

Germany and Switzerland

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON



Bernina Express at Alp Grum Station

CC: FLICKR/VELDIT BROWN; BILLYG301.BN

Your source for Swiss rail adventures

Rail Source International owner Carmen Metcalf got hooked on rail travel in the 1970s when she worked for a tour operator in Switzerland that specialized in train packages. That experience made such an impact that, when Metcalf decided to open her own tour company in 1988, she knew she had to focus on rail travel throughout the country she loved.

"Switzerland always exceeds the visitor's expectations," she says. "Visitors don't make up for months of the cow fields and church bells, the smells of the sausage grilling, the fresh crusty bread and hundreds of different cheeses, and the breathtaking views on top of the mountains."

The main itinerary she recommends for groups starts and ends in Zurich and goes to Positano, Bernau, Montreaux, Vevey and Lucerne via Switzerland's efficient rail system.

The 11-day tour includes rides on three scenic routes—the Glacier Express Passants, the Golden Pass Classic and the Bernina Express Star—as well as tours of the Lucerne white region and La Chaux-de-Fonds, which is known as the capital of Swiss watchmaking.

Metcalf also customizes a number of packages annually for RVs. "A very typical and popular itinerary is flying into Zurich and taking a direct train to Lucerne for a couple of nights to visit Mt. Pilatus," she adds. "Then it's on to Grindelwald or capitol Interlaken for two or three nights where clients get to see a lot of wonderful, lake through the mountains and do other exciting activities such as riding down the mountains on a toothy slide."

To learn more, contact Metcalf at carmen@metcalf.com or visit metcalf.com.

The Appina of your eye

Since Appina Travel opened its doors in 2002, the family-owned tour company has helped thousands of travelers discover Germany's history, traditions, landscape, cuisine and art.

"We pride ourselves in being able to show groups a hidden side of Germany and take them off the beaten path," says Luis

Lintner, Appina's managing director. "It always makes us proud to have groups come and end up surprised at how Germany is so much more than bratwurst, beer and the Berlin Wall."

He recommends the following tours, which reveal unique aspects of German culture.

The Automobile Industry of South Germany Lovers of German cars can experience the country's renowned automotive culture during visits to factories and museums in southern Germany that are dedicated to Audi, BMW, Porsche and Mercedes.

From Baroque to Bauhaus This week-long itinerary highlights a range of architectural styles found throughout Germany. Travelers will see Baroque buildings in Würzburg, explore Munich's sleek modern structures, tour the Bauhaus School buildings in Dessau and discover Berlin's blend of concrete-slab and postmodern architecture.

Having a Feast in Germany On this tour, groups take a tasty journey across Germany. As they visit the different regions, they will discover local specialties such as fish in the north, beer in the south, wurst in the east and wine in the west.

Contact Lintner at luis.lintner@appina-travel.com or visit appina-travel.com to find out more. 📍



Porsche Museum, Stuttgart

CC: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/BACCHARUS; DR. WZATCERZ