



It's impossible not to love Switzerland. It has mountains, lakes, cheese, yodelers, dancers, drinkers and some of the most picturesque villages in the world. Zurich is the largest Swiss city, boasting a population of nearly half a million.

A bustling world banking center. Zurich has almost zero unemployment, and the people there are considered some of the most affluent in Europe. Of course, world-class bankers and smugglers keep their untaxed stashes in Swiss banks. Get There: Zurich Airport is just seven miles away from the city, and convenient access is by taxi, bus or rail. Swiss Air and most international airlines offer regular Zurich service.

Sightseeing: When arriving, you'll have fantastic views of the Alps from across Lake Zurich. If not content with faraway scenes, rent a car and drive an hour to the Golden Pass near Luzerne. There you'll have close-up looks at the snow-capped Jungfrauoch, rising more than two miles high.

Schedule your visit to include the annual Swiss National Day, celebrated on the first of August. Festivities include native food offerings, folk music, street parades, native dances and folklore lectures.

Zurich was conquered by the Romans in the First Century A.D. Some religious buildings from that era still exist, as well as beautifully-preserved Medieval houses, cafes, taverns and cobbled streets. Downtown are contemporary glass and metal buildings, while just around the corner can be an 11th Century church and a 15th Century tavern.

Hotel Ascot, Tessinerplatz 9, Zurich 8002, www.ascot.ch/en . The small downtown Zurich offers rates from about \$180. It's just a few steps from the train station and local tram stop. A short stroll takes you to shops, restaurants, museums and parks.

Zeughauskeller: Bahnhofstrasse 28a 8001, www.zeughauskeller.ch . The genuine Swiss beer hall serves local favorites, including Swiss-themed meals priced from about \$30. For more info about Zurich, go to www.sadt-zuerich.ch