SWISS DELIGHTS

A shopper’s paradise, a nature lover’s haven, city of relaxation...Zurich has been termed all these and more. Yet, what makes a trip to the picture perfect Swiss city a truly memorable experience is its eclectic variety of culinary choices.

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There are not many cities that have something for just about every visitor. Zurich is one of the few cities that cater to visitors with varied interests. Be it art, history, shopping, nature or wellness, Zurich never fails to captivate and interest even the most seasoned traveller. The air of vibrancy is hard to miss in the cosmopolitan Swiss city that combines the charm of old world with new. What adds to the uniqueness of Zurich is its fascinating culinary choices.

While chocolates are definitely one of the highlights of the city, Zurich is home to some of the finest cafes and restaurants in Switzerland that caters to the frugal traveller as well as the most extravagant. Although one visit might not be enough to experience the culinary expertise and variety that Zurich has to offer, there are some hotspots of gastronomy that should not be missed. In no special order, here is a listing of Zurich’s delectable options for an authentic Swiss meal, lip-smacking hot chocolate or Michelin-star cuisine.

Confiserie Sprüngli, AG: Every person worth his or her taste in chocolates would know that a visit to Zurich is not complete without visiting a Confiserie Sprüngli. The last word in luxurious Swiss chocolates and everything delectably sweet, Confiserie Sprüngli is the chocolate lover’s paradise. While Confiserie Sprüngli has around 14 stores in and around Zurich, the one not to be missed is located at Bahnhofstrasse 21. Here, not only can you buy the various goodies that Confiserie Sprüngli is known for, but also indulge in a scrumptious array of pastries, entrees, Swiss delicacies as well as hot beverages that include their well-known, hot chocolate. Absolute must-try includes their decadent truffles and light-as-air Luxembourg. This is also a great place for people watching.

Zeughauskeller: For authentic Swiss cuisine, Zeughauskeller is one of the finest options in Zurich. Apart from being one of the oldest restaurants in the country, Zeughauskeller, located at Bahnhofstrasse 28a, is very much a part of the city’s DNA. A favourite haunt of residents and a must-visit of almost every tourist, this restaurant serves a variety of traditional Swiss delicacies that include sausages, veal and schnitzel. Vegetarians will find the creamy macaroni with onions and potato just as enticing as the tortellini pasta with ricotta and spinach. The restaurant is quaint and homely; when the weather is good, dining outside is a lovely option at Zeughauskeller.

Rôtisserie, Storchen Zurich: Switzerland is home to many traditional ‘houses’ (or guild houses) that form an intricate part of the country’s culture. The Rôtisserie in Hotel Storchen Zurich at Weinplatz 2 is one such traditional restaurant. Yet another specialty restaurant that serves traditional mouth-watering Swiss cuisine in a fine dining ambience, Rotisserie is especially favoured for the fantastic views diners enjoy. The restaurant overlooks the Limmat.
River and offers unparalleled views of the Old Town. During summer, the terrace is one of the best locations to enjoy an appetising meal. Long after having relished the restaurant’s classic lobster soup or ravioli or a hearty breakfast, guests tend to sit back and enjoy the beautiful view that lies ahead.

The Restaurant, The Dolder Grand: Away from the hustle and bustle of the vibrant city of Zurich, atop a hill sits the breathtakingly beautiful hotel – The Dolder Grand. Favoured by celebrities, politicians and the jet set crowd, The Dolder Grand, located at Kurhausstrasse 65, does not fail to stun visitors. Superlatives are often used to describe the hotel and the same applies to its renowned The Restaurant. With 18 GaultMillau points and two Michelin stars, The Restaurant, helmed by acclaimed chef Heiko Nieder, is a must visit. Open for lunch and dinner, the restaurant has a well-thought out menu that features classic as well as contemporary cuisine. The a la carte menu is extensive but the 5-course tasting menu with its brilliantly selected dishes gets our votes. Fine dining is at its best in The Restaurant.

Hiltl: Some places are intertwined over time with a city’s character. A city would be incomplete without this link. Hiltl, one of the oldest vegetarian restaurants in Europe, is one such link of Zurich. The restaurant that has been serving diners in the city since 1898 is nothing short of an institution. Hiltl, located on Silhstrasse 28, is a unique combination of restaurant and lounge/nightclub. While the restaurant has a great à la carte menu, the buffet, which has a weigh and pay option, stands apart with its staggering variety of dishes that include Asian, Indian, Middle East and European vegetarian delicacies. Hiltl is a hot choice among both vegetarians and non-vegetarians. Tourists often have Hiltl on their Zurich itinerary. Towards evening, the lounge bar area of Hiltl dons a spirited ambience with music and lively chatter filling the place.

Brasserie Lipp & Jules Verne Panoramabar: For a touch of Paris, Brasserie Lipp on Uraniastrasse 9 is the perfect place. A classic French brasserie that sports La Belle Epoque ambience, Brasserie Lipp is especially renowned for its seafood fare. The oysters are heavenly and extremely popular; in fact the restaurant even offers oysters ‘to-go’, that are opened and cooled over ice. The Scottish smoked salmon is also divine. Their desserts are renowned and must not be missed. Go early and head to the top of the restaurant where you will find the Jules Verne Panoramabar. From here, you get a sweeping panoramic view of Zurich. Getting a table here can be difficult at lunchtime, but if you do, then this is a great place to enjoy a lovely meal or freshly concocted blends.

Cheese Fondue Cruise: One of the highlights of Swiss cuisine, a good cheese fondue warms the heart and soul. And when enjoyed in a distinctive ambiance, the culinary experience can leave a long lasting impression. Zurich is home to many remarkable fondue eateries but a truly unique way to enjoy the Swiss delicacy is to go on a Cheese Fondue Cruise. Ordinarily this cruise not only lets you taste the appetising Swiss dish that originated from the Alps but also enjoy an alternate view of the city and its countryside from Lake Zurich. Do remember if you drop the bread into the fondue then you will have to buy a round of drinks for the table! Cheese Fondue Cruises depart from Burkliplatz.

Runway 34: To experience a trendy and absolutely mind-boggling dining experience head down to Runway 34 next to Zurich airport. The aviation themed restaurant features a Russian Ilyushin II - 14 smack in the middle of the 'hangar restaurant'. The restaurant serves Asian, Swiss and Mediterranean cuisine.