Via Alpina Trekking - Linthal to Meiringen

Trip Code: SGLM

Version: Via Alpina Trekking - Linthal to Meiringen

WALK & TREK	SELF-GUIDED	6 MODERATE

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tackle the ridge over the Balmeregghorn with views of Bernese Oberland giants including the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau
- Undertake a classic long-distance Alpine trek at your own pace
- Hike through the majestic landscapes of Central Switzerland and the Bernese Oberland
- Discover idyllic trails and bucolic pastures, shaped by dairy cows and their farmers for thousands of

years
- Explore the vibrant Swiss resort towns of Engelberg and Meiringen

AT A GLANCE

- 5 days trekking
- Max altitude 2,292m
- Daily departures
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Join at Linthal / End in Meiringen

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 6 Breakfasts
- 1 Dinner
- 5 nights Hotel
- 1 nights Guesthouse

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

The Via Alpina long distance route - also known as the Alpine Pass Route – crosses Switzerland from Vaduz in the east to Montreux in the west, passing through seven distinct regions. Over a total distance of 390km, it takes in an incredible variety of landscapes and cultures, and traverses fourteen high Alpine passes along the way. On this one-week self-guided walking holiday, you will hike stages 5 to 9 of the classic long distance Via Alpina 1 route, beginning in the small village of Linthal and ending in the resort town of Meiringen. The route will take you from the tranquil Glarus Alps of Central Switzerland to the breathtaking Bernese Oberland, as you hike through some of Switzerland's wildest mountain regions.

If you love spectacular landscapes and the satisfaction and challenge of undertaking a long-distance hike, you should consider this classic trip in stunning Switzerland. This is a magnificent trek to rival the Tour du Mont Blanc. Travelling self-guided, with holiday logistics taken care of and just your daypack to carry, we are sure you will be just as enamoured with Switzerland as we are.

Looking to extend your holiday?

To spend more time walking this stunning trail, why not combine this trip with our Via Alpina Trekking - Meiringen to Lenk self-guided holiday for which we have selected upgraded accommodation, so you can end your two-week holiday in style and extra comfort.

Is this holiday for you?

This trip is perfect for you if you are an active walker looking for a challenging trek without the constraints of joining a group trip or the hassle of making the arrangements yourself. The flexibility of undertaking the Via Alpina as a self-guided trip allows you to go at your own pace with only your daypack to carry while we transport your luggage.

This is a sustained trek in an Alpine environment, covering an average distance of 18km per day over 5 days, with significant daily ascent/descents of around 1,000m on average. You will be hiking around 6 hours each day on average. You should have a high level of fitness, surefootedness and a good head for heights. Experience of hiking in mountainous terrain is a must for this trip. This is a fantastic, well-signposted mountain trek; nevertheless a sound knowledge of map reading is highly recommended,

particularly in changeable conditions. Occasionally in the early season you may come across patches of late snow which will need careful navigation.

For safety in the high mountains and on more remote trails, this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers.

Itinerary

Version: Via Alpina Trekking - Linthal to Meiringen

DAY 1

Arrive in Linthal at the southern end of the canton of Glarus.

Your holiday starts when you arrive at your hotel in Linthal, a charming village at the head of the Linth River, surrounded by mountains swathed in trees - a wonderful launching-off point for your Via Alpina experience! The scenic rail journey to reach this beautiful spot will have given you a first taste of the superb landscapes in store for you this coming week. Depending on your time of arrival, take a walk along the river and enjoy a coffee before choosing your spot for your evening meal and settling in for the night.

Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Hike through forests and wild pastures to Urnerboden.

No doubt you will be raring to get going this morning! Striking out from Linthal on foot, you will tackle a steep path cutting switchbacks through forested slopes to reach the car-free resort of Braunwald, tucked into a sunny hollow on the mountainside. Your route continues around the cirque and on through lush green pastures, with stunning views of the craggy granite faces around you. Keeping to the high ground on an undulating path above the wild valley of Flatschbach, you will soon meet the river and handrail it on a gentle course all the way to Urnerboden, accompanied by the ringing of cowbells from the hundreds of cattle grazing in the valley. In this little village, your hosts at your traditional guesthouse will be waiting with a warm welcome.

Meals: **B**

Accommodation
Guesthouse

Ascent
935M

Descent
215M

Time
5-6 hours

Distance
16KM

DAY 3

Cross the Klausen Pass (1,948m) to reach Unterschachen.

Waking in the tranquillity of Switzerland's largest alpine pasture, home to some 1,200 head of cattle, you

can fuel-up on breakfast while watching the changing alpenglow on the rocky flanks of the surrounding massifs. Your hike this morning follows a pleasant course along the wide green valley before climbing steadily to the high point of the day, the Klausen Pass (1,948m). As you hike, keep your eye out for inquisitive marmots that may be foraging in the sun! From the pass, remember to turn around for magnificent views of the Urnerboden Valley behind you. Your next objective is in the Schachental Valley ahead of you, and you will take a high trail with spectacular views before descending steeply to reach Unterschachen and your home for the night.

Meals: **B**

Accommodation	Ascent	Descent	Time	Distance
Hotel	670M	1040M	6-7 hours	18KM

DAY 4

Enjoy panoramic views on a ridge walk to the Surenen Pass (2,292m) then descend to Engelberg.

Your day starts with a bus transfer to Attinghausen (payable locally) from where you will take the cable car to Brüsti (1,528m), despatching a large chunk of ascent and making today's long stage more manageable. The trail takes you over the scenic ridge linking Chräienhöreli (1,728m), Grat (1,936m) and Nussfruttli (1,954m), with sumptuous panoramic views throughout, then across rocky slopes of scree and possibly some patches of late snow to reach the Surenen Pass (2,292m). From the saddle, crane your neck to the spectacular soaring peaks of the Blackenstock (2,931m) above you, and gaze with wonder into the basin of the Blackenalp before you. From here, you will descend through dreamy scenes of alpine meadows grazed by languid cattle, to reach the valley floor and join a pretty path that takes you all the way to Engelberg. There is a wealth of restaurants for you to choose from in this popular holiday village this evening; after your efforts on a challenging day, you can refuel to your heart's content!

Meals: **B**

Accommodation	Ascent	Descent	Time	Distance
Hotel	745M	1250M	7-8 hours	21KM

DAY 5

Tackle the Joch Pass (2,207m) to enter the Bernese Oberland, aiming for tranquil Engstlenalp.

Feeling well rested, this morning you can have a more leisurely start as today's hike is a little shorter than what you've covered on each of the previous two days. Setting off from your hotel, you will take a path ascending steadily through woods and open pastureland, followed by a climb on a forest trail that cuts switchbacks beneath the Trubsee cable car. Overcoming the crest, you will be greeted with a

spectacular view of Trubsee lake (1,764m), situated beneath the Graustock (2,662m). You can have a breather or perhaps a little snack here, before continuing your ascent in the direction of the Ochsehorn (2,343m), aiming for the Joch Pass (2,207m). This pass demarcates the point where you will cross from the canton of Nidwalden to the canton of Bern to enter the enchanting realm of the Bernese Oberland. The mountain hut here makes an ideal lunch stop with a view, where you can tuck in to your picnic on the outdoor terrace or maybe enjoy a meal from its buzzing restaurant. Sated, you can commence your descent toward the Engstlenalp on an idyllic path, with the lake of Engstlensee glistening ahead of you. The turquoise waters invite you for a bracing dip (or maybe just a dip of the feet to cool off!) before you make your way to your home for the night - a historic mountain hotel situated on this high alpine plateau. This evening, you can enjoy the house specialties in the cosy dining room and perhaps share some tales of adventure with fellow guests over a glass of wine.

Meals: **B D**

Accommodation	Ascent	Descent	Time	Distance
Hotel	1170M	340M	5-6 hours	12KM

DAY 6

Walk the spectacular ridge over the Balmeregghorn (2,255m) with views of the Eiger, and descend to Meiringen.

You might like to get up early this morning to soak in your peaceful surroundings and watch the changing morning light on the surrounding peaks; there is something magical about being at 1,835m bathed in silence and fresh mountain air. Feeling re-energized and well-fuelled, it is time for you to tackle the final stage of your one-week trek - and what a magnificent, varied day is in store for you. You will meander through bucolic alpine pastures, where mountain herbs and flowers sway gently in the breeze and cast their scent in the air. There will be awe-inspiring balcony paths hugging the flanks of the rocky mountainside, and mountain lakes that reflect the surrounding peaks in perfect symmetry. You will hike on the incredible ridge over the Balmeregghorn (2,255m) and gain views of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau that take your breath away. You might well feel a sense of wonder as you approach these famous giants of the Swiss Alps and imagine the geological forces that shaped this land. After the cable car station at Planplatten (2,229m), it is downhill all the way to Meiringen (595m), passing small wooden chalets and curious dairy cows.

Settling into your hotel, you can enjoy a celebratory meal at one of the many restaurants in Meiringen - you will be spoilt for choice in this popular resort town. You could even treat yourself to a double helping of dessert; after all, it is said that meringues were invented in Meiringen!

Meals: **B**

Accommodation	Ascent	Descent	Time	Distance
Hotel	445M	1680M	8 hours	22KM

DAY 7

Departure Day.

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before checking out of your accommodation and making your onward journey.

You could even extend your holiday into a two-week Alpine trekking adventure. This trip can be easily linked with our Via Alpina Trekking - Meiringen to Lenk self-guided holiday for which we have selected wonderful boutique hotels so that you can end your two-week Via Alpina holiday in style and extra comfort.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Luggage transfers
- Cable car Attinghausen to Brüsti on Day 4
- Discount code to the value of CHF 10 when booking your train with Swiss Federal Railways (www.sbb.ch/en)
- Navigation App and GPX tracks available

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to Linthal
- Travel from Meiringen
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tourist taxes may apply and are usually under CHF 10 per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Bus transfer Unterschachen to Attinghausen (allow approx. CHF 11 per person)
- Any other optional local transfers by bus/rail/cable car
- Any other optional local transfers by bus/rail/cable car (please note Post Buses only accept cash for on the spot purchases)
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit and the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook, and all your relevant documents, no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start-date. We will send your documents using a signed-for courier so that you can track your package and know that it is safely on its way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our Sales Team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker, so please remind them to pack it before setting off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start-date, please inform our Sales Team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

GPS Travel App

This holiday includes a GPS navigation app, which contains the routes for you to follow each day, as well as attractions, coffee stops and points of interest along the way. The app does not need to have Wi-Fi connection to work, you simply follow the instructions we provide you to download the app to your personal smartphone device before you leave home and you are ready to go.

While the travel app is running, your phone battery charge can be consumed faster than normal, so we strongly recommend that you pack a power bank with you just in case you require it.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking or cycling holiday for your family, a centre-based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a day's walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool, or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our Sales Team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts in Linthal and ends in Meiringen. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The nearest airport for this trip is Zurich, served by many departures from UK regional airports.

The Swiss Federal Railways network is extremely efficient and offers excellent connections all over the country (https://www.sbb.ch/en).

If you are flying to Zurich Airport, you can take the train from the airport to Zurich Hauptbahnhof, where you can pick up a direct train to Linthal. The whole journey takes around 2 hours. At the end of your trip you can return to Zurich by taking the train from Meiringen via Lucerne. The whole journey takes around 2.5 hours.

It is also possible to travel flight-free from the UK by taking the Eurostar train to Paris Gare de Lyon where you can change to pick up TGV connections to Switzerland.

A Swiss Half-Fare Card is available to purchase which offers savings on the Swiss transport network. You might like to consider this particularly if you are planning an extended holiday in Switzerland. For more information visit the SBB website: https://www.swissrailways.com/en/buy-swiss-half-fare-card.

Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis, with the night in Engstlenalp on a half-board basis (evening meal also included on this night), to allow you plenty of flexibility during your holiday.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Swiss food is a blend of French, German and Italian cuisine, which is hardly surprising given the country's location surrounded by all three countries. In particular, Switzerland is a cheese and chocolate lover's dream destination and is home to some of the world's finest cheese producers and chocolatiers. Yet there is much more to Swiss food than cheese and chocolate.

The great Swiss staple, the cheese fondue, is a dish all visitors must try and is almost a rite of passage. A mix of delicious melted Gruyere and other Swiss cheeses, white wine and herbs, it is the meal the Swiss Cheese Union claims 'creates a good mood' - unless you are first to drop your bread in the fondue that is! Tradition states that the poor soul who drops their bread in first, must foot the bill.

Although cheese fondue is delicious, it is certainly not the only yummy dish on the menu. Other national delights include Rösti (a fried grated-potato dish served with anything from eggs to apples) and Zürcher Geschnetzeltes (which translates as 'meat cut Zurich style' and consists of slices of veal cooked in a creamy mushroom sauce). Although traditional food is generally rich and hearty, you will find many lighter options too such as soups, salads and fresh fish from the region's lakes. For a typical dish of the area, Berner Platte is a traditional celebratory dish, consisting of a large plate with a variety of sauerkraut, meats, buttery potatoes and vegetables.

Of course, if you are keen to embrace the cake and coffee culture, you will find a range of delightful sweet treats, many containing the fresh fruits grown in Switzerland, and of course the renowned Käsekuchen (cheesecake). Go on, you've earned it!

Accommodation

On this one-week trekking holiday you will stay in carefully chosen hotels and traditional Alpine guesthouses, each selected for their welcoming hospitality and outstanding locations along this section of the stunning Via Alpina route. Nestled in picturesque valleys with a backdrop of magnificent landscapes, you can rest and relax at the end of your day's hike in the peace and tranquillity of the mountains. Your stay each night will be on a bed & breakfast basis (half board for one night in the Engstlenalp) in comfortable double or twin rooms, typically with Austrian style twin beds (two beds within one bed frame, and separate bedding).

It is possible to arrange additional nights' accommodation at either end of your trip if you would like to extend your stay in Linthal or Meiringen. Please speak with our Sales Team for further details.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your walk. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is limited to one piece under 20kg per person, and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The unit of currency in Switzerland is the Swiss Franc.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace, however getting some additional exercise before going on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. After all, the fitter you are, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 6 hours a day for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

Climate

Daytime temperatures at the elevations at which you will be hiking in this region tend to be quite warm, ranging between 10 and 25 degrees Centigrade. It can be cool in the evenings, dropping to as low as 5 degrees Centigrade, particularly at higher elevations. The weather is usually stable during the hiking season between July and September, however mountainous areas do generate their own weather systems and occasional rain and even stormy weather cannot be ruled out. You should be prepared for all eventualities!

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

Switzerland in Tolkien's Middle-Earth - M.S. Monsch

Slow Train to Switzerland - Diccon Bewes

Cicerone Guide: Trekking the Swiss Via Alpina - Kev Reynolds & Jonathan Williams

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Self Guided Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good-grip soles

- Hiking socks
- Long / short hiking trousers
- Functional base layer top and leggings
- T-shirts
- Fleece / extra warm layer
- Windproof jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Hat, gloves, and neck gaiter
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Sunhat
- Small first aid kit inside your rucksack
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Camera (and batteries / memory card)
- Reusable sealable picnic boxes for picnics

- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Walking poles
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Personal wash kit
- Your self-guided route notes
- Rucksack (approx. 20L)

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons on double or twin occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers - contact our Sales Team for a quote.

When considering your travel dates, you might like to investigate any seasonal opening times of attractions and points of interest.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights' accommodation before or after your self-guided trip - ask our Sales Team to find out more about this.

Our Sales Team will be happy to provide you with a quote for scheduled flights, or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Shhh... not many UK operators offer this route! Venture away from the usual hotspots of long-distance Alpine treks and complete stages 5 to 9 of the epic Via Alpina 1 at your own pace.Plus, you can combine this trip with our Via Alpina Trekking - Meiringen to Lenk self-guided holiday for an incredible two-week point-to-point adventure.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 14/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change