

# Classic Swiss Alps

Single center  independent walking

- Breathtaking natural beauty: snow-capped peaks, emerald green slopes, amazing turquoise lakes, meadows thick with flowers
- Views of the Eiger, Jungfrau, Matterhorn, Mönch
- A walker's paradise: 1000's of kms of well-marked trails, stunning Alpine flowers; rare birds of prey; marmots and deer
- Friendly family-run hotel with heated indoor pool/ sauna; excellent cuisine; superb value - virtually all meals included
- Superb mountain transport: cable cars, funiculars, chairlifts



Kandersteg is in the heart of the Bernese Oberland, where the great arc of the Alps culminates in some of its highest and most spectacular peaks. This is “chocolate-box” Alps: lush green meadows bright with wildflowers against a backdrop of rugged, wild and beautiful mountains, topped by glistening glaciers.

A weeks' stay here will allow you to discover the very best of the region: a huge turquoise lake enclosed by towering cliffs, a “hidden” valley headed by a glacier you can touch, a sheer gorge carved out by glacial meltwaters, an Alpine pass that has been used since Celtic times and more wild flowers than you even knew existed. And what views! The 4,000-metre Eiger, Mönch, Jungfrau and Matterhorn all display their white peaks proudly, and a plethora of other summits and glaciers is closer to hand. Amazingly, all of this is accessible on well-defined paths directly from the hotel or after a short bus or cable car ride.

The excellent Swiss signposting and path marking, together with the Breakaway notes, makes all of the walking accessible even for people with little, or no, experience of walking in the high Alps. On arrival, your hosts will provide you with a Guest Card giving you unlimited use of the village bus and a reduction on local cable cars. You do, however, need to be a confident walker.

Having based our Swiss cross-country skiing holidays here since 1996, the ★★★ Hotel Alfa Soleil is now a firm Breakaway favourite. There's an elegant lounge, lively bar, traditional restaurant, swimming pool, sauna, solarium and gym. New, for 2012, we are including 5 lunches - choose from picnics or a light buffet at your hotel.



## CLASSIC SWISS ALPS | DAY BY DAY

### Day 1 Arrive in Kandersteg

You arrive in time to settle in and perhaps enjoy an apéritif before dinner.

### Day 2 Allmenalp 11km/7mi/3hr or 16km/10mi/4.5hr

A gentle start to your walking week begins with a spectacular cable car ride (small cost, pay locally) to ascend to the Allmenalp (1725m), a colorful meadow brimming with rural mountain charm. Stunning views across the valley to the Oeschinensee with its magnificent turquoise-colored waters and towering cliffs adorned with waterfalls. From the summit the 360° view is nothing less than spectacular, with 12 mountain peaks above 3000m in close proximity, and occasionally eagles frequent the adjoining peaks.

### Day 3 The Gasterntal and Kanderfirn Glacier 13km/8mi/5hr

This is a day full of thrilling experiences, starting with an exciting 20-minute minibus ride along a narrow road literally hacked out of the rock wall. The Gasterntal is Kandersteg's "hidden valley", dozens of snow-fed waterfalls thundering down the sheer rock faces carved out by a gigantic glaciers 10,000 years ago. From this romantic nature reserve, and with the mighty rock walls of the Tatlishorn and Atels towering up on the right, you meander through woods and open meadows: look out for lady slippers, fire lilies and more than 25 varieties of orchid!

### Day 4 Oeschinensee 15km/9mi/5hr

Widely regarded as the jewel in the crown of the Bernese Oberland, Oeschinensee is, in our view, the most beautiful Alpine lake in Switzerland. After a short ride up on the Nostalgia Chairlift (pay locally), you climb to the viewpoint at Heuberg: nothing can prepare you for the cobalt blue of the water surrounded by the razor-edged peaks of the Doldenhorn (3638m), towering 2000m above it, and striped by dainty waterfalls trickling down from the Früden glacier.

### Day 5 Free day

It's less than an hour on the mountain railway to the fascinating and colorful town of Interlaken. From here, you can take a picturesque steamer ride, or catch the funicular to the town of St Harderkulm (1322m). Perhaps take the "rack and pinion" rail route to Schynige Platte and explore its Alpine Gardens (top tip: magnificent panorama of the famous Eiger-Mönch-Jungfrau trio from here!)

### Day 6 Üschinengrat and the Gemmi Pass 15km/10mi/4hr or 20km/12mi/5.5hr

The Sunnbüel cable car (pay locally) whisks you up to nearly 2,000m, from where you climb to a fantastic ridge walk along the Üschinengrat (2200m). If you're lucky, you'll spot wild deer on the upper slopes. You might fancy lunch at the renowned Schwarenbach Hotel, where Lenin and Picasso have signed the visitors' book. On past the Daubensee (sometimes still partially frozen) to the famous high Gemmi Pass (2322m), a major transalpine route first used by the Celts. The extraordinary panorama of the Valais Alps to the south includes the Matterhorn (4478m) and Monte Rosa on the Italian border.

### Day 7 The Sud Rampe 12km/7mi/3.5hr or 18km/11mi/5.5hr

Today starts with a 25 minute rail ride through the mountains up to the village of Hochtenn where your route takes you high above the Rhone Valley, and through a landscape of gorges, plunging waterfalls and small colorful villages hemmed in by vineyards on the edge of the fertile Rhone Valley.

### Day 8 Leave Kandersteg



## Dates and Prices

### Departs Saturdays

### Tour Only

#### 2012 departures

|                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Jun 9, Sep 15, 22            | \$2,417 |
| Jun 16, 23, Sep 1, 8         | \$2,417 |
| Jun 2, 30, Aug 18, 25        | \$2,491 |
| Jul 7, 14, 21, 28, Aug 4, 11 | \$2,615 |
| Child (any date, see notes)  | \$1,883 |

**Singles:** Add \$28 per night for a single room. **Jun 9 departure no supplement.**

**Child:** Over 2 and under 12, sharing with 2 adults.

**Room upgrade:** Mini-Suite (room with balcony and seating area) add \$51 per person, per night, based on 2 sharing.

**Holiday type:** Independent walking, single center, no minimum group size.

**Departs:** Saturdays from Jun 2 to Sep 22. Other days also possible please ask for details.

**Duration:** 8 days (7 nights).

**Meals:** Buffet breakfast, 5 picnic lunches and all evening meals.

**Other details:** You should allow \$125 for local buses/ski lifts and cable cars for the walks and activities (more if including the day trip to Interlaken). For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

## Tailor-made travel choices

### Nearest Arrival Airport: Zurich Airport

Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

**The above prices include our standard transfers:** Kandersteg rail station at 16:41 (transfer to hotel, 5 mins, provided). **Return:** Kandersteg rail station by 10:13.

**Rail options:** Zurich airport to Kandersteg (via Bern and Spiez) 14:13/16:41. Return: Kandersteg to Zurich airport (via Spiez and Bern) 10:13/12:41.

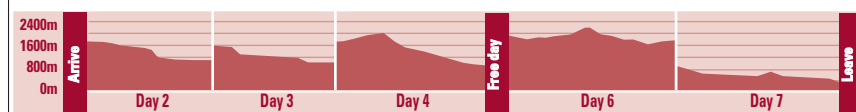
**Second Class Swiss Rail:** Add \$375 per person, round trip.

**First Class Swiss Rail:** Add \$572 per person return.

**Tour only:** Transfers included from Kandersteg train station at 16:41, and back to Kandersteg train station departing the hotel at 10:00.




## CLASSIC SWISS ALPS | WALKING DETAILS



The walking is of moderate difficulty and includes mountain walking on good (though sometimes narrow) paths with occasional steepish climbs. Note: Some ski lifts/cable cars do not operate in early/late season when alternative walks will be proposed.

**Average daytime temperature (°C):**  
 16 18 17 14  
 JUN JUL AUG SEP

**Average monthly rainfall (mm):**  
 55 55 65 60  
 JUN JUL AUG SEP

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