

12. Heidi's enchanting journey from Geneva via Crans Montana to Ascona, Davos, Lucerne, Interlaken, Gstaad and back to Geneva

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Self drive/Group tours/Guided private tours

16 days/15 nights/11 rounds of golf, from/to Geneva

Geneva - Montreux - Crans Montana - Ascona - Davos - Lucerne - Interlaken - Gstaad

Day 1 - Geneva. Individual arrival in Geneva

You collect your rental car and take your time to explore this cosmopolitan city where you find the headquarters of the UNO and the IKRK (Red Cross). You spend the night in the metropolis of Western Switzerland on the shores of lake Geneva.

Day 2 – Geneva/Cheserex (30 kilometers / 20 miles)

Short drive through wonderful vineyards with great views of the Savoyan Alps and Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe (4792 m above sea level). Enjoy a round of golf on the „Schlossplatz“ („Castle Course“) of Bonmont (18 hole, Par 71, length 6080 m). A picture perfect course and contributing to its setting are ancient trees, a quite undulating but never steep terrain and a historic Zisterzienser Abbey that now functions as the club house. The intention was to create the design around the existing geometry and the openness of the terrain, which was achieved brilliantly. This course also impresses with its fast new greens and free, magnificent views towards the mountain range of Mont Blanc. You spend two nights in the charming village of Cheserex.

Day 3 – Cheserex

Domaine Impérial is rated as one of the most prestigious courses in Switzerland. It offers class, tradition and wonderful views (18 hole, Par 72, length 6339 m). You drive past the villas of Michael Schumacher and Nigel Manson, then reach probably the best course in Switzerland. It takes good advantage of the last open undeveloped space close to the lake shore. Don't let yourself be distracted by the anticipated joy of the famous wines which grow within eye sight, or by the marvellous views of the Jura and the French Alps. Because this playground with an extension of more than 1 square kilometer, styled in American design, plus its huge bunker areas and heaps of challenging surprises is very demanding. Even long time club members don't regard this parcours designed by the star architect Pete Dye as a „home game“. Also the club house is awesome, originally built in 1860 by Prince Napoleon as the „Villa Prangis“.

Day 4 – Cheserex/Crans Montana (170 kilometers / 105 miles)

After a short drive on your way to the Wallis you are tempted by the golf course of Montreux in the area of Aigle. The second oldest parcours in Switzerland was founded back in 1900 and is especially impressive with its old trees and the wonderful views of Lake Geneva (18 hole, Par 72, length 6207 m). With lots of sensitivity and keeping the historical faith it was just recently awoken to new life. A euphoric feeling lies over the whole setting, but only really overflows at the last hole with its spectacular water obstacles. A fair terrain that despite its narrow passages through forest still allows for good hits to avoid problem zones. Enjoy also the many attractive glimpses of the vineyards of the Wallis, the medieval castles and the dominating peaks of the mountain Dents du Midi. Next your trip takes you further up through the Rhone Valley to Crans Montana. In this very sunny village you spend two nights in a lovely hotel.

Day 5 - Crans Montana

Here at 1500 meters above sea level the golf balls fly a little bit further. The exceptional golf course of Crans Montana was opened in 1906 and since 1939 every year hosts the Swiss Open, the highest rated tournament of Switzerland and since 1983 also the European Masters. Situated just next to it you find the varied 9-hole course of Jack Nicklaus (par 35, length 2779 m). The golf course of Crans Montana is located on an enviable high plateau offering an incredible panorama. The course not only thrills the professionals, also the amateur will take home as an unforgettable souvenir the memory of the unique stage set in which Monte Rosa, Mont Blanc and the mountains of the Berner Oberland play the main role. The re-designing by S. Ballesteros emphasized the challenges of this special course even more. The perfectly maintained fast greens are also nourished by the many drops of sweat the players have to spill here on this demanding course. And also never underestimate the 9-hole course opposite the village, designed in 1988 by legendary Jack Nicklaus and set in an open forest around a reservoir. The holes leave you with only a little tolerance for inaccurate hits and therefore are not for careless leisure golfers who just want to show off.

Day 6 - Crans Montana/Zermatt (67 kilometers / 40 miles)

You move on in the Wallis where you drive down the valley and further on to Visp. Through breathtaking gorges and typical villages of the Wallis you reach the classy Zermatt by the world famous Matterhorn (4478 meters above sea level high). No cars are allowed in the village, the parking area is in Täsch from where you take a shuttle train into Zermatt. You play golf on the course Matterhorn, named after the splendid mountain close by (9 hole, Par 36, length 2931 m). Not even watches or chocolates contribute as much to the fame of Switzerland as the Matterhorn does. A picture perfect mountain of incredible beauty, an eyecatcher shaped as a majestic pyramid, surrounded by 29 mountains also higher than 4000 m! Understandable that the golf club of Zermatt, which is owned by the council, uses this export hit for promotion, although the course lies far below in Randa from where the mother of all mountains can't even be seen. But the spectacular views of the much higher mountain Breithorn with its ice shield is a worthwhile substitute. Already with the first hit you have to cross the river Vispa. Later the course is surprisingly flat and thus lacks a bit of dynamics, but, it's still a fine warm up and the glorious surroundings easily make up for this. The rest of the day you spend as you please. You will stay two nights in Zermatt.

Day 7 – Zermatt

Enjoy a free day, for example with a cogwheel ride up to the summit of the Little Matterhorn (3850 m above sea level) or to the Gornergrat (3089 m above sea level). There you find yourself standing in awe admiring the overwhelming alpine panorama of countless giant peaks higher than 4000 m and wide glaciers.

Day 8 – Zermatt/Ascona (145 kilometers / 90 miles)

You drive through unforgettable landscapes from the Alps of the Wallis down to the Rhone Valley, then further on through the Goms Valley and over the Nufenen Pass (2478 m above sea level), finally heading south via Airolo down the Leventina Valley to the Mediterrean-like, Italian spoken Tessin. Later that day you play on the golf course Gerre Losone (18 hole, Par 71, length 6250 m). It really is quite astonishing how a golf course only ten minutes away from the Patriziale parcours could be totally opposite in landscape. This naturally treeless terrain was the inspiration for Peter Harradine's creation of the Gerre Losone course. With its edges and craters, speedy and highly interesting, undulating greens this is a great achievement in the art of golf course design. The ladies on the European tour regularly play there in spring to win the money from the German Bank, which sponsors this event. Towards the North your view captures the Campanile of Intragna, the highest church tower in the Tessin and all around you see mountains with dense woods. After playing golf you drive to your hotel in Ascona, beautifully nestled on the shores of the large lake Lago Maggiore, where you spend the next two nights.

Day 9 - Ascona

Today you play on the golf course Ascona (18 hole, Par 71, length 5933 m). Embedded into Lago Maggiore on a peninsula this course was already established in 1928 and is a true jewel in the Swiss golfing scene. Although the parcours demands your highest skills and concentration, sometimes your mind and eyes surely are distracted by the incredibly beautiful ancient treelines that feature on this course. In spring time the setting is even more glorious with the flaming colours of Rhododendron and Azaleas. The fairways explode with colours and during your round you feel like you are in paradise. Of course Il Patriziale, the setting's name derived from its owners the township of Ascona, doesn't just relax on its laurels or benefit from its high reputation. Actually all the greens have recently be renewed. The rest of the day is free for you to enjoy. Highly recommended for example are a stroll through the dreamy alleyways of Ascona or a visit to Locarno.

Day 10 – Ascona/Davos (160 kilometers / 100 miles)

Today you make a charming trip from the South up to the marvellous Alps. Enjoy the drive and take your time to include a worthwhile stopover for a visit to the old villages in the Verzasca Valley, where you also find the overhanging 280 meter high dam, once used for a breathtaking stunt scene in a James Bond movie. For the next two nights we have a hotel reserved for you in Davos with its many great shopping opportunities.

Day 11 - Davos

In the renowned Mountain Wellness Destination of Davos you will play on the quite flat and rather short course (18 hole, Par 69). Davos lies 1560 meters above sea level and is the highest situated township in Europe which offers the player a parcours without any distinctive changes in profile. But nevertheless, the fairways older than 80 years have some surprises at hand for the visitor who will enjoy the many water runs and new designed greens. Davos is an all year round destination, and so is the golf course.

Day 12 – Davos/Lucerne (170 kilometers / 105 miles)

From the mountains of Graubünden you move on to Central Switzerland. The drive is quite long, but scenically most worthwhile and finally you are rewarded with the splendid town of Lucerne in the heart of Central Switzerland, located right on the shores of beautiful lake Vierwaldstättersee. There is enough leisure time for you to enjoy a stroll through the historic old town with its world famous wooden Chapel Bridge or for a relaxing cruise on a majestic steam boat with great views of Mount Pilatus (2132 m above sea level high). You will spend two nights in Lucerne.

Day 13 – Lucerne

The golf course Lake Sempach near Lucerne is the only one in Switzerland that offers two complete 18 hole courses, plus the wonderful view of the Alps and Lake Sempach (2x18 hole „Championship“, Par 72, length 6161 m). Exactly here on the shores of the peaceful Lake Sempach, which is surrounded by meadows and fruit trees, one of the most important battles in the history of Central Switzerland took place in 1386. And now you find one of the largest golf settings in Switzerland, located on the „sunny balcony of Switzerland“ with 36 Holes and championship character. The wide fairways are comfortable to play, but the undulating approach areas and the difficult to read greens make the whole matter quite tricky. And you can easily be distracted by the pleasant views either across the plain towards the pretty lake or towards the impressive mountain ranges on the horizon.

Day 14 – Lucerne/Interlaken (70 kilometers / 45 miles)

Enjoy your drive across the Brünig pass into the highlands of the Canton Berne. You will see many very old traditional farm houses typical of this area and a truly pretty flora. After arrival in Interlaken you play on the local golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus (18 hole, Par 72). The course is very rich in tradition, rather flat but quite long and situated within eyesight of the dramatic mountains Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, the so called Trinity of the Alps. On the golf club's website you are greeted with the words „Welcome to Paradise“, a term the course really deserves because of its dreamy settings on the shores of Lake Thun and also for its brand new greens which are amongst the best in the golf scene. Lots of water and the „Bermuda Triangle“ between holes 13 to 15, where already many high hopes for a good score have been deeply sunk, are characteristic of this course. Tonight you stay in Interlaken.

Day 15 – Interlaken/Gstaad (70 kilometers / 45 miles)

Today you drive further into the highlands of the Canton Berne. Then you play golf on the atmospheric alpine course in Gstaad with its tricky trouble zones(18 hole, Par 72), situated in the area of the river Saane with wonderful views of the Berne Alps, which may distract you from your play. Then relax on one of the many sunny terraces in the pretty village of Gstaad, one of the top destinations in Switzerland, where you find famous restaurants with very high ratings in the Gault Millau Gourmet Guide. Also you can touch Elizabeth Taylor, though only as a bronze statue on the market square, plus Roger Moore and Yehudi Menuhin are honorary citizens. You spend the night in Gstaad.

Day 16 – Gstaad/Geneva Airport (160 kilometers / 100 miles)

Easy drive to Geneva and on to the Airport, where you hand over your rental car and check in for your flight back home.

Included in the package price are:

- Stay in double room including breakfast
- Pre booked tee-times with green fees
- Daily departures with a minimum of 2 people
- Rental car category D, Volkswagen Passat or similar including insurances
- Travel documents with guide book, road maps, stroke saver

Not included in the package price are:

- Meals besides breakfast
- Petrol
- Parking fees
- Costs for transport on railways, cable cars, cogwheels, ships, park entrance fees etc.
- Hiring costs of trolleys and clubs (available everywhere)
- Carts normally don't exist on Swiss golf courses

Rates in Swiss francs per person on request

Group packages on demand, available for a maximum of 32 people

Incoming Golf Tour Operator **Green Golf**
Roly Petermann
Klosterstrasse 15
6003 Lucerne, Switzerland
Tel. +41 41 248 50 33
Fax +41 41 248 50 39
E-Mail: roly.petermann@greengolf.ch