

SWITZERLAND TO BECOME A CYCLING TOURISM DESTINATION



Switzerland is aiming to diversify their tourism sector. The Alpine country wants tourists to arrive not only for hiking and skiing, but also for cycling. Cycling tourism is thus the main focus of local tourism board.

With a budget of 45.5 million Swiss francs, the organization Schweiz Tourismus will bring the country as a cycling tourism destination to road and mountain-cyclers as well as trekking bikers.

There are already 1.5 million guests cycling during the summer holidays in the country. **Every third cyclist in Switzerland is on a round trip.** Cycling in the Alps is especially popular with Austrians, Belgians, Czech, French, Germans, Italians, Dutch, Poles, English and also among the Swiss themselves.

According to marketing experts, especially women would recognize cycling as a fitness and lifestyle tool. In addition, this activity is popular with the 50+ generation. Overall, experts see cycling tourism as a kind of lifestyle. You roll through mountains and valleys for adventure and as an expression of liveliness.

Schweiz Tourismus is planning various marketing activities and events. In addition to 4.5 million brochures, 55 media conferences and numerous discussions with opinion leaders, 1200 foreign journalists are expected to travel to get an idea of the conditions.

On some days, the Alpine passes are even completely closed, so that cyclists have free rein. The first such event under the title "Ride the Alps" is scheduled to take place on May 26 at Sustenpass. The fact that the Mountain Bike World Championship takes place in Switzerland in September fits perfectly into the overall image of cycling tourism destination.

In addition to the passionate cyclists, "beginners" are also a target group. Inexperienced cyclists, especially from remote markets, can cycle on rental bikes and discover Switzerland. **If the campaign succeeds, Schweiz Tourismus expects an increase of 2.8% this summer and 3.2% in 2018 as a whole, thus continuing the positive trend.**

In terms of the large-scale campaign, Switzerland is obviously also dealing with the issue of accommodating the cyclers. Those who want to trample for several days, but also need the right accommodation will be happy that Schweiz Tourismus published a booklet containing 85 specialized hotels.

These so-called bike hotels are very practical. They contain lockable bike rooms, cleaning areas with repair kits, the possibility of laundry or showering on departure day, as well as packed lunches on request and much more. In Celerina, for example, the Cresta Palace also has an activity coach and base station. A pearl among bikers, the Petit Relais, is known for its rich breakfast buffet and whirlpool.

Another possibility for accommodation for cycling enthusiasts are camping sites. However, the issue with them in Switzerland is their high price. As a matter of fact, **Switzerland is the most expensive camping destination in Europe**. Overnight stays cost an average of €46.78 for two adults and a child.

In comparison, German campers pay on average just €29.13 which is also significantly less than the European average of €35.50. But even despite high prices, Swiss campsites attract many people.

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