

Zeitschrift: Die Schweiz = Suisse = Svizzera = Switzerland : offizielle Reisezeitschrift der Schweiz. Verkehrszentrale, der Schweizerischen Bundesbahnen, Privatbahnen ... [et al.]

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Verkehrszentrale

Band: - (1935)

Heft: 11

Artikel: Do come to Switzerland, darling!

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-779000>

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Do come to Switzerland, darling!

Somewhere in Switzerland.
November 3rd 1935.

John dear,

When I sat down to write to you I had to make a conscious effort to count the number of days that have passed since I arrived here. I simply didn't know! Time has ceased to exist, I am living in an enchanted dream. Oh, I know that this confession does not sound very flattering to you. «Too busy enjoying herself to miss me!» you may say. But I refuse to discuss the question. In five days you will be here with me yourself, and then I shall show you how much I have missed you, and how much **you** have missed by allowing business to interfere with the holiday you promised to spend with me alone. Until now this has been the one flaw in an otherwise perfect world — that you are not here to share it all with me. But let me try to explain.

I am in my element. I have become another woman. Grey old London, dear as it is, seems a hundred thousand miles away. In the morning I awake and at once my eyes instinctively turn towards the French window leading on to the terrace of my hotel room. What I see is too beautiful for my inadequate pen to describe: an Alpine valley straight from the pages of a book of fairy-tales; on the farther slope a pine-forest mantled in ermine; in the background, dazzlingly white in the clear crispness of sundrenched mountain air, giant peaks rise up into the blue sky. Sun, air, space and — what I treasure most of all — peace: a perfect stillness and harmony that blends with the scene. Never have I known such restfulness!

And yet my day is full of life and movement. Every evening finds me gloriously tired. For — this confession was to have remained a secret till your arrival, but I simply can't keep it to myself — for I am learning to ski. Oh, you needn't smile so pityingly! When I saw a Ski School class at work on the slope near the hotel I couldn't resist. It looked so easy, so simple. So I enrolled and — believe it or not — tomorrow we are making our first short tour.

Hotel life here is not just a question of having a roof over one's head and a supply of food at regular intervals while one is away from home. People are here to enjoy themselves, and they do. My room is tastefully and comfortably furnished. Anything more unlike the stereotype «hotel room» it would be impossible to imagine. After my morning bath I put on ski-ing things and go down to breakfast, served in the heated verandah. Early though the season is, there are already lots of English visitors, and I am never at a loss for pleasant company. A common interest in ski-ing and a desire to exchange and share the host of new impressions that crowd in upon us in this new world, create a free, natural atmosphere in which conventional stiffness and frigidity soon disappear. It is impossible to be «distant» in these surroundings.

After breakfast three of the other guests and myself go off to our ski-ing lesson. At noon we return for lunch, and I should be ashamed of my appetite if it were not for the fact that all the others are just as ravenous as myself. A short rest after lunch and then off to the practice-grounds again. These lessons are fun, though we all take them seriously.

Sunset — tea-time — is the signal for the end of the sporting day. You have no idea how fine a cup of steaming tea can be after one has been out on the snow all the afternoon! Over tea plans are made for the evening. I am writing this just before dressing for dinner; we have an excellent dance band here and there is a little party on tonight, so I am looking forward to enjoying myself. But still more I am looking forward to your arrival. Do come soon, darling — you don't know what you are missing!

Grace.



The Aerial Railway from Engelberg to Trübsee (Central Switzerland) — Die Schwebbahn Engelberg-Trübsee (Zentralschweiz) — Le Téléférique Engelberg-Trübsee (Suisse centrale)



Braunwald Ski-ing Grounds (East Switzerland) showing the Ortstock and the Hohen Turm — Das Braunwalder Skigebiet mit dem Ortstock und dem Hohen Turm — Champs de ski de Braunwald, avec l'Ortstock et la Haute Tour



A powerful snow-plough at work on the Julier Pass, the great motor-road in the Engadine — Die mächtige Schneeschleuder öffnet den Julier, die grosse Auto-Paßstrasse ins Engadin — Le chasse-neige du Julier, la grande voie automobile de l'Engadine



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