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RESTFUL WINTER HOLIDAYS IN SWITZERLAND

Switzerland, according to the Swiss National Tourist Office, has fourteen mountain resorts which are located far off the motor roads and therefore may be regarded as absolutely "sound and smell proof" oases isolated from this highly motorized world of ours. It is emphasized that, with one exception, all these places can be reached by modern means of transportation, either by mountain railways or even by car, but where the latter is the case automobiles have to be parked at the outskirts of the

smiling hotel porters will welcome the arriving tourists and escort them (and their luggage) to their holiday headquarters. Unterbäch, basking on a mountain terrace 4,000 feet above sea-level, lets winter storms bury its road of access under a thick blanket of snow and thus becomes one of the fourteen "oases" for the duration of the cold season, only reached by a scenic aerial cableway. He who wishes to retire even deeper into the untouched loneliness of the Alps may try to take refuge at 6,000-foot-high Fafleralp, of which the announcement of the Swiss National Tourist Office says, "To be reached from Blatten (Loetschen Valley) on foot in one hour." This, of course, is for summer visitors, and Fafleralp in fact has not yet been officially opened for winter sports, while two similar off-beat holiday spots nearby, Bettmeralp and Riederalp, now attract increasing crowds of skiers, thanks to their cable-



The Swiss mountains are awaiting you

(Photo: Swiss National Tourist Office)

village, so that the peace inside will not be disturbed. Not included in the list of the "Quiet Fourteen" are small mountain hamlets with less than three hotels and lone mountain-top hotels. The best-known of Canton Valais' six "motor-free" alpine resorts is Zermatt, featuring 38 hotels and pensions. It is linked with the Rhone valley by a narrow-gauge railway, whereas its little sister, Saas-Fee, admits cars to a parking lot outside the village where

car links with the Rhone valley. In the Bernese Oberland, the three resorts unattainable by motorists but conveniently reached by electric trains of one of Europe's most efficiently run network of mountain railways, are Mürren, Wengen and Kleine Scheidegg. In Central Switzerland there are four, Rigi, Stoos, Bürgenstock and Frutt-Melchsee. In the North-East, "non-motorized" ski fans flock to the sunbath terrace of Braunwald, high above the Linth valley.