

Seizing opportunities

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Seizing opportunities.

Switzerland Network in the USA

With almost 2 million overnight stays, the North American market constitutes an important market segment for Switzerland. An important basis for targeted marketing work in the USA is the «Switzerland Network» training programme initiated by Switzerland Tourism. Travel Weekly – one of the largest and best selling trade journals of North America – described the programme as «one of the most highly rated specialist programs according to agents».

This two-stage training programme for travel agents was elaborated in cooperation with the Institute of Certified Travel Agents, ICTA, and the Travel Industry Advisory Board. In the first stage – the home-based course with a final exam – the future «Swiss Pros»

acquired their basic knowledge of Switzerland. The second stage – on-location training – includes an individual study trip and participation in the «Switzerland Network Convention» (October 27–29, 2000, in Lucerne). The course concluded with the «Switzerland Network Certified Specialist» diploma. Switzerland Tourism guarantees graduates of the course continuous further education and product information as well as promotion and sales support.

The innovative training programme has led to the formation of a core group of approximately 560 highly qualified travel specialists in the USA. In addition, the programme strengthens the North American view of

Switzerland as a holiday and travel destination and opens new distribution channels for Swiss suppliers.

Russia workshop

This workshop, which was carried out for the second time, was a complete success again this year. It has already become the leading event for cooperation between Swiss and Russian partners. From August 31 to September 2, 2000, 40 leading tour operators from Russia and the CIS states and participants from the media were able to take part in the workshop in Montreux. The Russian travel agents included various leading operators as well as some companies that have only recently discovered the Swiss market. The potential of participants is therefore very high.



After the one-day workshop, every participant had the opportunity to visit one or two Swiss destinations in person and thus to deepen their knowledge on the spot.

Russian growth in the year 2000 reached 42%, which also makes it a highly interesting market for Switzerland in future.

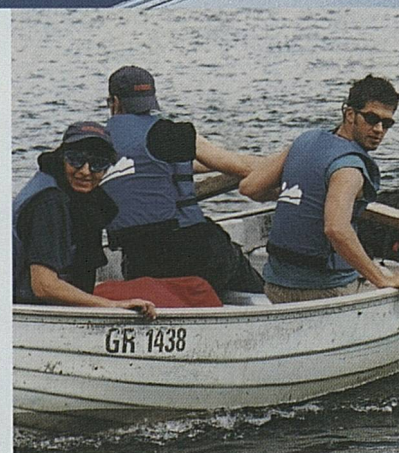
India's fascination for Switzerland

Approximately 200,000 Indians visit Switzerland every year. Most of them follow in the footsteps of their Indian film heroes; Switzerland's mountains are, after all, one of «Bollywood's» favourite settings, partly thanks to the good relations between the Indian film industry, the travel sector and the Swiss tourist trade. This creates certain challenges, primarily in the culinary field. Many Indians are strict vegetarians and wish to continue to observe this way of life when abroad. An increasing number of restaurants have now at least added a few vegetarian dishes to their

menus. That their efforts have met with success is proved by an article in the Assignments Abroad Times of June 2000 which says that «if there is paradise on earth, then it is Switzerland!»

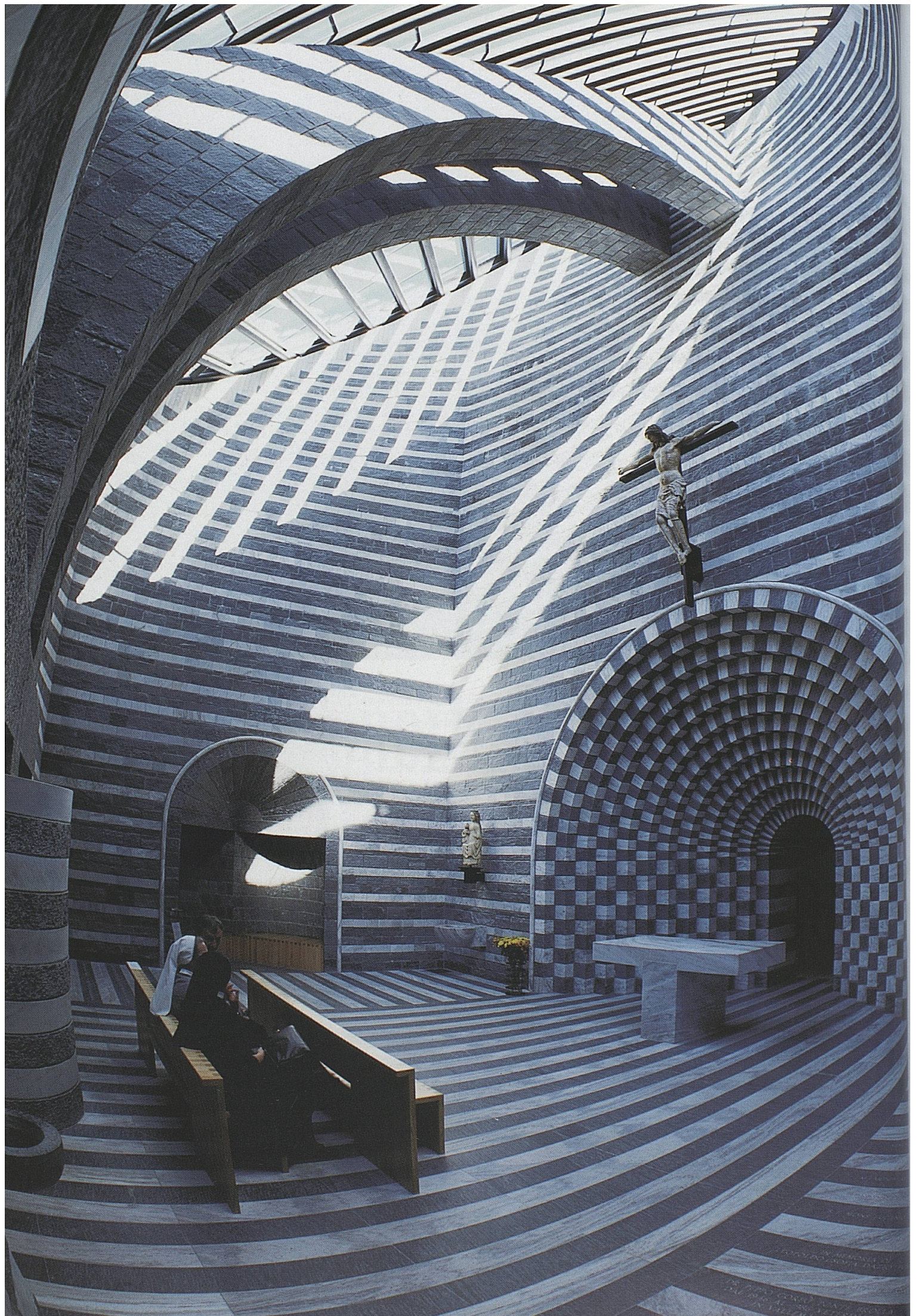
Ski Free and Snow Camps

The between-seasons period was not only launched by a large-scale campaign promoting autumn, but also by a special offer created for the pre-winter season. These special combined «Ski Free» offers for weekly packages in the low and between-seasons periods, which include free ski passes, were launched in cooperation with the Swiss cableways Association. 18 destinations are taking part in the attractive offer, which is primarily directed at the younger customer segment. A further offer – entitled «Snow Camps» is intended to breathe new life into the ski camps that seem to have gone into hibernation in some resorts.



Abenteuer Schweiz (Switzerland adventure)

For the first time, Switzerland Tourism sponsored «Abenteuer Schweiz» – a «reality show» in 10 episodes on Swiss TV3 which targeted a mainly younger audience, presenting numerous ideas and excursion tips for active holiday experiences in the great outdoors. Each of the episodes was accompanied by holiday tips on the homepage of Switzerland Tourism.



Quality means insisting on the best and supplying first-class services — this applies to architecture as it does to tourism. For Switzerland Tourism, quality has top priority. And the label of quality is our yardstick.

