



Bernese Oberland

POP 207,650 / AREA 5907 SQ KM / LANGUAGE GERMAN

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Why Go?

Nature works on an epic scale here. Whether you're hiking in the fearsome north face of Eiger, carving powder on a crisp winter's morning in Gstaad or gawping at the misty Staubbach Falls, the Swiss Alps don't get more in-your-face beautiful than this. Nowhere are the resorts quainter; the peaks higher; the glaciers grander. Fittingly watched over by Mönch (Monk), Jungfrau (Virgin) and Eiger (Ogre), the Bernese Oberland sends spirits soaring to heaven.

The region's cinematic looks haven't gone unnoticed. Mark Twain wrote that no opiate compared to walking here (and he should know), Arthur Conan Doyle thought Meiringen a pretty spot for a Sherlock Holmes whodunnit, while 007 brought the icy wilderness of Schilt-horn to screens. Yet try as they might, few photographers manage to do the Bernese Oberland justice. Listen for tutting tourists at postcard carousels trying – and failing – to find something to match their memories.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ WineArt (p115)
- ➔ Cafe 3692 (p121)
- ➔ Restaurant Schöneegg (p126)
- ➔ Nico's (p136)
- ➔ Chesery (p138)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Rugenpark B&B (p113)
- ➔ Gletschergarten (p120)
- ➔ Hotel Eiger (p127)
- ➔ Esther's Guest House (p128)

When to Go

- ➔ From ritzy Gstaad to picture-postcard Mürren, the slopes hum with skiers and boarders in winter.
- ➔ Ring in the New Year ogre-style at Harder Potschete in Interlaken and catch the hell-for-leather Lauberhorn and Inferno ski races.
- ➔ Summer is the time for Alpine hiking and open-air folk festivals galore in the Jungfrau Region.
- ➔ Room rates plunge in autumn, when the crowds are few and the weather is often fine.
- ➔ In September at *Almabtriebe*, cows wreathed in flower garlands are brought down from the mountains for another winter of dung-shovelling.

Bernese Oberland Highlights

- 1 Get dizzy with zip-wires, hanging bridges and Eiger views on the *via ferrata* (p127) in **Mürren**.
- 2 Hike the classically Alpine **Faulhornweg** (p117).
- 3 Be spellbound by 4000m peaks and the ginting Aletsch Glacier at **Jungfrauoch** (p123).
- 4 Do some Sherlock Holmes-style detective work for glorious waterfalls and meringues in **Meiringen** (p133).
- 5 Test your limits canyoning, skydiving, ice climbing and glacier bungee jumping in adventure-sports mecca **Interlaken** (p111).
- 6 Marvel at the 72 waterfalls cascading down the cliffs in the **Lauterbrunnen Valley** (p124).
- 7 Sialom like a celebrity on the slopes of glitzy **Gstaad** (p137).

