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Tourist News

AND EVEN ZERMATT
NEEDN'T BE EXPENSIVE

The cheapest way of staying in a place is still in a holiday flat – especially for family holidays. In the winter resort of Zermatt in canton Valais for instance, there are over 8,000 beds available in chalets costing 10 to 25 francs per person daily. A list of these flats is obtainable from Zermatt Tourist Office. If you're planning on staying in an hotel, don't forget that hotel prices drop by 30% during the off-season. So enjoy a cheap holiday during the period covering the beginning of January till the 25th of that month or after Easter when snow conditions are still favourable. Reckon on six to eight francs for lunch in one of the mountain restaurants such as "Blauherd", "Schwarzsee" and "Ritty". The self-service restaurants in the village centre are the cheapest. One week's ski voucher, which is valid on nine aerial cableways, one rack-railway, four chairlifts and gondola cableways, sixteen ski-tows (giving access to 80 miles of ski runs), is worth the price of Fr. 166. There's a 50% reduction for children under 16 years.

SKI NURSERIES IN SWITZERLAND

More and more ski-nurseries are being organised in Swiss ski resorts so that parents can also ski in peace for a few hours. In the morning, children (from three to twelve years) are taught in ski school. Lunch is included in most places and in the afternoon, there's more ski school instruction or, when bad weather prevails, play-time in the nursery. Young ski fans are looked after by trained staff in the following resorts: Adelboden, Anzère, Arosa, Bettmeralp, Braunwald, Davos, Engelberg, Flims, Grindelwald, Kandersteg, Klosters, Les Diablerets, Lenk, Les Marécottes, Lenzerheide, Les Pléiades, Locarno, Pontresina, Saas Fee, Savognin, Scuol-Tarasp-Vulpera, Sedrun, Sils, Silvaplana, St. Luc, St. Moritz, Verbier, Wengen, Wildhaus and Zermatt. Cost per day – approximately Fr. 12. – and for one week (including board), between Fr. 50 to Fr. 100. For more details consult the brochure recently issued by the Swiss National Tourist Office – "Child Care in Swiss Holiday Resorts".

CENTRAL SWITZERLAND: NEW CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING LOIPES

A new four-mile long cross-country skiing loipe and a two-mile long ski-hiking path have recently been opened at Emmetten (3,000 feet above sea-level). To get there, take the N2 road to Beckenried from Lucerne or go by boat from Brunnen and then catch the Treib-Seelisberg mountain railway. This is also an ideal skiing region.



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Swiss Abbeys

WETTINGEN CONVENT

Ancient convent which shelters since 1841 the normal school of the Canton of Aaran.

The Count Henri of Rapperswil, on his return journey from Palestine in 1227, was struck by a violent storm: he then made the vow that should he come back home safely, he would construct a convent. While invoking the Virgin, he saw a bright star amongst the clouds and took it as a sign that his wish had been granted. On his return, he had the convent built near the village of Wettingen and gave it the name "Meerstern" (Maris stella); according to his desire, the abbot Eberhard of Salmansweiler established himself in the convent with 7 priests and 5 deacons.

After the death of his wife, the count Henri of Rapperswil took the habit, became a precentor of the convent, where he died in 1246.

During the middle-ages, the convent declined through bad management; at the time of the Reformation, it was even deserted by nearly all the monks, but came back to life completely again later.

In 1507, the monastery was partly

destroyed by fire, but was reconstructed.

In 1799, it was plundered by the French. It had formerly a printing house, and many works composed by the monks were published.

Under the management of the abbot Pierre II Schmid, of Baar the convent was very flourishing, especially from the artistic point of view. From that time date the magnificent stalls of the choir, the work of an unknown artist whose monogram was J.G. 1603–4.

The transept contains about 180 stained glass windows from the 17th centuries, giving successfully a very good image of the development of the art in Switzerland.

In 1841, after having been administered by 44 priests, it was suppressed with the other convents of Argovie. The brothers were expelled and retired to the convent of Meererau in Austria, given to them by the Austrian emperor. This monastery now bears the name of Neu Wettingen (New Wettingen).

After several alterations, the normal school of Wettingen is still in existence today.

Pierre Savoie

