

Tourist news

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TOURIST NEWS

PROBLEM SOLVED

Hotels and restaurants in Zurich have found an answer to the industry's staff shortage — they are offering special free courses to personnel who have lost their jobs in other sectors of industry.

A Zurich Labour Office spokesman said that while there had been an increase in unemployment in other industries, hotels and restaurants still had many vacancies.

The special courses' costs are being shared by the Zurich Labour Office and the hotel and restaurant industry.

The Swiss hotel and restaurant industry claims that, nationwide, it is short of some 30,000 personnel, and it has unsuccessfully petitioned the Swiss government to allow more foreign workers into the industry.

JODELLERS SENT ON "CULTURAL MISSION"

Federal councillor Hans Huerlimann told Switzerland's best jodellers to pursue their cultural mission. Speaking at the 16th Federal Jodelling Festival which took place in Aarau in mid-June, he said that such a mission was "all the more important in view of the need of our diverse country to cultivate everything that can strengthen its solidarity, mutual understanding and unity".

Mr. Huerlimann, who is in charge of Transports and Telecommunications, added that the Jodeller's activities were a "real source of comfort at a time when so many values are put into doubt".

GENEVA HOTELS ONLY 49 PER CENT OCCUPIED

Geneva's hotels had to contend with an average occupancy ratio of 49 per cent last year. During their annual meeting, the hoteliers of the town were told that use of only half of their accommodation was the worst total recorded since the war. But the situation in the remainder of Switzerland was even worse than in Geneva, where hotel night bookings had fallen by a little less than 10 per cent. Despite the recession in the hotel industry, it is estimated that tourists spent some 750 million francs in Geneva last year.

CITY-BUS LUCERNE: A HIT

Tests made with two buses which regularly drive through the City free of charge has been a real success. Shopping in Lucerne's old town has thus become even more attractive and easy.

The Steyr buses have been specially developed for pedestrian zones and are designed to connect the partially traffic-free old town and the surrounding parking lots.

They are propelled by liquid gas and therefore really contribute to the protection of the environment and to an ideal pedestrian shopping zone.

WILLIAM TELL GRAND PRIX 1975

The fifth William Tell Grand Prix which for the first time has been put into the highest category of the World Cup (Challenge AIOCC) this year takes place in Switzerland from 18–24 August.

It actually begins on 18 August with the prologue in the City of Lucerne, which, in turn, is connected with the fourth Gentlemen Grand Prix "Lucerners help Lucerners".

INTERNATIONAL BALLET SUMMER COURSES IN LUCERNE

After being so successful last year a second series will take place from 21 July to 2 August 1975. The course is open to professional dancers, pupils and trainee teachers.

There will also be courses for beginners and non-professionals for Polish folklore and possibly jazz ballet. Masters of ballet: Maria Surowiak and Boguslaw Wolcynski.

Three soloist dancers will be present for assistance and demonstration.

The Polish Chopin prize-winner, Jerzy Smoczynski, will play the piano. On Saturday 26 July, 1975 at 8.15 pm at the Hall of the Kantonsschule, Alpenquai, Lucerne, there will be a Polish guest ballet evening. For organisation, information and reservations please refer to Mila Gürtler, Ballet-Studio MILA, Sälistrasse 23a, CH-6005 Lucerne.

SWISS TRANSPORT MUSEUM IN LUCERNE

The newest attraction in the manifold and modern collection of the Swiss Transport Museum is one of the successful Convair CV-990 "Coronado" planes. This huge 43m-long bird with 37m wing spread has been presented by Swissair.

A GOOD PACKAGE

The Hotel Palace in Lucerne is offering all-in arrangements for this year's Lucerne International Music Festival in August and September.

The arrangements include tickets for "very good" seats for festival performances, including those by the New York, Berlin and Israeli Philharmonic Orchestras.

FROM BOEINGS TO BIKES

An Interline group of air hostesses from the United States gave up their wings for wheels when they flew to Switzerland to open Lausanne-based Welcome Swiss Tours' 1975 "Ride a Bike round Lake Geneva" programme.

Launched by Welcome Swiss Tours in 1974, the programme was so successful that it is being expanded this year with tour dates up to mid-October.

Participants cover 110 miles a week, visiting Swiss vineyards, the lakeside resort of Montreux and a

24-hour visit to neighbouring France.

Each tour is escorted by a Welcome Swiss Tours guide and a follow-up repair car with a mechanic. Before commencing the tour, participants are taken to a Lausanne factory which fit the bikes out with their equipment and pedal their way round a practice run.

The tour — including hotels, five days' half-board and two days' bed and breakfast — costs Sw.Fr.478, with no high-season supplement.

AMBASSADOR HOTELS LAUNCH NEW HOLIDAY SCHEME IN VALAIS

"50 francs a day" — that's the motto of the nine hotels belonging to the Ambassador Service in the Valais resorts of Arolla, Brig, Crans-Montana, Leukerbad, Martigny, Saas Fee, Visp and Zermatt.

In first-class hotels the price includes overnight stay (in double room with bath) and breakfast.

In standard-class hotels it also includes a main meal.

This special arrangement is offered from 25 August to 20 December this year. Visitors on a round-trip who spend nine nights in Ambassador Hotels in the Valais, get a tenth night free of charge!

DEATH OF A GREAT ACTOR

Michel Simon, Switzerland's most famous expatriate actor died last May in his eightieth year. Leaving his native Geneva to find adventure abroad, he had found fame in his thirties and became an institution in the French pre-war cinema, appearing in such monuments as *Quai des Brumes*.

Although he showed some misanthropic tendencies towards the end of his life, he remained active most of the time and starred in several films including *Le vieillard et l'enfant*.

DRUG TRAFFIC THROUGH KLOTEN AIRPORT

A record number of drug smugglers have been arrested in Kloten during the months of May and June. Most of them were Chinese from Hong Kong, many of whom were in transit on their way to Amsterdam. Thanks to the vigilance of customs officials scrutinizing certain categories of east Asian passengers, no less than sixteen heroin catches were made in a period of a month. In one case, customs laid their hands on heroin of a market value of 2 million francs.

Tradition broken

The British airline Dan-Air has broken a 21-year tradition by naming one of its fleet of 35 aircraft — and it has named it after a foreign city — Berne!

"This is an historic occasion," Dan-Air scheduled services co-ordinator Mr John Varrier told more than 50 British and Swiss travel agents, tourist officials and journalists at the naming ceremony at Berne airport.

"In the 21 years' history of our company, we have never before named one of our fleet of aircraft. But we have decided to do so in appreciation of our affinity with Berne and to strengthen our links."

The ceremony marked the introduction of the new daily service between London-Gatwick and Berne by Dan-Air — the only international airline serving the Swiss capital. The carrier opened the route three years ago with three flights a week.

Mr Varrier said traffic on the route had increased steadily since 1971 "to the



point where the growth has been over 80 per cent in the last 12 months."

The "City of Berne" is a Hawker Siddeley 748 turbo-prop.

The naming ceremony was performed by Mr Hans-Ulrich Hug,

President of the Berne City Council.

Immediately afterwards the "City of Berne" left for Gatwick with six special guests on board — Bernese orphan children invited to London by Dan-Air and the Swiss National Tourist Office.

BALAIR'S 2.1 MILLION

Swiss charter airline Balair had a net profit last year of Sw.fr.2.1 million — an increase of 1.4 per cent over the 1973 figure.

Among the main reasons, managing director Mr. Heinrich Moser told Balair's annual press conference, had been:

- * the company's success in buying fuel "at the right price in the right places,"
- * the increasing strength of the Swiss franc against the United States dollar, and
- * the introduction of new long-distance destinations.

"On average the price of fuel for Balair rose by 123 per cent last year," reported Mr. Moser. "But we were able to make our purchases abroad in dollars, while most of the company's income was in francs."

The introduction of new long-distance destinations for Balair resulted in more than 4,000 flying hours for the carrier's biggest aircraft, the 249-seater DC-8-63, alone — an average of 11 flying hours a day throughout the whole year.

Mr. Moser said Balair had flown more than 8,000 passengers last year on a newly-introduced regular service to the United States, while the introduction of Lomé (Togo) as a new destination in Africa had helped increase the number of passengers flown to that continent by 47.5 per cent.

The number of passengers flown to

Bangkok and Colombo fell slightly from 22,000 to 21,000, but the passenger total to Rio went up by 13 per cent.

In the short-distance sector, the cancellation of flights to Turkey and Greece during the Cyprus conflict lost Balair 6,000 passengers in September alone.

On prospects for 1975, Mr. Moser said: "The current unstable international monetary and economic situation makes predictions difficult. But prospects are promising and Balair is looking to the future with optimism and confidence."

WORLD TOURISM ORGANISATION

Madrid has been chosen as the headquarters of the World Tourism Organisation — the new intergovernmental body succeeding the International Union of Official Travel Organisations.

The decision to make the move from Geneva, provisional W.T.O. headquarters, was announced at the Organisation's first General Assembly in Madrid.

Delegates from the 89 nations attending the Assembly, chose Madrid by the required two-thirds majority from among offers made by the governments of Mexico, Philippines, Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

A W.T.O. spokesman said the Organisation was expected to move its headquarters to Madrid early next year.

Spain has offered both a provisional site, for immediate use, and a final one.

The provisional headquarters, in the

Palacio de Congresos y Exposiciones, is already equipped with all the necessary installations "for immediate and exclusive use." The final building will be completed in about 19 months' time. This will be constructed on the Avenida del Generalísimo within the Civil Centre now under construction opposite the existing Palacio de Congresos.

OPTIMISM

The outlook for tourism this summer gives rise to "a certain optimism," according to a Swissair statement.

The airline says that "APEX tariffs for flights across the North Atlantic have found a market that is better than expected."

HOTEL CHIEF

New Vice-President of the Swiss Hotel Association is Mr. Emile-L. Niederhauser, general manager of the Palace Hotel in Lausanne.

He succeeds Mr Peter Andreas Tresch, who was last year elected to the Presidency of the Swiss Hotel Association.

Mr. Niederhauser has served on the Association's central committee for the past four years.

WALK IN TESSIN

The Ticino Tourist Association is organising a programme of 15 walking tours this year — "to places of cultural

interest" — to mark European Architectural Heritage Year.

The tours range from half an hour to two hours' walking and cover all areas of Switzerland's Italian-speaking region.

BBC IN BERNE

BBC television sent a team to Berne recently — and called on the city tourist office to help them find their way around.

The BBC team was in the Swiss capital to film for a forthcoming 13-part documentary series called "The Age of Uncertainty," dealing with "social ideas of the past and the events that grew out of them." In Berne they filmed localities where Lenin lived.

ICE HOCKEY SCHOOL IN BERNE

Berne's SCB Club — national ice hockey champions for the past two seasons — is organising for the first time in its history an ice hockey school for schoolboys.

Six one-week courses are being held until 16th August, but the final week (11th-16th August) has already been fully booked.

The school is at Berne's Allmend Ice Stadium. Instructors are leading Czechoslovak stars Richard Farda and Jarda Krupicka, and well-known Berne players Urs Dolder and Bruno Zahnd.

Cost of the course is Sw.fr.350 a week, including meals and accommodation at the Ice Stadium. The course is open to schoolboys from throughout Switzerland born between 1957 and 1966.

MAX ROSTAL MASTER COURSE IN BERNE

The famous violinist and music teacher, Max Rostal, is again holding his International Master Course for Violin and Viola in Berne from 28th July to 23rd August.

Professor Rostal lives in Berne — and it's the twentieth time his course is being held there. The course always attracts applications from every continent, with professional musicians, teachers and students attending either as "active" or "passive" participants.

Full details are available from the Secretariat, Max Rostal Master Courses, Weststrasse 12, 3005 Berne. The Official Tourist Office of the City of Berne, telephone 031/22 12 12 would like to hear from local residents interested in providing free accommodation for course participants.

BERNE'S NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION

Berne's 1st August National Day celebrations will not be quite the same this year — the traditional firework display on the Gurten has become a victim of money-saving measures and has had to be called off.

Nevertheless, an attractive programme of events has been organised. Games at which everybody can

participate will take place on Bärenplatz. The traditional children's lantern parade will start from the bearpits at 20.15 hrs. and end at the town hall square.

Official federal ceremonies get under way at 20.00 at the Münsterplatz in front of the Cathedral.

Then, from 22.00-01.00, there will be open-air music and dancing at Bärenplatz and Waisenhausplatz while many wine and dine in local restaurants.

BERNE — THE FIRST CITY WITH ROUTES FOR CYCLISTS

Berne has become the first city in Switzerland to work out a safety route for cyclists. It's a 4½-mile route, intended mainly for school-children from the Muri, Murifeld and Schosshalde areas who cycle to the Kirchenfeld Grammar School.

The safety route — clearly marked with a white bicycle on a red background — avoids the mainstream of traffic. The idea has been introduced as a six-month experiment and, if successful, will be tried in other parts of Berne.

CATERING TO THE SWISS

When it comes to the catering business, the Swiss are the acknowledged champions. They go all over the world to act as restaurant managers, maîtres d'hôtel, chefs, and so on. So, it's a bit of a switch, and a feather in the cap, that the manager of the restaurant at Lugano's new Convention Centre is an Englishman, David Bolton.

He took charge of the operation for the well-known Mövenpick chain of restaurants when the Centre opened at the beginning of April, after serving as assistant manager at the existing Mövenpick in the community. He faces a big job since, in addition to running the restaurant, he is in charge of all the catering, including for the conventions and other gatherings, which will take place in the up to 1,050-place banquet hall and small dining rooms; it's this side of the job which appeals to him most.

David didn't suddenly scale the heights. He climbed up laboriously, like any good Swiss. His parents were in the hotel business in Britain, and he spent three years studying at the Brighton Catering School.

His first Swiss job was with Mövenpick, as a waiter. Then, he moved to St. Moritz, first as a waiter, and then as buyer for food and spirits at the Schweizerhof Hotel; and later as barman in a night club.

Based on his own experience, David Bolton believes it is tougher running a restaurant in Switzerland than in Britain — or in most places. His reasons? Such things as having to think (and prepare menus) in the three national languages of German, French and Swiss, not to mention English for visitors; to control staff from such diverse countries as Italy, Spain, Austria, Turkey. Swiss clients also are very exacting, fussing over the smallest detail, and going over their bills with a magnifying glass.

SWISS CHURCHES

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches à 11h15 et 19h00.

PASTEUR: Michel Languillat, 8 Park View Road, London, N.3. Tele: 01-346 5281.

SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION: John Southworth Centre, 48 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 2HA.

Sundays: Holy Mass at 6.30 p.m. with sermon in German, in the Club hall, ground floor.

(2nd floor at the same time, Protestant service in German).

RESIDENCE OF CHAPLAIN: Bossard, Swiss Catholic Mission, 48 Great Peter Street, (2nd floor), London SW1P 2HA. Telephone: 01-222 2895.

SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, every Sunday at 10.00 a.m. Sunday school takes place on the first and the third Sunday in the month for children of all age groups. Children assemble in the church with their parents who attend the normal Service. Liturgical Service takes place every second Sunday in the month. Services also at John Southworth Centre, 48 Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1 every Sunday at 6.30 p.m.

MINISTERS: Pfr. U. Stefan, 1, Womersley Road, N.8. Tel: 01-340 9740.

OBITUARY

We regret to announce the death of Mary Frances Wedderburn Sommer on 4th June after a short illness. Mary Sommer was a native of Highgate. She married Alfred William Sommer over 49 years ago while both were resident in Kobe, Japan. Mr. and Mrs. Sommer settled in London in 1928. A kind and generous wife and mother, she is mourned by her husband, one daughter and two sons.

A RETIREMENT

Mr. Walter Bion, who joined Bally's over 40 years ago, and was Manager Director of Bally's Shoe Company Limited in London for 19 years, has retired from his executive duties at the end of June 1975.

He has joined the Board of Bally Group of Companies (U.K.), a newly-formed company which controls all activities of Bally's in the U.K.

Having moved to Frinton-on-Sea he will no longer be able to play an active part in The City Swiss Club, the Swiss Economic Council, nor the Swiss Hostel for Girls of which Mrs. Bion was also a member of the Committee.

Mr. and Mrs. Bion wish to inform all their friends that they are anxious to maintain their bond with the Swiss Colony and, whenever possible, will try to attend their functions.