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AND FINALLY... Flughafen Zürich




Photo: Boyd Misstear

Planning to take one of the first flights out of Zürich Flughafen (ZRH) from 6am onwards? Here are a few things you might want to consider when making your travel plans. Unlike many international airports ZRH does not operate over a full 24 hour day. Terminal complexes close down as the last flights arrive late in the evening. Long before midnight most people have departed as public transport ceases around then not resuming until after 5am. Depending where you are staying in Switzerland, this may be a problem if you are aiming to arrive for an early check-in. Around midnight even the lighting is reduced and the only activity in the empty halls is likely to be a handful of marooned travellers not wishing to check into a premium-rated Zürich-area hotel. As the ambient noise dies away, the ever present level of “muzak” rises - to the delight of all those who love that sound! But not for long, gradually a cacophony of noise erupts, originating from the cleaners and their automated floor and escalator polishing machines – a side of Swiss transportation not often covered in this

magazine! There would appear to be no comfortable lounge seats in the complex, only modern equivalents of 3rd class wooden railway carriage seating of yesteryear, offering little chance of any respite and every incentive to stay awake and write a piece for the next *Swiss Express* using your laptop's battery - there are no power outlets. As 4am approaches on Level 3 (above the station) airline check-in desks start to open, immigration follows at 5am, and finally at around 6am coffee becomes available from sleepy-eyed staff at kiosks and in airline lounges. Somehow this sequence of priorities seems unhelpful! There are two bright spots:- left luggage containers of varying sizes are readily available, but carry lots of coins as 24-hour charging segments could cost CHF8 or more per locker depending on size; and toilets and washrooms remain open and fully lit. 

Editor's Note; US member Boyd Misstear put his personal comfort on the line to bring us this information. Either that, or he too was not prepared to shell-out for overpriced hotel accommodation!

SwissTip Good ideas and information about Switzerland from travellers.

Hungry for Switzerland in Chester? Why not visit Zügers Tea Room and Patisserie in St John Street. It is run by an Anglo-Swiss family who formerly had a highly successful hotel on the Wirral. Starting with their special Continental breakfast, the menu moves through coffee-time treats and then on to lunch which features Swiss staples such as Wiener Schnitzel and Rosti Alpine. Afternoon tea brings Apple Strudel, cream-rich tortes, and other Swiss specialties to the fore, all of which could be seriously damaging to your waistline! A warning though, it is always busy so be prepared to join the queue of locals who have voted Zügers as the best café in their City. 

Dislike crowds? Remember that the Swiss start work early and also often finish earlier than in the UK so try to avoid local public transport between 06.00 & 08.00 and then 16.00 to 18.00. Some schools start at 07.00 and finish at 12.00 so children often invade buses, trams and trains then. In cities many offices keep to a fixed lunch hour from 12.00 to 13.00 so eat later. 