



Sustainability in Zurich

Switzerland regularly features in international rankings as a blueprint to follow in matters of sustainability. It has also earned high regard as a country where diverse cultures live together in fairness and security. When it comes to recycling, it is something of a world champion: a careful economic approach to natural resources and social issues is written into the DNA of this little country at the heart of Europe. Zurich is the gateway to this destination, and its tourism organization and creative entrepreneurs are working together with the city and canton to systematically develop sustainability concepts and pursue their strategy for a long-term Smart Destination.

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Zurich: a steady path to a Smart Destination

Sustainability as a feature of positioning

Tourism is a particularly globalized industry, where making a strong commitment to sustainability is becoming increasingly important. Since 2010, Switzerland has adhered to a sustainability charter that is endorsed by all the destination's key players. Zürich Tourism was amongst the first to put its name to the charter. As a result, the issue is a priority within the organization and, thanks to initiatives by the city and a number of tourism service providers, is becoming increasingly relevant throughout the entire destination of Zurich. Together with the city and canton, Zürich Tourism has adopted a comprehensive and long-term approach to the goal of positioning Zurich and the surrounding region as an international blueprint for a Smart Destination.

An active and methodical collaboration

Zürich Tourism has a systematic approach to this complex issue, taking into account the various dimensions of sustainability and aligning all measures with the Plan-Do-Check-Act approach. A distinction is made between the work of Zürich Tourism (a mid-sized company with roughly 70 employees and 40 tour guides) and that of the destination of Zurich and the surrounding region. The city, canton and local service providers play a major role in this context, working on their own projects in close collaboration with Zürich Tourism.

Work within the Zürich Tourism organization

Total commitment from the very start

As an organization, Zürich Tourism maintains a strong commitment to sustainable development and has been leading by example since 1998. The company is ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certified. These integrated quality and environmental management systems allow Zürich Tourism to monitor itself and continue to improve. The organization marked one of its most important milestones in 2010, when it signed Switzerland Tourism's Sustainability Charter and fixed its commitment to sustainability firmly within its corporate mission statement. In 2015, Zürich Tourism reinvigorated this commitment with the development of the comprehensive Sustainability Concept 2015+, which set credible and ambitious goals for the coming years. By continuing to raise awareness about sustainable development among its employees and other stakeholders in the destination, Zürich Tourism can ensure it covers all three dimensions of sustainability: environment, economy and society. At the organizational level, a sustainability group has been formed, consisting of an employee from each sector, the director and a sustainability manager. This team is responsible for evaluation and implementation of the appropriate measures to meet goals at the organizational level.

Ecological aspects: less is more

Zürich Tourism is working hard to reduce its carbon footprint, paying particular attention to air travel, hotel stays, events, waste disposal, and energy and paper consumption when printing and copying. Zürich Tourism has consistently applied the principle of Avoid – Reduce – Offset.

This has had an immediate and positive effect. Since 2015, for example, Zürich Tourism has sent out its annual report and all invoices in digital form only, bringing a significant reduction in paper consumption. The organization has also made a conscious effort to use recycled paper in its marketing products. Some 47% of paper used in 2016 was recycled, up from 2% in the previous year. Emissions cannot be avoided entirely, but they have been offset since 2010 in collaboration with Zurich-based foundation myclimate. Zürich Tourism uses its compensation funds to support an international climate protection project. Thanks to this commitment, Zürich Tourism became Switzerland's first climate-neutral tourism organization in 2010.

Zürich Tourism is also working actively to protect the environment within the destination of Zurich. The organization regularly provides support to local projects with an ecological focus. In 2016, for example, a Lunchtime Cinema was organized to raise employee awareness on the subject of food waste. Food for the event was provided by Äss-Bar, an organization that collects leftover food from regional bakeries and sells it on at reduced prices. Zürich Tourism also highlights environmentally friendly tourist offers on its website with a green leaf. This allows guests to immediately recognize products and services that will not have a negative impact on the environment. All Zürich Tourism's city tours, for example, are carried out on foot. The organization is particularly proud of the myclimate Audio Adventure, a remarkable audio experience on the subject of climate change and climate protection in Zurich. It is available free of charge in German and English at zuerich.com.

Social and economic goals: Supporting human power and integration

A comprehensive sustainability concept should involve more than just ecological aspects. In the social sphere, Zürich Tourism invests systematically in the well-being of its employees. The goal is to continue to raise overall employee satisfaction in the coming years, and by doing so to strengthen the success of the company. Zürich Tourism also contributes to youth development by offering a commercial apprenticeship every year. This is provided in collaboration with Login, the training association of Swiss Federal Railways (SBB). Zürich Tourism also offered an integration post for six months during 2016. Thanks to projects such as city tours for refugees, Zürich Tourism is able to make a contribution to the some of the bigger social issues in Zurich.

Commitment within the destination

Zurich builds on a solid basis

After tackling the subject of sustainability in depth at the organizational level, Zürich Tourism is now applying the same thinking at the level of the destination. It asked itself a fundamental question: Is it possible to market Zurich as a sustainable city? From the point of view of the organization, the answer is a resounding 'yes'. After all, Zurich as a destination already has a broad base on which to build something substantial.

Regularly amongst the best worldwide

The UN's World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has declared 2017 the **International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development**. Zürich Tourism supports the campaign as 'Friend of the Year'. After all, as well as being well represented in global rankings for happiness and quality of life, the city on the Limmat regularly enjoys top billing in international sustainability classifications. For example, it achieved first place in the **Arcadis Sustainable Cities Index 2016** and second place in the **Mercer Quality of Living Ranking 2017**. Zurich is one of the most sustainable conference cities in the world, and attained the third highest score in the first edition of the **Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS)** in 2016.

Leadership through research

Zurich is an inspirational center for science, biotechnology and start-ups. Indeed, the city on the Limmat is home to one of the world's foremost technology universities, ETH Zurich. In 2016, the university achieved eighth place in the QS World University Ranking. The city also hosts Zurich University of the Arts (ZHDK), the largest university of art and design in Europe. It's no wonder then that companies such as Google, Disney Research and IBM have chosen their second home in Zurich.

The Smart Zurich vision: top of the agenda

For Zürich Tourism, the situation is clear: Zurich can be more than 'just' sustainable. The long-term goal, then, is to make it a Smart Destination. The Smart Zurich strategy is an integral component of Zürich Tourism's positioning, as well as one of the four focal points of its marketing strategy. The target year is 2022. In addition, all efforts are aligned with the strategies and projects of the city and canton of Zurich.

Projects to anchor theory in practice

Theory is being turned into concrete experience, thanks to projects and workshops run in collaboration with service providers. In 2016, the destination prioritized the theme of 'sustainable nutrition' on a number of different platforms. The food waste workshops run by Zurich hoteliers for their chefs and restaurant staff are a particularly relevant example. As early as the test phase, restaurants were able to reduce waste by a hefty 42%. Other notable events from 2016 include a hearty dinner for people in need at the Zurich Marriott Hotel, as well as the popular 'bio&fair' events at the FOOD ZÜRICH festival. Over the course of 10 days and 100 events during September, the event put the spotlight on local products and manufacturers. From 2017, sustainability has been one of the festival's four strategic focal points. After all, nothing works up an appetite for sustainability like conscientious eating.

Zürich Tourism is also continuing work on its Smart Zurich strategy in collaboration with WAVE Trophy (Europe's largest electric car rally), the E-Grand Tour (the first tour worldwide to be fully equipped with charging stations for electric cars), and the Green Marathon (a jogging route through Zurich).

'Meet the locals': inspirational and authentic experiences

Zürich Tourism is marketing its destination to leisure and business travelers using some clever storytelling, placing local people and stories firmly in the spotlight. In a relaxed and spontaneous fashion, Zurich residents show us the best things in their everyday life, and where to find them. There are organic vegetables at the weekly market on Bürkliplatz, fresh fish from Lake Zurich and a healthy supply of water from the city's public fountains and the stylish cafes of its restaurants. For 30 years, **Maurice Maggi** has been brightening up Zurich's unused spaces with an invasion of floral displays. ETH professor and climate researcher **Reto Knutti** develops computer models that simulate climate change. And **Christian Bärtsch** from Essento develops products from edible insects. Zurich is living by the goals it has set itself and inspiring guests from around the world in the process. 'Meet the locals' is the authentic way to experience sustainability on the banks of the Limmat. About 30 meetings have been prepared for tourists in image, word and sound. All of which means the ideas box for sustainable, concrete and bookable travel experiences is growing as quickly as the demand.

Involvement of local businesses

Fair on the go: Forces for innovation lead the way

Ultimately, Smart Zurich is achievable only thanks to innovative service providers that care about sustainability. Whether it's food, shopping, activities or urban farming, Zurich has flagship businesses in every sector. Many of its restaurants carry organic products and foods that are produced with high quality ingredients from regional sources. Notable examples include The Artisan in Wipkingen, EquiTable in Kreis 4 and Haus Hiltl, which has been celebrating vegetarian food for more than 100 years.

getchanged.net is a fair fashion roadmap that offers help on shopping expeditions in the city on the Limmat. And with shops and boutiques such as Sanikai, rreolve, Zämä, Foifi and Freitag lab (the international flagship store for smartly repurposed truck tarpaulins), you're sure to find what you're looking for, whatever your style. At the Umwelt Arena in Spreitenbach, visitors can learn first-hand about the connections between environmentally friendly products and their own consumption behavior. Innovative organizations such as Wabe 3 (which has set up 'bee hotels' where honey can be harvested at various Zurich hotels) and Veg and the City show how urban farming can work in city life.

The city's commitment

Strategy 2035 takes off

The concentrated efforts of Zürich Tourism and the city and canton of Zurich have made possible the city's regular appearances at the top of international rankings. The catalyst for all this was the 2008 referendum on the 2000-watt society. The people of the city of Zurich voted overwhelmingly in favor of the trail-blazing proposal. The city then confirmed its commitment to preservation of energy resources and protection of the environment with its political Strategy 2035. Since then, Zurich has

worked in a targeted fashion to consume less energy and to reduce its yearly CO2 emissions, making an ever-greater commitment to renewable energy and efficiency optimization.

From Smart City to Smart Destination

In 2016, SwissEnergy awarded the city of Zurich the label Energiestadt®Gold for the fourth time, in recognition of its consistent climate and energy policies. Now Zurich is striving for another label – Smart City. SwissEnergy’s program for municipalities is aimed at showing Swiss towns the opportunities that arise when they coordinate their projects and take a cross-sector approach. In autumn 2016, the city of Zurich decided that a Smart City strategy should be defined and adopted by the city and municipal councils. Benno Seiler, Head of Economic Development for the city of Zürich, was named as project manager. One of the latest projects, Greencity Zürich Süd, has made waves in both urban planning and tourism circles. It will create the city’s most sustainable location in an area between Lake Zurich, Sihlwald and Uetliberg. Zurich’s first 2000-watt site will come to life on an eight-hectare site where the Sihl paper factory once stood. It will feature apartments, office space, shopping facilities and hotels.

On the path to a mobile, international and connected Zurich

Zurich residents are always on the move. Traveling by bike or on foot is the simplest and most ecologically friendly way to get around the city streets. And thanks to a dense and efficient network of trains, trams and boats, public transport is extremely popular, too. Travel here is as steady and reliable as a Swiss watch. The city of Zurich is already drawing up the first plans for its Smart Stops project, which will see public transport stops take on additional functions. The platforms will be used for timetable alterations and waste disposal, and function as a data hub and power station. They could also form the basis of a comprehensive network of sensors. Alternative transport solutions for carrying both people and goods are being tested throughout the city’s many districts.

Zurich’s proximity to its airport makes it particularly attractive to foreign tourists; it takes about 12 minutes to travel from the airport to the city center. A project at the airport, The Circle, is gaining attention around the world. The plan is to create a location where a host of different needs converge: education, business, culinary diversity, hotels, art and culture, convention centers, medicine and entertainment. It will be built with Minergie and Leed® certification in mind. The latter focuses on seven key areas: sustainable construction, water conservation, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, comfort and quality of space, location and development, and innovation. Currently Switzerland’s largest current construction project, it is scheduled for completion at the end of 2019.

Involvement of the canton

Supporting innovation with a tailored cluster strategy

The canton of Zurich also puts a strong emphasis on promotion of its location. Using a tailored cluster strategy, it aims to improve connections among industry groups and their stakeholders along the entire value chain. This will increase the innovative power of the cluster as a whole, and decision makers will be put in direct contact with the cantonal government at dialog events. The clusters of ICT, finance, life sciences and clean technology will receive particular attention. Zürich Tourism's Convention Bureau will also focus its attention on these clusters.

The Innovation Park: knowledge transfer in the private sector

The Innovation Park in Dübendorf opened its doors in the summer of 2017, creating a new center for research, development and innovation at the Dübendorf airfield site. Its goal is to promote collaboration and knowledge transfer between the private sector and Zurich's renowned universities and research institutes, bridging the gap between research results and marketable products.

Quick and clear: sound reasons for a Smart Zurich

Zurich is smart because ...

...everyone pulls together. Zürich Tourism, the city and the canton of Zurich and its residents are committed to achieving sustainable development and transforming Zurich into a smart destination.

...it is connected by efficient networks – from public transport to knowledge transfer at educational and innovation institutions.

...the city on the Limmat is a magnet for forward-thinking people and businesses, with local service providers leading the way.

...the city is on a democratically endorsed path to a 2000-watt society and, thanks to the Smart City strategy, is following a comprehensive vision for a more efficient and effective use of all its resources.

Smart Destination: a necessary and vital path

Martin Sturzenegger, Director of Zürich Tourism, discusses the status quo and his goals and aspirations for smart cities.

Where does Zurich stand today when it comes to sustainability?

That's exactly the question we've been asking ourselves. Our participation in the Global Destination Sustainability Index last year provided us with the perfect context to find some answers. The results were impressive and showed us that we had already laid the groundwork for sustainable development, both at our organization and throughout the city as a whole. The reason is that we had all already made strong commitments in the area, quite independently. There's still a long road ahead of us, of course, but we have a clear goal in our sights: for Zurich to become a Smart Destination that gets people talking.

What kind of potential does Zurich have as a sustainable travel destination?

Zurich has already proven many times how adaptable it is. With the city, canton, and above all a conscientious population behind it, Zurich is a destination with enormous potential in this area. We are lucky enough to be home to world-renowned universities, innovative global companies and a host of start-ups. They are all driving the city's sustainable development. But it's important that we do not rest on our laurels and lose sight of our comprehensive view of sustainability. There is still progress to be made in all three dimensions: environment, economy and society. We have noted an increasing demand for green and socially responsible offers, particularly in convention tourism. Companies are increasingly accountable for their choice of conference destination.

Which destinations are leading the way, in your opinion?

When it comes to sustainability, the Scandinavians are, dare I say it, a hair's breadth ahead of us. I am particularly impressed by Copenhagen, which has made an asset of its status as the home of Nordic cuisine and design – sectors that are all about sustainable, fair and healthy products. That's the standard we want to measure ourselves against. We also view cities such as Vienna and Amsterdam, which are home to research institutes that work on these issues, as our fellow competitors. The Israeli metropolis of Tel Aviv is a good example of a city that has persuaded start-ups of its merits, and is making great strides towards becoming a smart city.

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