

Zeitschrift: Annual Report / Switzerland Tourism
Herausgeber: Switzerland Tourism
Band: - (2016)

Artikel: Representations around the globe
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-685619>

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Representations around the globe

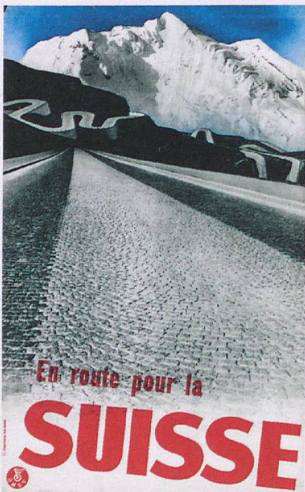
SNTO offices began simply as information and ticket agencies, but increasingly developed to become essential marketing hubs. Time and again and with prominent support they have advertised Switzerland around the world as a holiday destination.

From 1936 until the end of World War II the Swiss Tourism Bureau in Berlin was housed on the ground floor of the magnificent "Haus der Schweiz", or Switzerland House. Prospective travellers could ask expert staff about holidays in Switzerland and book train tickets for their desired destination on the spot. Did the protective hand of the bronze sculpture of little Walter Tell on the façade save the building? As if by some miracle, Switzerland House survived the Allied air raid on Berlin in the last weeks of the war in 1945 practically unscathed.

United under one roof

As World War II brought foreign travel effectively to a halt, the SNTO representation in Berlin handled the departure of Swiss citizens from the city. Keeping Switzerland's foreign representations open even in the confusion of war was a conscious decision, strengthened further by a federal decree in 1939. All 12 agencies operated by the SBB (Swiss Federal Railways), from Amsterdam to Vienna, passed to the SNTO, forming the foundation for a unified presentation of Switzerland as a tourism destination. And these sometimes took a quite spectacular form – for example, when Diana Rigg, star of the James Bond film "On Her Majesty's Secret Service", waved from the roof of the Swiss Centre in London in 1968.

Over the past 20 years Switzerland Tourism has opened a completely new chapter. Whether in Beijing, New York, Amsterdam or Dubai, the 26 representative offices have metamorphosed from classic tourist information agencies into marketing hubs which – in agreement with head office in Zurich – promote Destination Switzerland with campaigns big and small.



First advertising poster for motor touring. "All roads lead to Switzerland", a photomontage by Herbert Matter.



The SNTO opened a new office in Stockholm, to market Switzerland as a holiday destination in Scandinavia. After a short break, today Switzerland Tourism once again has a presence in Sweden.

△
1935

◇
1936



In light of the economic situation, the government devalued the Swiss franc.



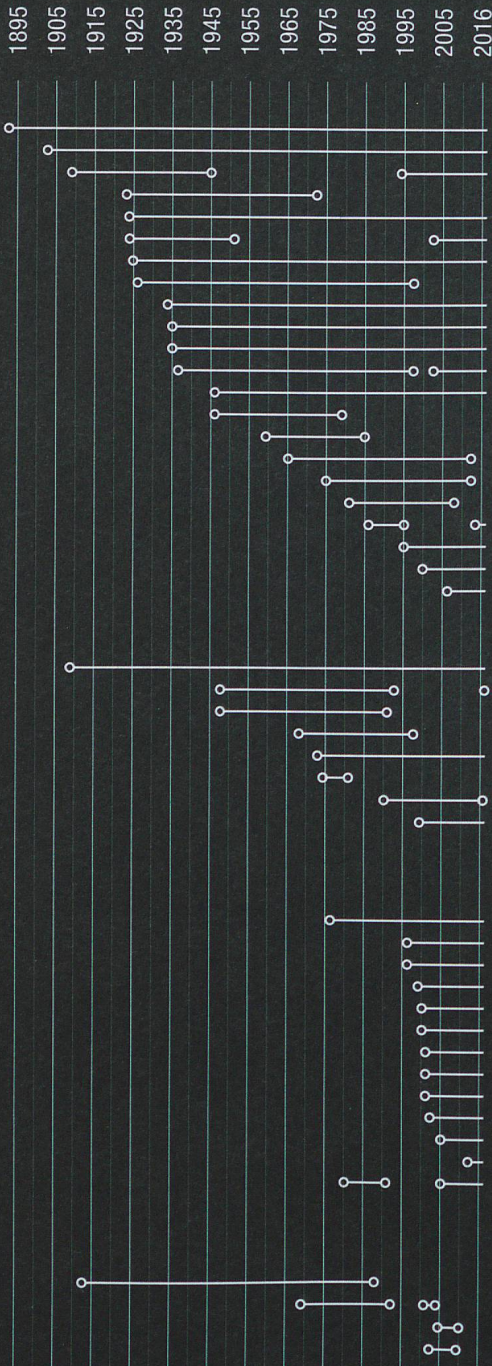
007 on the roof of the Swiss Centre, London: promotion in Britain for the new Bond film set in Switzerland.



Switzerland House in Berlin: firmly in Swiss hands, even during World War II.

Strategic worldwide presence

Switzerland Tourism has offices in 26 countries around the world. It all began with SBB ticket offices at strategically important points around the world, which the federal railways then handed to the SNTO in 1939. This marketing network has changed enormously since then. From Cairo to Beijing, from Nice to Moscow a round-the-world trip through time, with a few noteworthy back-ground stories.



1 Cairo

With the Suez Canal bringing floods of travellers through Cairo, the SBB opened an office selling travel tickets in the Egyptian capital, which was of major touristic and strategic significance. The SNTO took over in 1941, and in the late 1980s the Cairo office became a branch of Swissair.

2 Nice

With the world's "rich and beautiful" gathering for summer on the Côte d'Azur, in 1923 the SNTO decided that this was an ideal market to beguile with dreams of winter holidays in Switzerland. 50 years later the information office closed, and the region was henceforth managed from Paris.



3 Frankfurt

The SNTO returned to Germany in 1946 as the first foreign tourism office to do so, opening in Frankfurt. Even shortly after the end of World War II, managers were convinced that the German market would soon play an important role once again.

4 San Francisco

The SNTO opened its San Francisco office in 1947, in a prominent position on Union Square. When Swissair launched flights to Los Angeles in 1993, the SNTO moved with them and relocated to L.A.. But then San Francisco developed into a hi-tech hub, the gateway to Silicon Valley – so in 2016 Switzerland Tourism moved back again, with the SwissPier project representing a highly exclusive Swiss showcase.

5 Tokyo

In 1974 Swissair flew direct to Tokyo for the first time. The SNTO took advantage of the opportunity and, two years later, opened a bureau in the city, to establish important contacts with press, TV, radio and the travel trade. Consequently, and for many years, more tourists visited Switzerland from Japan than from any other East Asian country.

6 Moscow

Switzerland Tourism was the first national tourism organisation with a presence in Moscow, successfully developing the Russian market soon after the end of the Soviet Union, in 1995, and later in close collaboration with Swissair. Despite various setbacks, Swiss tourism marketing still has a presence in Russia today.

7 Hong Kong

In 1996 Switzerland's advertising chiefs recognised the great potential of Southeast Asia for Swiss tourism. The office in Hong Kong was expanded three years after opening, to work ever more intensively in the region. Today, Hong Kong primarily takes care of southern China, while responsibility for tourism marketing in Southeast Asia is now handled locally through offices in Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia.

8 Beijing

Switzerland Tourism was the first European national tourism organisation authorised to establish a representative office in China. The Beijing office opened in 1999 and continues to be the heart of all of Switzerland's tourism efforts in China.