

Ticino Region



About the Ticino region

Ticino, the part of Switzerland where people speak Italian and the climate is mild throughout the year. An immense world enclosed in a small region rich of contrasts: palm trees and glaciers, lakes and mountains, gourmet restaurants and grottos, trends, and traditions. Here quality and efficiency are Swiss, whereas the lifestyle is Italian. Be seduced by the many suggestive spots, the colors, and the flavors of the "Dolce Vita" that make this land unique and unforgettable.

Population

356363 Inhabitants (4.3% of Switzerland's population)

Main cities

Lugano	63.583 inhabitants
Bellinzona, capital	43.900 inhabitants
Locarno	15.968 inhabitants
Mendrisio	14.938 inhabitants

Culture

Ticino's past and present are characterized by a cultural and artistic life which has had an impact on Europe and the wider world. Ticino hosted some of the most famous European cultural celebrities during the 19th and 20th centuries. Among them, the winter Hermann Hesse, who moved to Montagnola in 1929, where he wrote some of the books that made him famous throughout the world. It was in architecture



that Ticino made a name for itself well beyond the cantonal borders, following the Second World War. In the past Ticino had successfully exported the genius of its designers, sculptors, and craftsmen to major European capitals. Today modern architecture has made Ticino a center of major interest for avant-garde and innovative art, especially thanks to Mario Botta's works.

Ticino is also internationally regarded for art and the performing arts: for example, Daniele Finzi Pasca, actor, choreographer, and theatrical director. In theatre, Ticino has a pearl of originality in the Theatre and in the school founded by the great clown Dimitri.

At last, the three UNESCO world heritage sites in Ticino: the Mount San Giorgio with its fossils and the three medieval Castles in Bellinzona and since 2020 the processions of the Holy Week in Mendrisio

Gastronomy

The Ticino region is also known for its culinary traditions and its gastronomical offer. Overall, the cuisine proposes the most popular products of Northern Italy, like risottos, cheeses, cold cuts, gazzosa, as well as polenta, ecc. One can consume these flavorful delicacies of the so-called "Cucina Povera" in the typical restaurants of the region, named "Grotto". Nothing is more typical for life in Ticino than the grotto, a simple tavern in quiet hideaway places, well in the shade of trees. They usually consist of a kitchen and a generous garden with solid granite tables and benches, where everybody sits in the coolness of the trees, drinking and eating products of the local cuisine.

Two Michelin Stars

Ascona – **Ecco** (Hotel Giardino Ascona) – Rolf Fliegau

One Michelin Star

Ascona – **Locanda Barbarossa** (Castello del Sole) – Matthias Roock

Ascona – **La Brezza** (Hotel Eden Roc) – Marco Campanella

Bellinzona – **Locanda Orico** – Lorenzo Albrici

Lugano – **Galleria Arté al Lago** (Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola) – Frank Oerthle

Lugano – **Ristorante I Due Sud** (Hotel Splendide Royal) – Domenico Ruberto **(new entry)**

Lugano – **Principe Leopoldo** (Hotel Villa Principe Leopoldo) – Christian Moreschi **(new entry)**

Lugano – **Ristorante Meta** – Luca Bellanca **(new entry)**

Guide Michelin Switzerland 2021 – stars falling on Lugano

Lugano, the largest town in Ticino and a new insider tip when it comes to fine dining, is already causing quite a stir this year with the opening of three new Michelin-starred restaurants with a star each. The inspectors were especially impressed by the excellent culinary standards at the following establishments: Head Chef Domenico Ruberto at I Due Sud (Hotel Splendide Royal), Luca Bellanca at META and Cristian



Moreschi at Principe Leopoldo (Hotel Villa Principe Leopoldo). Another destination for food-lovers in Lugano is Head Chef Frank Oerthle at the Galleria Arté al Lago restaurant (Grand Hotel Villa Castagnola), upon which a Michelin star has shone since 2011. Also known for its award-winning Head Chefs is holiday destination Ascona on the shores of Lake Maggiore. Here it's well worth paying a visit to Rolf Fliegauf and his Restaurant Ecco (Hotel Giardino Ascona) with its two Michelin stars, to star cook Marco Campanella in La Brezza (Hotel Eden Roc) and to Matthias Roock in the Locanda Barbarossa (Hotel Castello del Sole), who – in addition to receiving the accolade – has also been awarded a Michelin green star. This new symbol represents establishments which recognize sustainability as a priority. To round off the glittering list of recipients in Ticino, we have Chef Lorenzo Albrici and his Locanda Orico, a small restaurant with a large kitchen in the region's capital and which has long been a flagship for excellence in dining in Bellinzona. ticino.ch/stars

Ticino Wine and the Bianco di Merlot

Hobby vintners from German-speaking Switzerland and several cautious Ticino wine makers were responsible for the second wave of innovation that considerably improved wine growing in the 1970s and 1980s. Merlot now represents over 80 percent of the grapes grown in Ticino. Most of the production is made up of award-winning, storable Merlot wines that are often aged in small oak barrels (barriques). Rosé wines are also made from Merlot grapes, as well as the Bianco di Merlot specialty, a white Merlot that is enjoying growing popularity.



Public transport

Switzerland does indeed offer the most tightly knit public transport network in the world. Remote regions can also be reached easily by bus and train, inviting their visitors to explore them and to visit places unknown to them so far. Ticino is full of places to discover. Where else can you hike in the alpine heights or tranquil valleys in the morning and sit cosily beneath a palm tree at the lakeside in the afternoon? Buses, cable cars, funiculzars, regional train lines and boats offer the best connections for excursions within the area.



914 miles of public transport network in Ticino - convenient without a car

Ticino is divided by Mount Ceneri, the natural divide between the north and south of the canton. The Ceneri Base Tunnel, which has been in operation since 2021, shortens the distances in regional transport and brings the different areas of Ticino closer together. For example, the Ceneri Base Tunnel has created a direct connection linking Locarno with Lugano every hour in just 30 minutes. In addition, the canton is currently investing a total of 461 million Swiss francs in the expansion of public transport, including the bus network, for better mobility by bus and train within Ticino.

Treno Gottardo – direct connection to Ticino from Zurich and Basel

Since the timetable change in December 2020, the Swiss Südostbahn AG (SOB) has been operating the "Treno Gottardo" on the old Gotthard mountain route, providing a direct connection to Ticino without changing trains. It runs every hour alternately from Basel and Zurich to Locarno on Lake Maggiore. The new copper-coloured Traverso trains will be used, a spectacular train with 359 seats and large panoramic windows that now glides



through the landscape. The journey through the Gotthard tunnel, opened in 1882, to Airolo, Switzerland's highest railway station at 1141 metres above sea level, has a nostalgic and decelerating effect. The route continues through the Leventina valley down to Bellinzona and through the Maggadino plain to Lake Maggiore. With every kilometre south, the air becomes a little warmer, the mountains a little greener and the landscape changes from alpine coniferous forests to Mediterranean palm trees. Experiences along the line are part of the "Treno Gottardo" offer. The SOB works together with tourist service providers along the route, whose offers can be booked on the train's website. In addition to the convenient purchase of the train ticket, travellers can, for example, also purchase an admission ticket for a museum or a ride on the mountain railway. www.trenogottardo.ch

Gotthard Base Tunnel – the longest railway tunnel in the world

Gotthard Base Tunnel – the longest railway tunnel in the world. With the construction of the Gotthard base tunnel, which, with its 36 miles, is the longest railway tunnel in the world, Switzerland once again has written traffic history. As the construction results in a reduced travel time, the distance to German-speaking Switzerland is shortened to a historic minimum. The railway journey from Zurich to Lugano will be



reduced to considerably less than two hours, at the latest when the Ceneri Tunnel and the upgraded Zurich - Arth - Goldau route are commissioned in 2020, equivalent to time-savings of up to 60 minutes for passenger transport. With the commissioning of the Ceneri base tunnel in 2020, Ticino merges even more strongly within the region as travel times between Bellinzona and Lugano are 12 minutes and from Locarno to Lugano 22 minutes.

A journey through time with the historic Centovallina – the foliage train

The Centovalli Railway line connects Locarno and Domodossola, passing through the fascinating landscape of the Centovalli with its authentic villages, deep gorges, wild mountains, rivers and waterfalls just waiting to be discovered. On four Sundays (18 July, 22 August, 19 September and 10 October 2021), nostalgia fans and train enthusiasts will be able to take a historic train ride through the Swiss section of the line from



Locarno to Camedo. The nostalgic train will consist of an electric ABDe 6/6 motor set from 1963 and two AB4 carriages from 1923, the year the Centovalli line opened. A unique railway experience with the romantic, wooden-clad carriages of yesteryear guaranteed to excite more than just history buffs. Tickets are already available starting at CHF 10 and must be reserved in advance. www.vigezzinacentovalli.com

Mountain hamlet Scudellate transformed into an *Albergo Diffuso*

Right at the southern end of Ticino lies the Muggio Valley, and right at the end of that lies Scudellate, a picturesque village located at an altitude of 900 meters at the foot of Monte Generoso. Characteristic for this authentic valley are peace and tranquility, the beauty of the landscape and – last but not least – contact with nature which our everyday lives can often mean we forget. This small Ticino hamlet – with its 20



inhabitants, give or take a couple – got the green light as an *Albergo Diffuso* on 22 June, 2021. After Corippo in the Verzasca Valley, this is the second such ‘scattered hotel’ in Ticino based on an Italian model and will offer a total of 60 beds across four structures. The focal point of the *Albergo Diffuso del Monte Generoso SA* – the registered company name of the ‘hotel village’ – is the Osteria Manciana. It has undergone complete renovation and is now the reception, dining room and mini-hotel with two modern guest rooms. osteria-manciana.ch, ticino.ch/scudellate-ostello, ticino.ch/scudellate-manciana, ticino.ch/scudellate

Huge swings invite you to discover unknown locations

Handcrafted swings, excellent local knowledge and an original idea: with their “Swing the World” project, Elisa Cappelletti (23) and Fabio Balassi (27) – a young couple from Ticino – launched a new attraction across the Canton during the lockdown phase in spring 2020. Discover new locations in Ticino, swing and enjoy breathtaking views on a wooden seat and be at one with the landscape: by the lake, on the summit of a mountain, next to a waterfall or even on a Piazza. Visitors can experience nature from a completely different point of view thanks to the swings which have been set up at some of the most stunning locations across the region. There are currently a total of 15 swings located across Ticino, with more set to follow in co-operation with Ticino Turismo. Find more information on the locations at www.swingtheworld.ch and ticino.ch/swingsticino

Snowshoe trekking and swing with a view in Nara

Nara is a small but perfectly formed skiing area with sun-kissed ski-runs between 1,400 - 2,200 m a.s.l in the Blenio Valley. This year, this leisure paradise in Ticino will be adding a new almost 4miles snowshoe trekking route to its activities. The route will be available on SwitzerlandMobility from December 2021. The tour starts at the lower cable car station in Leontica. From there, a chairlift takes hikers up to Cancorì halfway station, where the new well-signposted snowshoe trail starts and finishes. Along the way, the route offers spectacular views of the Blenio Valley and even 2 “Swing the World” swings to enjoy the mountain panorama. Anyone fancying a quick break can pop into the Pela Bar – a great meeting point to enjoy a hot drink or snack just off the route. ticino.ch/hike114



For more information:

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