7-Day Switzerland Itinerary: Lucerne, Interlaken & Zermatt

Switzerland packs a lake town, an alpine resort valley, and a car-free village under the Matterhorn into a week that runs almost entirely by train. This loop starts in Lucerne's old town, rides a panoramic line into the Bernese Oberland for a day at the Jungfraujoch, then continues over the Alps to Zermatt for a close-up of Switzerland's most famous peak.



cellars muntraie

Day 2 Mt. Titlis Day Trip from Engelberg

A glacier day trip up the valley from Lucerne — the world's first revolving cable car, a summit above 3,000 meters, and a suspension bridge over the ice.

🚄 Luzern–Interlaken Express (GoldenPass Line)

~2 hours · CHF ~34 fare + CHF 12–16 panoramic seat reservation (~$50–55 USD total) per person, one-way

Panoramic carriages run the full route through the heart of Central Switzerland, skirting Lake Sarnen and Lake Brienz before pulling into Interlaken with the Jungfrau massif already in view. Reserve the panoramic seat ahead in high season — the window seats sell out.

SBB / GoldenPass · +41 848 44 66 88 · https://www.goldenpass.ch/en

📸 Höhematte Park & Interlaken Old Town

~1–2 hours · Free

Interlaken's central meadow frames the Jungfrau perfectly on a clear afternoon — paragliders land here most days. The old town's wooden chalets and the Höhematte's benches make for an easy first evening.

🛎️ Overnight — Hotel Interlaken

From $210–290 USD / night, for 2 people

A historic 4-star hotel dating to 1859, steps from the train station, with Jungfrau views from its Japanese garden terrace.

Hotel Interlaken · +41 33 826 68 68 · https://www.hotelinterlaken.ch/en

Day 4 Jungfraujoch — Top of Europe

A full day to the highest railway station in Europe — book the first train up if the forecast looks clear, since the summit view depends entirely on the weather.

🚆 Jungfrau Railways — Interlaken Ost to Jungfraujoch

~2.5 hours each way (cogwheel trains) · CHF 234.80 + CHF 10 seat reservation (~$280 USD) per person, round trip

Cogwheel trains climb through Grindelwald or Lauterbrunnen and into a tunnel bored through the Eiger and Mönch to reach 3,454m — the highest railway station in Europe. At the top: the Sphinx observation terrace, an Ice Palace carved into the glacier, and views over the UNESCO-listed Aletsch Glacier.

Jungfrau Railways · +41 33 828 72 33 · https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/

🍽️ Lunch at Jungfraujoch

Est. $25–40 USD / person

On your own — the summit complex has several restaurants, including a Bollywood-themed one that's a local curiosity in its own right.

🛎️ Overnight — Hotel Interlaken

From $210–290 USD / night, for 2 people

Second night at the same hotel.

Hotel Interlaken · +41 33 826 68 68 · https://www.hotelinterlaken.ch/en

Day 5 Interlaken to Zermatt

The scenic transfer over to the Matterhorn — a change at Visp onto the narrow-gauge line into Switzerland's most famous car-free village.

🚄 SBB Train — Interlaken Ost to Zermatt

~2h15min via Spiez & Visp · $65–75 USD per person, one-way

Regular trains connect through Spiez and Visp, then switch to the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn for the final climb into the car-free Zermatt valley — one of the best mountain approaches on the whole network. Cars are left behind at Täsch; electric taxis and hotel shuttles cover the last stretch in the village itself.

SBB (Swiss Federal Railways) · +41 848 44 66 88 · https://www.sbb.ch/en

📸 First Views of the Matterhorn

Free

Bahnhofstrasse, Zermatt's car-free main street, lines up almost perfectly with the peak on a clear afternoon — the classic first-look photo of the trip.

🛎️ Overnight — Hotel Schweizerhof Zermatt

From $380–520 USD / night, for 2 people

A Small Luxury Hotels property in the village center with Matterhorn-view rooms, a five-minute walk from the Matterhorn Glacier Paradise cable car station.

Hotel Schweizerhof Zermatt · +41 27 966 00 00 · https://www.schweizerhofzermatt.ch/en/

Day 6 Matterhorn Glacier Paradise

Europe's highest cable car station, glacier views into three countries, and a free afternoon in the village to close out the alpine leg of the trip.

🚡 Matterhorn Glacier Paradise Cable Car

~40 min ascent · CHF 120 / ~$140 USD per person, round trip (shoulder season)

A three-stage cable car climbs to 3,883m — Europe's highest cable car station — with a glacier ice palace, a viewing platform looking into Italy, and, on a clear day, sightlines to Mont Blanc. Dress warm even in summer; the summit sits well below freezing.

Zermatt Bergbahnen AG · +41 27 966 01 01 · https://www.matterhornparadise.ch/en

🍽️ Dinner in Zermatt

Est. $40–65 USD / person

On your own — the car-free village center has a dense run of fondue and raclette spots; book ahead in peak season, tables turn over slowly.

🛎️ Overnight — Hotel Schweizerhof Zermatt

From $380–520 USD / night, for 2 people

Second night at the same hotel.

Hotel Schweizerhof Zermatt · +41 27 966 00 00 · https://www.schweizerhofzermatt.ch/en/

Day 7 Depart from Zermatt

The long way back — a scenic train ride from the car-free valley all the way to Zurich Airport for the flight home.

🚄 SBB Train — Zermatt to Zurich Airport (ZRH)

~3.5 hours via Visp & Bern · $100–115 USD per person, one-way

Through-tickets connect at Visp and Bern and are timed to standard international departure windows — build in buffer time regardless, since a missed connection on the narrow-gauge leg out of Zermatt can add an hour.

SBB (Swiss Federal Railways) · +41 848 44 66 88 · https://www.sbb.ch/en

Download your itinerary here