



THE VIA ALPINA EAST

10 Days & 9 Nights

From
\$3,320.00

Select Date

- ✓ Complete the quieter eastern Swiss section of this classic Alpine traverse
- ✓ Hike beneath the Jungfrau, Mönch & Eiger peaks of the Bernese Alps
- ✓ Conquer 7 alpine passes through remote, less-touristed valleys
- ✓ Experience a more authentic and peaceful side of the Swiss Alps
- ✓ Stay in comfortable hotels & enjoy Swiss specialties like Potato Rösti

ACTIVITY LEVEL	
ACCOMMODATIONS LEVEL	
START / FINISH	Zürich / Grindelwald
DISTANCE	156.5 km / 97.5 miles
ACTIVITY	Inn to Inn Walking
TOUR TYPE	Classic Routes
AVAILABILITY	July-September

Overview

Description

Walk Switzerland's eastern section of the Via Alpina from Sargans to Grindelwald on this inn-to-inn hiking journey, easily accessible from Zurich, Switzerland. Crossing 7 alpine passes, the route quickly leaves the crowds behind, following quieter valleys and remote trails before building toward the dramatic Bernese Oberland and its iconic Jungfrau, Mönch and Eiger peaks. This is a more peaceful and authentic Swiss Alps experience, with well-marked trails, traditional chalet villages, and comfortable hotels or mountain inns each night. With luggage transfer included, you can hike light while enjoying authentic Swiss village life on a less-touristed section of Switzerland's famous trekking route.;

Itinerary

Day 1	Arrive Zurich	Day 6	Hike to Unterschachen and bus to Altdorf
Day 2	Train to Sargans and hike to Weisstannen	Day 7	Bus/cable car to Bruesti and hike to Engelberg
Day 3	Hike to Elm	Day 8	Cable car to Jochpass and walk to Meiringen
Day 4	Hike to Linthal, Funicular to Braunwald	Day 9	Hike to Grindelwald
Day 5	Hike to Urnerboden	Day 10	Onward Travel

1

DAY 1 | ARRIVE ZÜRICH

Arrive in beautiful Zurich, which is easily reached by train—just 10 minutes from the airport, or a scenic journey from Geneva (3 hours) or Bern (1.5 hours). Switzerland's largest city feels surprisingly intimate, with a walkable old town, world-class museums like the Swiss National Museum and Kunsthaus, and the sparkling shores of Lake Zurich, perfect for a relaxed stroll or lakeside pause to soak in the atmosphere.



Overnight Zürich



Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Townhouse Hotel | 3 Star | Hotel

The 3* Superior hotel Townhouse is a small boutique hotel, located in the very heart of Zurich, on Bahnhofstrasse and a block away from the main train station where direct services take you to Zurich airport in less than 15 minutes.



Boutique Hotel Josef | 3 Star | Hotel

This centrally located hotel has 33 individually decorated rooms that feature free WiFi and espresso makers. They also have a bar and roof terrace onsite, the ideal place to relax after a day of exploring.

2

DAY 2 | TRAIN TO SARGANS AND HIKE TO WEISSTANNEN

8 MILES | 12.5 KM

Begin with a scenic one-hour train ride to the small town of Sargans and the official start of the Via Alpina. Today is a rewarding introduction to the rhythm of alpine trekking. Leaving the town behind, you'll wander through charming hamlets and quiet countryside before leaving the road and gradually climbing above the valley floor.

As the path rises, vineyards stretch out beneath you, offering sweeping views over Sargans, Mels, and the distant peaks of Liechtenstein. The air feels fresher here, the pace slower, inviting you to settle into the experience. After reconnecting with a country road near Schwendi, you'll continue through serene landscapes until reaching Weisstannen, a tranquil alpine village where tradition and mountain beauty meet.

Ascent/Descent: 641m/144m (2,103ft/472ft)



Overnight Weisstannen



Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Hotel Gemse | Hotel

The Hotel Gemse is nestled in the quiet Weisstannen valley. A warm welcome awaits from the friendly service team. Recently renovated, rooms are modern, spacious and comfortable. Dinner is a real treat with some fine Swiss specialties on offer.

3

DAY 3 | HIKE TO ELM

15 MILES | 24 KM

Ease into the day with a relaxed 5.5mi/9km hike along a country road before beginning your climb to Foopass (at 7,293ft/2223m), your first true alpine crossing. As you ascend, pass through scenic farmland dotted with wildflowers, waterfalls, and the occasional marmot, with views growing more dramatic at every step. Crossing the border between St Gallen and Glarus, the landscape shifts to a wilder, more rugged feel before a long descent leads you to Elm, a charming mountain town set beneath the striking peaks of Piz Sardona and Piz Segnas.

Ascent/Descent: 1292m/1301m (4,239ft/4,268ft)



Overnight Elm



Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Gasthaus Segnes | Guest House

Susanna and Werner are ready to welcome you to this cosy guesthouse with just 10 rooms. Enjoy a refreshing drink on their sunny terrace and take in the mountain views. In the restaurant, homemade regional specialties are served.

4

DAY 4 | HIKE TO LINTHAL, FUNICULAR TO BRAUNWALD

13 MILES | 21 KM

A long but deeply rewarding day, crossing two passes as the landscape grows ever more dramatic. After the first crossing, tackle the steep zigzag ascent to the Richetlipass (2261m/7,418ft), where sweeping views open over the wild Durnachtal valley. A sharp, sometimes narrow descent – with a short chain-assisted section – adds a touch of adventure before reaching Linthal, nestled beneath towering Tödi, the “King of Little Mountains.” From here, enjoy a short funicular ride (10min) up to the peaceful, car-free hamlet of Braunwald, perched high above the valley.

Note: The path from Richetlipass to Linthal is narrow and can be tricky in wet weather, so allow plenty of time.

Ascent/Descent: 1427m/17036m (4,682ft/5,587ft)



Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Alexander's Todiblick | Chalet

A wonderfully typical chalet style mountain hotel set in yet another beautiful location. Warm up after a long day of walking with some Swiss fondue in the restaurant while enjoying the stunning surroundings through the window.

5

DAY 5 | HIKE TO URNERBODEN

8.5 MILES | 13.5 KM

From Braunwald, follow the high balcony path with sweeping views across the valley to Urnerboden. One of the Alps' most striking valleys, its broad, open floor of pastures contrasts beautifully with the sheer, towering cliffs that rise on either side, creating a truly unforgettable setting.

Ascent/Descent: 385m/264m (1,263ft/866ft)



Overnight Urnerboden



Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Gasthaus Urnerboden | Guest House

A simple but comfortable guesthouse in the quiet hamlet of Urnerboden.



Gasthaus Sonne | Guest House

A simple but comfortable guesthouse with homemade dishes and a large sunny terrace.

Today's highlight is the historic Klausenpass (1948m/6,391ft), a storied crossing between Glarus and Uri that has linked these regions for centuries. The ascent is steady and rewarding, followed by a scenic descent through open meadows and forest, passing the hamlet of Aesch and the dramatic Stäubi Falls cascading down the cliffs. Finish in Unterschachen before a short bus ride (30min) to Altdorf, the charming capital of Uri.

Ascent/Descent: 587m/943m (1,926ft/3,094ft)

★ Overnight Altdorf

🏠 Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Hotel Höfli Altdorf | 3 Star | Hotel

Steeped in history, Hotel Höfli has been welcoming guests since 1768 and is one of the few buildings to have survived the great village fire of 1799. Today, it blends historic charm with modern comfort, offering well-appointed rooms and a warm, inviting atmosphere. Guests can enjoy a relaxed dining experience in the on-site restaurant, known for its flavorful Swiss and Italian cuisine—perfect after a day in the mountains.

One of the finest stages of the Via Alpina, today begins with a short bus ride (10min) to Attinghausen and a cable car up to Brünsti (1525m/5,003ft). From here, a steady climb to the Surenenpass (at 2291m/7,516ft) winds past alpine huts and farms, with glimpses of Lake Lucerne below.

At the top, soak in a spectacular panorama dominated by the jagged peak of Mount Titlis before descending through beautiful mountain scenery to Engelberg, a renowned alpine resort.

Ascent/Descent: 836m/1368m (2,743ft/4,488ft)

★ Overnight Engelberg

🏠 Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Hotel Schweizerhof | Hotel

Perfectly located in the heart of Engelberg, Hotel Schweizerhof offers a great base with easy access to village amenities. After a day in the mountains, unwind in the sauna or fitness room, or relax in the spacious garden with sunbeds. Bright, soundproofed rooms ensure a restful night and include modern bathrooms, free WiFi, minibar, seating area, and cable TV, while the on-site restaurant serves hearty Swiss cuisine – ideal for refueling after exploring the trails around Mount Titlis.

Begin with a cable car ride to reach the heights of Jochpass (at 2207m/7,241ft). Then descend on foot to the serene Engstlensee, a shimmering alpine lake framed by rugged peaks. Ahead, the striking Wetterhorn comes into view, hinting at the grandeur of the Bernese Oberland. From Engstlenalp, follow a spectacular balcony path with sweeping valley views and cascading waterfalls before reaching Reuti, where you can walk or take the cable car down to Meiringen—famed as the setting of Sherlock Holmes' dramatic final chapter.

Ascent/Descent: 0m/1610m (0ft/5,282ft)

★ Overnight Meiringen

🏠 Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Hotel Victoria | 4 Star | Hotel

Franziska, Simon and their friendly team are waiting to welcome you to the Hotel Victoria. With just 18 rooms, the hotel has a cosy atmosphere and rooms are designed in modern style with a traditional alpine twist.



Hotel Meiringen | 3 Star | Hotel

This welcoming, family-run hotel offers an ideal base in the heart of Meiringen. With just 13 rooms, it provides a relaxed, personal atmosphere, while the bright interiors—renovated in 2020—combine modern comfort with classic alpine hospitality, making it a comfortable and convenient stop after a day's hike.

Today, enter the heart of the Bernese Oberland, a landscape shaped as much by mountain culture as by nature itself and popular with tourists. Leaving Meiringen, follow the wooded Reichenbachtal as the trail rises steadily toward Grosse Scheidegg (at 1962m/6,437ft), a sweeping mountain pass with ever-expanding views.

On clear days, your first sight of the iconic Eiger (at 3,967m/13,015ft) is a true highlight of the journey. From the pass, descend past alpine scenery to Hotel Wetterhorn before continuing into the lively mountain town of Grindelwald, a renowned mountaineering hub and the halfway point of the trail. It's an ideal place to pause, add a rest day, and indulge in a well-earned upgrade to 4 star spa hotel.

Ascent/Descent: 1676m/1217m (5,499ft/3,993ft)

★ Overnight Grindelwald

🏠 Accommodations

A sample of our typical carefully chosen accommodation in this location. Where you stay will vary depending on availability, but will be a similar standard.



Hotel Gletschergarten | 3 Star | Hotel

Chalet Hotel Gletschergarten is a charming, family-run hotel welcoming guests since 1899 and now in its fourth generation under the Michel-Breitenstein family, offering a warm alpine atmosphere that blends tradition with comfort. Guests can unwind in the wellness area with a sauna, steam bath, and relaxation room, and all rooms feature a private balcony or terrace with mountain views. In the restaurant, Chef François Rollet prepares refined four-course dinners, while packed lunches are available on request for CHF 12 per person, or guests may enjoy fresh baked goods from the bakery just across the street.



Hotel Belvedere | 4 Star | Hotel

Hotel Belvedere - Grindelwald, a 4-star superior hotel since 1907, offers unmatched views of the Eiger. Managed by the Hauser family in their third generation, it features stunning room views, excellent dining, and a peaceful wellness zone. The spa has a large indoor pool, Finnish sauna, glacier steam bath, and outdoor saltwater Jacuzzi. The Restaurant Français serves inventive, locally sourced cuisine, Swiss dishes, and Mediterranean-inspired fusion. All rooms have spacious balconies with mountain views and pillow options for better sleep. For terrace dining, reservations are recommended, especially in July and August.



Hotel Fiescherblick | Hotel

Tucked away in a peaceful corner of Grindelwald behind the church, Hotel Fiescherblick enjoys a postcard setting opposite the village's picturesque white church, with sweeping mountain views all around. Built on values of sustainability, regional sourcing, and understated elegance, the hotel offers 19 Nordic-inspired rooms designed for calm and comfort. Guests can also enjoy a small, refined à la carte restaurant, where the kitchen showcases fresh ingredients from local farms - an ideal taste of the region at the end of the day.

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DAY 10 | ONWARD TRAVEL

Check out of your hotel after breakfast. Grindelwald is served by railway and you can reach many Swiss and European destinations from here.

If you would like even more hiking, and would like more time to explore the Bernese Oberland, you may be interested in our [Best of the Bernese Oberland tours](#). Just ask our Destination Specialists for more information.

Select Date

Trip Information

Is it for me?

This tour is perfect for experienced long-distance hikers who like their creature comforts. Rated 'Moderate to Strenuous' with significant ascent and descent each day (on average 3,280ft/1000m). There are some long hiking days (on average, 12mi/20km per day). The varied terrain includes short sections of aided ascent/descent via cable cars. Daily bag transfer is included, meaning you only need to hike with a light backpack each day. Accommodation is in comfy 3* and atmospheric mountain hotels, always in private rooms.

Tour Type

Classic Routes | If you're the active, outdoorsy type, who's interested in taking on the great routes of the world or looking for a challenge, then our Classic Routes are for you. We're talking the West Highland Way in Scotland, the world renown Tour Du Mont Blanc and Germany's Moselle Cycle Path, to name but a few!

Activity

Inn to Inn Walking | Walk from place-to-place changing accommodations each night. Generally staying in B&Bs, inns, and guesthouses.

Ideal if you have an interest in:

Long-Distance Trails, Alpine Walking

The minimum age for this tour is: 16 Years

Activity Level & Terrain

This trip is graded 'Moderate to Strenuous' with the average daily distance being 12mi/20km. However, almost every day has an option to shorten it by using some form of public transport. Each day has significant ascent and descent, and the paths are a mix of woodland trails, rocky mountain paths, grassy paths, moraine, scree and paved country roads. There is some light scrambling involved in places, and there are cables, ropes and chains to aid ascent/descent in some places. Please be aware that on the highest passes, there may be some residual snow lying in patches, but this will not require any special equipment or skills; just a steady foot, hiking experience and a head for heights. Hiking poles are highly recommended. To get the most of this trip, you should be in good physical shape.

Navigation

All the hiking trails in Switzerland are very well marked with yellow route signs, indicating distances and directions to all destinations. We provide you with detailed route notes, maps, GPX tracks via the Macs Adventure smartphone navigation app, so you will have no problem finding your way —simply download the tracks for offline navigation and follow the route directly from your device. Download instructions are available in your Macs Adventure Account, and we highly recommend setting up the app before your trip.

Accommodation & Meals

Stay 7 nights in comfortable 3* hotels in private en-suite rooms and 2 nights in mountain hotels in private rooms and depending on the availability with ensuite or shared bathroom facilities. An example of the accommodation we use in some towns along the way can be found below. A hotel of the same or better standard will be used if these accommodations are unavailable.

Single Rooms & Solo Travelers

This trip is not available to solo travelers due to the difficulty of the terrain. Single rooms are available upon request, and a supplement is payable.

Extra Nights

If you have some extra time, we suggest adding a few extra days along the route. We would recommend building extra nights in, in the following places:

Zurich - After a long flight, you might wish to enjoy an extra night in Zurich before starting your Via Alpina trek. With so much to see and do, you could add a couple extra nights here.

Grindelwald or Wengen - You'll be amazed by the stunning views right under the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau peaks, and take the opportunity to visit the Jungfrauoch.

Engelberg - A very popular summer mountain spot with locals, with fantastic walking opportunities.

Hotel Upgrades

Why not upgrade your hotel in Grindelwald at the end of the trail?

Meals

Breakfasts are included daily and are a buffet selection with lots of sweet treats like pastries, homemade jams, fruit and cereals. Savoury tastes are also catered for with bread, cheese, ham and eggs usually available. Packed lunch items can be bought locally from supermarkets or the local bakery. If you are staying in a small town without these facilities, order a packed lunch with your accommodation upon arrival. Dinner is included at each overnight location except Zurich, Grindelwald, and Urnerboden, where plenty of dining options exist. Meal times are a real highlight, and you can enjoy homemade Swiss specialities. If you have any dietary requirements, please let us know upon booking, and we can arrange this with the accommodations. Swiss specialities are mostly based on cheese and potatoes, such as raclette and potato roesti.

What's Included

Included

- ✓ 6 Dinners
- ✓ Daily bag transfer
- ✓ Route notes, maps, GPX tracks and access to our Macs Adventure Navigation App
- ✓ 24-hour emergency telephone assistance
- ✓ 7 Nights in 3* hotels, plus 2 nights in mountain hotels and guesthouses
- ✓ 9 Breakfasts

Excluded

- ✗ Flights to and from Switzerland
- ✗ Travel to starting point/from finish point
- ✗ Public transport such as cable cars
- ✗ Travel Insurance
- ✗ Personal expenses such as drinks, phone calls, extra transfers, tips, etc.
- ✗ Any items not specifically mentioned in the program

Extras

- ✓ Additional nights

When to go

Availability

This trip is available to start any day of the week, from the start of July to early September.

Grindelwald is hosting the famous **Eiger Ultra Trail** race (17th to 21st July). We recommend avoiding the Via Alpina at this time as the area is bustling and most accommodations are full.

Travel & Baggage Transfers

Fly into [Zurich](#), [Geneva](#), or [Bern](#), then continue by train to Zurich (10 mins, 3 or 1 hour). For general travel planning and information in Switzerland, please go to www.myswitzerland.com/en-gb/transport-travel/getting-around

From Grindelwald most train connections are via Interlaken Ost (35 mins).

Travel times are as follows from Grindelwald to city train stations (Hauptbahnhof/HB): to Bern (1h40), Zurich (2h40), Basel (2h40), or Geneva (3h30); please see [SBB's website](#) for timetable planning.

Baggage transfers are included in the price of your trip. We ask you to keep your baggage to a maximum of 1 bag per person with a maximum weight of 20kg/44lbs.

Info & FAQ

How fit do I need to be?

This trip is graded 'Moderate to Strenuous' with the average daily distance being 11mi/18km. However, almost every day has an option to shorten it by using some form of public transport. Each day has significant ascent and descent, and the paths are a mix of woodland trails, rocky mountain paths, grassy paths, moraine, scree and paved country roads. There is some light scrambling involved in places, and there are cables, ropes and chains to aid ascent/descent in some places. Please be aware that on the highest passes, there may be some residual snow lying in patches, but this will not require any special equipment or skills; just a steady foot, hiking experience and a head for heights. Hiking poles are highly recommended. To get the most of this trip, you should be in good physical shape.

How does the bag transfer work?

Bag transfer is included in this trip. We ask that you limit your baggage to one bag per person with a maximum weight of 20kg/44lbs per person. Leave your bag at the reception before 9am and it will be transferred to your next accommodation by 6pm each day.

How far in advance do I need to book?

We suggest you book as soon as your plans are finalised as this area is extremely popular with a relatively short season. Please note you can start this holiday on any day of the week.

What personal equipment do I need?

You will need good hiking boots, comfortable hiking clothes, waterproof jacket and pants and warm layers just to mention a few of the items required. We supply a detailed packing list within the app.

What happens if I cant walk a stage

No problem! You can use public transport and local taxis to get to your next overnight stop. Full details are included in your Macs Adventure App, or you can call us for help making arrangements.

What's the difference between the East and West Via Alpina tours?

Both the East and West sections of the Via Alpina are 10-day inn-to-inn hiking trips in the Swiss Alps, but they offer distinctly different experiences depending on the kind of journey you're looking for. Hikers can choose either section individually or complete the full Via Alpina crossing of Switzerland over 18 days.

The East Via Alpina (Sargans to Grindelwald) follows a quieter, more remote route starting near Zurich. It quickly leaves populated areas behind and moves through peaceful valleys and less-travelled alpine passes. This section gradually builds toward the dramatic Bernese Oberland, finishing in Grindelwald beneath the Jungfrau region. It's ideal if you're looking for a more tranquil hiking experience with fewer crowds and a stronger sense of solitude and discovery.

The West Via Alpina (Grindelwald to Montreux) begins in the heart of the Bernese Oberland and moves through a more varied and continuously changing landscape. The route crosses alpine passes, meadows, and traditional mountain villages before descending all the way to Lake Geneva and the Swiss Riviera. It suits hikers who want a greater sense of contrast—moving from high alpine terrain to vineyards and lakeside scenery within the same journey.

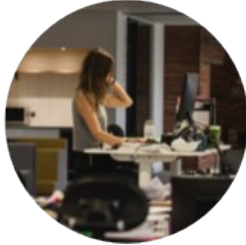
In short: the East focuses on quieter trails and a gradual build into the mountains, while the West delivers a wider range of landscapes and a more pronounced transition from high Alps to lakeside Switzerland. Both offer classic Swiss hiking with comfortable accommodation, well-marked trails, and luggage transfer throughout. Breaking the route into 2 trips (an east and west section) allows you to complete the entire route over the course of several years.

How the booking process works



Make a Booking

Book (by paying a deposit) either online or with our specialists, and we will get to work building your adventure, and selecting & securing accommodations and services..



We Build Your Trip

We confirm availability and book all your accommodations and options before emailing you a final confirmation. We aim to do this within 5 working days (although more complex or longer itineraries can take a little longer).



Confirmation

Once this is complete, we will send you an email confirming your booking, and you can proceed to book flights or other travel arrangements.



www.macsadventure.com/us

hello@macsadventure.com
UK: +44 (0)141 530 3639 | US: +1-844-880-4102
Emergency Out of Hours: +1-844-880-4102