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## Berne: The insider view

### Adrian Blaser

*Adrian is the President of the Auckland Swiss club and immediately recognisable by his lovely Bernese accent.*

#### **What is your special connection with Berne?**

From the age of 12 (year 7 at school) I travelled to Bern every day to attend Untergymnasium Neufeld (pre-High School), then 4.5 years of Gymnasium Neufeld, followed by 4.5 years of study in Chemistry and 4 years of PhD. I know the city quite well.

#### **What are your most favourite things to do?**

I like the old part (in the U of the Aare). The main streets have the covered walkways (Lauben) where you are protected from the rain. In summer you can take a swim in the Aare. Although I haven't seen it yet but I think the new bear area "Bärepark" on the river bank of the Aare is very nice (next to the old bear pit "Bäregrabe").

#### **What are your fondest memories of the city?**

I like it when you can take visitors up the Münster clock tower to show them the city from above. And of course you have to see the Zytglogge Tower.

#### **How would you describe the people of Berne?**

Bernese people are friendly and talk **s l o w l y** so that the others can follow.

#### **Berne is Switzerland's capital – how does that affect living in Berne?**

There is always stuff happening. Security can be high, but if you have a chance, go and do a tour around the Bundeshaus.

### Simone Roggen

*Simone is New Zealand born (and Oscar Roggen's daughter). She is a fabulous violin player who has chosen Berne as the centre of her musical universe. She is part of the well known Faust Quartett.*

#### **What brought you to Berne?**

I came to Berne to study the violin at the Hochschule. At first I lived in Baden and I commuted to Berne for my lessons.

After six months of commuting early in the morning or late at night, I was sitting in the tram going across the Kornhausbrücke with a new colleague of mine. I wasn't reading and the sun had decided to shine.

We had just survived a winter (my first in Switzerland) and I looked out of the window when we were about halfway across the bridge. To my absolute astonishment (and to my colleague's) I saw the mountains for the first time. What an amazing sight! I totally fell in love with Berne at that moment, and moved into an apartment a couple of months later.

#### **In which part of Berne do you live?**

When I first moved to Bern, I lived in Breitenrain, quite close to the school where I studied for three years. I now live in Burgerziel right next to the Czech Embassy with their beautiful garden and entertaining parrot.

#### **How do you get around?**

I get around mostly by tram, but do travel in the summer by bicycle and go jogging down by the Aare.

#### **What are your all-time favourite things to do?**

Two of my all-time favourite things to do are walking down by the Aare River and going swimming at Weyermannshaus in Ausserholligen. This pool used to be a small lake but it got concreted and cleaned, and is now an enormous swimming pool with a little island in the middle, and a 50 meter area to do lengths off to the side. Surrounded by trees and grass, it is a great place just to go and relax.

#### **What are the three best places to visit in Berne?**

Definitely go and visit the Bear Family in their amazing new enclosure. Instead of the hole in the ground, it is now an entire hillside including a part of the Aare River where they can swim if they want.

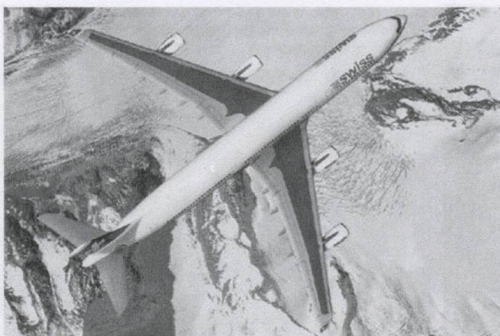
Go up to the Gurten and check out the view.

And my favourite restaurant is Lötschberg - where the salads are incredible. Famous for its big selection of organic cheeses and wine. It's where all the locals go - a good sign!

#### **How would you describe the people of Berne?**

I like the people of Bern the most. They have time for a smile :-).

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