

**DAY 1**

At a glimpse: Site seeing on Lake Thun

Travel agenda: Most visitors will arrive in Interlaken via train. The stop **Interlaken Ost** or **West** will have you in the center of town and likely within walking distance of your accommodation. Once you've dropped off luggage, head to the **Interlaken West ferry terminal** and buy a **Lake Thun** day pass on board the **BLS ferry**, allowing you to hop on and off as you please! A first class ticket gives you access to the top deck and bistro. Ferries run on both Lake Thun and Lake Brienz: both worth exploring, but for the sake of time, Thun has more going on!

Traverse the entire lake and disembark at the town of **Thun**. First, walk 10 minutes north to the **Aare River** with featured covered bridges. Keep an eye out for the floodgates built in the 18th century. Also where surfers take advantage of the swells!

Just across the second set of Aare's bridges, Thun's old town and city square are picturesque and worth a stroll. Just one block further north and you will hit **Obere Hauptgasse**, the main road with split-level walkways and beautiful storefronts. At the end of the road, walk up the covered stairs to the small pedestrian path **Holi Mäz** that will lead you to the **City Church** and **Thun Castle**.

Head back to the dock and board the next boat to **Spiez**. This "hidden gem" town across the lake has a storybook feel to it. The 12th century Spiez Castle houses a permanent exhibition, museum and an ancient Castle Tower that has the best view in town. Next door, the Romanesque church and gardens are free to roam. The area is surrounded by "the most beautiful marina in Switzerland" and Spiezer Alpine Wine Culture vineyards. The winery offers a tasting and history lesson that connects to the castle.

Tip: Between the Thun and Spiez stops, there is an option to disembark at the **Oberhofen Castle**, the most popular of all the castles along the lake. That being said, it's the incredible exterior and views that make it a star – all of which you can see from the lake!

Last stop is at **Beatushöhlen-Sundlaenen**. From this dock, there is a 20-minute path to the **St. Beatus Caves**, a unique site that inspired JRR Tolkien's vision of Rivendell. Aptly named for Saint Beatus, an Irish monk who defeated the menacing dragon living in the caves and saved the small town. The "pilgrimage" to the caves is a path with several switchbacks through waterfalls. This leads to a series of caves and mirrored lakes peppered with stalagmites and stalactites.

Finally, board the boat to Interlaken West. Once back in the city, enjoy an authentic Swiss dinner at **Restaurant Baren** in town. This is the place to indulge in a creamy cheese fondue or the trendy raclette dishes.



**DAY 2**

At a glimpse: Canyoning in the morning, exploring Interlaken and indulging in iconic Swiss f&b
Travel agenda: This morning don a bathing suit and bring a second outfit to change into because canyoning is on the itinerary! **Canyoning** is the process of traversing a water route down a canyon or gorge by hiking, climbing, sliding, rappelling, swimming, and/or abseiling. Open to any level of fitness and anyone with a dash of courage. The experienced guides explain the steps and lead the way.

Interlaken was made for canyoning. There are several popular spots: **Interlaken's Canyon** is just 10 minutes from town and a great introduction to the sport. **Grimsel** is more involved. It starts with a rappel and includes ziplines. **Chli Schliere** is physically demanding with bigger thrills along the way.

**Or alternative activity – suggestions below!*

Post activity, stop at the welcoming **Sandwichbar** for lunch and order one of the hot ciabatta roll sandwiches! Then it's time to hit the town. The main street is **Hoheweg**, where cafes, souvenir stores and chocolate heaven await. For a chocolate tasting, stop at **Swiss Chocolate Chalet** or **Grand Café**. On a Saturday or Sunday, the 150-year-old **Victoria Jungfrau Grand Hotel** hosts afternoon tea between 2:30PM-5:30PM. It's also an opportunity to walk along the serene **Brienzen Lake**.

Little Thai is the place for dinner tonight. A local favorite, with great pad Thai and generous portions. After dinner, make your way to the famous **Balmers Hostel**. This is where the **pub-crawl** begins. Interlaken is known to be a backpacker's paradise so it's an opportunity to make friends, swap stories about canyoning and connect with those who are also skydiving in the morning!

DAY 3

At a glimpse: Skydiving in the morning, Harder Kulm in the evening
Travel agenda: Rise and shine and jump out of a plane today! If you've ever had any inclination to **skydive**, this is 100% the place to do it. The professional skydive teams will have you laughing away nerves and the picture perfect scenery from above will be the ideal distraction until you're flying in the air. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

**Or for alternative activity – suggestions below!*

Lunch should be at the **3 Tells Irish Pub**, a well-liked spot for a burger and a well-deserved brew. Later in the afternoon, walk to the **Harder Kulm** funicular at the center of town. Trains leave every 30 minutes with hours of operation roughly from 9:00AM to 9:00PM (it's a steep 1.5 hour climb up





if you prefer to hike). Plan to be there a couple of hours before sunset. When you reach the top of Harder Kulm, the forested **Rundweg Trail** is an hour-long walking loop near the restaurant. There's also viewing deck and restaurant, which is perfect for a meal overlooking the sparkling city. There are package deals available on the website.

DAY 4

At a glimpse: Board a train to a year round winter wonderland at Jungfrauoch, spend the night in Lauterbrunnen

Travel agenda: Pack your bags and set off early for an epic journey in the mountains. From Interlaken Ost there are two routes to the **Jungfrauoch-Top of Europe station**. For this itinerary, stop at **Lauterbrunnen**. Pay to store your bags at this station, in either the lockers or luggage office, as there is where you'll spend the night. Then change to the iconic WAB cogwheel train (get a seat on the right hand side!) heading towards **Kleine Scheidegg**.

From Kleine Scheidegg, the Jungfraubahn train ascends 3,000 meters to Jungfrauoch-Top of Europe station. This last section of the route is through a 50-minute tunnel with brief stops at **Eigerwand** and **Eismeer** to allow passengers to get off for a few minutes of picture taking.

Once at Jungfrauoch, allow at least 4 hours to explore the attraction. Don't miss the multiple viewing decks, a 45-minute walk on the well-groomed path to the **Mönchsjochhütte Hut**, an ice palace that Elsa would approve of and a hole-in-one competition where you can tee off on the Aletsch Glacier. The snow park has snowtubing, skiing and boarding options. There are restaurants, cafes and a small Lindt chocolate factory so you won't go hungry.

Board the train back to Lauterbrunnen and pick up the bags left at the station. From here, walk just a few minutes to your accommodation in town. This enchanting little Swiss village is set in a valley featuring rocky cliffs and waterfalls. Before sunset, stroll just 5 minutes to **Staubach Falls**, the magnificent glacial waterfall from the 300-meter high peaks that emerge into the river. The stairs up lead to a man-made grotto behind the falls.

Just a five minute walk south, dinner is at **Weidstübli**, or as the locals call it: **Camping Jungfrau**, a casual but charming restaurant serving local specialties.

Tip: Another reason to spend a night in Lauterbrunnen is if the weather isn't cooperating on Day 4, switch the trip to Jungfrauoch to the morning of Day 5!

DAY 5

At a glimpse: Village hopping via cable car

Travel agenda: Grab your day bag, slip on your sneakers and head to **Airtime** for a coffee and porridge. On the way to the Lauterbrunnen station, stop at the **Coop Supermarkt** to pick up snacks





and water. Then take a 6-minute cable ride to **Grutshalp**. From there, it's a 15-minute train to **Mürren**, a car-free alpine village with views of Jungfrau, Eiger, and Monch. Walk the streets and take in the mountain life of just 450 locals.

Take the next set of short cable cars to **Schilthorn Peak** for a James-Bond 007 lunch at the rotating **Piz Gloria**, though a warm soup from the **Skyline Takeaway** café will have a similar view. After lunch, opt for the **Thrill Walk**, a 200m long steel and glass walkway and wire tunnel that hugs the rock and leads to the cable car station. Next, take the cable cars back to Mürren.

From Mürren, walk the 25 minutes down to **Gimmelwald**. Or if the mood strikes you, book the thrilling “iron highway” Mürren Via Ferrata guided trek with mountain climbing, zip lines and suspension bridges.

Gimmelwald is another car-free village that hangs off a cliff high above the Lauterbrunnen Valley. Then make your way to the **Pension Hotel**. Stop at their **Honesty Shop** for local crafts and souvenirs. Then go next door and walk through the cozy bar. Go for the Schwartz Monch on tap and cheers to an epic adventure in the dreamlike beer garden! Hop on the last cable car, just a short 5-minute ride down to **Stechelberg**.

From here it's a leisurely hour walk back to Lauterbrunnen through more wildflower fields with cascading waterfalls. This includes **Trümmelbach Falls**, a set of waterfalls located inside a mountain accessible by carved caves, bridges and paths. From Lauterbrunnen, take the train wherever you need to go!

*Activity alternatives:

Other celebrated activities include: paragliding, hang-gliding and bungee jumping. Interlaken is also home to the best whitewater rafting. The Lüscherne River has III to IV rapids in some of the cleanest water on earth. For more relaxing substitutes, there is canoeing, paddleboarding and fishing in Brienz or Thun.

*Winter:

If visiting in the winter, the Harder Kulm funicular and Beatus Caves are closed and the lake boats are less frequent. Otherwise most landmarks and trails are open and there are skating rinks and mountains ready for skiing and snowboarding. A velvety hot chocolate and cheese fondue will add to the Swiss winter wonderland ambiance.

