

Via Alpina Trekking - Meiringen to Lenk

Trip Code: SGML

Version:



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Tackle a challenging trek in the spectacular mountain landscapes of the Bernese Oberland
- Magnificent views of Swiss giants including the Eiger, Mönch & Jungfrau
- Cross high Alpine passes, hike beneath hanging glaciers and discover stunning waterfalls and glacial lakes
- Relax after your walk in the comfort of charming 4* & 3* hotels, many with spa and pool facilities

AT A GLANCE

- Self-Guided
- 6 days trekking
- Luggage transfer
- Max altitude 2778m
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Upgraded hotel accommodation
- GPS Travel App
- Daily departures available
- Join at Meiringen / End in Lenk

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Stunning scenery straight out of fairy tales, superlative hiking on well-marked trails, delicious Swiss cuisine and warm hospitality - welcome to Switzerland's Bernese Oberland. On this one week self-guided walking holiday, you will hike the most impressive section of the classic long distance Via Alpina 1 route from Meiringen to Lenk, surrounded throughout by breathtaking peaks, high glaciers and idyllic Alpine meadows. Along the way you can feast your eyes on peaks enshrined in Alpine mountaineering legends, including the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, and cross spectacular mountain passes including the highest on the Via Alpina: the Hohtürli Pass at 2,778m. Not only that, you will also discover sublime waterfalls and picture-postcard Alpine villages such as Wengen, Lauterbrunnen, Kandersteg and Adelboden.

You will walk an average of 5 to 6 hours a day, and when your legs are feeling warmed up mid-week you will tackle a couple of longer days to cross the two highest mountain passes on your route. This is an awesome week of challenging walking, immersing you into sumptuous landscapes. With daily luggage transfers arranged and staying in carefully selected Alpine hotels, many with spa, sauna or pool facilities, you can immerse yourself into the trek carrying just your day pack, and relax and rejuvenate in comfort at the end of your day's hike. Get ready to fall in love with Switzerland.

Is this holiday for you?

This trip is perfect for you if you are an active walker looking for a challenging trek without the constraints of joining a group trip or the hassle of making the arrangements yourself. The flexibility of undertaking the Via Alpina as a self-guided trip allows you to go at your own pace with only your daypack to carry while we transport your luggage. This itinerary is arranged with upgraded accommodation to offer you a higher level of comfort and great spaces to unwind after a good day's hike. You will hike on well-established paths, walking an average of 5 to 6 hours a day with a couple of longer days of around 7 to 8 hours walking, and ascend up to 1,450m in a day. The terrain is varied, including straightforward paths across meadows, forest trails, steep rocky tracks, and routes across slopes with loose moraine scree, with some steps and chains to aid you over the steep ground. There are sections on balcony paths that feel exposed, which might be difficult for those suffering from vertigo.

You may come across patches of snow and ice at higher elevations. This is a fantastic mountain trek with excellent waymarking throughout the route; nevertheless a sound knowledge of map reading is highly recommended. It is possible to shorten most days or take alternative routes if required, by using cable cars, trains or buses. For safety in the high mountains, this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Luggage transfers
 - Discount code to the value of CHF 10 when booking your train with Swiss Federal Railways (www.sbb.ch/en)
- Navigation App and GPX tracks available

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to Meiringen
- Travel from Lenk
- Any local transfers required by bus/rail/cable car
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tourist Taxes may apply and are usually under CHF 10 per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit and the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook, and all your relevant documents, no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start-date. We will send your documents using a signed-for courier so that you can track your package and know that it is safely on its way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our Sales Team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker, so please remind them to pack it before setting off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start-date, please inform our Sales Team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

GPS Travel App

This holiday includes a GPS navigation app, which contains the routes for you to follow each day, as well as attractions, coffee stops and points of interest along the way. The app does not need to have Wi-Fi connection to work, you simply follow the instructions we provide you to download the app to your personal smartphone device before you leave home and you are ready to go.

While the travel app is running, your phone battery charge can be consumed faster than normal, so we strongly recommend that you pack a power bank with you just in case you require it.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts in Meiringen and ends at Lenk. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The nearest airports for this trip are Geneva or Zurich, with many departures from regional UK airports.

The Swiss Federal Railways network is incredibly efficient and offers excellent connections all over the country (<https://www.sbb.ch/en>).

If you are flying to Geneva Airport, you can take the train to reach Meiringen, depending on the connections chosen the journey takes between 3.5 hours and 4.5 hours. From Lenk, the return train journey via Zweisimmen to Geneva Airport takes around 4 hours.

If you are flying to Zurich Airport, you can take the train to reach Meiringen, the journey takes between 2.5 to 3 hours. At the end of the trip, your journey from Lenk to Zurich Airport takes between 3 to 4 hours, with changes at Zweisimmen and Spiez or Bern.

To enjoy a spectacular rail journey through Switzerland that flows well with the direction of the trek, you might consider arranging your flights to arrive in Zurich, then depart from Geneva at the end of your trip.

It is also possible to travel flight-free from the UK via the Eurostar to Paris and on to Basel, from where you can make use of the highly efficient Swiss Railway service to travel around Switzerland.

Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility during your holiday.

Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Swiss food is an amalgamation of French, German and Italian cuisine which is hardly surprising with cantons of each language too; and not to mention that Switzerland is a cheese and chocolate lover's dream destination with some of the world's finest cheese makers and chocolatiers calling it home.

The great Swiss staple, the cheese fondue, is a custom all visitors must try; it is almost a rite of passage. A mix of melted delicious Swiss Gruyere cheese, wine and herbs it is the meal the Swiss Cheese Union claim 'creates a good mood', well unless you are first to drop your bread in the fondue that is. Tradition states the poor soul who drops their bread first, must foot the bill.

Although cheese fondue is delicious, it is certainly not the only yummy dish on the menu. Other national delights include Rosti, a fried potato dish which is served with anything from eggs to apples; Zurcher Geschnetzeltes, which translates to 'meat cut Zurich style' and made using slices of veal cooked in a mushroom cream sauce. Traditional food is generally rich and hearty but you will find many lighter options too such as soups, and fresh fish from the surrounding lakes. For a typical dish of the area, Berner platte is a traditional celebratory dish, consisting of a large plate with a variety of sauerkraut, meats, buttery potatoes and vegetables.

Of course, if you are to embrace the cake and coffee culture, you will tuck in to sweet treats such as apple strudel or the renowned Käsekuchen (cheesecake). Go on, you've earned it!

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

This holiday has been designed with comfort in mind. You will stay in carefully selected 4* & 3* hotels throughout, offering you a wonderful space to rest and relax after each day's hike. All of the accommodations have been chosen for their fantastic locations, showcasing traditional alpine character and welcoming Swiss hospitality. Many also have spa and pool facilities, making them perfect for unwinding after a day of walking. The accommodations all offer a great breakfast buffet to fuel you for the day ahead and rooms are on a double or twin basis, some with Austrian style twin beds as is traditional in this area (two beds within one bed frame and separate bedding).

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation if you would like to enjoy this magnificent region a little longer. Please speak to one of our sales team for further details.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your walk. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is limited to one piece under 20kg per person, and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

Currency

The unit of currency in Switzerland is the Swiss Franc.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 6-7 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina.

Climate

The temperatures that we can expect to encounter during the day will be reasonably warm, ranging between 10°C to 25°C. It can be cool in the evenings, dropping to as low as 5°C particularly at higher elevations. The weather is usually stable during the hiking season between July and September, but mountainous areas do generate their own weather systems and occasional rain and even stormy weather cannot be ruled out. You should be prepared for all eventualities!

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

Switzerland in Tolkien's Middle-Earth - M.S. Monsch

Slow Train to Switzerland - Diccon Bewes

Cicerone Guide: Trekking the Swiss Via Alpina - Kev Reynolds & Jonathan Williams

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Self Guided Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good-grip soles
- Hiking socks
- Long / short hiking trousers
- Functional base layer top and leggings
- T-shirts
- Fleece / extra warm layer
- Windproof jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Hat, gloves, and neck gaiter
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses

- Sunhat
- Small first aid kit inside your rucksack
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Camera (and batteries / memory card)
- Reusable sealable picnic boxes for picnics
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Walking poles
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Personal wash kit
- Your self-guided route notes
- Rucksack (approx. 20L)

Cotswold Outdoor

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons in double or twin occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Enjoy the satisfaction of completing stages 10 to 15 of this classic long-distance alpine trek at your own pace and in comfort, with daily luggage transfers arranged and staying in carefully selected 4* & 3* accommodation throughout, some with spa facilities, perfect for rest and recuperation after a day's hike.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 03/04/2025 and the trip is subject to change