



**Zurich unites creative city life and idyllic scenery within the smallest of areas. Art connoisseurs and culture enthusiasts have over 50 museums and more than 100 galleries to choose from, while inquisitive city explorers can discover the striking contrast between the picturesque Old Town and modern urban quarters. Nature lovers will delight in the city's location directly by the lake and in its very own mountain, the Uetliberg. In addition, first-class restaurants, bars, and clubs give rise to a vibrant nightlife.**

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## **The Gateway to Switzerland**

Zurich is situated in the very heart of Europe and at the foot of the Swiss Alps. The city is the ideal base from which to explore Switzerland. Zurich Airport, which has direct connections to 170 destinations all over the world, is just a 10-minute train ride from the centrally located Zurich Main Station. From here, travelers can conveniently get to Milan or Paris in just four hours. The Swiss Alps are also within easy traveling distance of Zurich – for example, on a day trip to Mount Titlis in Central Switzerland or to the famous Jungfrauoch in the Bernese Oberland. The imposing Rhine Falls, where visitors experience at close quarters the power of the water as it cascades down the rocks at a rate of 600,000 liters per second, is also not far away. In the Zurich region, a dense public transportation network of trams, buses, and trains enable visitors to get around in comfort – as reliably and punctually as a Swiss watch.

## **The Water City**

Water is omnipresent in this city by the lake. Top-quality, drinkable fresh water flows from Zurich's water taps, as well as from the approximately 1,200 public fountains. Lake Zurich in the heart of the city and the River Limmat, which winds its way past Old Town buildings and through rapidly growing urban quarters, give Zurich a fresh Mediterranean ambiance. Bathing in the lake or the river is a particularly popular pastime; measured in terms of the population, scarcely any other city in Europe has such a high concentration of bathing facilities as Zurich. After dusk, a number of riverside and lakeside bathing areas are transformed into so-called "Badi bars", offering refreshing drinks and entertainment until late into the night. Those who prefer to be on rather than by or in the water can best enjoy the luxuriant nature along the shoreline by boat. Besides the regular boat services, special theme cruises – such as the Party Cruise, Sunset Cruise or Fondue Cruise – provide plenty of variation. Boats also provide access to the abundant nature along the southern part of Lake Zurich. The tiny, idyllic island of Ufenau is a nature reserve and offers tranquility, fresh air, and a restaurant with a view. Another pearl in Lake Zurich is the island of Lützelau, which can be comfortably reached from nearby Rapperswil by water taxi and, besides a restaurant, is home to a campsite. Incidentally, the lake is also surrounded by countless hiking paths; the Lake Zurich Trail takes keen walkers all the way round the lake basin in ten stages. And anyone who wants to explore the numerous lakes in the region can get to the Greifensee, Pfäffikersee or Sihlsee in no time at all.

## **Relaxation and Sport Surrounded by Nature**

One-third of the city of Zurich is made up of lush verdant spaces. In this city abounding in parks and forests, the nearest recreation area, barbecue site or hiking path is never very far away. Beautiful natural surroundings far removed from the bustling city can be found on Zurich's very own mountain, the Uetliberg. The summit of this car-free, hilly mountain is swiftly reached by train or aerial cableway, offering visitors a fantastic panorama of the city of Zurich, the lake, and the snow-covered Alps on the horizon. Lush forests, such as the Sihlwald, provide plenty of fresh air and space to enjoy leisurely walks or more energetic sporting activities. Here, in one of Switzerland's largest mixed deciduous forests north of the Alps, there are countless trails for walking, jogging, hiking, cycling, mountain biking or horse riding. Meanwhile, in the adjoining wildlife park, visitors can observe various native animals, from foxes to marmots, in environments very similar to the natural habitats. Even more animal species

can be found at the 27 hectare (68 acre) large Zurich Zoo, whose Masoala Rainforest treats visitors to a Madagascan tropical climate all year round. Animals are also the main attraction at Knie's Children's Zoo in Rapperswil; some can be stroked and petted, while others – such as elephants and camels – can even be ridden on. Meanwhile, the Atzmännig mountain is absolute heaven for action seekers. With its summer toboggan run, slides, rope park, trampolines, hiking paths, and much more besides, the leisure park guarantees people of all ages an exciting day out. Fresh mountain and lake air can also be enjoyed at the popular excursion regions of Amden, Sattel-Hochstuckli, and Braunwald, which offer sports enthusiasts and families anything from relaxation to adrenaline-pumping action according to their individual wishes.

## Lively Art Scene

In Zurich, countless artists and cultural sites are concentrated within the smallest of areas. Around 14 of the city's 50 museums and more than 100 galleries play an active role in Zurich's lively art scene. Thanks to the Kunsthalle Zürich, the Migros Museum of Contemporary Art and the host of artists who create and present their works of art in the former brewery, the Löwenbräu-Areal in Zurich-West has become a very special place of pilgrimage for art lovers. The Cabaret Voltaire – regarded as the birthplace of Dadaism – is still a competence center for the Dadaist movement to this day. The Cabaret Voltaire was founded in 1916 by Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings. The Kunsthaus Zurich, meanwhile, houses a vast collection of significant paintings, sculptures, and photographic and video material, as well as the most comprehensive collection of works by Alberto Giacometti. Giacometti is one of Switzerland's most important artists and his portrait currently adorns the 100 Swiss franc note. Further highlights include the Museum Rietberg, one of the world's leading centers for non-European art, and the Haus Konstruktiv, which is devoted to constructive and conceptual art. The Kunst(Zeug)Haus in Rapperswil-Jona is a vibrant center for Swiss contemporary art, with a collection comprising some 5,000 works. The adjacent library is home to over 4,000 books in all variations, as well as drawings, films, and portfolios relating to the adventure story, "Robinson Crusoe". The Alte Fabrik cultural center presents a highly varied program of dance, theater, music, visual arts and literature, as well as activities that appeal to children. With the Vögele Kultur Zentrum, Rapperswil has a third fascinating cultural institution, which is devoted to interdisciplinary themed exhibitions addressing modern-day issues and conflicts. The exhibition building is characterized by its unusual architecture, which was designed in the 1970s by a New York firm of architects.

## Treading the Boards in Zurich

The performing arts play a major role in Zurich. The Zurich Opera House enjoys an excellent reputation worldwide and year after year stages an ambitious program comprising operas, operettas, concerts, and ballet performances. The fact that the people of Zurich are particularly keen theatergoers is reflected by the high number of theaters of varying sizes. Probably the most famous of them all is the Schauspielhaus Zurich, which presents classical plays in modern stage settings and produces experimental interpretations in its Schiffbau theater. The modern performances at the Theater Gessnerallee are characterized by the fresh, new ideas of young theater students. Once a year, the Zürcher Theater Spektakel transforms the left bank of Lake Zurich into an exciting theater

## Zürich Tourism

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venue, when artists from the contemporary performing arts scene come together to present a first-class program and spontaneous open-air performances of theater and dance. Movie enthusiasts can choose from some 17 movie theaters with over 70 screens spread all over the city, from large multiplexes to small movie theaters specializing in independent films. In the fall, the Zurich Film Festival (ZFF) features world premieres, insider tips, movie screenings for children, and the award of the coveted “Golden Eye” prize. Every June, Rapperswil is taken over by concert stages and food stands, when internationally renowned musicians and Swiss artists from the musical worlds of blues, jazz, and pop convene here to take part in the blues’n’jazz Festival. The hand-picked line-up, coupled with the spectacular location on the shores of Lake Zurich, give rise to a relaxed ambiance with plenty of great music.

## **Museums Abounding in Culture and Science**

The National Museum Zurich is situated just behind Zurich Main Station and houses the country’s largest cultural-historical collection. The castle-style building, which was extended in 2016, is part of the Swiss National Museum. The interdisciplinary educational museum, Kulturama – the Museum of Mankind, gives visitors an insight into evolutionary history. The Aathal Dinosaur Museum goes back in time to the dinosaur era, while the Archaeological Collection of the University of Zurich bears witness to the life and art of ancient cultures. The Rapperswil-Jona Municipal Museum, opened in 2012, presents 800 years of history and culture relating to the so-called “Town of Roses” on Lake Zurich. Also located beside the water, Zurich’s Museum Bellerive is devoted to the applied arts. The Fotomuseum Winterthur is the Swiss mecca for photography and for over 20 years has focused on themes relating to artistic photography. Zurich’s Succulent Plant Collection houses one of the largest and most important special collections of its kind in the world. Around 6,500 different species – that is, half of all the succulents in the world – can be found growing in the greenhouses, including agaves and cacti. Since 2010, plant lovers have been in for a treat in Rapperswil, too. The Enea Tree Museum, created by Enzo Enea, lies within 75,000 m<sup>2</sup> (810,000 sq. ft) of parkland and combines magnificent trees with impressive landscape architecture. Science enthusiasts will feel at home at the Swiss science center, the Technorama, in Winterthur or at Kindercity in Volketswil, which is specifically geared towards children. In both places, visitors can delve into natural and technological phenomena and discover some of their secrets. Meanwhile, all the exhibits at the Swiss Children's Museum in Baden and the Toy Museum in Zurich revolve around themes relating to childhood and children's games.

## **Powerful Fraternities**

The history-steeped guild houses, with their magnificent rooms, still bear witness to the period between 1336 and 1798, when Zurich's history was significantly influenced by its guilds. Between the 11th and 13th centuries, artisan’s associations, guilds, and corporations representing the interests of their trades were formed from religious fraternities in Zurich and throughout Europe. These associations also attempted to gain political power, but in Zurich they only succeeded in doing so following the so-called “Brun’s Guild Revolution” on June 7, 1336. Under the leadership of the young nobleman, Rudolf Brun (after whom the Rudolf-Brun-Brücke in Zurich's Old Town is named), a

Constitution of the Guilds was drawn up, newly regulating the balance of power in the City of Zurich. With time, the craftsmen's guilds also developed into political and military organizations with tremendous power. This continued right up until the 18th century, when the French invaded Zurich and brought the rule of the guilds to an end. The coats-of-arms painted on or attached to the entrances of various buildings in the Old Town indicate where which artisan's guild used to politicize behind closed doors in times gone by. Zurich's guilds still exist to this day, and every April they celebrate their traditional spring festival, Sechseläuten.

## **Patron Saints and the Grossmünster Church**

Zurich's patron saints, Felix und Regula, lived in the 3rd century AD. They were persecuted because of their Christian faith and fled to Zurich, where they were the first Christians to settle there.

Unfortunately, the Roman rulers of the time were not very sympathetic towards them either, and they died a martyr's death, beheaded on the site where the Wasserkirche (Water Church) stands today. According to legend, Felix and Regula picked up their heads and carried them 40 paces up the hill to the place where they wished to be buried. Five hundred years later, while out hunting a stag, Charlemagne heard this story and immediately had the Grossmünster Church – today one of Zurich's most famous landmarks – built on this spot. It is not known how much of these two intermixed legends is actually true, but what is certain is that Felix und Regula entered into Zurich's history as its patron saints and to this day are depicted on the city seal. It is also an established fact that thanks to the legend of Felix and Regula, Zurich was an important place of pilgrimage right up to the Reformation.

## **Zwingli's Reformation**

Several centuries later, the Grossmünster once again became the scene of a major historical event, when Huldrych Zwingli came to Zurich in 1519. Prior to this, he had served as a pastor at Einsiedeln Abbey, which today is one of the most important and best-known abbey in Switzerland. In Zurich, the fervent lay preacher broke with Catholic tradition and began to preach a whole new interpretation of the Word of God. He was of the opinion that everything that was not mentioned in the Bible should be banned from religious life – from holy images and Sunday sermons to singing hymns in church and fasting for Lent. He preached against the veneration of relics, celibacy, and the Eucharist, and sought to eliminate the selling of indulgences and the mercenary army. Thanks to his far-reaching reforms, Zwingli achieved what the City Council had previously failed to accomplish with its numerous moral laws: he instilled the people of Zurich with new moral values. So it came about that, against the recommendation of the Pope, the Council declared their acceptance of Zwingli's theses, thus laying the foundation for the Reformation in Zurich. Huldrych Zwingli retained his fighting spirit to the end of his life. He was killed in 1531 during the Second Kappel War against the Catholics. In 2019, the City of Zurich celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

## **From a Celtic Settlement to a Picturesque Small Town**

Numerous archaeological finds testify to the Celtic past of Rapperswil on Lake Zurich, showing that this region was already inhabited over 5,000 years ago. Later, the Romans discovered the "Centum Prata", which means "100 meadows" in Latin and today is the district known as Kempraten. Rapperswil

itself was founded at the beginning of the 13th century; the castle that towers up high above the town is also thought to date from around this time. Turbulent centuries followed, shaped by Habsburg rulers, Napoleon, and various alliances, among others with Zurich or the Central Swiss cantons. It was not until the beginning of the 19th century that the present-day canton of St. Gallen, to which Rapperswil is politically affiliated, was established. During the Reformation, Rapperswil was caught between two fronts: the Zurich Reformists on the one side and the Central-Swiss Catholics on the other. In the Second Kappel War between these two parties, the latter proved victorious, whereupon Rapperswil remained a Catholic municipality. Nowadays, the Way of St James pilgrimage trail leads directly through Rapperswil on its route to Santiago de Compostela. At this last resting place before reaching Einsiedeln, the volunteer-run pilgrim hostel offers travelers a place to spend the night before continuing on their way to Einsiedeln Abbey on the other side of Lake Zurich. On doing so, they cross over a long wooden bridge, an at that time audacious structure built in the 14th century, which has been renovated a number of times since then. Rapperswil is also known as the “Town of Roses”, on the one hand because this beautiful flower features on its coat-of-arms, and on the other, due to the abundant rose gardens in which thousands of roses bloom every spring. The magnificent townscape and the fragrant scent of countless roses make Rapperswil particularly worth visiting in spring or summer.

## **Contrast-Rich Zurich – Ever Changing Urban Districts**

Zurich can look back on a long and eventful past. Still today, its 12 urban districts are constantly undergoing change, and in some cases could scarcely be more different. While in the inner city, majestic stone buildings have withstood the test of time, others – such as in the entertainment district of Zurich-West or the creative Kreis 4 – have changed almost beyond recognition. In the places where the machine industry once flourished and towering apartment blocks were inhabited by factory workers, temporary projects and innovative concepts have transformed Zurich-West into an ever-changing El Dorado for city explorers. Urban oases, such as Frau Gerolds Garten, stand just a short distance from the tallest building in Zurich – the shimmering green, 126m (413ft) tall Prime Tower, which opened in 2011. This exciting contrast, coupled with the vast choice of restaurants, bars, and clubs, makes Zurich-West a popular meeting place among both locals and visitors from further afield, especially after dark. In Kreis 4, the red light district, the creative artist scene, and the lively nightlife breathe urban life into the area around Langstrasse, whatever the time of day or night.

## **Shopping From Traditional to Modern**

The site where Zurich’s city wall once stood is now a paradise for shoppers with exclusive tastes. Along the prestigious Bahnhofstrasse and in the picturesque Old Town, boutiques selling international design labels rub shoulders with luxury jewelry and watch shops. Situated on the bank of the River Limmat is Schipfe, one of the city’s oldest quarters, where in particular local handicrafts are still sold to this day. Tucked away in the quaint, narrow winding streets of the Old Town and the Niederdorf are also a multitude of tiny boutiques, selling individually made items of clothing and jewelry or exclusive curiosities. Time seems to have stood still at Schwarzenbach, a store trading in colonial produce, which has been selling choice blends of coffee, spices from all over the world, and other such commodities for over 150 years. Tradition-steeped specialist shops of this kind can be found scattered

throughout the city of Zurich, but also lining the streets of Rapperswil's Old Town. Meanwhile, the creative Kreis 4 quarter is overflowing with local designer shops, fashion boutiques, and art outlets. In 2010, a unique shopping center with over 50 outlets and a huge market hall complete with restaurant was opened in the area under the arches of the railway viaduct, dating from 1894, in Zurich-West. The colorful mix of shopping facilities – which, incidentally, is also enriched by cultural activities such as tango courses or movie evenings – is further supplemented by the Gerold-Areal, situated a mere stone's throw away. Here, the Freitag brothers sell their world-famous bags made from recycled truck tarpaulins in a tower of stacked-up freight containers. Behind it, the shops and ateliers at Gerold Markt are just waiting to be invaded by buyers with good taste.

## **Innovative Gastronomy and Traditional Fare**

Zurich's restaurant scene is just as diverse as the city itself. Innovative ideas are instantly put into practice. The Haus Hiltl – according to the Guinness Book of Records, the oldest vegetarian restaurant in the world – was founded here, as was also the world's first and often imitated “restaurant in the dark”, the Blinde Kuh, where blind and visually impaired staff serve culinary delights in complete darkness. In the former industrial quarter of Zurich-West, you can dine in factory halls or high above the clouds. All around Lake Zurich, mouthwatering menus featuring fresh fish from the lake are served up together with a spectacular view and a refreshing lake breeze. Those who prefer to sample Zurich's traditional cuisine will be suitably impressed by the various guild houses of the trade guilds that governed Zurich between the 14th and 18th century. These buildings are now high-class restaurants and particularly renowned for their Zurich specialties prepared in a classic way. Where better a place to enjoy a plate of traditional Zürcher Geschnetzeltes (sliced veal) than in a magnificent guild hall and former center of power in Zurich's Old Town? Zurich's top chefs regularly figure in the prestigious Gault-Millau restaurant guide, confirming their status as among the best in the country. Also outstanding is the sweet side of Zurich's cuisine. In the time-honored stores and tradition-steeped confectioneries, maitres chocolatier and expert confectioners work untiringly to produce new creations, while traditional specialties, such as Luxemburgerli macaroons or Hüppen truffles, have been known and loved by sweet-toothed connoisseurs all over the world for many years. In addition, FOOD ZURICH provides an opportunity to indulge: once a year, the festival celebrates food in all its many facets over a period of 11 days. Featuring a large street food festival, countless workshops, food tastings, dinners and courses, it enriches Zurich's gastronomic scene.

## **Nightlife from Alternative to Chic**

Nowhere else in Switzerland is there such a large and diverse nightlife as in Zurich. Particularly colorful places to go are the electro entertainment temples in the former industrial district or the converted strip joints or hip clubs on or around Langstrasse. On the other side of the River Limmat, the Niederdorf district between Central and Stadelhofen train station have plenty of bars to enjoy a prolonged drinking tour in picturesque surroundings. Those who want to spend the night dancing should make for the oldest nightclub in Zurich, the Mascotte, at the end of the Niederdorf, the Plaza Club, not far from Langstrasse, which opened in 2010, or the Aura, which opened in 2013 in the heart of the banking district by Paradeplatz and whose chic interior design perfectly matches the lifestyle of

the surrounding area. Diverse special events bring added variety to Zurich's party scene. Every year, the Street Parade draws hundreds of thousands of dance enthusiasts to the upper end of Lake Zurich, where they are rewarded with music presented by the electronic-music DJ elite. The Züri Fäscht, Seenachtsfest Rapperswil and Seenachtsfest Lachen are held alternately every three years and are real public festivals, also promising plenty of fun, music and the opportunity to make new acquaintances outside in the open air. Visitors looking for an adrenaline kick will find it at Switzerland's largest casino: at the Swiss Casinos Zürich, guests can try their luck at the gaming machines and tables or relax in the lounge to live music 365 days a year. There is also an exclusive high-limit area for discerning gaming enthusiasts who like to play for high stakes.

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