

A Sparkling Swiss Christmas Regional Culture & Christmas Markets Galore!

Ten Day Tour ~ December 1-10, 2025

Highlights: Roundtrip, Nonstop Airfare Newark to Zurich • Three Cheery Nights Lugano • Five Cozy Nights at the Lakeside Hotel des Alpes, Lucerne • Downtown Zurich Christmas Markets & Museums • Lovely Lugano • Lake Lugano Cruise to Sweet Swiss Village of Gandria • Lugano Christmas Market • Thrilling Funicular to Monte Bre • Beautiful Bellinzona • Bellinzona's Christmas Village • Castel Grande • Loveable Locarno • Winterland Locarno Market • Scenic Aerial Cableway to Cardada Cimetta Observation Platform • Treno Gottardo Panoramic Line - Locarno to Luzerne • Luminous Lucerne • Glacier Garden • Funicular to Chateau Gutsch • Lucerne Christmas Markets • Queen of the Mountain Rigi Day Trip • Mt. Titlis • Titlis Cliff Walk • Titlis Glacier Cave • Lucerne's Kapellbrücke & Spreuerbrücke • Voralpen Express Scenic Train Ride - Lucerne to St. Gallen • Splendid St. Gallen • St. Gallen Abbey Library & Cathedral • Capital of Christmas, Strasbourg France Christmas Market • Captivating Colmar, France • All Breakfasts • Four Lunches • Two Dinners • Fully Escorted

Wintertime in Switzerland during the countdown to Christmas is more than just a season, it's an awe-inspiring experience! Snowcapped peaks spread from enchanting villages, across serene alpine landscapes, glaciers and sparkling lakes to festive cities filled with twinkling lights and decorated fairytale old town streets. We'll travel by train through glistening snowy landscapes in search of unforgettable adventures in the varied regions of the country, each with its own history, culture, and charm. A Mediterranean winter awaits in Ticino, after a jaw dropping jaunt through the Alps, the perfect place for sunny walks along lakeside shores, medieval castles, and the aroma of local delicacies lingering in the air from charming Christmas Markets. Winter magic comes alive in lovely Lucerne and its sparkling lake surrounded by the snowy Swiss Alps. We'll explore this enchanting winter wonderland from top to bottom in regions near and far. Scenic boat cruises and mountain railways along with thrilling funiculars all lead to the ultimate wintry panoramic views and old town romance oozes from every village and town transformed into magical, traditional Christmas markets. Why not wander this winter into the sparkling Swiss holiday atmosphere and let Switzerland cast its magical Christmas spell on you.

Day 1. Get comfortable and a few winks of sleep on our overnight flight where we wake up in the snowy landscapes of Switzerland!

Day 2. We arrive in Zurich, so let's start right here! Fill the day with holiday cheer while browsing the several festive Christmas Markets spread all over town and sample some local delicacies like raclette and fondue. Take a wander inside Kunsthaus where you'll come face to face with precious artworks of Picasso, Monet, and Rodin or among the narrow streets of Old Town leading to the Zurichsee where you may catch glimpse of the surrounding Alps in the distance. If we can't see them here, we certainly won't miss the views along our scenic train ride to the Mediterranean climate of Ticino. No amount of jet lag can make your eyes close on this spectacular ride. As the lovely landscape of Lugano comes into view, we'll make our way to our Mediterranean home for the next three nights at . If you're up for it, enjoy included dinner close by, then get settled in for a sleepful night.



Christmas Markets



Swiss Alps Panorama

Day 3. Wake up in the morning to winter sunshine and a vista of palm trees set under a backdrop of snow topped mountains surrounding glistening Lake Lugano. Let's take the day to explore lovely Lugano filled with Italian flair along with much Swiss charm. Stroll the festive old city center past wooden stands of the city's Christmas market offering local goodies and artisan crafts, perhaps pop into a museum or two, or take in the picturesque lake views on the promenade. A highlight of the day will be cruising along sparkling Lake Lugano to the most perfectly sweet tiny fishing village of Gandria where we'll enjoy an included lunch and you can explore until your heart's content. If you're up for a thrill packed ride, then the Monte Bre funicular will whisk us away to the top of the mountain for more sun and amazing views. As evening approaches, enjoy as you please.

Day 4. Beautiful Bellinzona is only a short train ride away where its three castles make it feel as if we were catapulted back to the Middle Ages among a world of knights and drawbridges. Lucky for us, Castel Grande, the largest of the three, perched on a rocky peak overlooking the valley is open for a visit. Step inside and experience the museum that contains 6500 years of human presence on the hill, covering the period from the first Neolithic village to the 20th century. There's much to explore in the warm, enchanting atmosphere of the town including Bellinzona's Christmas Village where the Piazza del Sole comes alive with music, scents, and twinkling lights of the season. Another festive Ticino village that sparkles with Christmas magic is loveable Locarno set among luminous Lago Maggiore. Palm and lemon trees lining the lakeside path will be twinkling with lights and a wander through the tangle of alleyways of Old Town lead to cheery piazzas and decorated palazzos. Piazza Grande will be transformed into Locarno's Winterland with stalls selling handmade decorations and roasted locally grown chestnuts, leaving a warm, spiced scent in the air. If you're up for a panoramic adventure, hop on the aerial cableway leading to Cardada Cimetta above the center of Locarno and take in the spellbinding 360-degree views from the striking Passerelle observation platform. Once back in lovely Lugano, enjoy your night!

Day 5. It's time to adventure to central Switzerland on the 120-year-old panoramic line of Treno Gottardo, the that will whisk us from palm tree vistas to a world filled with majestic views of snow kissed rugged mountains faces and deep blue lakes. We end our journey in luminous Lucerne where shimmering lights mirror on the surface of the lake against the backdrop of snow dusted peaks. Take the day to explore the compact medieval old town filled with ancient spires, cobbled lanes, and colorful historic houses home to festive shops and candlelit taverns that beckon you in. If you haven't had enough Christmas Markets yet, you're in luck because Lucerne has several different ones to visit each with its own unique atmosphere. We'll have a special glacial adventure in an intriguing rocky underworld at the Glacier Garden, a place frozen in time. The garden is 1 billion years old. It is 300 million years old. It is 25,000 and also only 150 years old. This journey through space and time will bring you face to face with petrified "giant's kettles", enormous potholes, and fascinating labyrinth of mirrors. While here, let's enjoy an included lunch with local specialties at Bistro Salwideli. As we make our way from the garden, let's pass by the famous lion monument lying in his lair in a rocky grotto nearby and learn the history of its creation. Enjoy the rest of your day and evening as you please.

Day 6. Today we'll adventure up to Queen of the Mountains, Mt. Rigi by way of the splendid scenery on Lake Lucerne. Our cruise will take us to the foot of the mountain where the charming town of Vitznau lies. From here a cogwheel train will climb to 6000 feet with a breathtaking panoramic view across the Alps, 13 lakes, and over the entire Switzerland landscape towards views of Germany and France from the summit. Lunch will be included on our all day journey. Once back in lovely Lucerne, enjoy your night!

Day 7. Let's hop aboard the Voralpen Express for a picturesque journey through the heart of Switzerland to the Star City of St. Gallen. The copper-colored train rolls past extraordinary views of regional mountain ranges, scenic raised bog landscapes, vistas over Lake Zurich, the rustic charm of hilly Toggenburg and over the Sitter Viaduct – the highest in Switzerland. A sparkling sea of almost 700 stars await in the quaint old town of St. Gallen where the World Heritage Abbey District is bathed in a magical light. Take time to explore the historic squares and alleyways along with the local Weihnachtsmarkt filled with handmade gifts and festive decorations. A very special treat lies at the Abbey Library, one of the most beautiful in all of Europe with frescoed ceilings and an ornate baroque interior featuring intricate gold framing. Our tour will allow us to explore this amazing space while learning all its hidden secrets. We can't miss the spectacular St. Gallen Cathedral right nearby. After our scenic ride back to Lucerne, enjoy the night as you please.

Day 8. It's time to get up into those breathtaking Swiss Alps, way up to 10,600 feet! Mount Titlis awaits with its 360-degree snowy peak panorama over the wide Engleberg valley and deep down into the abyss of countless crevices carved into the glacial ice. At the summit, we'll warm up with an included panoramic lunch with stunning views then get out into the fresh mountain air and experience the Alps. Take an adventurous walk along Cliff Walk, Europe's highest suspension bridge where the ultimate in mesmerizing and captivating views can be found and venture out on a chilly walk through the Glacier Cave where 5,000-year-old ice shimmers in a mysterious blue above your head. Now that we're all popsicles, let's get back to Lucerne and thaw out!

Day 9. Today is filled with a holiday French flair as we make our way over the border into France to the most captivating and charming fairy tale village of Colmar. The magic of Christmas is all aglow among the picturesque cobbled old town where you'll find six unique Christmas Markets, each with its own theme, radiating a warm and inviting atmosphere that will leave you spellbound. Another French Christmas Wonderland will be found in the Capitale de Noel of Strasbourg where we can immerse ourselves in the history, legends,

recipes, and traditional symbols of the Alsace Region. Wander through the festive streets past half-timbered houses where wooden chalets of the Christkindlsmarik, the oldest in Europe, offer a taste of the region. Festive decorations are over the top here with tons of tinsel, wreaths, gingerbread and even teddy bears. Don't miss adorable Rue de Orfevres and its stunning décor and get lost in the narrow alleyways filled with gorgeous and intricate holiday displays. Another must see is the special Nativity scene at the awe inspiring Cathedrale Notre Dame with its majestic spire adorned in shimmering lights. It's been a long but fun day, so let's enjoy one last included dinner together once we're back in Lucerne.

Day 10. Today we must say goodbye to our holiday winter wonderland and make our way back to our own home sweet home filled with all the Swiss Christmas cheer. © 2025 The Educated Wanderer

Air transportation is provided by United Airlines. A surcharge will apply if United Airlines increases the price of its airfare. One piece of luggage per person (baggage fee by United is included) and one small carry-on are permitted. **A valid, government-issued picture ID is required to board the plane.**

Monday, December 1: Flight # departs Newark at PM and arrives in Zurich at AM

Wednesday, December 10: Flight # departs Zurich at PM and arrives in Newark at PM

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*Due to the changes in airline booking policies, airfare will need to be booked before the cancellation date, Once flights are booked, we cannot refund that portion of the tour unless you'd like to pay an additional cost for refundable tickets.

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