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Switzerland in the UK



Bargain flights start price war

With no frills airline EasyJet opening a cut price service between the UK and Switzerland, a new fare war is under way between competing services.

For many passengers the disadvantage of EasyJet is that flights to Switzerland start from Luton. But the big plus is the price. When the service started last month the introductory lure was the single fare to either Zurich or Geneva – just £39.

Airline pricing can be a minefield. When *Swiss Review* did a spot check on the return economy fare from Manchester to Zurich we found 15 different prices, ranging from £140 to £240, from nine different airlines.

The EasyJet Service started with two flights a day to both Zurich and Geneva, and the company said to meet the demand they intended to increase this to a total of seven daily flights in January.

Swiss school plan for Queen's grandchildren

The Duke and Duchess of York want to send Royal Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie to complete their education at Aiglon College.

The news has resulted in a sudden flurry of interest in one of Switzerland's least-known exports – education.

Aiglon, perched at a height of 3,700 ft at Chesières-Villars, Vaud, is one of the most respected – and the most expensive – of Switzerland's many private

schools. It takes 280 boys and girls between the ages of nine and 18, and boasts a rigorous academic programme, preparing pupils for both the British GCSE and A level examinations.

Beatrice, who is ten, and eight year old Eugenie are expected to enroll in the junior school next September with 50 other boarders.

They will probably be living in La Dacha, one of two residential chalets, under the supervision of Lara Kellett-Smith, who has just moved to Aiglon from an international school in Prague.

Aiglon is a sister school of Gordonstoun, where their grandfather, the Duke of Edinburgh was educated, as were their father and uncles Prince Charles and Prince Edward.

Like the Scottish school it believes in "work hard, play hard" – and that includes character-building forays into the mountains.

This autumn, despite the long run of bad weather, has seen no let up in the expeditions programme.

One for junior girls was to the challenging Cornettes de Bise, and there was even more excitement for them when they went to the rescue of a local climber who had slipped on the ice and had to be evacuated by helicopter.

None of this comes cheap for pupils' parents. Aiglon's fees come to £19,500 a year, which means that Prince Andrew, who has agreed to meet the princesses' school fees, will have to find almost £40,000 – a hefty slice out of his naval officer's salary.



Aiglon College: Its suitability for the princesses has already been considered by the Queen at Buckingham Palace

Choc-loving Brits beat the Swiss

Which country claims to have the highest consumption of chocolate in the world? If you think the answer is Switzerland you would be wrong. The Swiss can only come second to the British in the global league table.

Analyst Euromonitor report that the average Briton eats more than 35 pounds of chocolate a year, at a cost of £85. That works out at a huge 817,000 tons a year. Only the US and Russia eat more – but their markets are bigger and consumption per head is lower.

Individually the Swiss spend more than the British on chocolate, but are way behind in terms of the quantity they consume.



The Duke of York, a serving officer in the Royal Navy, has agreed to meet the school fees of almost £40,000 a year.

Fortunately the Royal Family never stint on the cost of education for the young princes and princesses. The Duke has already talked to the Queen about the benefits of Aiglon.

The Duchess gave her approval after visiting the school last year. The Duke was expecting to confirm her choice during his own visit in October, but this had to be cancelled after Sarah's mother was killed in a car crash in Argentina.

Aiglon is considered a jewel in the crown of Switzerland's international schools. Proud parents who have sent their children there include Sophia Loren, Roger Moore and Jackie Stewart.

Next year Aiglon celebrates its 50th anniversary with a host of celebrations, including a ski race for parents, teachers and pupils in February and a time capsule planting ceremony in June. They also plan an expedition to The Great St Bernard Pass to erect a special jubilee plaque.

● British MPs go to Zurich to see why Swiss schools don't need heads – see centre pages.

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Professor Jean's gift remembered

Members of the Yorkshire Swiss Society have paid a sentimental visit to Golden Acre Park, just outside Leeds, to mark the 25th anniversary of a historic moment in the life of the club.

It was on December 1, 1973, that one of the most respected figures in the Swiss community in the UK, Professor Jean Inebnit, marked his retirement from the presidency of the club by a tree planting ceremony.

It was typical of the man that he should use part of the retirement gift from his compatriots to plant six red chestnut trees.

Contemporary records show that it was a glorious crisp and sunny morning and snow covered the countryside as club members and their friends gathered at the park for the ceremony.

It was Professor Inebnit who introduced the Landsgemeinde to Hardcastle Crags near Hebden Bridge.

Not to be missed

Don't miss the annual congress of the Swiss Abroad, urges Swiss Club Tyne Tees president Nelly Scott-Niederberger in her latest club newsletter.

She said she was concerned that out of 24,208 Swiss nationals registered in the UK only 13 attended last year's congress.



Young Peter Habermacher seen with his father Anton and Erica Bartrum when the Midlands Swiss Society held their National Day barbecue, which was followed by a firework display. The photograph was taken by Christopher Schneider.

How to contact the editor

Reports of Swiss society activities and coming events, and articles and correspondence for the 'Switzerland in the UK' section of the Swiss Review, should go to the editor, Derek Meakin, at Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. Tel: 01625 855 000; fax: 01625 855 128.

His email address is: dmeakin@europress.co.uk.

Enquiries regarding advertising should go to Jeffrey Long, 30 Finsbury Drive, Bradford BD2 1QA. Tel/fax: 01274 588 189.

● The 'Switzerland in the UK' supplement appears four times a year. The deadline for the next issue containing UK news, to be distributed in March, is January 13.

Meeting point...Meeting point

Newly arrived on the island of Jersey, Swiss national Alex Hacker was surprised to find there was no organised Swiss Club there.

He has written to *Swiss Review* saying he would like to organise a Swiss Circle and would also like to make contact with other Swiss people living in Jersey.

Anyone interested should

contact Alex or Saliha Hacker at 5 Jardin des Sablons, Grouville JE3946 (tel/fax: 856 651).

● A West Sussex reader would like to hear from other Swiss living in his area. He is Thomas Boos of 2 Cowdray Court, North Street, Midhurst, GU29 9UA (tel: 01730 810 745).

Mr Boos' late father,

Johan Jakob (known as Jean-Jacques) was a former president of the Swiss Mercantile Society.

● From Oxford comes a request to hear from other Swiss. It comes from Mrs Marianne Ransom-Schmid, who lives at 6 Birch Road, Garsington, Oxford OX44 9AP (tel/fax: 01865 361 373).

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How can you run a school without a head?

While drawing up a report on the role of head teachers, the House of Commons Select Committee on Education was given some shock news: *Swiss children were better than British at maths. Swiss schools didn't have heads.*

Was this possible? To find out they sent a delegation to visit schools in Zurich and Aargau.

This is what they had to conclude about their visit:

Although the great majority of schools in the cantons of Zurich and Aargau do not have headteachers, their performance in international comparisons of education rank Switzerland above the UK in some subjects, notably mathematics.

We concluded that this 'leaderless' system had worked well, but in conditions which were very different to those in the UK.

There the schools are much smaller, there is no

A number of leading educationalists helped the committee during the visit, including the president of the canton of Zurich, Professor Ernst Buschor, who is also the canton's minister of education. Others included Peter Feller, head of the Lehrmittelsverlag des Kantons Zurich, Professor Walter Hohl of Zurich University, and senior staff of the Pestalozzianum Zurich and the cantonal ministry of education.

Commons committee flies to Zurich – to investigate how it's done in Switzerland

system of national testing, lesson planning and classroom organisation is fairly standard across schools and subjects, and the cantons provide standard textbooks used by nearly all schools.

Schools do not have devolved budgets and the local school board is responsible for buildings, maintenance, etc.

the primary and lower secondary phase, a class teacher will stay with the same class for several years, and teach them most of the subjects on the curriculum.

This reinforces the relationship between the teacher and the child, and indeed between the teacher and the child's parents.

average public sector salary.

Swiss teachers are not paid as well as, for instance, doctors: a newly qualified doctor would earn about Sfr. 82,000, with the prospect of higher remuneration later.

Swiss teachers are generally perceived to have a higher status in society than their UK counterparts.

It seems to us that such a system may not be in the best position to adapt to changing circumstances – it has been successful in a fairly static educational environment compared to that of the UK. Indeed, this is one of the biggest differences between the UK and Zurich, although change is now on its way in the canton, including greater delegation of budgets to schools and increased use of information technology.

Interestingly, some teachers we met in Zurich agreed that the introduction of such new ideas would require the development of more leadership in schools.

● **More about what the MPs found in Zurich and Aargau in the next issue of Swiss Review.**

The MPs conclude: A great idea for the Swiss, but it's not right for schools in the UK

The inspection regime is also much lighter than in the UK.

There is, in short, much less for teachers to worry about beyond practising their pedagogical skills.

Another very important difference is that, in the great majority of schools, at both

It should also be added that Swiss teachers' salaries are higher than in the UK, even allowing for differences in the cost of living, and higher than national average earnings.

The average Swiss school teacher in primary or lower secondary school earns about Sfr. 100,000 a year (about £46,000), which is roughly 40 per cent higher than the average wage in the Swiss public sector.

In the UK the average salary for a classroom teacher is £22,800, about 20 per cent higher than the

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The night Enrico Caruso sang drew for his supper

Five unique wall panels autographed by more than a thousand celebrities who frequented the famous Artists' Room at Pagani's Swiss Italian restaurant in London's Great Portland Street have been acquired by the Museum of London.

They have been reunited with seven further panels from private collections in Switzerland, Italy and the USA for a special display at the museum – Halls of Fame: Reuniting the Pagani Panels.

Pagani's was one of a large number of Swiss Italian restaurants that started opening in London from the 1840s, all run by families from the Ticino.

The restaurants ranged from lavish establishments such as Monico's in Piccadilly to small cafés. They soon became a feature of social life in the capital and revolutionised the eating habits of middle-class Londoners.

From 1874 to 1939 the leading actors and actresses, composers, singers and writers of the day autographed the walls of the tiny room, adding messages, drawings and snatches of music, and the panels evoke

the romance and richness of life in the capital in this period.

They are now displayed alongside a reconstruction of the Artists' Room, with original items from the restaurant.

Among the illustrious names from the world of music was the great Caruso, who in 1904 added a splendid self-portrait of himself in the role of Don José in Carmen (pictured right).

Others who made their marks on the walls of the restaurant ranged from Tchaikovsky, who left a musical quotation from his Fourth Symphony, which had been performed for the first time in the UK a few days' earlier, Puccini, Gigli, Richard Strauss and George Gershwin.

From the stage came the legendary Sarah Bernhardt, Maurice Chevalier and Nijinsky. Literary visitors included H G Wells and Stefan Zweig.

Queen Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales, was a regular diner at Pagani's, along with his mistress, Lillie Langtry, although the panel that featured her signature is now lost.



Feast of culture as Ticinese celebrate 125th anniversary

Next year marks the 125th anniversary of the founding of one of the most active of all Swiss societies in the UK – the Unione Ticinese – on February 8, 1874.

Many cultural activities are planned that will analyse the role of modern Ticino in Switzerland and Europe, and the contribution of the Ticinese colony in England to the Ticino itself.

The celebrations start on February 6 with an anni-

versary dinner dance at the Russell Hotel. Details can be obtained from Mrs Christiane Barber, 16 Tivoli Road, London N8 8RE.

On March 4 a talk will be given at the Swiss Embassy by Paolo Jacomelli and a colleague from the Università del Ticino on "Educated in England, Teaching in Ticino."

News about the many other events will be in the next issue of *Swiss Review*.



The City Swiss Club

The Committee of the City Swiss Club would like to wish all its members, Swiss and friends of Switzerland:

SEASON'S GREETINGS

The City Swiss Club was founded in 1856. The club offers a wide-ranging programme of business and social events throughout the year. If you would like to learn more about the Club and/or receive a membership form, please contact Julie Streader, City Swiss Club, c/o Secure Trust Banking Group plc, Royex House, Aldermanbury Square, London EC2V 7HR. Telephone: 0171 374 0417.



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London holds a memorial service for tragic Flight SR111

"We never believed it could happen. Yet it did on that fateful day at Peggy's Cove in Nova Scotia."

The speaker was Kirk Albrow, Swissair's UK head, giving a moving address to mourners, mainly Swiss and related airline staff and friends, who filled the Swiss Church in London in September for a memorial service to those lost on Flight SR111.

"Why, we ask ourselves," he continued, "did 229 passengers and crew lose their lives in such an incomprehensible and tragic manner?"

Kirk Albrow expressed the shock and sorrow, the agony and pain experienced by so many who lost dear ones, family, friends and colleagues from all round the world.

At the same time as others gathered in New York, Zurich and Geneva, the

large congregation remembered and honoured the victims, saying goodbye and trying to come to terms with the tragedy.

"The unique relationship of the whole airline community will help," went on Mr Albrow. "We have suffered together and will heal together. We pray that we all find the strength to move forward. Thus we can show the families of those on board that their loved ones did not die in vain."

The reading of Christina Rosetti's beautiful poem Remember was impressively recited by Edward Aitken-MacIntyre.

The service was introduced by the Rev Barbara Brunner, assistant minister at the Swiss Church. Her address later in the proceedings was based on the 23rd psalm, The Lord is

my Shepherd. Poignantly she reminded us how such a sudden tragedy brings to mind that we never know when a smile is the last one, or an argument, a joke or a discussion. All, she said, have different memories of the deceased, "memories which will become precious as time passes by."

Barbara Brunner handed a lighted candle to Kirk Albrow on behalf of all those affected by the tragedy.

It was a sad occasion, yet strangely comforting. A church full of mourners united in grief and prayer, in remembrance and hope.

Splendid organ music sensitively played by Kenneth Waller, the Swiss Church organist, surrounded the spoken word and supported the hymns.

Mariann Meier

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Singers all!

Torbay Swiss Club president Max Singer found himself surrounded by a massed choir of singers when 50 girls from Basle dropped in for a traditional Devon cream tea. Max (seated left with Torbay Mayor Vince McCann) had invited them to give a concert in aid of the local Brixham branch of the Macmillan Cancer Relief charity.

Women's suffrage: the story so far

In 1996 three lecturers in the Department of Modern Languages at the Scottish University of Strathclyde set up the Centre for Swiss Cultural Studies. A conference took place that year which marked the 200th anniversary of the university as well as 25 years of Swiss women's suffrage at federal level.

The three lecturers, Joy Charnley (French), Malcolm Pender (German) and Andrew Wilkins (Italian) have done extensive cultural research in their individual fields.

They were thus highly competent to have organised an earlier conference, in 1989, on "Change and Continuity in Switzerland."

The papers presented by 15 eminent women in Swiss public life at the 1996 conference have now been published.

In a foreword the Swiss ambassador, François Nordmann stresses the importance of the cooperation between the university, Pro Helvetia and the Swiss Embassy in London.

The title of the book may be misleading. Not only does it give a picture of women in Switzerland since 1971 but also a comprehensive history of women's role before

suffrage, such as that played by women's organisations, their important part in education, social and charity work, in science and the arts. The reader is also reminded of the women's movement that was active as far back as the 1860s.

Several of the lecturers pointed out how the political and economic structure of Switzerland both hindered and advanced women's status: the old principle of direct democracy, but with

family and from protecting it as a unit.

The fight by the suffragettes is pictured with particular clarity in Brigitte Studer's chapter on The Rise of Public Women.

There are fascinating chapters on new women's writing in the German, French and Italian speaking parts of the country, reflecting the comprehensive literature produced by women authors.

A report on a round-table

MARIANN MEIER reviews 25 years of emancipation? Women in Switzerland from 1971-1996

its ingrained dominance of male voters.

Women's struggles went back a century before the introduction of suffrage. Yet it was only in 1945 that the first debate took place in Parliament. And it took another 25 years before the matter was seriously debated by the Chambers.

There was also an anti-suffrage section – women who feared that the vote would prevent many from remaining at the heart of the

discussion. Writing as a Woman in a Small Country, gives an insight into the difficulties they still face.

There is an interview with Swiss film director Patricia Plattner. A description of the status of women in Swiss political life and in public office shows that while progress has been made a gap still exists between men and women.

This is well documented by Yvette Jaggi in Swiss Women's Long March to



Yvette Jaggi: a leader in the fight against male dominance in politics.

Equality. Well qualified as a politically active woman, becoming mayor of Lausanne, she points out the obstacles women still have to overcome in a historically male-dominated society.

She is convinced that women will eventually get to "wherever the power is, but in their own subtle and pragmatic way". And she adds that "emancipation of women is not only a product of the law, which provides for formal equality, but also a matter of behaviour, of attitude and of conviction."

The three university lecturers are to be congratulated on editing one of the most comprehensive histories ever produced in English on the development of Swiss women's status over almost a century.

● Published by Peter Lang, Jupiterstrasse 15, 3000 Berne 15. Price Frs. 40.--.



Scottish club's new ventures

Two regular events now appear on the calendar of the ever enterprising West of Scotland Swiss Club.

Every fortnight a playgroup for children of members is held at 7 Hughenden Terrace, Glasgow, where they are given ample opportunity to practise their Schwyzerdeutsch or French.

Every two months a Stammtisch is reserved for any member wishing to drop in at Glasgow's Café Gandolfi for a chat and informal get together.

The West of Scotland club reports increases in both membership and attendance at events, and initiatives like these are expected to increase the club's popularity even more.

Any reader wishing to find out more about the club should contact Shula Spain on 0141 339 5828 or Anita Dick on 01360 660 224.

COMING EVENTS

Southern Area Swiss Club: Christmas party, Community Centre, Farnborough (November 27). Details from Vreni Rudkin on 01252 547 948.

Swiss Club Tyne Tees: Club meeting, Three Tuns Hotel (New Elvet), Durham (January 30); Annual dinner, Romano's Italian restaurant, Whitburn, Tyne & Wear February 27). Details from Nelly Scott-Niederberger on 0191 519 0956.

Manchester Swiss club: Raclette Evening, Wilmslow Parish Hall (March 6); AGM, Wilmslow Parish Hall (April 15). Details from Mariann Reutter on 01260 273 681.

Swiss Club Edinburgh: Annual dinner at Denzlers (January 29). Details from Ursi Ross on 0131 539 2543.

West of Scotland Swiss Club: A night at the opera: Don Giovanni at the

RSAMD (January 23); Stammtisch evening, Café Gandolfi, 64 Albion Street, Glasgow (January 25, March 29, May 31); Fondue & Raclette party, 7 Hughenden Terrace, Glasgow (March 20); Egg hunt in Stirlingshire (Easter); Club AGM, 7 Hughenden Terrace, Glasgow (May 19). Details from Shula Spain-Gayer on 0141 339 5828.

The Midlands Swiss Society: Fondue evening, Trinity Centre, Lichfield (January 16); Swimming and Ploughman's, Droitwich Brine Baths (February 19); Tea and canal trip around Birmingham (March 28). Details from Glynne Roberts on 01543 250 737.

Secretaries of Swiss societies are asked to write to the editor before January 13 with details of events planned to take place after March 10.

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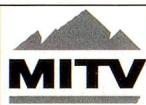
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