



Basel & Aargau

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Includes ➔

Basel.....	215
Around Basel	222
Aargau Canton	223
Rheinfelden.....	223
Baden.....	223
Southwest along the Aare.....	224

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Acqua (p220)
- ➔ St Alban Stübli (p220)
- ➔ Restaurant Schlüsselzunft (p220)
- ➔ Atelier (p220)
- ➔ Goldener Schlüssel (p224)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Der Teufelhof (p219)
- ➔ Hotel Krafft (p219)
- ➔ SYHA Basel St Alban Youth Hostel (p219)
- ➔ Au Violon (p219)
- ➔ Les Trois Rois (p219)

Why Go?

Tucked up against the French and German borders in Switzerland's northwest corner, business-like Basel straddles the majestic Rhine. The town is home to top-flight art galleries, museums and avant-garde architecture, and boasts an enchanting old town centre.

Cultural enticements include the Beyeler Foundation, one of Switzerland's most important art collections; the absorbing Jean Tinguely Museum, devoted to the madcap Basel-born sculptor; the Kunstmuseum, currently undergoing a major expansion; and the nearby Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany, filled with showpieces by some of the world's best contemporary architects.

Excursions outside Basel lead to the country's finest Roman ruins at Augusta Raurica and to a gaggle of proud castles and pretty medieval villages scattered across the rolling countryside of Aargau canton. A journey along the Aare takes in the canton's coquettish medieval capital, Aarau and the equally fetching thermal-bath town of Baden.

When to Go

- ➔ The best time to visit is in summer (June to August). The city shucks off its notorious reserve to bask in some of the hottest weather in Switzerland. As locals bob along in the fast-moving Rhine, whiz by on motor scooters, and dine and drink on overcrowded pavements, you might feel like you're in Italy, rather than on the border with France and Germany.
- ➔ Basel is famous for its *Fasnacht* and Vogel Gryff festivals in winter.
- ➔ The *Christkindlmarkt* (Christmas market) in the Old Town creates a special magic in the four weeks leading up to Christmas.

Basel & Aargau Highlights

- 1 Take in the art at **Fondation Beyeler** (p222), join the festivities of **Fasnacht** (p218), explore the **Altstadt** (p215), or hit the bars on both sides of the Rhine in Basel.
- 2 Ogle architectural masterpieces and pick up designer souvenirs at **Weil am Rhein's Vitra Design Museum** (p222).
- 3 Admire Switzerland's most extensive Roman remains at **Augusta Raurica** (p223).
- 4 Witness the cradle of a great European dynasty at **Schloss Habsburg** (p224), **Langmatt** (p223) in Baden.
- 5 Savour one of Switzerland's sweetest small art museums: **Stiftung Langmatt** (p223) in Baden.

