Document 2

Explore the breathtaking beauty of Switzerland by train and marvel at the stunning landscapes, historic sights and iconic architecture. Go World Travel is reader-supported and may earn a commission from purchases made through links in this piece. I would have complained. If I were one of the settlers in Switzerland during the Roman Empire, I would have grumbled that this unconquerable territory was nothing but narrow valleys and cold, unforgiving mountains. The Alps, with an average altitude of 5,576 feet, cover 2/3 of Switzerland. However, being the fierce fighters that they were, the Romans took all that in stride and used the mountains as fortresses. Then they needed to settle the area, and the inspiration they had was to cultivate the valleys and graze cows in the mountains. That worked. Now this country, ½ the size of New Jersey with 9M people, has 60 different types of cows that forage from May-Sept in the high altitudes. The cows move to the lower elevations when the snow flies, and the multimillion-dollar production of cheese and chocolates is already underway. Perfect solutions, but those mountains are still unnavigable–or they would have been if the clever Swiss hadn’t devised plans to traverse them. They laid multitudinous miles of train tracks, laid cog wheel tracks where the mountains were too steep for trains and bored holes when the passes were inaccessible. The result is an efficient train system that penetrates mountains and delivers inhabitants to the most remote areas. The Swiss built the longest tunnel in the world, Gotthard Tunnel, at 35 miles long. They established tourism with hiking trails and cable car systems that deliver skiers and hikers to stunning slopes. One gondola, the Titlis Glacier Mountain Rotair near Lucerne, rotates 360 degrees. The Swiss have figured Switzerland it out and in fine style. The undulating emerald hillsides glisten in sunshine, glaciers feed dusty turquoise rivers and mountain flowers burst from ruby red to daisy white. My beau and I traveled in summer and the weather was in the high 60s and low 70s. Who could ask for more when winding our way through Switzerland by train? We arrived at Zurich, and then circled Switzerland by train, boat and bus: the Swiss way. Coordinated to arrive when trains did, busses and boats were a short walk away. Part of Switzerland’s charm is that it enjoys many cultures in one country. The prevailing language is German since Germany borders some of Switzerland. But perching on Swiss borders are Austria, France and Italy. This means that when you’re in Switzerland’s adjoining cities, the prevailing language changes, and you immerse yourself in those countries’ ethnicities. Read More: Swiss Delight: Top 10 Things to Do in Switzerland