

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 6 (2000-2002)
Heft: 1

Artikel: Swiss tourism goes up in the world
Autor: Farr, Michael
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-854844>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 20.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

A little piece of Switzerland has disappeared from central London. The beautifully panelled Swiss National Tourist Office shop in Swiss Court has become a ladies accessory shop!

I always found the staff there most helpful and if they were unable to immediately provide brochures or timetables for my journeys they would order them from Switzerland and, thanks to the wonders of the internet, a few days later a thick package would plop through the letter box, post-marked Luzern.

The services formerly provided there are now dispensed from the reception area of Swiss Tourism, on the tenth floor of the Swiss Centre and accessible by lift from the entrance to the left of the Bally Shoes shop.

Knowing how busy the office could be at times, I fear that the space allocated upstairs may prove inadequate, and whilst the staff are as helpful as ever, the surroundings certainly do not have the same ambience.

Over 100 years ago, in May 1893, the Syndicat des Intérêts de la Suisse Romande et du Jura-Simplon-cantons opened a London office at 11B Regent Street and, after a referendum voted to nationalise the main Swiss Railways in 1901, the office began to market journeys all over Switzerland.

At about the same time Dr Alexander Seiler led a campaign in the Swiss parliament for a central organisation to market tourism and the London office took on its present rôle. At the outbreak of war in 1939 most of the staff returned to Switzerland, the first floor offices were taken over by the Red Cross and the basement became an air-raid shelter.

After the war the increasing number of UK travellers wishing to make arrangements to visit the country necessitated a move in April 1949 to larger offices in the Strand, near Trafalgar Square. These visitors were nominally entitled to a travel allowance of £25, but only a limited amount was allocated each month by the Treasury, issued on a first come-first served basis, and intending travellers often queued overnight at the nearby Swiss Bank to claim their Swiss francs.

The SNTTO public counter has been open at the Swiss Centre since 1966 and the glockenspiel over the door, whose 25 bells ring each day, was presented to the City of Westminster in 1985. The bells still peal above the door of Claires Accessories, but intending travellers will in future need to visit the tenth floor of the Swiss Centre. Perhaps they should install a cable car!

ARTICLES AND PHOTOGRAPHS FOR SWISS EXPRESS

If possible please supply copy on a floppy disc or CD in RTF format together with a hard copy typed double spaced.

Photographs should be sharp and well exposed and can be forwarded as slides, prints (colour or black & white) or digital. Digital pictures must be taken at the highest possible resolution on your camera. At this moment in time I am not "au fait" enough with digital imaging to give a minimum resolution. Diagrams should be in black and white only and preferably A4 sized on high quality paper.

All that being said I would rather have an article etc. than not, so if your medium happens to be hammer/chisel and granite or whatever then send it in anyway.