



Steph's Quick Budget Fact Sheet

Switzerland - Saanen / Gstaad

Quick Facts

- ✓ **Capital:** Bern
- ✓ **Language:** German, Swiss-German, French, Italian, Reto-Roman
- ✓ **Population:** ± 7000 (Saanen) / 9,200 (Gstaad)
- ✓ **Sq. km:** ± 5,959
- ✓ **Currency:** Francs (CHF)
- ✓ **Country code:** +41 (33)
- ✓ **Visa:** Yes, not EU, but Schengen. Info [here](#). EU citizens up to 90 days without registration.
- ✓ **Emergency phone:** 117 (police), 118 (fire), 144 (ambulance), 112 general



History Recap Over 1 Drink

1291: Origin Swiss Confederation: 3 cantons form alliance. 1815: Napoleonic Wars – borders & neutrality established. '48: Federal constitution, centralized government. '74: Revised constitution: democracy by referendum. 1914-18: WWI. '19-20: Versailles Treaty → reaffirms neutrality. '20: Joins League of Nations, headquarters in Geneva. '23: Union with Liechtenstein. '39-45: WWII, Federal Council issues declaration of neutrality. Refuses to join UN. '59: Founder member of EFTA. 4 Party Government System. '63: Joins Council of Europe. '67: Right-wing campaigns anti-immigration. '71: Women vote. '85: Referendum: Equal female rights in marriage. Immigrant nr's restricted. '92: Enters World Bank & IMF, but rejects EEC. '94: Referendum: racism & denial of holocaust illegal. Laws against drug traffic & illegal immigrants. '95-98: Releasing pre-WWII Jewish bank accounts to Holocaust survivors. '01: 11 die in Gotthard tunnel crash. Voters reject proposal to reject army. '02: Voted to join UN. Tightening asylum laws. '05: Join EU Schengen. Job market opens to EU. 5-year ban on genetically modified crops. '07: Anti-foreigner politics, only EU friendly. '09: Recession. Ban minarets. '10: Majority women in cabinet. '12: Anti-immigration politics and initiatives continue. '17: Plans to abolish nuclear energy

Travel Seasons

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spring												
Summer												
Autumn												
Winter												
Budget												

Altitude: 1014-1050m. Climate: Marine West Coast Climate (Cfb).

Bucket List For Free

- ☺ **Sights:** Le Mirage.
- ☺ **Hikes:** Wispile towards Lauenensee (loop trail), Feutersoey / Arnensee (loop trail) towards Retaudsee & Col du Pillon and Gsteig, Via Alpina: Gstaad – l'Etivaz, Wildhorn Hut, Cholis Grind towards Eggli and Meielsgrund, Sparenmoos – Nujeberg Moor Trail, Obersimmental Chalet Trail, Saanen towards Rellerigrat – Hugeligrat, Gstaad towards Schonried - Saanenmoser – Horneggli, Saanen towards Rougemont - Le Cret, Saanen towards Chalberhoni – Gummesel, Tungelschluss Loop, Weismills Loop, Wasserngrat...

Check [Outdoor Active](#) & [Komoot](#).

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- 👍 **Skiing & Snowboarding:** [Ticket info here](#).
- 👍 **Other:** Glacier 3000, Sportzentrum Gstaad, Freibad Saanen.

Festivals

- ⚙️ Swiss Open / Ski Europe Cup: Sports, July / Jan.
- ⚙️ Menuhin Festival: Classical Music, August.
- ⚙️ Swiss National Day: Aug.

The Earth Becomes My Throne

Budget Bites

⌘ **Big supermarkets:** Gstaad only: Denner, Coop, Migros.

⌘ **Local food:** Fondue (*melted cheese*), Rösti (*potato dish*), Zopf (*Sunday bread*), Bürli (*small breads*), Raclette (*grilled cheese dish*), Pastetli (*meat pie*), Rippli (*pork ribs*), Berner Platte (*mixed meat*), Älplermagronen (*potatoes-macaroni dish*), Saffron Risotto, Polenta, Zürcher Geschnetzeltes (*veal with mushrooms*), Rüebli Kuchen (*carrot cake*), Magenbrot (*sweet bread*), Birchermüesli (*mixed muesli*), Basler Leckerli (*glazed ginger bread*), Büdnernusstorte (*nut pastry*), Meringue, Chocolate, Cheese.

⌘ **Go vegan:** Being vegan is ridiculously easy in Europe, and also in Switzerland. Restaurants in general are just very expensive in Switzerland. Check vegan-friendly restaurants here: [Happy Cow – Gstaad](#).

Mama Said

☠ Europe is generally safe... and Switzerland is one of the safest countries in Europe. Relax.

☠ Tap water is drinkable. In the Alps you can even drink river water.

☠ People speak a very specific dialect of German, that is basically a language on its own and can't be understood with 'normal' German skills. Simply request to speak 'Hoch Deutsch'. This area is bordering the Francophone-part of Switzerland. Francophones don't speak / don't want to speak German (or English), Swiss Germans do speak French as well (and English).

Next?

→ **In Switzerland:** Rougemont, Zweisimmen, Montreux, Lausanne, Fribourg, Bern, Thun, Interlaken, Adelboden, Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen.

→ **International destinations close by:** Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Italy, France.

Sleep Cheap

❖ Hostels and alternative accommodation are very expensive in Switzerland. Check [Booking.com](#) for deals, but always book directly to avoid fees. Also check [Sleep on Straw](#). [Air BnB](#) usually has slightly cheaper deals.

❖ Go [Couchsurfing](#) or Housesitting ([20% discount for Trusted Housesitters via this link!](#)). Also check [WorkAway](#) or [HelpX](#) for work-exchanges. Wild camping **not allowed**, but you can sneak off in the mountains.

Nights Best Spent

◆ **Nightlife areas:** Gstaad main street (expensive).

◆ **Theatres:** Ciné-Theater Gstaad.

Free-Riding?

■ Walking is an excellent option to see the more subtle details without spending money. It's in fact the main attraction outside of ski season. The easy Philosopher's trail along the river connects Saanen and Gstaad (30 min).

■ Biking is another fun way to explore. Bicycle hire is available at several bike shops in Saanen and Gstaad.

■ There's a train and bus connection. Trains are operated by the [SBB](#) and the earlier you book, the cheaper your ticket. [Trainline](#) has good flash-sales, but terrible customer service. The so-called 'post-buses' operate the area, check Moovit or Google Maps for times. They're very expensive though.

■ Hitchhiking is a safe and convenient option in this area.

■ Airports: Luchthaven Zürich (ZRH) / Geneva Airport (GVA), Bern Airport (BRN).