

Cycling in Switzerland

With superb roads and unspoiled scenery, Switzerland is a paradise for devotees of road cycling – you'll find plenty of options ranging from level cycling paths by lakes to hilly routes through countryside villages imbued with tradition. And then there are the Alps, with 17 passes exceeding 2,000m in altitude amid the snowy peaks, where over 12,000km of signposted cycling paths prove that the country takes cyclists seriously.

Mountain bikers are not forgotten – spectacular singletracks criss-cross through the Alps, whether you prefer zipping through

forest trails across hills or along lakes, or through the Alpine foothills and across the entire country of Switzerland. No matter what type of trail – from easy gravel to challenging terrain – there's a trail out there for you.

Those who prefer two wheels but aren't good with climbs can take solace in any of the e-bike trails, specially created for those looking for a leisurely ride without the strain. No matter how you prefer to ride, there's a route out there for you to explore.

Cycling Tours

You can explore Switzerland on two wheels on self-guided week-long tours with **Travel Wander**. Depending on your interests, itineraries include riding along countless lakes, winegrowing regions, and of course, the mighty Alps.

THE SWEETEST BICYCLE TOUR OF SWITZERLAND

This well-marked route is mostly paved, and on quiet roads, leading you through the most beautiful landscapes of central Switzerland, where you'll visit family-owned chocolate factories. The route takes you through the Limmat Valley where you can swim in Baden, marvel at the Gothic glass panes in Königsfelden, or enjoy Aarau's charming old town. You'll pass Lake Lucerne with its mountain backdrop and drop in on the pretty town of Zug before heading to Sihlwald, a park in Zurich.

7 Days | Beginner | \$S1,488.00 per person



RIDE WITH THE SUN, WINE & SWISS CULTURE

The Rhone route connects three different types of landscapes between Obervald and Geneva along almost-even terrain with downhill rides and occasional climbs. Leisure ride through the Alpine scenery from Goms to picturesque villages dominated by orchards and vineyards until the banks of Lake Geneva. You'll pass Sion (with its castles, churches and mansions), St-Maurice (with its castle, fort and cave), and Montreux where you take the cable car to Le Mont-Pèlerin (and the vineyards of Lavaux). The ride ends at Geneva with Mont Blanc in view.

7 Days | Intermediate | \$S1,438.00 per person



EXPLORE LAKE CONSTANCE, RHINEFALLS & BASEL

The flat, leisurely self-guided ride follows the shore of the Rhine and Bodensee between Schaffhausen and Basel along romantic riverside paths, sunbaked salt towers, and exciting Roman ruins. You'll get to explore historic towns like Thurgau with its castles, the richly-decorated Stein am Rhein, picturesque Laufenburg, the historic Roman town of Augusta Raurica, and the thermal town of Bad Zurzach. You'll also cycle the quiet rolling trails near the Black Forest and the Jura.

7 Days | Beginner | \$S1,638.00 per person



CYCLE TO THE LAKES OF IDYLIC ALPS

This generally flat route crosses many lakes from Lake Geneva to Lake Zurich, with occasional rolling hills as you ride along 16 lakes between Montreux and Horn. From Montreux, head up to Gruyère, where a Swiss landscape of chalets, snowy mountains and cable cars dominate. A boat ride to Interlaken and a train across the Brünigpass gets you to Obwalden with its pre-alpine landscape. Ride past plentiful bays all the way to Lucerne and explore the moor of Rothenthurm; a steep climb to the "Etzel" precedes a descent to the banks of Lake Zurich.

8 Days | Advanced | \$S1,648.00 per person



Planning Your Trip



Getting to and around Switzerland

Situated in the middle of Europe, Switzerland is easily accessible by air, rail, bus, and car.

Air: The main international airport is in Zurich. It is serviced by a multitude of airlines including the national carrier Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS), which has direct flights from Singapore. From Zurich Airport, you can easily hop on the train or bus to reach Zurich and the rest of Switzerland. There are also international airports at Geneva, Basel, and Bern.

Rail: Switzerland is famous for its efficient railways. Whether from Germany, Austria, Italy, France or the Netherlands, plenty of international trains arrive in Switzerland daily across its multiple cities like Geneva, Lausanne, Basel, and Zurich.

Train, bus & boat: Swiss public transport encompasses trains, buses, and boats that take you to fascinating panoramic routes, beautiful mountain summits and romantic boat tours. The best way to take advantage of its public transport is to purchase the Swiss Travel Pass which enables you to explore Switzerland from end to end by train, bus and boat for 3, 4, 8 or 15 consecutive days. It also includes free travel on premium trains and free admission to over 500 museums, as well as discounts on mountain excursions. Passes start from CHF225 (3 days, second class).

Travelling with a bicycle

Bicycle transport: Bicycles can be taken onboard most SBB trains and private railways with a valid bicycle ticket (from CHF13/day). In Cantons Grisons, Valais and Bern, PostBuses with special trailers or tail racks offer bicycle transport as well. If a bike can be folded and stored in a carry case, it can be taken along free of charge as hand luggage.

Luggage Service: Regardless of which airline or airport you arrive in, you can have your luggage seamlessly transported to one of more than 50 destination railway stations (and hotels) throughout Switzerland with the "Express Flight Luggage" service (from CHF22 per piece). You can also send your luggage from one train station to another if you intend to cycle between cities.

For your departure, you can also directly check-in your luggage from your hotel in Switzerland if you fly with SWISS, with the "Flight Luggage Door-to-door" option.

Bike Hotels: There are plenty of hotels – from luxury properties to family-run chalets – across Switzerland that cater to cyclists. These dedicated Bike Hotels all come with lockable storage rooms for bikes, a bike cleaning area, and provide rentals and repair services. In addition, services on offer include bike tours in the area as well as amenities like indoor pools, saunas, or steam baths.

Bicycle parking: There are plenty of parking spaces for bicycles at Swiss stations – these are free of charge. There are also staffed bicycle parking spaces available at a modest charge, some of these offer repairs.

Bicycle rentals: You can easily book, rent and collect your bicycle directly from Rent A Bike rental stations conveniently located throughout Switzerland, including at over 80 railway stations. You can return them at any other station with bike rental facilities. The range of bicycles on offer ranges from city bikes to mountain bikes, e-bikes and fat bikes, with rental from CHF35 for a full day.

Resources



Switzerland Mobility
www.schweizmobilitaet.ch
Switzerland Mobility is a free platform – online and as an app – for planning a cycle programme. The "soft mobility" route network of uniformly signposted routes throughout the country are perfectly coordinated with public transport.



Travel Wander
<http://travel-wander.com>
You can book a week-long bicycle tour of Switzerland with Travel Wander which is based in Singapore. Offering 4 self-guided itineraries, routes range from flat lakeside pedals to hilly Alpine rides past quintessential Swiss landscapes.



SBB CFF FFS (Swiss Rail)
www.sbb.ch
Providing rail services across Switzerland, SBB also provides plenty of visitor services at train stations across the country, from bike rentals to luggage forwarding. You can download the SBB mobile app for train times, ticket booking, and more.



Switzerland Tourism
www.myswitzerland.com
Find out more about Switzerland and its attractions, as well as plan your holiday around travel themes and regions. The site provides details about all its cantons, bicycle routes, and plenty of general information for every traveller.

SPORTS + TRAVEL

MCI (P) 142/07/2017
MAY-JUN 2018
Free

SINGAPORE



Switzerland Cycling Special

Road Cycling | Mountain Biking | Tours

West

The French-speaking region of Switzerland is as much about traditional landscapes and villages as it is about its cuisine – a trip to this region is not complete without visiting its wine-producing areas or sampling its local cheese varieties. Whether you're exploring lakeshores or mountain villages, there's no shortage of variety on offer.

1 TOUR DU LÉMAN (175KM)

This is a grand tour around Lake Geneva, where 200km of marked trails lead through the cantons of Vaud and Valais. Pedal along the shores of this vast expanse of water on a clockwise direction from Geneva to Lausanne and Lavaux, a picturesque shore of stepped vineyards. The Route de la Corniche climbs through the quintessential wine-growing villages of Aran, Grandvaux, Rex and Epesses before arriving at the summit at Chevres and Chardonne before the descent to Vevey.

Continuing along the shores of the Vaud Riviera, you'll reach charming Montreux and the imposing island castle of Chillon, set against a dramatic backdrop of mountains and lake. Cycle onwards, following the lakeshore to Villeneuve before ending in St. Gingolph which sits on the Franco-Swiss frontier.



2 PAYS D'ENHAUT BIKE (30KM)

Château-d'Oex hosted a world MTB championship back in 1997, leaving behind beautiful routes in this holiday region of Pays-d'Enhaut. From Château-d'Oex, you climb up to the wooded areas on the steep south-facing slopes towards Rossinière (home to Le Grand Chalet – dating from 1754 with 113 windows, it's the largest in Switzerland). Then it's a downhill ride to Lake Vernex at the bottom of the valley.

Following the Saane river upstream, ride past the village of Gérignoz to reach Rougeument, with its many superbly-built chalets that are adorned with flowers and mottoes. You can visit its 11th century Romanesque church and the adjoining castle. The way back to Château-d'Oex is along the lovely southern slopes. At the end of the ride, you can sample some Etivaz cheese, a local specialty made over an open wood fire.



3 THROUGH VALAIS VINEYARDS (82KM)

This 82km-long route is a trip through the wine-growing region of Valais, winding up and down along the sun-drenched north flank of the main valley from Martigny to Leuk, through carefully cultivated vineyards and historic locations.

Climb through the beautiful terraced vineyards on quiet back roads with stunning views over the Rhone valley, where small wine producing villages (the region features around 40 types of grapes) along the route offer wine tasting mostly without appointment. Upon arrival at Leuk, take a different route on the return leg by either cycling along the Rhone river or catching the train back to Martigny.



4 HEART OF SWITZERLAND (134KM)

Featuring almost 50kms of climbing, this loop starts from Atdorf, climbing to Bürglen (birthplace of William Tell), before reaching the Klausen pass (part of the Tour de Suisse) and the Schächen valley with its spectacular waterfall.

The descent amid the cliffs is spectacular; the route flattens out a bit through the pretty farms of Unerboden. A few hairpins take you to Linthal and Glarus before a hard ride up a narrow, tranquil road to Lake Kiental, ringed by awe-inspiring cliffs. A final climb to the Prasel pass ends with a steep downhill to Schwyz, birthplace of the Swiss army knives. Return to Atdorf along Lake Lucerne's shoreline.



Northeast

5 BAD SCHINZNACH WINE AND WATER (63KM)

The route takes in the best of Aargau through hilly vineyards and along the Aare River. Starting from the thermal bath village of Bad Schinznach, the route continues into the historic town of Brugg, past the Widońska Museum (site of a Roman legionnaire camp), the old city wall and to the Wasserschloss, the confluence of the rivers Aare, Limmat and Reuss.

The route then runs through the villages of Villigen, Leuggern, Hettenschwil and along the foot of the Laubbberg to Remigen. Take a break at Liner Linde before continuing the ride along picturesque vineyards to Thalheim and Kasteln Castle – a Baroque palace perched on a rocky outcrop, surrounded by vineyards – back to Schinznach where you can enjoy a thermal bath soak.



6 ALP FÜRSCHE BIKE (36KM)

This day trip is amid the magnificent Alpine landscape at Flumserberg, topped off with an exciting descent through the beautiful Schlis Valley. From Flums, the route takes you past the Gräpplang castle ruins and along a quiet road across the hamlet of Fälsch and eventually to the Flumserberg ski and hiking region.

Take a break at Prodalp plateau, with its stunning upland moor. There are glorious views of the Sarganserland and the Churfirsten Mountains. From here, the forest road leads to Panüöl with its impressive mountain panorama. From here, it's a scenic ride to Alp Fürsch, before a demanding downhill ride through the Furschwald to the valley floor. Following the picturesque Schlis valley, a forest trail then takes you back to Flums.



South

With a huge number of tracks catered to cyclists – from gentle lakeside trails to alpine singletracks – and a climate that's mild the whole year round, the Italian-speaking canton of Switzerland has to be explored from the saddle. Have fun on a mountain bike and take to the downhill tracks, or tackle the famous inclines of the alpine passes.

7 PIANO DI MAGADINO (22KM)

This flat, relaxing ride starts from the Italian-speaking city of Bellinzona, home to three of Switzerland's best-preserved medieval castles (Castelgrande, Monte Bello, Sasso Corbaro), which are UNESCO sites.

The trail crosses the flat Magadino plain – one of Switzerland's largest vegetable growing areas – through a number of villages (Contone, Cadenzazzo, Sant'Antonio, Camorino and Giubiasco) along quiet roads and wetland areas, passing grazing horses and waterways. At Camorino, visit the five remaining cylindrical 'hunger forts' – so-called because they were built by the desperately poor – which were erected in 1853 as a defense against attacks from Austria.

The ride ends at Lake Maggiore; the shoreline between Tenero and Locarno is shaped by Ticino-style houses and large villas.



8 TRAVERSING THE TREMOLA (26KM)

From Airolo, the cycle route takes you along the legendary Val Tremola – a cobblestoned road that was built in 1830 for horse-drawn wagons to overcome the mighty Gotthard Pass. Today, the serpentine road – considered Switzerland's longest historical monument – is best explored on two wheels as you overcome 900ms of altitude over 37 hairpin bends, each with its own name. As most travellers tend to take the tunnel to bypass the Gotthard, the road is a cyclist's haven.

Cycle up to the top of the Gotthard Pass, and visit the 12th century chapel and museum before descending into the impressive Ursertal valley, ending at the German-speaking town of Andermatt.

Alternatively, you can start at Andermatt and tackle the cobblestoned hairpin bends of Tremola down towards Airolo.



9 ALTA VERZASCA (9KM)

The MTB trails in the upper Verzasca Valley is a mix of single trails and gravel roads which offer a lot of variety. The trail starts in the picturesque village of Brione with its historic stone houses. The Alta Verzasca route rolls up and down all the way to Sonogno, a small village surrounded by steep mountainsides in all directions.

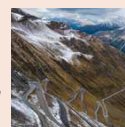
The route crosses the Verzasca river with its clear, blue-green water several times, and is especially attractive in summer when you can have a picnic and a swim. A small mountain road through the valley takes you to Locarno.



10 ALPS EPIC TRAIL DAVOS (38KM)

After a cable car ride to Jakobshorn, the trail heads down into the Serig valley to Filisur. The easy singletrack from Jakobshorn to Serig leads up to the Rinerhorn mountain station, before heading to Monstein. This mostly downhill singletrack is reputed to be one of the most beautiful in the region.

After Monstein there's a challenging ascent on a little mountain road to Jenisberg before it becomes a fun downhill ride as it heads into the Zügen gorge. The old road to Bärentritt leads to the Wiesen railway station and along the Landwasser river to the famous Landwasser viaduct. The final stretch winds uphill to Filisur railway station.



Southeast

11 GRAUBÜNDEN ROUTE (152KM)

The Graubünden Route leads along breathtaking stretches through glorious Alpine landscapes, from Chur over the Albula Pass to Engadine and on a second branch of the route, along the Hinterhorn over the Bernhardinpass down to Bellinzona.

The route goes along some unique sections through overwhelmingly beautiful scenery: from Chur over the Albula Pass to the Engadin region or – alternatively – from Thusis over the San Bernardino to Bellinzona. Both are tough routes but the physical effort is worthwhile in the end: the beautiful deep gorges, fairytale villages of the Graubünden (like the picturesque Guarda), the stony Alpine passes, and the silence of the downhill sections – like the unparalleled run from the top of the San Bernardino Pass through Valle Mesolcina (2,000m elevation).



12 STELVIO PASS (62KM)

The legendary Stelvio Pass is a dream for many cyclists – this route follows the Umbrail Pass, Switzerland's highest metalled road. Starting from Santa Maria, the 1,100m of climbing begins with a series of hairpins in a glorious larch forest towards the Umbrail Pass (and into Italy).

A brief descent later, it's another short climb to the next summit of Stelvio (2,758m). From here, the legendary road is punctuated by 48 numbered bends as you descend 1,800m over 29km towards Prato allo Stelvio.

After 20km of cycling, a 400m climb brings you back into Switzerland to Santa Maria via Mustär, Switzerland's easternmost village, home to the Benedictine Convent of St. John (775AD) which houses important frescoes from the High Middle Ages.

