

Schwyz



Schwyz is a canton of remarkable landscapes, thriving traditions, world-renowned cultural and historical gems combined with a taste for innovation.

Marvels of nature such as the Karst mountains and the primeval Alpine forest in the Muota Valley, moors, pre-Alpine lakes and spectacular views from the Fronalpstock and the Rigi are excellent reasons to take your time exploring the area. The region, which exudes culture and history from every corner, is home to the "Bundesbrief" (Charter) of 1291 and other important original documents from the time Switzerland was founded, historic patricians' houses and the Abbey of Einsiedeln with its world-famous abbey library. Enduring traditions and old crafts are coupled with innovation and are celebrated throughout the year in numerous festivities and events, including the "Nicholas Chase" in Kuessnacht, the Shrovetide Carnival and traditional Swiss sports.

The lively town of Schwyz, capital of the canton with the same name, is home to the Forum of Swiss History and important founding documents of the Swiss Confederation. Schwyz and the area surrounding it, is famous for its cherry blossom and numerous cherry specialties. And Schwyz is also where the famous Swiss army penknives come from.

Switzerland owes its name and coat of arms to the town of Schwyz located between Lake Lucerne and the small Lake Lauerz. In 1291 the cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden entered into an alliance, and in 1315, by winning the Battle of Morgarten, they managed to drive out the Austrians. The Museum of the Swiss Charters houses the most important documents of the early Swiss confederacy, including the confederation's founding document. And the Forum of Swiss History provides an opportunity for a multi-media experience of everyday life between 1300 and 1800.

The people of Schwyz have not always been prosperous. From the 16th century onwards many of the canton's men were forced to serve as soldiers in foreign armies. They proved to be brave warriors, frequently returning home wealthy and in a position to build the proud houses which to this day are a feature of the town of Schwyz. A few individual Schwyz houses, such as the Hofstatt Ital Redding dating from 1609, are among the most magnificent secular buildings in Switzerland.

Schwyz is also where the world-famous Swiss penknives come from: in excess of 25'000 of the red all-rounders leave production daily. It is hardly surprising then that the tourism destination surrounding Schwyz meanwhile goes under the name of "Swiss Knife Valley".

Summer

The impressive summits of the two legendary peaks immediately above Schwyz, the long-drawn-out ridge of the Rigi, famous "Queen of Mountains", or the nearby mountain holiday resort of Stoos with the

Fronalpstock are just two among many mountain experiences available in the region. Schwyz is furthermore the gateway to the Muota Valley, a wild Karst mountain valley.

Along 'Cherry Street', or Kirschstrasse, which runs through the hilly lakescape of the Alpine foothills featuring a great many cherry tree orchards from Lucerne, via Zug and Schwyz, all the way to Brunnen on Lake Lucerne, there are several opportunities to tour distilleries. Thanks to its central location, Schwyz is a good starting point for excursions to the most beautiful destinations of early Switzerland.



Highlights

- Schwyz townscape - the fabulous village square surrounded by the dominating parish church, town hall and manor houses is regarded as one of the most beautiful squares in Switzerland.
- The Museum of the Swiss Charters - the founding document of the three first member cantons and other documents are exhibited here.
- Demonstration Cheese Dairy Schwyzerland in Seewen – watching, tasting, enjoying and buying for groups and individual visitors.
- Kirschstrasse – features everything from cherry blossom to distilled kirsch produced in the demonstration distillers along 'Kirsch Street'
- Hölloch Karst cave system in the Muota Valley – measuring about 190 km, this is the longest cave in Europe and the fifth-biggest cave system in the world. The caves can only be visited as part of a guided cave expedition.