3 hours, depending how many “gawking” breaks one takes (lots of opportunity for that!) The first 45 minutes of the trail is wide open walking along the ridge of the meadows. After crossing into the valley there is around 20-30 minutes of uphill which less-experienced hikers may find a bit challenging – just take your time! The rest of the way is flat or downhill with the last hour occasionally somewhat steep on narrow trails but there is no exposure.



Because we prefer to hike up rather than down we always reverse the course. (This approach puts the hike squarely in the moderate rather than easy category.) The hike starts in Mürren, right near the Schilthorn gondola station. With a lower elevation starting point this direction has, of course, more vertical ascent. The first 1.5 hours (more for less experienced hikers) is continually up, covering about 1200 feet of vertical. The trail then flattens out for the final hour with a bit of downhill toward the end.

Regardless of which direction you hike the entire way is well-signed with blue “Northface Trail” signs, including some blue blazes painted on hay/dairy structures. Note that portions of the trail are “Bergwegs” requiring good hiking footwear

More information about Allmendhubel lift and activities at [https://schilthorn.ch/en/Info/Allmendhubel\\_1907\\_m . 6257\\_ft](https://schilthorn.ch/en/Info/Allmendhubel_1907_m . 6257_ft)

**First to Bachalpsee.** This is one of the iconic hikes in the region, with stunning scenery both out and back on a (mostly) flat trail of 2.5 miles in length (each way). The lift up to First is amazing and there is a lot to do in the area. See “Things To Do With Kids” section for more information.

## MULTI-DAY HIKES

Switzerland is a perfect place to do multi-day hikes – think of it like back-packing without the need to drag along sleeping bags, tents, stoves, and food. You can hike from village to village with a large day pack, have great meals, take a shower, consult a wine list, and sleep in a bed with a down comforter. What a way to go! (Disclaimer: all of these wonderful attributes apply only if you are staying in hotels or inns; hut hikers will find accommodations far more rustic.)

We usually only carry one change of clothes for the evening, rain gear (always), water, and one lunch that can last a few days in a pack (invariably it’s the third or fourth day when you can’t find food on the trail). We wash out our hiking clothes in the sink at night thereby saving lots of weight and space in packs.

You will want trail maps for some of these hikes. The best place to start is in the tourist office in the center of the village. If you want more detailed maps than those they provide they can direct you to where to buy them in town.

### Wengen to Kandersteg

**Wengen to Lauterbrunnen to Mürren.** Take the train (or walk) down to Lauterbrunnen from Wengen, then hike to Mürren as described in the “Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg optional Mürren” entry in the “Easy Hikes” section. In Mürren I’d recommend staying at either:

Hotel Blumental (the hotel connected to La Grotte restaurant)

Ralph & Heidi von Allmen

<https://blumental-muerren.ch/en>

[blumental@muerren.ch](mailto:blumental@muerren.ch)

Tel: 011-41-88-855-18-26

Fax: 011-41-33-855-36-86

or

Hotel Alpenrüh

Willem Thomas + Jasmin

CH-3825 Mürren

[alpenruh@schilthorn.ch](mailto:alpenruh@schilthorn.ch)

[www.alpenruh-muerren.ch](http://www.alpenruh-muerren.ch)

Tel: 011-41-33 856 88 00

Fax: 011-41-33 856 88 88

**Mürren to Griesalp** via Sefinenfurgge Pass, a classic Swiss mountain pass with stunning Alpine scenery. Take a lunch since you will encounter no food on the trail once you pass the Rotstockhut fairly early in the hike. Now things get more serious, with 10 miles, just over 3000 feet of vertical (both up and down – 6,000 total, there are no lifts) and some exposure. There is loose skree on the very steep tops, both on the ascent and particularly on the descent where the trail is very narrow and a steep drop off. There is a solid cable to hold on to on the North (descent) side, which is helpful. (The steps that also helped a bit were wiped out in a storm last winter, they may or may not have been rebuilt.) The Pass itself is a quite narrow flat spot atop the steep slopes. If you are inclined to vertigo or have any fear of heights *this is not a hike for you*. If you are an experienced alpine hiker without these concerns, the rewards are positively stunning views and a good sense of accomplishment when you arrive in Griesalp. A wonderful place to stay is the Berggasthaus Golderli. Golderli provides classic Swiss Berghotel style accommodations (albeit upscale compared to most Berghotels) with bunk beds, shared baths, and a set menu served family style to all guests at dinner. They have a lovely patio where they will gladly serve up cheese plates and beer in the late afternoon to starving hikers. The set menu dinner meal is always quite good (what wouldn't be after that walk!) and they have a wine list. The website is all in German, but you can use Google translate to translate it (and you have to click on the picture on the home page to enter the site). They are extraordinarily accommodating and the place is usually full of locals passing through (on foot, of course).

Berggasthaus Golderli

Alexandra and Robi Schnitzler

Tel.: 011-33-676-21-92

Fax: 011-33-676-20-90

[www.golderli.ch](http://www.golderli.ch)

[mail@golderli.ch](mailto:mail@golderli.ch)

*Reservations can only be made in writing via email or the contact form on the website*

If Golderli is full or you want something more upscale, another choice in the area is “Griesalp Hotelzentrum”, a large complex offering accommodations ranging from dormitory/shared bath to luxury suites. Website in German, use Google Translate.

Griesalp Hotelzentrum  
CH-3723 Kiental  
[mail@griesalp-hotelzentrum.ch](mailto:mail@griesalp-hotelzentrum.ch)  
[www.griesalp-hotelzentrum.ch](http://www.griesalp-hotelzentrum.ch)  
Tel: 011-33-676-71-71  
Fax: 011-33-676-71-72

If you want to end your adventure with Griesalp there is bus service that runs once every two hours from Griesalp to Kiental and on to the train station at Reichenbach. You can search connections at [www.sbb.ch/en](http://www.sbb.ch/en) The Griesalp bus stop is at the Hotelzentrum complex (stop is Griesalp Kurhaus), which is a short walk from the Golderli. The bus ride is quite dramatic as it is the steepest bus route in all of Europe. Mercedes has built specially articulated busses that make it possible to drive the very twisty, narrow roads in the area. Wow!

**Griesalp to Kandersteg** via Höhturli pass. This is the most aggressive hiking stretch, with 13 miles and 4000 ft of vertical ascent (and descent) with even more exposure than the trail over Sefinenfürgge. However, it is the most spectacular day of the trip as you pass close to the famous Blumlisalp massif and see fabulous alpine lakes. Unlike Sefinenfürgge, there’s a hut at the top of the pass with food and refreshments. Downhill from the Pass lies Kandersteg, a lovely little village in the Kiental valley region. The best place to stay in Kandersteg is a positively charming inn just on the outside of town called Landgasthof Ruedihus (pronounced ROY-dee-hoos). It was built in the 1700s but has modern amenities. The restaurant there has been exceptionally good, although recent reports say it has gone downhill a bit. There are many other restaurants within walking distance in the town.

Landgasthof Ruedihus  
Familie Rene and Anne Maeder  
3718 Kandersteg  
[www.doldenhorn-ruedihus.ch](http://www.doldenhorn-ruedihus.ch)  
[doldenhorn@compuserve.com](mailto:doldenhorn@compuserve.com)  
Tel: 011-41-33-675-81-81  
Fax: 011-41-33-675-81-85

If you’re tired of quaint and are ready for a 4 star sort of hotel, the Waldhotel Doldenhorn is just across the road and is owned by the same family.

In September 2009 we stayed at the Hotel Bernerhof and found the accommodations, service and food to be very good.

Hotel Bernerhof Kandersteg  
Fam. Gerhard & Claudia Lehmann (and Samira, the hotel cat)  
Aeussere Hauptstrasse  
CH-3718 Kandersteg  
hotel@bernerhof.ch  
www.bernerhof.ch  
Tel: 011-41-33-675-88-75  
Fax: 011-41-33-675-88-77

Kandersteg is home to a number of other good hotels in all price ranges, see [www.kandersteg.ch](http://www.kandersteg.ch) for more information.

### **Kandersteg to Gstaad**

Another lovely 4 day hike, to tack on to the previous (after a day or two lay-over in Kandersteg) or to do as a stand-alone venture.

**Kandersteg to Adelboden** via the Bunderchrinde pass. This is another spectacular hike. It's about 3,500 to 4,000 feet of vertical over 12 or so miles. The Lonely Planet guide to Swiss hikes describes this route very well; I suggest you pick that up so I won't repeat their trail comments here. Adelboden is a charming little town with cobblestone streets although it is somewhat touristy. There is no train service to town, only bus and auto. There's an outstanding Italian restaurant I highly recommend, Trattoria Alfredo at 3715 Dorfstrasse. A good place to stay here is the Hotel Bären <https://www.baeren-adelboden.ch/en/homeen/>

**Adelboden to Lenk** via the Hahnenmoospass. This is a relatively short (4 hours) hike through rolling hills and over another of the famous passes. The Berghotel Hahnenmoospass is a great place for lunch. This hike is described in the Lonely Planet guide as well.

**Lenk to Lauenen** via the Trüttlisbergpass. Another lovely hike also described in Lonely Planet. The village of Lauenen is really charming, a throwback to the old days of small working villages. The best place to stay is Hotel Geltenhorn. It's a charming old house; most of the rooms are shared bath. The restaurant is very good and there is a lovely little beer garden. *2021 update: it appears Geltenhorn is permanently or temporarily closed.*

Hotel Geltenhorn  
Peter and Heidi Zumbrunnen  
3782 Lauenen  
[geltenhorn@bluewin.ch](mailto:geltenhorn@bluewin.ch)  
Tel: 011-41-33-765-30-22  
Fax: 011-41-33-765-32-31

Lauenen is only a short distance from **Gstaad**. You can walk it or catch the bus in front of the Geltenhorn which runs about once an hour. Gstaad is much like Vail – very upscale shops, restaurants, and hotels. You can get very good train connections from here to most anywhere.

## EXCURSIONS AROUND WENGEN

There are countless excursions but, in my opinion, these are the best. You can view all the events happening in any region, sorted by date, at <http://www.myswitzerland.com/en-us/service-updates/events.html>

**Lakes.** There are two large, gorgeous lakes on either side of Interlaken (hence the town's name): the Thunersee (TOOner-zay) and Brienzersee (BREENTSer-zay). Taking one of the many scheduled ferry rides from town to town is a delightful way to spend half a day or longer. Catch the Brienzersee ferry just behind the train station at Interlaken Ost. (We find this a more interesting, picturesque trip than the Thunersee trip. Thunersee ferries depart from behind the train station at Interlaken West.) Your discount travel card works on these, too. Second class is fine, but first class is divine during peak season as the boats can get pretty crowded at times. It also allows you access to the lovely restaurant up top. If you have a second class discount travel card you can pay a small fee to upgrade to first class for the boat trip.

You will want to do some planning for this as boat departures can be as infrequent as once every two hours and you don't want to arrive at the boat dock just after one has left! If you don't want to hassle with doing it yourself ask the staff at the Wengen train station to put together a timetable for you with convenient connections; they can also sell you the boat tickets there. You may want to make these arrangements the day before so you have the most flexibility. If possible, take one of the restored old paddlesteamers: the Blumlisalp on the Thunersee and Lötschberg on Brienzersee. You can read all about the boats, ports of call, and hikes from various different stops at <https://www.bls.ch/en/freizeit-und-ferien/schiff/schiffseinsatzplan>

If you are looking for a shorter (1.5 hours) boat ride, buy a boat ticket from Interlaken Ost to Brienz. Brienz is the center for woodworking and has some fabulous homes well worth seeing on a stroll through town. An "add-on" to this journey is a trip up the Rothorn (see below). Return from Brienz to Interlaken via train (the Brienz train station is right at the boat dock), then back to Wengen.

If you want to spend more time on and about the lake, buy a roundtrip boat ticket at Interlaken. You can make as many stops as you like and stroll through several of the villages along the shore. Just be sure to check when boats are departing so you can time

your explorations (you can get on any boat, not just the one that you started on.) The entire round trip without stopping at any of the ports of call takes about 3.5 hours.

There are a number of swimming opportunities in and around both lakes. More information at <http://www.interlaken.ch/en/activities-excursions-adventure-festivals/summer-sports-and-adventure/bathing-weather-swimming-interlaken.html>

**Ballenberg Open Air Museum.** This is a wonderful, mostly outdoor museum that features more than one hundred centuries-old buildings from all over Switzerland, 250 farmyard animals, traditional old-time gardens and fields, demonstrations of local crafts and many special events that create a vivid impression of rural life in days gone by. The Museum (if you can call it that, it's fun and not stuffy) is divided into cantonal sections so you can get a feel for the different regions of Switzerland. It's almost like a giant petting zoo as well with chickens, roosters, and goats roaming around pretty much everywhere but mostly concentrated around the regional cafes, begging for bites. (Speaking of the "regional" cafes, I highly recommend lunch at the café in the Ticino section. Stunning risotto among other delicious dishes.) There are pigs, cows, and rabbits in fenced areas or pens that love to be petted. There is even a very small dairy operation where you can see cheese being made (not available on Mondays) and buy some to take with you. Kids of all ages will enjoy this outing! It's really a great day, plan on at least 4 hours at the museum.

There are two ways to get there. You may want to go using one method and come back using the other.

1. Take the train from Wengen to Interlaken, then take a ferry from Interlaken to Brienz. (See the "Lakes" section for information about the ferries). At Brienz, take either the bus to the museum or hop on the train for one stop from Brienz to Brienzwiler. (The bus and train stations are right next to the Brienz boat dock). Brienzwiler is directly across the street from the east entrance to the museum, the bus will delivery you to the west entrance. This option sounds a bit complicated but it's really not at all and it is great fun to take the boat!
2. Take the train from Wengen to Brienzwiler, enter through the east entrance to the museum (which is just across the street from the train station).

To return, you can take the train from Brienzwiler back to Wengen or take the bus from Brienzwiler east entrance or the west entrance back to Brienz.

Highly suggest you buy the entire package at Wengen station where you can sometimes get a special deal.. Read more about Ballenberg at <http://www.ballenberg.ch/en/Welcome>

**Jüngfrau-joch.** Jungfrau-joch, tagged "Top of Europe", is certainly an unusual experience. <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/jungfrau-joch-top-of-europe/>

This is an expensive train fare at 208 CHF (July 2022) round trip second class from Wengen, but a Half Fare Card cuts that in half. There are reductions (typically 25%) with other Passes as well.

Although expensive, it is worth doing it once if for no other reason than to witness the engineering miracle of this train. The Jungfrauoch is the highest train station in all of Europe at 3,454 meters. Take the train from Wengen to Kleine Scheidegg where you connect with the Jungfraubahn. The train burrows through the Jungfrau, with a stop at two “windows” so you can see out of the mountain. Once on top, you’ll see the year round snow (and some not-very-good skiing) atop the glaciers and there are all sorts of touristy things like an ice palace, multiple restaurants, and so on. The best outing up top is the walk out to Monchshütte, which takes about 1 – 1.5 hours each way and gives you a flat walk in the snow atop the permanent glacier.

Total travel time from Wengen to Jungfrauoch is approximately 1.5 hours each way. The restaurants are not very good; I suggest you stop for lunch in Kleine Scheidegg on the way up or pack a picnic. On a clear day you can pretty much see forever up here. However, I wouldn’t recommend doing it if it is raining or foggy because you won’t be able to see anything from the top. For this reason, do not buy tickets any further in advance than you have confidence in the weather as they are non-refundable. There’s a live webcam feed at the train station in Wengen so you can see what the weather is like on top before you go. Your best strategy is to check the webcam and forecast the morning you want to go (no later than 9 am) and buy your tickets then if all looks clear. You should always plan to go up in the morning as afternoon clouds often come in and obscure the view.

If you are traveling during peak tourist season (July and August) you MAY need to buy tickets the night before as they occasionally sell out and you will also want seat reservations, which are sold separately from the train ticket.

There is also an option to secure a seat reservation without a ticket. That way, for 10 CHF per person, you can be sure to get a seat. See here <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/jungfrauoch-top-of-europe/book-priority-boarding/#/reservations/>. Then you can buy your very expensive transport ticket day before or day of (depending on demand)

**Mürren and the Schilthorn.** Mürren is like a sister village to Wengen. It sits on a shelf opposite Wengen, about halfway up from the valley floor. (You will be able to see Mürren from Wengen). Like Wengen, it is also car free and is well worth a visit. To get there, take the train from Wengen to Lauterbrunnen, then cross the street (or use the under-street tunnel) to get to the Mürren gondola. Once you get to Grütschalp at the top of the gondola you will switch to a regular train for the last leg of the journey to Mürren. Or, better yet, get off at the station and cross the tracks to the footpath leading to Mürren. (Note: this is the same as the Grütschalp to Mürren walk mentioned in previous sections.) It is about a three mile walk and is virtually flat. The views are fantastic, whether you are walking it or riding. The entire train/lift trip from Wengen to Mürren should take about



45 minutes. Add an hour if you choose to hike to Mürren from the train stop in Grütschalp.

Walk through the charming village and admire the very old structures, gardens and views. It takes about 15 to 20 minutes to get from one end to the other. There are two great spots for lunch. One is Restaurant La Grotte, about in the middle of town (*re-opening end July 2022*). They have a quite varied menu and the restaurant (and patio) are traditional and quaint, but there isn't a view. However, the food is the best in the village. Another option is the Alpenrüh, which is on the far end of town just before the gondola up to the Schilthorn. This is a newer hotel/restaurant done in traditional style, has a great view from the dining patio, and the food is quite good. They have the best fruit tarts in this part of the country. Another view spot for lunch is Edelweiss, in the middle of the village.

After lunch catch the gondola up to the Schilthorn ([www.schilthorn.ch/en](http://www.schilthorn.ch/en)). The Schilthorn provides another bird's eye view of the Alps, but from a different and wider vantage point than the one at the Jungfraujoch and I find the views even more compelling. It's also less expensive at about CHF 89 full fare round trip from Mürren to Schilthorn, discount cards apply. The ride takes about 20 minutes. The big attraction on top is a revolving restaurant (Piz Gloria) that provides 360 degree panoramas of this part of Switzerland. There are labeled etchings in the base of the windows so you can tell what you are seeing. The food here is lousy, so have breakfast or lunch in Mürren before you go up. The beer, however, is drinkable. Plan on spending one hour here, which is one entire revolution of the restaurant. This structure was the filming site for much of "Her Majesty's Secret Service" starring James Bond, so you'll see lots of movie trinkets in the gift shop. *Note that clouds often begin to gather in the afternoon, obscuring views. Time your visit to be up top by late morning or early afternoon – and keep an eye on the weather*

*NOTE: during high summer season (July and August) the Schilthorn gondola can get extremely busy, necessitating long waits in long lines to board. There is now a reservation process in place that helps you bypass the lines. Read more at <https://www.myswissalps.com/forum/topic/new-schilthorn-cable-car-reservation-process>*

**Rothornbahn.** This is another one for train fans. The Rothornbahn is an antique steam-powered engine – the last in the country – and climbs up about 7000 feet from Lake Brienz to the Rothorn (pronounced "ROAT-horn"). On the way up, the views of Lake Brienz and the entire Interlaken area are simply stunning. And, as always, there's a large restaurant up top. This is a good choice for travelers with children as this attraction caters to families. To get there, take the train from Wengen to Interlaken Ost, then follow the boat signs to the Brienersee ferries, which dock just behind the train station. Take one to Brienz, then cross the street to the Rothornbahn station. To return to Wengen, either retrace your steps or, if the weather has come up, you can take the train back from Brienz. There are some hiking trails around the top of the Rothorn as well so you can



make a whole day of it. If you're feeling really sporty, hike up and take the train down. It's a haul, though! More info at <https://brienzen-rothorn-bahn.ch/?lang=en>

**Trümmelbach Falls.** Trümmelbach Falls, located in Lauterbrunnen Valley mid-way between Lauterbrunnen and Stechelberg, is an amazing and stunning site. It is a series of 10 waterfalls in a cave-like environment, hidden inside a mountain. It's a natural UNESCO World heritage site, and rightly so. Melt water flowing down from the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau form a powerful raging torrent that carries 20,000 liters of water per second through the caves. The torrent carved its way through solid rock and debris over thousands of years and sculpted elegant and impressive shaped of rock formations. The result is spectacular and the thunder from crashing waters deafening. You will need shoes with good soles as the ground is slippery from spray and, yes, you will get a little damp! Children under the age of 4 are not permitted to enter due to safety concerns. The falls are open from beginning of April to beginning November. See more information at <https://www.truemmelbachfaelle.ch/e/>

**First Gondola and more.** See information in “Things to Do With Kids” section below

## THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS

The Bernese Oberland, and Wengen in particular, is very family-friendly. Following are a few suggestions for things to do with children.

**Swimming.** There is an outdoor heated public swimming pool just up the hill from center village. A pool with a view of the Jungfrau, imagine that! It is usually open from late June until early September during good weather. Cost is 5 CHF for 16 and older, younger children enter for free. <https://wengen.swiss/en/summer/see-and-do/wellness-bathing/bathing/openair-swimming-pool/>

There are also indoor heated pools at the Beausite, Sunstar, and Silberhorn hotels. Non-guests can often use them for a fee but on advance request only.

There are a number of swimming opportunities in and around Lakes Thun and Brienz, on either side of Interlaken. More information at <http://www.interlaken.ch/en/activities-excursions-adventure-festivals/summer-sports-and-adventure/bathing-weather-swimming-interlaken.html>

**Miniature Golf.** There is a mini-golf course located between the Männlichen gondola and the playground in the center of the village.

**Hikes.** Any of the hikes listed in the “Easy Hikes” section are suitable for children, depending on their age and physical condition. There are also a number of walks directly from Wengen village. The tourist office can guide you.

***Stroller-friendly Walks.*** The walks from Männlichen to Kleine Scheidegg, Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg, and Mürren down to Gimmelwald are all stroller-friendly.

***Playgrounds.*** There is a playground located in the center of Wengen village and another one atop Männlichen. In Mürren there is a lovely playground next to the Sportzentrum/Ice Rink. Also from Mürren you can take the funicular up to Allmendhubel where you will find another large, dedicated play area. They even offer Family Fun packages. See [https://schilthorn.ch/en/Info/Allmendhubel\\_1907\\_m\\_6257\\_ft](https://schilthorn.ch/en/Info/Allmendhubel_1907_m_6257_ft)

There is yet another large play area at the restaurant at Winteregg (the stop between Mürren and Grütschalp) that I believe also has a trampoline. See <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/winteregg-muerren/> and <https://www.restaurant-winteregg.ch/>

Probably the best playground in the area is at Bort, see a description below under “First Gondola and More”.

And for even more walking and playground ideas consult the excellent post at [https://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowTopic-g188082-i7944-k9419525-Jungfrau\\_with\\_a\\_toddler\\_and\\_baby-Jungfrau\\_Region\\_Bernese\\_Oberland\\_Canton\\_of\\_Bern.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowTopic-g188082-i7944-k9419525-Jungfrau_with_a_toddler_and_baby-Jungfrau_Region_Bernese_Oberland_Canton_of_Bern.html)

***High Mountain Excursions.*** Be sure to take the cable car up to Männlichen. It's a beautiful ride and children usually get a kick out of the VERY large cows that hang out at the top (they are friendly). There is a playground up top. Then, take a short hike (about 3 miles slightly downhill, stroller-friendly) to Kleine Scheidegg as described in the “Easy Hikes” section. There is lots to do and see at Kleine Scheidegg.

A trip up to the Schilthorn is a dramatic, stunning ride that children usually love. See “Excursions Around Wengen” section for more information.

A Jungfraujoch ascent may also be fun for children, but not for very small ones or those that are easily bored. The ride up is a long one, enclosed in a train that spends quite a bit of time in a tunnel through the mountain. During peak times during peak season the trains may have standing room only, which makes for a very long ride for the younger set. See “Excursions Around Wengen” section for more information.

***Lake Cruise.*** As described in the previous “Excursions” section, lake cruises are great fun for everyone. You can combine a cruise with a trip up the Rothorn to make it an all day outing. Take a Brienersee ferry to the town of [Brienz](#), cross the road from the train station, then take the RothornBahn <https://brienz-rothorn-bahn.ch/?lang=en> up the Rothorn. The Rothornbahn is an antique steam-powered engine – the last in the country – and climbs up about 7000 feet to the peak. On the way up, the views of Lake Brienz and the entire Interlaken area are simply stunning. There is a large restaurant up top and some short hiking trails.

***First Gondola and More.*** Take the train to Grindelwald and walk through the village to the First (pronounced “Feerst”) gondola on the opposite end of town. Take the gondola up (it’s a glorious ride) to the First ski resort. From there, it is about a 2.5 mile walk to a stunning Alpine lake called the Bachalpsee. You may even see marmots along the way.

Then, return to First and choose from some wild and crazy adventures such as zip lines, gliders, a cliff walk, and more! See <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/grindelwaldfirst/>

Once you are done with that, take the gondola back down to Bort, a mid-way station that you will have passed on your way up. There is a large play area there <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/grindelwaldfirst/bort-alpine-playground/>

If you’re still up for more adventure, rent some Trottibikes at Bort and ride them from there down to Grindelwald (again, not for toddlers). <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/grindelwaldfirst/trottibike-scooter/> There are also YouTube videos of both the First Flieger and the Trottibikes, just search on that site.

***Toboggan Run.*** There is a toboggan run at Pfingstegg that you can easily access from Grindelwald. This could be combined with a First/Bort trip as well. More at <http://www.pfingstegg.ch/index.php?lang=en>

***The Ballenberg Open-Air Museum*** in Brienz is well worth a visit. As the name implies, it’s an outdoor museum with over 100 structures and 200 farm animals that show a variety of scenes from Old Switzerland. It’s interesting, not hokey. You get there from Wengen via train and short bus ride -- you can buy tickets for all transport and museum entrance at the train station in Wengen, it is all very easy. See “Excursions” section

## RAINY DAY ACTIVITIES

Rain is always a possibility in the Jungfrau region. As mentioned in the “Before You Go” section, you should pack thin layers and a waterproof shell, ideally with a hood.

**Lake Brienz cruise.** A cruise on Lake Brienz is fun even in the rain. In fact, it is even MORE dramatic and interesting in inclement weather. All of the lake steamers have large indoor cabins and have good food and drink service. If you are travelling with a very large group (or just want some elbow room) you may want to upgrade to first class tickets. Good value for the money.

**Ballenberg Museum.** Another good rainy day activities is a visit to the Ballenberg Museum outside of Brienz. It is largely an outdoor museum but perfectly navigable with an umbrella or rain coat with hood unless it’s just pouring and very windy at the same time. You can add this on to a lake cruise as well. Again, the train staff at Wengen station

can arrange all of this for you, including selling you all the tickets you need to get there and back and to enter the museum.

The **Lauterbrunnen to Stechelberg walk with the Trümmelbach Falls** side trip is also very do-able with proper rain gear – you’re going to get somewhat wet inside the falls anyway! If it is really pouring, you can take the Post Bus from Lauterbrunnen to Trümmelbach and return.

A visit to the Swiss capital city of **Berne** (about two hours by train) is a fun outing. Berne is a medieval city and a UNESCO-designated world heritage site. You can explore the lovely old shopping arcades and relax in the cafes/coffee shops, among other city highlights. Stop by the tourist office by the train station for up-to-date information on walking tours and other things to do/see. There’s a good but short overview of Berne at <http://www.magicswitzerland.com/berne.htm>.

## WENGEN RESTAURANTS

*Opening days and times as of July 2022, check restaurant websites for updated information.*

Wengen has approximately 20 public restaurants and most of them are quite good. Here are our favorites.

First place honor for views is a two-way tie: **Judy’s Restaurant** and **Berghaus Hotel Restaurant**.

**Judy’s Restaurant** at the Hotel Bellevue (see separate review in “Lodging” section) directly overlooks Lauterbrunnen Valley. The Bellevue’s webcam footage tells the whole story. Formerly a private restaurant (serving hotel guests only), owner Judith Graf Engi has recently opened her namesake restaurant to the public. Reservations are required and there is one seating at 7:00pm. Guests can choose either the daily three to five course set menu or select from the ala carte menu featuring several soups, a well-stocked salad bar and assorted entrees (poultry, beef, lamb, veal, fish, Alpen macaroni, and rösti). Everything is freshly prepared and delicious. Open daily. <https://www.bellevue-wengen.ch/home.html>

The **Berghaus Restaurant** offers fine cuisine in a breath-taking panoramic setting with views to Wengen village and the peaks beyond. Patio dining is a top hit during good weather. Specializing in fish from local lakes, there is also an extensive menu (available on website) offering a variety of meats and vegetarian dishes. Everything is remarkable and beautifully prepared. This is another family-run operation and owner Martina and her staff are charming. Reservations required. <https://berghaus-wengen.ch/restaurant/>

**The Eiger Restaurant**, right at the train station and on the main square in town, is excellent. Owners Cortado and Orlando are charming, gracious and out-going hosts that

are a lot of fun. There are good views from the patio and it's fun to watch all the comings and goings at the station. The roast chicken is marvelous, the pork and beef dishes sublime. The soups are also very good. If you are in town during pilze (mushroom) season, you are in luck as they do an excellent version of sautéed chanterelles as an appetizer. The Eiger is one of the few restaurants that offer fondue year-round and their version is outstanding. There is a very nice wine list – best in the village in my opinion -- including some outstanding Italian picks by the glass or bottle. Cortado knows his wines and is happy to help with recommendations. Reservations usually not necessary but I'd recommend it as it's a quite popular spot. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

<http://www.restaurant-eiger.ch/>

The **Bären**, in the “below the train station” part of town, is a fine-dining experience featuring traditional food with a lighter, gourmet touch. The dining room is open and airy, views from the patio very attractive. If you happen to be there during “Wild” season (typically first two weeks of September) you simply must take advantage of the Wild Speisekarte (wild game menu). This typically features Gemse (like venison), boar and other treats with all the trimmings – roasted chestnuts, currant sauce, brussels sprouts, potatoes, and so on. It's much like a Swiss version of Thanksgiving dinner in the US. Reservations required. Closed Tuesdays. <https://www.baeren-wengen.ch/restaurant/>

**Steakhouse & Pizzeria da Sina** is just behind the Shönegg hotel at the north end of the main road through the village. Don't let the Pub/Disco/Open Late signs put you off, this is a quite good Italian restaurant. There is an indoor cozy restaurant and a nice dining patio so a good spot with kids. The pizza is excellent and the pastas and steaks are good, too. They have dozens of different types of pizza – the best one, in my opinion, is the pizza de parma, which is thin crust pizza, mozzarella, parma ham, and arugula (they call it rocket or rucola in Switzerland). They also have great rucola salads. The wine list is mostly Italian (with some fantastic Sicilian reds) and a few big U.S. reds thrown in. And, yes, there really is a Sina. She is there some nights, but also owns and runs the Falken hotel in town so isn't a fixture. Reservations usually not necessary but during high season you will want one or risk being turned away. <https://www.dasina.ch/english>

In addition to the public restaurants in town many hotels have their own private restaurants. These are primarily intended to serve half-board (room + breakfast + dinner) hotel guests but many will also allow non-guests to dine with a day or two notice. Some of these restaurants are really outstanding. They all offer set menus of 4 – 5 courses, with prices in the 40 – 50 CHF per person range (drinks extra). Although this may sound expensive it's a very good value given the prices in Switzerland. And, during high season, they are less busy/more efficient than the public restaurants. Simply stop by and inquire or call ahead a couple days in advance.

**Hotel Edelweiss** offers a very nice four course set menu, with dinner starting between 6:30 and 7:30. They welcome outside guests with advanced reservations. The food is

delightful and owners Daniel and Susanne charming. Open daily.  
<https://www.edelweisswengen.ch/en/food>

The restaurant at the **Falken Hotel** is fantastic. The Falken is a charming old traditional hotel and the dining room is the same. The bar and public room are a throwback to the old days. Read more about the Falken in the “Lodging” section. Advanced reservations required. Open daily. <https://www.hotelfalken.com/en/food-bar/>