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From: Michael Kemp - Wetherby

The cost of holidays in Switzerland

I have noted with interest recent articles about the cost of holidays in Switzerland and the emergence of low-cost airlines. The prices mentioned on page 26 on the "January" issue have prompted me to make my own comments.

Until about 10 years ago my wife and I had never considered Switzerland as holiday destination as everyone "knew" it was "far too expensive". When the last of our offspring had achieved financial independence we thought we might be able to manage a one off holiday in the Alps, both of us enjoying upland walking and railways. After looking at several brochures we discovered the Kuoni Swiss Summer brochure and were surprised at the reasonable prices, well below certain others. We booked Kandersteg in September 1992, were delighted with the good value and have returned every year in September since. This year we are staying in Kandersteg for the 4th time at the 3* Hotel Blumisalp, two weeks half board at £605 each, including Swiss Card, Fly-Rail luggage and Swiss Air scheduled flights.

This is still expensive for families, self catering would be cheaper. But, by using the other option of a budget airline and booking one's own accommodation in a similar hotel I still doubt that it would be possible to beat these prices. My estimates (per person) for this are:

UK-Zürich return flight - £50

Swiss Card & Fly-Rail - £72.50 Travel £112.50

14 Nights half board, low season at Hotel Blumisalp (booked direct) £592 (ChF 2.53/ £1)

Total cost of holiday £704.

Staying at more popular resorts does cost appreciably more and to be fair the choice with Kuoni is limited although comparable value can be obtained at Adelboden, Champéry, Château D'Oex and Davos. although all this sounds like a PR exercise for Kuoni I must stress that I am not in any way connected with the company. I just believe that members may be paying more than in strictly necessary and that looking at main stream packages can save money.

There was a proposal a few years ago to compare a list of hotels visited by members. I would be happy to assist and think it's a good idea.

From: Iain Dodd - Cyberspace

Dampfbahn Furka-Bergstrecke

I was wondering if the members could help me identify a locomotive seen at Realp in August 1999. When I visited an emergency timetable was in operation using No. 1 Furkahorn. Because I have walking difficulties I was not able to visit the depot but the tour leader reported that a locomotive bearing the number 9 was seen.

Locomotive number 2 has been recorded on various magazines as being rebuilt from Furka Oberalp (FO) number 2 whilst in other magazines it is recorded as being based on FO number 9. From Peter Arnold's article in Swiss Express it appears that FO 9 was in better condition than FO 2 so it seems to me that reports that number 2 is based on FO 9 is more sensible. Can anyone confirm if number 2 has been renumbered 9 to reflect its true ancestry or do both 2 and 9 exist? Also can anyone say where the other locomotives recovered from Vietnam are and if any work is taking place on them?

THE CLASSIFIED SECTION - Members Adverts

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