

# Our Chalet World Tour



**OUR CHALET WORLD TOUR- PART THREE**  
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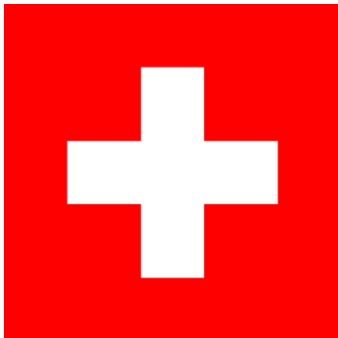
## Overview of Switzerland

The official name for Switzerland is the Swiss Confederation. It covers approximately 16,000 square miles, and has three major physical regions: The Jura Mountains in the northwest, the central Swiss Plateau and the Alps, which cover the southern three-fifths of the country. Switzerland has many lakes, of which Lake Geneva is the largest. Switzerland's climate is humid, with mild to cool summers and mostly cold winters.



The Swiss are descended from several different ethnic groups. The earliest recorded inhabitants of present-day Switzerland were a number of Rhaetic and Celtic tribes. After the decline of the Roman Empire these tribes were overwhelmed by the Germanic Alemanni and Burgundians in the 400's. Switzerland has four official languages: French, German, Italian and Romansch. Most Swiss have at least a working knowledge of more than one language. About two-thirds of the population speaks German. In terms of religion, the Swiss are divided evenly between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.

The largest cities in Switzerland are Geneva and Zurich. The capital of Switzerland is Bern. Switzerland has few natural resources and agriculture is limited by the rugged terrain. The Swiss have developed a prosperous economy based on the manufacture of high quality, low bulk goods such as watches and clocks, that involve a high degree of skilled workmanship. These goods have an excellent reputation and a steady market abroad. The economy has also been aided by the country's political stability and policy of strict neutrality, which have made it a great international banking and insurance centre. Picturesque countryside, beautiful old villages and towns, and renowned ski slopes have made tourism a huge economical force in this small but prosperous country.



The Flag of Switzerland is a red square with a white cross in the center. It is one of two square flags in the world, the other belonging to the Vatican. Switzerland's flag was adopted from the flag of the Swiss canton of Schwyz (one of the first three Swiss cantons). This flag was adopted as the official flag on December 12, 1889, but the design dates from about 1480, during the Old Confederation. The flag represents freedom, honour and fidelity.



Saint Bernard's are well known in Switzerland for their life saving abilities. This breed of dog is named after Bernard de Menton, an Augustine monk who founded a monastery in the alpine region in 980AD. Bernard de Menton soon found that he and his fellow monks were providing help to weary travellers as they passed through the Alps. The dogs, which were bred near the monastery, soon began to help the monks find lost travelers. The monks soon realized that the dogs had a keen sense of smell and were large enough to dig through snow to find people who had been buried. As well, the dog was large enough to keep people warm if they were unable to move. Many times the dogs were trained to work in pairs, with one dog staying with the traveler and the other going to the monastery to get help.



## Guiding and Scouting in Switzerland

In Switzerland, Scouting started in 1910. The first groups of Guides were founded one year later in 1911. The Swiss Guide and Scout Movement (SGSM) was formed in 1987 building a mixed association. Most of the groups have both female and male members. In Switzerland, the leaders usually are between 17 and 25 years old. The SGSM maintains several partnerships with other Guide and Scout Associations from different parts of the World, notably with the Girl Guides of Burkina Faso and the Girl Guides of Romania.

The Swiss Guide and Scout Movement divides its members into four sections:

1. Bienli & Wölfe (Bees & Wolves): aged 7 - 11 years (cp. Brownies & Cub Scouts)
2. Pfadi: aged 11 - 15 years (cp. Guides & Scouts)
3. Pioniere: aged 15 - 17 years (cp. Ventures)
4. Rover: aged 17 years and older (cp. Rovers)

The Programme Guide and Scout activities in Switzerland are based on seven distinctive approaches: enhancing the personal progress, respecting our law and promise, living in a group, cultivating rituals and traditions, participating in a responsible manner, living in nature and playing

The Uniforms:

Brownies & Cub Scouts: turquoise shirt, group scarf, belt with the head of a wolf or a bee on the buckle.

Guides & Scouts: Khaki shirt, group-scarf and a belt with a fleur-de-lis or a trefoil on the buckle.

Ventures: Khaki or red shirt, group-scarf and belt with a fleur-de-lis or a trefoil on the buckle.

Rovers: Green shirt, group-scarf and a belt with a fleur-de-lis or a trefoil on the buckle.

The Mottos

Brownies & Cub Scouts: Mis Bescht (doing my best)

Guides & Scouts: Allzeit Bereit (be prepared)

Ventures: Zäme Wyter (advance together)

Rovers: Bewusst handeln (act consciously)

The Promise:

With your help, I promise to do my best: or

With the help of God and with your help,

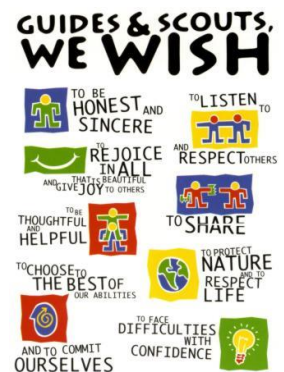
I promise to do my best:

to continuously study and reflect upon the values of the Guide & Scout law.

to search for the meaning and goal of my own life.

to be actively involved within the community in which I live.

The Law:



## Our Chalet



Switzerland is the home of two International Guide or Scout World Centres, both are located in the heart of the Swiss Alps. Kandersteg is the home of WOSM's International Scout Centre. WOSM is the World Association of the Scouting Movement. Kandersteg regularly hosts International Scout camps and training events. The Centre was officially opened in 1923.

Our Chalet is the original World Centre owned by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). It is built up in the Bernese Oberland of Switzerland in the city of Adelboden. Our Chalet was started as a dream of Helen Storrow from the United

States, past Chairman of the World Committee. It was her dream to find a place where Girl Guides and Girls Scouts from around the world could find a little "peace for the soul". After much searching for a location, WAGGGS opened the doors to Our Chalet on July 31, 1932 and Mrs. Storrow's dream became a gift to Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.



Our Chalet was built in the style of a traditional Swiss home, but in a larger size! At present, Our Chalet can accommodate approximately 60 guests with additional accommodation available in the Baby Chalet. Squirrel House, Spycher and the camp site allow 20 more guests to be on the property. Two other buildings on the grounds include "Stockli" which is the staff housing and the store. Most accommodation is provided in the main house. Rooms can house individual visitors, as well as large groups. Guests assist with the day to day running of Our Chalet in a variety of ways. These include doing small chores that often make Our Chalet feel more like a home than a hotel. All meals are provided and are included in the cost of the program.

In the dining room, known as the Big Room, the staff serve swiss food. Swiss food is similar to German or English cooking. Potatoes, vegetables, pork, chicken and beef are regularly on the menu. Desserts are also very delicious! Breakfasts include muesli with some thin yogurt poured over it. Bread, butter, jam and hot drinks are also available. Lunches are typically sandwiches and fruit, with a local treat available most days.



If you are looking for a quiet place to relax at Our Chalet, the library is just off the dining room. The library contains memorabilia from past guests to Our Chalet and provides a space for peace and reflection.

Our Chalet is open year round. In the winter season the program activities include alpine and cross country skiing, snowshoeing and tobogganing. Many of these activities are taught by qualified staff at Our Chalet or through local businesses. Evening activities include fondue evenings, moonlight hikes, campfires and night skiing.



Programs for girls often take place during the spring and summer months. Often the sounds of laughter of more than 100 girls from around the world fills the hallways of Our Chalet. Hiking and a variety of outdoor adventures such as rock climbing and rafting are some of the offerings available to guests. Guests are also invited on coach trips to visit Thun, Interlaken or Bern. The staff at Our Chalet, who act as tour guides, offer useful and interesting information about the history, wildlife and culture of Switzerland.

Our Chalet, like all the World Centres, offers guests challenge, adventure, spirit and international friendship. The spirit of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting can be seen throughout the year in the atmosphere of warmth, friendship, tolerance, understanding and cooperation.



## Swiss Holidays and celebrations

January

**Silversterklausen** "Spirits of the New Year" is a folk festival celebrated when people go from house to house to wish families a prosperous year. People in traditional costume wear cowbells, masks and glowing headgear that is often very big and illustrate scenes from rural life. Another tradition is that unmarried boys and girls dressed in traditional costume travel in decorated sleds from one village to another.

Vogel Gryff

This festival in Basel is held to celebrate their community ties. Three symbols – the wild man of the woods, a lion, and a griffin (a mythical lion with an eagle's head) dance and parade in the streets accompanied by merrymakers dressed in masks and strange costumes.

Berchtoldstag

This day honours the Duke Berchtold V, the founder of Bern which is the capital of Switzerland. He promised to name the city after the first animal he killed on a hunt. The animal he killed was a bear (or bern in German) which then provided the city's name.

February/March

Chalandra Marz

A very old Engadin tradition, in which the school children drive away winter with bells and songs. In Zurich it's called Boogg. The people dress in mummers or harlequins and burn Old Man Winter to signify the end of winter.

April

Fastnacht

Three days before Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent) this festival is similar to Mardi Gras in New Orleans. It is a big party marking the last days before Lenten abstinence is over. Early in the morning, when all lights in the city are extinguished, groups carry lanterns on the streets beating drums and playing pipes. People wear masks and carnival costumes. Decorated floats, pipe and drum bands are part of the merrymaking. In some areas the people wear cowbells and run around the villages making lots of noise to scare away evil spirits.

Sechselauten

Meaning "six o'clock chimes" – when the church bells ring six times, an image representing winter is burned and spring is welcomed.

Fronleichnam

In many towns, the streets are covered with carpets of flowers and men in old uniforms march through the town to commemorate the death of Christ. Weeping women carry representations of Christ's shroud, crown of thorns, and other things associated with the crucifixion.

August 1<sup>st</sup>

National Day

Celebration of the meeting in the field at Tufli, where the first Swiss cantons forged a defensive alliance in 1291. The day is celebrated with reading of the federal pact, torchlight processions, fireworks and bonfires throughout the country.





December

**Saint Nicholas' Day** Kussnacht, located on the shores of Lake Lucern, glows with the light of nearly two hundred enormous, transparent bishop's miters (hats) worn by a group of men parading through the streets. The headpieces, some of them six feet tall, have been artistically designed and are lit by a candle from within. The men, dressed in white robes accompany Saint Nicholas on his way through the village. The streets resound with the clang of heavy bells, horn blowing and brass bands. The tallest of the men leads the procession and carries a sooty rag attached to the end of a long pole.

**Christmas Day** Celebrations begin with the arrival at each house of the Christkindli, a girl dressed in white, wearing a veil and crowned in gold and jewels. She and her helpers, children dressed in white, arrive on a sleigh pulled by a reindeer. Their arrival at each house is the signal to light the Christmas tree and gifts are distributed to the children from a basket carried by the Christkindli. Bell-ringing then signals that it is time to carol from house to house singing old songs. Processions of children, carrying cowbells and other noisemakers, parade from house to house expecting small treats, like our Halloween traditions.

**Saint Stephan's Day** December 26<sup>th</sup> – Christmas festivities continue

**New Year's Eve** Originally this ceremony took place on Christmas Eve but then after many years the town priest managed to have the date changed to December 31<sup>st</sup>. After nightfall, the schoolboys, comprising of three groups, meet on the hill at the local castle and proceed down to the village. In the first group are the "bell ringers" who swing or rattle large bells which can be heard for miles. Next, the "broom men", carry long poles with bunches of juniper branches tied to the top. The third group is probably the most bizarre – the "bladder men" carry pig's bladders filled with air. The procession stops at various locations along the route as the leader recites a rhymed farewell to the old year and wishes the crowd a happy new one. During the recitation, the broom men wave their juniper brooms over the crowd. At the end of the journey, the broom men and the bladder men, armed with their brooms and bladders proceed to "beat" the onlookers, especially young ladies, until their weapons are in shreds.



## Recipes From Switzerland

The Swiss speak German, French, Italian and Romansch, a language that descends directly from Latin. The diversity of foods available in Switzerland reflects their multicultural spirit. Their land, which is mostly mountainous, also tells us something about their cooking traditions. Livestock graze in the Alpine region, but wide-scale planting is impossible. Thus, animal products, such as milk and cheese are very important to the Swiss. Most Swiss people do not live in the mountains. They live on a stretch of land between the Alps and the Jura ranges in cities and towns. Banking and tourism are big industries. It is a highly industrialized country, famous for its craftspeople and precision products, such as clocks. Thus, the Swiss can afford to import food instead of trying to raise it in a relatively inhospitable environment.

The Swiss are most famous for their cheese and their chocolate, which are among the best in the world. Wines, brandies, and liqueurs of Switzerland are world famous too.

### FONDUE:

The cheeses of Switzerland are legendary and every village seems to have a local cheese maker. For centuries, long before the Romans invaded the tiny country, the process of making cheese was already well established. Fondue, the national dish of Switzerland, shows off the excellent Swiss cheeses. Fondue, which means “to melt”, is easy and fun to make and heavenly to eat. Do not use American processed cheeses, as they do not melt properly.

- 2 cups each finely chopped Gruyere and Swiss cheeses
- ½ cup flour
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 cups pure apple juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Salt to taste
- 1 loaf of Italian or French bread, cut into bite-sized pieces



Put Gruyere and Swiss cheese in a bowl with flour and toss to coat.

Put garlic, apple and lemon juices in saucepan or fondue pot and heat until simmering. Add cheese, a handful at a time and stir continually until melted. Add nutmeg and salt to taste.

Keep the cheeses hot while eating. Give each person a plate of bread cubes and a long handled fork. Place the bread cubes securely onto the fork tines and dip into the pot to coat with melted cheese. Serve an assortment of fresh fruit to eat with fondue.

Serves 6 to 8



## BRIOCHES (French buns):

- 1 cup warm water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 3 cups flour + 1 cup more for mixing in later
- 1 ½ cups butter
- 1 egg yolk

Mix warm water and sugar in bowl. Sprinkle dry yeast on top and let stand for 10 minutes. Add salt and eggs. Stir in 4 cups of flour and beat with a wooden spoon. Knead in bowl, then knead on table for 10 minutes. Add extra flour as needed. Dough should be shiny and elastic. Put back into bowl and cover. Let rest for 15 minutes.

Place dough back on table and flatten. Cut butter on top of dough and mix in gently. Knead well. Place back into bowl. Every 15 minutes, for 3 times in all, pull dough up and fold down. Now let rise until doubled in volume.

Grease muffin tins. Knead dough one last time. Divide into individual small pieces. Cut ¼ off of each small piece. Roll larger piece into a ball and make a hole in the middle of the ball. Take the ¼ piece and roll into small ball and set into hole of the big ball. Set into muffin tin. Repeat with remainder of dough. Let rise.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Brush tops of buns with egg yolk. Bake about 20 minutes until golden.

## CREPES:

- ½ cup water
- ½ cup milk
- 4 eggs
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup oil
- Fillings such as sugar or jam

Place the water, milk, eggs, salt and flour in a blender and mix thoroughly, or mix by hand into a smooth batter. Let rest at least one hour.

Oil frying pan and heat to hot. Take off the heat and pour in enough batter to coat the bottom. Return to heat and fry a few seconds. Turn crepe over and fry a few seconds more.

Slide crepe onto a plate. They may be stacked on top of each other. They will not stick. Keep warm in oven or cool and reheat later. To serve, fill with filling and roll up, or just sprinkle with sugar.



## BIRCHERMUESU (BREAKFAST OR LUNCH)

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup milk
- 3 apples, grated
- 2 oranges, cut into small piece
- 3 bananas, cut into thin slices
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup whipped cream
- ¼ cup sugar or honey

Soak oats in milk for 15 minutes. Add all other ingredients and mix well. Chill. Add nuts, berries and more fruit, if desired.

## FRUIT LEATHER

- 4 cups of apples, peeled, cored and pureed with water, lemon or apple juice, OR thick applesauce OR another fruit prepared in the same manner.

Line a baking sheet with saran wrap. Spread fruit spread evenly, thinly on saran wrap. Set oven to 150 degrees F. Dry fruit in the oven for 8 to 12 hours. Turn over once during this time. Fruit is done when there are no soft spots left. Roll up and store airtight or freeze.

## CARAMEL CRÈME

- 1 cup sugar + ¼ cup
- 4 cups milk
- 4 eggs
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 1/4 cup whipped cream

Put 1 cup of sugar in saucepan and brown over high heat until it bubbles. Take off heat – BE CAREFUL as it may splatter. Pour in milk. Sugar is now hard on the bottom of the pan. Put pan back on heat and bring to a boil – sugar will dissolve.

In a blender, mix eggs, ¼ cup sugar and flour. Add some of the boiling milk to the mixture in the blender and blend. Pour contents of blender in with the balance of milk mixture in pan and bring to a quick boil, stirring constantly. Fold in whipped cream.



## Swiss Crafts

### “BEARS OF BERN”

Duke Berchtold, V of Zahriagen, founder of Bern, wanted to name the city after the first animal he caught when hunting of the site of planned construction. The animal he caught was a bear, so the name Bern (German for bear) was given to the city. A bear hut was built in 1513 in the city for a live bear. Barenplatz, or Bear Square, has had bears there as city pets ever since.

#### Materials:

- 9 pom poms per girl in three different sizes (1 large for the body, 1 medium for the head and 7 small for the arms and legs)
- 1 small black bead
- 2 googly eyes
- White glue
- Toothpick
- Wax paper
- Ribbon or small silk flowers (optional)

#### Instructions:

1. Glue the head pom pom (medium size) to the body pom pom (large size)
2. Put glue on two of the smaller pom poms. If you put a dab of glue on a piece of wax paper and slightly press the pom pom into the glue it won't be as messy. Press the pom poms onto the body pom pom to form legs
3. Set them so the bear can sit without falling over.
4. Using two more of the smaller pompoms glue the arms onto the bear.
5. Glue on the muzzle – small pompom
6. Glue on the two googly eyes
7. Glue on black bead for your bear's nose
8. Glue on the two ears using small pompoms. Set them right up on the top of the bear's head
9. You can decorate your bear to personalize with bows, ribbons, silk flowers, etc.



## SCHERENSCHNITT

Scherenschnitt is pronounced (shair-en-shnit-the) and is the name of the black and white paper craft you often see in Switzerland. The name literally means “scissor-cutting” and was used to decorate birth and marriage certificates as well as Christmas decorations. The picture, or design, is cut out of black paper and then put over a white paper background (or vice-versa) to make a contrasting image. It is the same idea as paper-cut snowflakes. You can use this to make cards as well as decorations.

### Materials:

1. 1 sheet of black paper
2. 1 sheet of white paper
3. Scissors
4. White glue

### Instructions:

1. Fold your piece of black paper in half, and then in half again.
2. With scissors, carefully cut out small sections of the paper, leaving enough of the folded edges so that the paper stays together. If you plan to do a more detailed pattern you may find it useful to draw your design in pencil (lightly) before cutting.
3. Once your design is complete, unfold it and place it over the white paper to see if you are happy with your design.
4. Glue the two layers together, leave to dry before displaying.

## EDELWEISS

The Edelweiss is the national flower of Switzerland. Use one of the ideas below to make a craft:

- a) A wood block with a “burned” designed (using sharpies) after indenting the wood with a blunt object
- b) Draw and paint the edelweiss
- c) Use yellow and white fimo to create a pin or magnet. You could also use red fimo to make a banner of Switzerland and small rolled tubes of white for letters.
- d) Use felt to create a soft edelweiss.



## Swiss Games

### HERD THE SHEEP

See how many sheep you can catch!

Equipment: A bag of clothespins (in two different colours)  
Large playing area

Set up: Choose two girls to be the sheep dogs. Each girl is given a different coloured small bag of clothespins. The rest of the girls are sheep and run around the marked play area.

To Play: The sheep dogs run around the area catching the sheep. Once a sheep is tagged, it is marked with a coloured clothespin. The sheep can continue to run but cannot be tagged twice. When all the sheep are tagged, or a certain length of time has passed, count to see which sheep dog has tagged or herded the most sheep.

### BAG OF BUTTONS

Equipment: Large bag of buttons  
Large indoor playing area

Set up: Have the girls stand in a large circle. Place the buttons on the floor in the middle of the circle. Number each girl from one to three.

To Play: The guider shouts out a number from one to three. All the girls with that number run in a clockwise direction on the outside of the circle, through the gap that she left and into the middle. When the first girl gets to the middle, the other girls start counting to ten

The girls in the middle put one hand behind their back and pick up as many Buttons as they can with the other. When the girls have counted to ten, the girls in the middle count their buttons. The one with the most gains a point. Everyone goes back to their original places and the game starts again.

You can play for as long as you want, but about 10 minutes is long enough! The Girl with the most points is the winner. This game can also be done as teams!

### THE EAGLE AND THE GOATS

Equipment: Large playing area

Set up: Choose one girl to be the eagle. The others are goats grazing in a pasture.

To Play: The eagle is trying to swoop down to catch a goat. The eagle swoops towards them with outstretched arms. The goats have to guess quickly which one the eagle wants to attack. They must hide her in a circle. If they guess correctly, the eagle flies away. If they guess incorrectly, the eagle calls out the name of the one she wants. Unless that one is quickly circled, the eagle can catch her and drag her off. The game continues until all the goats have been captured but one. That one will become the eagle for the next round.



## SQUIRREL

This is a game for the outdoors!

Equipment: A strip of fabric for each girl  
A bag of nuts (or other suitable objects)  
A small container for each group

Set up: Prepare the playing area by spreading the “nuts” around the outdoor playing area. Divide the girls into small groups of 4 to 5. Give each group a small container as their “nest”. As well, give each girl a strip of fabric which is to be tucked into the back of her pants

To Play: On the word “GO” all the girls run to look for the “nuts”. Each girl may only collect one at a time to carry back to their team nest. While the girls/squirrels are collecting nuts they are also trying to snatch the tails of the girls in the other groups.

Anyone losing her tail cannot play until she takes four nuts from her nest and gives them to the girl who stole her tail. By doing this the squirrel buys back her tail.

The group that has the most nuts at the end of the game wins. Any snatched tails in the nest count as four nuts.

## THE DINNER – Learn some popular swiss foods!

Equipment: A set of cards for each group (the cards must contain the letters of a swiss food, with one letter being on each card – each set should be a different colour and contain the same number of letters)  
Average size playing area

Set up: The girls stand in the middle of the room. The cards are hidden or scattered around the edges.

To Play: The groups are told which colour cards they are to look for and how many they have to find. When each group finds all of their cards they are to sort them into the name of the food. The first group to call out the food is the winner!





ALPINE RESCUE – Find people who have been trapped by snowfall in the Swiss Alps!

Equipment: A bag of two different colours of clothespins  
A large indoor or outdoor playing area – good for hiding

Set up: Choose two girls to be St. Bernard dogs. Give each of them a small bag of clothespins – a different colour for each. Have the remaining girls hide around the playing area pretending to be “trapped” in the snow.

To Play: The St. Bernards have the task of rescuing the girls trapped in a snowfall. The St. Bernard must rescue the girls by marking the with a clothespin. The rescued girl can go hide again but cannot be saved more than twice. When everyone is rescued, or a certain time has passed, a count is made to see who has found the most people.

