©Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd



Central Switzerland

POP 718,400 / AREA 4484 SQ KM / LANGUAGE GERMAN

Includes »

Lucerne	212
Lake Lucerne	.220
Lake Uri	.224
Brunnen	.224
Schwyz	.226
Einsiedeln	. 227
Engelberg	.228
Zug	.232
Andermatt	.234

Best Places to Eat

» Ski Lodge Engelberg (p231)

- » Wirtshaus Galliker (p218)
- » Takrai (p218)

» River House Boutique Hotel (p234)

» Hess (p231)

Best Places to Stay

» The Hotel (p217)

» Ski Lodge Engelberg (p230)

» The Bed & Breakfast (p218)

» River House Boutique Hotel (p234)

» Rigi Kulm Hotel (p223)

Why Go?

To the Swiss, Central Switzerland – green, mountainous and soothingly beautiful – is the very essence of 'Swissness'. It was here that the pact that kick-started a nation was signed in 1291; here that hero William Tell gave a rebel yell against Habsburg rule. Geographically, politically, spiritually, this is the heartland. Nowhere does the flag fly higher.

You can see why locals swell with pride at Lake Lucerne: enigmatic in the cold mist of morning, molten gold in the dusky half-light.

The dreamy city of Lucerne is small enough for old-world charm yet big enough to harbour designer hotels and a worldclass gallery full of Picassos. From here, cruise to resorts like Weggis and Brunnen, or hike Mt Pilatus and Mt Rigi. Northeast of Lucerne, Zug has *Kirschtorte* (cherry cake) as rich as its residents and medieval heritage. Come snow-time, head to the Alps for Andermatt's austere mountain-scapes or Engelberg for powdery off-piste perfection.

When to Go

Any time is a good time to visit Lucerne, although it does get packed in the summer months and during the Lucerne Festival. For places such as Andermatt and Engelberg, winter is the obvious time for taking advantage of skiing and snowboarding opportunities, although late spring, summer and early autumn are wonderful for walking and hiking. Zug and Lake Uri are at their best in summer, when swimming in the lakes is heavenly.

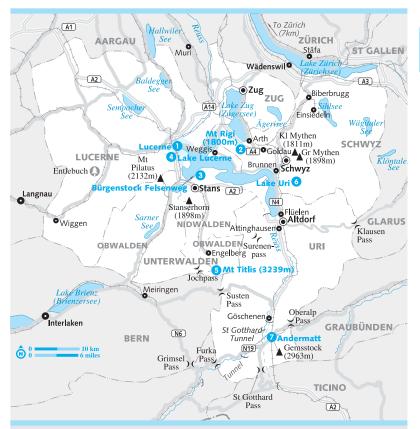
1 Getting There & Around

The nearest major airport is Zürich, and road and rail connections are excellent in all directions. An interesting way to leave the region is aboard the Wilhelm Tell Express (p363).

If you don't have a Swiss or Eurail Pass (both of which are valid on lake journeys), consider purchasing the regional **Tell-Pass** (www.tell-pass .ch; per 7/15 days Sfr180/246), which is valid

from 1 April until 31 October. Sold at Lucerne tourist office and all boat stations, the Tell-Pass provides free travel for two or five days, and half-price fares for the remainder.

The handy **Vierwaldstättersee Guest Card**, available when you stay overnight anywhere in the region, offers benefits, including discounts on sporting facilities and 10% to 50% off certain cable cars, as well as reductions on museum admission in Lucerne and elsewhere.



Central Switzerland Highlights

• Revel in the melodious atmosphere of **Lucerne** (p212), Switzerland's prettiest city

2 Witness the aweinspiring sunrise from the top of **Mt Rigi** (p223) – a time-honoured tradition that never disappoints Be dazzled by the blues of Lake Lucerne on the vertiginous **Bürgenstock** Felsenweg (p216) clifftop walk

Cruise Lake Lucerne (p220) and witness the play of light and shadow, mist and magic

5 Twirl above the crevassed glacier of

Mt Titlis (p230) via cable car

6 Feel the spirit of William Tell by walking the **Swiss Path** (p225) around fjordlike Lake Uri

7 Hike to the source of the Rhine in summer or cruise snowy backcountry in winter in **Andermatt** (p234)