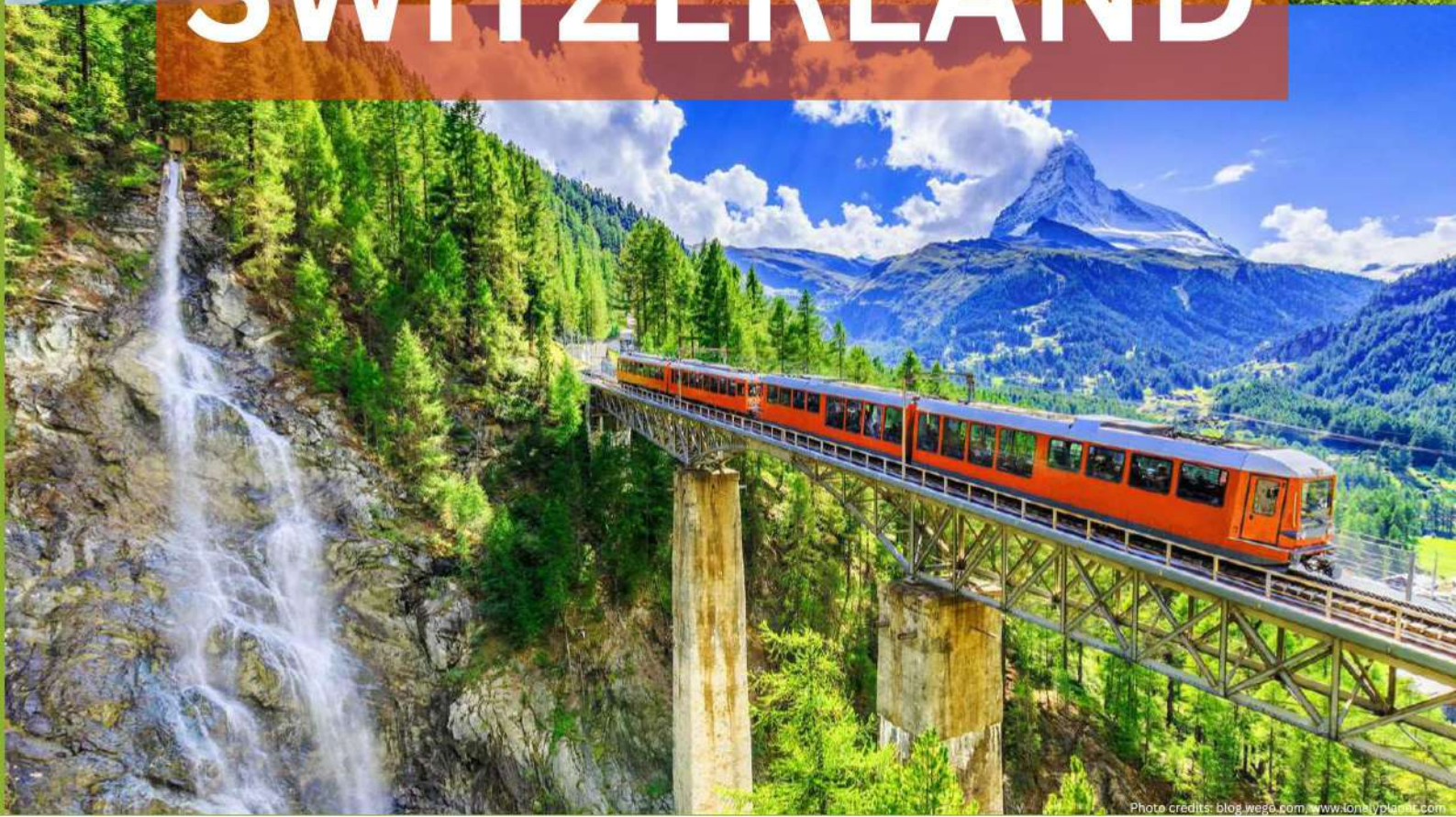


Travel 'n' Shop

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SWITZERLAND



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SWITZERLAND



Credit: www.myglobalviewpoint.com

Officially known as the Swiss Confederation, Switzerland is a nation in central Europe. 15,943 square miles (41,291 sq km). Population: 8,864,000 (as of 2023). Capitals: Lausanne and administrative Bern (judicial). Italy, France, and Germany make up the population. German, French, Italian, and Romansh are all spoken (all official, with Romansh used locally). Islam as well as Christianity (Roman Catholic and Protestant). Cash: Swiss franc. Switzerland is separated into three geographical areas: the Jura Mountains, which are covered in meadows; the central Mittelland, which is rich in agriculture and urbanization; and the towering Alps.

It is one of the great financial centers of the globe, and banking, international trade, and both light and heavy industries make up the majority of its economy. Watches, fine instruments, machines, and chemicals are all manufactured.

Agriculture, which produces items like cereals, sugar beets, fruits and vegetables, dairy goods, cocoa, and wine, is also significant. Despite its many ethnic, religious, and linguistic groupings, Switzerland has preserved the oldest democracy in the world for about 700 years.

It is a federal state with two legislative chambers, and the president of the Federal Council serves as both the head of state and government. The Helvetians were the initial occupants; they were subjugated by the Romans in the first century BCE. Between the third and sixth centuries CE, Germanic tribes invaded the area, and in the tenth century, Muslim and Magyar attackers entered the area.

In the ninth century, it was ruled by the Franks, and in the eleventh century, by the medieval empire (which would later become the Holy Roman Empire). In 1291 three cantons organized an anti-Habsburg coalition that constituted the basis of the Swiss Confederation. It served as a hub for the Reformation, which split the confederation and sparked a time of political and theological strife.

In 1798, the French established the Helvetic Republic, which included Switzerland. The Congress of Vienna maintained Switzerland's neutrality and acknowledged its independence in 1815.

Bern served as the capital of the newly created federal state that year. Both World Wars I and II saw Switzerland upholding its neutrality, which it has done so to this day. It opted out of joining the European Union but joined the European Free Trade Association in 1960. In 2002, it acceded to the UN.

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Top Destinations in Switzerland

LUCERNE



Source: switzerland-tour.com

The city of Lucerne, located on Lake Lucerne and serving as the entrance to central Switzerland, is surrounded by a stunning hilly landscape. Many tour groups and independent travelers stop in the town while traveling through central Switzerland because of its attractions, its alluring shopping selection, the picturesque lakeside location, and the close-by excursion mountains of the Rigi, Pilatus, and Stanserhorn.

BERN



Source: www.medibroker.com

Few cities have done as well as Bern, the Swiss capital, at preserving their historical elements. The ancient town of Bern is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and has one of the longest weather-sheltered shopping promenades in Europe thanks to its 6 kilometers of arcades, or "Lauben" as the locals call them.



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GENEVA



Source: uk.hotels.com

Switzerland's most international city is Geneva. It is also where the Red Cross's European headquarters are located. In addition, the city on Lake Geneva is the birthplace of watchmaking and has a large number of chocolatiers. The Jet d'Eau fountain, the L'horloge fleurie flower clock, the old town with the St. Pierre Cathedral, and the Plaza du Bourg-de-Four are just a few of Geneva's attractions.

BASEL



Source: holidaystoswitzerland.com

The city of culture for connoisseurs has the highest concentration of museums in the nation with 40 of them. Basel also features a lovely Old Town, contemporary buildings, and the Rhine, which is a relaxing place to unwind.



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Schengen Visa: UAE residents travelling to EU may not need visa stamps on passports, soon



Source: gulfnews.com

The entire visa application process could be done online.

There is good news if you are dreading the thought of making many trips to apply for visas but are shortly planning a trip to an EU nation. Given that the entire application procedure may eventually be digitalized, applying for a Schengen visa may soon become much simpler.

On January 31, 2023, the European Parliament approved a report that might do away with the requirement that applicants submit a physical visa application or have the visa stamped on their passport. The new digitalization plan was described in the following detail in a news statement from the Civil Liberties, Justice, and Home Affairs Committee of the European Union.

Online application process

In the case of multi-country journeys, visa applications would be processed on a single online portal that would also inform applicants which nation will receive their application. The EU's ecosystem of border management databases and systems is also taken into consideration when developing the new system.

Visa sticker will not be needed

Also, the new processes would do away with the requirement for a real visa sticker on your passport. A declaration made by EU Member of Parliament (MEP) Matja Nemeč stated that the visa sticker would be replaced by a digitally issued visa.

"A digital visa would lessen security threats presented by physical stickers, and a uniform system would enable individuals view the EU as a single geographic entity,"

He continued by saying that the new method would also increase data security for applicants by adding more processing safeguards.

Application procedures to be made easier

The research also aims to make the new system more applicant-friendly by reducing obstacles related to language, disability status, a lack of technical skills, or inadequate internet connectivity, according to Nemeč.

How will it affect people applying for the Schengen visa from the UAE?

VFS Global made the following comment in a message to Gulf News: "We are fully aware of the EU's ambitions to digitize the visa application process. VFS Global welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with these governments to support them on their transformation journey as an almost all of the EU and Schengen governments' external service supplier.

Inter-institutional negotiations are the next phase, and if there are no objections, negotiations on the specifics of the legislation's final provisions will start, according to the EU parliament's official press release.



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Where to travel in 2023: 3 new flight routes from the UAE

Be motivated to travel in 2023...

Already considering your travel plans for those extended weekends in 2023? With two thirds of the world accessible within an eight-hour flight of the United Arab Emirates, there is plenty of exploring to be done, whether it's a city break, beach getaway, or a bucket list location. And those new locations just keep getting closer as regional carriers increase the number of flying routes.

These are 15 intriguing new flight routes that will begin service in 2023 to help you plan your trips.



Source: guides.williams.edu

Abu Dhabi to Ankara, Turkey with Wizz Air Abu Dhabi



Source: whatson.ae

Almost exactly two years after its debut, Wizz Air Abu Dhabi expanded its network of low-cost destinations. Starting of January 19, flights are available every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from the capital of the United Arab Emirates to the culinary hub of Ankara, Turkey. Discounted tickets start at Dhs149. Ankara is a cosmopolitan city in central Turkey that is famous for both its wonderful retail therapy and its cultural institutions. Yet, a vacation there isn't only about the glorious food. The State Opera and Ballet, the Presidential Symphony Orchestra, and other national theatrical companies call it their home. It is a recognized center for the performing arts.



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Dubai to Milan, Italy with flydubai



Source: whatson.ae

Milan will be one of two new Italian air routes that flydubai will launch in 2023. Travelers will have access to five weekly flights to the chic Italian city starting on March 10, 2023. In the summer, this will become a daily service. Milan is regarded as Italy's commercial and financial hub because of its physical location. But Milan is much more than that. The culturally diverse city is known for its natural beauty, outstanding collection of museums and galleries, and beloved cafés and restaurants that serve up regional cuisine and friendly friendliness in equal measure. It also provides a charming blend of old and modern architecture.

Sharjah to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with Air Arabia



Source: whatson.ae

On March 20, Air Arabia resumed operating direct flights to Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. Currently, there are three flights each week from Sharjah International Airport to Kuala Lumpur International Airport, however starting in June 2023, there will be daily flights between the two airports. If you've never been to the Malaysian capital, you should know that it has one of the best culinary scenes in the world, with mouthwatering street cuisine available everywhere. A vacation to Kuala Lumpur, however, wouldn't be complete without taking in the city's skyline from a gorgeous rooftop, enjoying a night out on the renowned Changkat Bukit Bintang Boulevard, or working your glutes at the Batu Caves. Economy seats on return flights start at Dhs2,400.

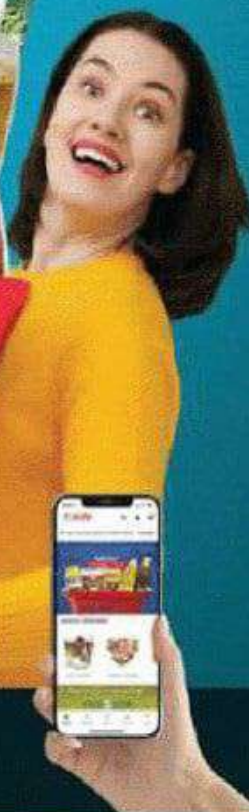
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