

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: - (2014)
Heft: 120

Artikel: Going around in circles. Number 2, The second of Steve Buck's occasional series of articles about Ticino trips
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-854164>

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Going Around in Circles Number 2



The second of Steve Buck's occasional series of articles about Ticino trips

A Voralpen express at Arth-Goldau headed by 456-093.

All photos: Steve Buck

After my initial article about trips from the Ticino, I promised other ideas for excursions from Lugano. This one covers more mileage but occupies about the same time in total. You leave Lugano at 08.57 and return at 18.47. The departure time means that you cannot linger long over breakfast, but are back in time for dinner.

The first leg of the journey is on the 08.57 all-stations train to Biasca as far as Bellinzona where you arrive at 09.27 and walk out on to the area immediately outside the station building to board the PostAuto heading for Chur. This departs at 09.40. Reservation is compulsory on this service, but is relatively simple and can be done from your own computer at home using the website www.postauto.ch and webcode 10040. Reservation is free, but is checked, as the seating capacity on the vehicle may be limited. The ride up to San Bernardino round the hairpins offers some spectacular views. There is a three-minute stop at San Bernadino Post Office - time for a quick cigarette, or a visit to the adjacent toilet. Be sure to tell the driver that's where you're going to ensure that you don't get left behind! After passing through the tunnel under the pass, some of the journeys on this route call at intermediate villages and pass through the Via Mala, instead of using the motorway. The PostAuto arrives at Thusis at 11.25 and you can either alight there to board the RhB train which departs at 11.33 and arrives at Chur at 12.03, or remain on the postbus which arrives in Chur at 11.50. In either case you have just over two hours to spare before the next leg of the journey. Opposite the bus station on the end of the bridge over the railway is a large Migros store with a fine self-service restaurant for a quick lunch, or you may wish to spend the time wandering around the old centre of Chur. There are plenty of other food outlets in this charming city including several on the station itself.

You will need to be back at the station ready to board the 14.16 to Zürich on which you travel as far as Pfäffikon (SZ)

where you arrive at 15.19. There is a kiosk just outside the station for an ice cream on a hot day, but to be honest there is not a lot else to see. At 16.06 your Voralpen Express arrives, which you board for a nice journey through hilly green countryside. You pass Samstagern where the main depot and works of the SudOstBahn can be seen mainly on the right hand side in the direction of travel. At 16.46 you arrive on Platform 6 at Arth Goldau after a steep descent into the station. You need to be in the middle of the train to be best placed to make a quick transfer through the subway to Platform 5, where your ICN can be found. This Basel-Luzern-Lugano train leaves at 16.50 for the run over the Gotthard. Being an ICN it carries a catering possibility so afternoon refreshments should be available. After calling at Bellinzona, the train terminates at Lugano at 18.47. Hope you enjoyed the journey. 



Chur PostAuto station with a selection of vehicles.

A Chur – Zurich InterRegio for the journey to Pfäffikon.

