

INSIDE:

- Summer Airfares
- 1st Night Hotel-Geneva
- Readers' Forum
- Operetta Festivals

DEAR  
SUBSCRIBER

June 28, 1993

This is it. The travel season is in full cry. The umbrella tables are out all over Europe. These are days when the mind tends to take trips without the body. Right now it's noon on the West Coast, 9 p.m. in thousands of European cities and villages.

In Munich, waiters swinging half liters of beer and heavy, steaming plates, zig-zag through packed ranks of tables on Neuhauser Strasse in front of the **Augustiner**.

In Maria Zell, a tiny town deep in the Austrian countryside, the *stammtisch* of **Gasthof zum Alten Brauhaus** is bathed in yellow light from a low-hanging shaded lamp. Half a dozen regulars sit quietly drinking beer and schnapps. There are no tourists, in fact, there are no other customers.

At Interlaken's swank **Grand Hotel Victoria-Jungfrau**, the candlelit **Restaurant La Terrasse** is in the midst of dinner. Every table is occupied. The tuxedoed pianist at the gleaming grand glides through an endless string of familiar tunes. The restaurant's high windows frame the Jungfrau as the great mountain catches the sun's last rays.

My body wants to be there.

Later, as I drive by the San Francisco airport, a 747

*Continued on page 2*

# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

The Travel Letter for Germany, Austria, Switzerland & the New Europe

## KITZBÜHEL

*Kitzbühel, the Tyrolean village made famous in the U. S. by ABC-TV's Wide World of Sports, offers more than a renowned ski race. There's much to do in the summer and it's less expensive.*

**T**he Tyrolean town of Kitzbühel is an upscale ski resort that attracts a crowd similar to the Swiss resorts of Gstaad and St. Moritz, but with a bit more country charm.

The Kitzbühel-Kirchberg ski region consists of more than 60 cable cars and lifts and more than 100 miles of ski trails in a variety of suit every level of proficiency. The town's *apres-ski* activity is considered the most lively in the Tyrol.

But Kitzbühel is also a pleasant place in summer. There are three golf courses; first-rate tennis facilities; mountains to explore by cablecar, ski lift and foot; and plenty of places around this agreeable old village to relax for a couple of hours of reading, sipping or just watching.

As with every Alpine mountain town, the most popular fair weather activity is walking or hiking and there are miles of trails. A good example of an easy, safe jaunt is the Hahnenkamm Panorama. The walk from the top station of the Hahnenka-

mm cablecar to the St. Bernhard Chapel, is only slightly uphill, rising 150 meters. Another easy stroll is to the Schwarze-see, a lake with extensive recreational facilities about 20 minutes from the center. Registered hotel guests are eligible for the Kitzbühel Guest Card which, among other advantages, allows free participation in guided walking tours three days a week.

One suggested family outing is to the Wildlife

Park five miles away in Aurach and open year round.

On summer evenings the town's brass band marches to the center of the village where it gives informal, outdoor concerts. (We found an outside table at the Big Ben Café where we were able to hear the band while enjoying a glass of our favorite beer, Budvar from Czechoslovakia.) The band plays every Friday at 8:30 p.m.

*Continued on page 3*

### Yellow Roads

## LAUSANNE TO INTERLAKEN

*You can drive the autobahn from Lausanne to Interlaken in less than an hour. Here's a longer, slower, more scenic route.*

**A**re you feeling low, traveler? You say the rental car company gave you a motor scooter instead of a Mercedes Benz? You say when you checked out of the hotel this morning you found out it cost \$150 per *person* instead of \$150 per room? And you phoned home last night to check on your 16 year-old son and a voice rising above the background roar yelled "Hey, Jimmy, the keg is almost empty," and Jim-

my is your son? Is that what's troubling you traveler? Well, slap a cassette of your favorite music in the tape player and crank the sunroof open. Here's a Swiss drive to lift your spirits.

The route is from Lausanne to Interlaken avoiding the autobahn. It first curves along the north side of Lac Léman (Lake Geneva) through the western Lavaux wine region, from whence come some of

*Continued on page 4*

## DEAR SUBSCRIBER

Continued from page 1

taxis toward takeoff. It is a flight I know well, Lufthansa's #455, nonstop to Frankfurt. No matter how many times I see an airplane on a runway I want to be on it.

But not today. Today I must return to my desk, fire-up the Mac, crack the spigot and release another trickle from my tiny reservoir of travel wisdom. Pray the drought is truly over.

### Summer Airfares

Transatlantic airfares are at their highest point of the year. It would, of course, have been prudent to have purchased your tickets in March or April when there were a few deals out there, but not everyone can plan that far ahead. For those of you shopping now for seats to Europe in July, August or September, here are a few ideas:

- Start with **Swissair**. Because you're a *Gemütlichkeit* subscriber you are entitled to \$100 off the airline's best sale fares in Coach Class, \$400 off Business Class and \$600 off First Class. (Remember, to obtain the reduced price, first book directly with Swissair at 800-221-4750. Identify yourself as a *Gemütlichkeit* subscriber and reserve at the best fare available. Next, call Shirley at 800-238-0399 who — after confirming with *Gemütlichkeit* that you are a subscriber — will issue your tickets at the appropriate reduced price. The lower price applies to everyone in your traveling party.) This program is for *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers only.

- Have your travel agent try **DER**

**Tours** (800-782-2424). For a New York-London roundtrip, a fare of \$615 was the best the major airlines could offer my son and his wife near the end of June. DER, however, quoted their travel agent a mid-week fare of \$449 on **Air Canada**.

- Check with charter carriers like **Balair** (800-322-5247), which flies from Newark, Orlando, Miami, Bangor, San Francisco and Anchorage to Switzerland, and **Martinair**, whose flights go to Amsterdam. At press time, **Martinair** (800-366-4655) was running a special out of Miami for \$398 roundtrip. From the West Coast (Oakland, Seattle and Los Angeles) in July, the price is \$748 roundtrip. Starting August 23 that drops to \$698.

- In the Midwest you might try a company called **Pleasure Break** which is the booking agent for **American Trans Air**, a charter carrier that flies on Sundays and Wednesdays from Chicago and Minneapolis. At press time they quoted a \$489 roundtrip to Frankfurt and a \$749 fare on **Lufthansa**. Pleasure Break does not accept direct bookings so have your travel agent call 708-670-6300. Pay with a credit card, never cash.

### Another Reader Benefit

You soon will receive a tempting discount offer for a four-day, three-night stay at the **Grand Hotel Victoria-Jungfrau**. The program is for *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers only. The price tag of about \$140 per day, per person (includes breakfasts, a five-course dinner each night, upgraded rooms when available and use of the hotel's stunning new spa facilities) will be too steep for many, if not most. However, those who travel in that style, or want to splurge a bit, will find this is a terrific price. Com-

pare it, for example, with a similar offer at the **Park Hotel Vitznau** on Lake Lucerne. A three-night package there is \$275 per night, per person, double occupancy. Or you can try the low season three-night package at Baden-Baden's magnificent **Brenner's Park Hotel** for \$392 per person, per night, double occupancy; a price that includes a "beauty day" for two at Brenner's Lancaster Beauty Farm with a spa lunch.

Both the **Brenner's Park** and the **Park Hotel Vitznau** are outstanding, luxurious hotels (more than one seasoned traveler has told me Brenner's is the world's best). I mention their package prices not to denigrate either, but to illustrate what a superb bargain the Victoria-Jungfrau is offering *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers.

### How the Other Half Lives

Items culled from a recent issue of the magazine *Geneva News*:

Switzerland now has a national deficit which is expected to continue through 1996 at a rate of two to four billion Sfr. Some legislators are in favor of a 6.5% value added tax in order to balance the budget. By the end of the year unemployment in Switzerland, mostly women and foreigners trying to enter the workforce, is expected to reach 150,000 to 200,000 — less than 3% of the total population. The Federal Council recently adopted a measure raising the unemployment compensation to 400 days at a rate of from 70% to 80% of salary earned. From July to November 1992 saving deposits in Swiss banks increased by 10 billion Sfr., about 1,500 Sfr. (\$1,000) per capita.



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# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

The Travel Letter for Germany, Austria, Switzerland & the New Europe

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### Rating Key - Hotel

- I** Basic accommodations or a hotel that underachieves. Suitable only for stays of one or two nights.
- II** Good hotel, typical of its class. Suitable for a longer stay.
- III** A cut above other hotels in its price category.
- IV** Excellent accommodations.
- V** A great hotel, world-class, could be a memorable experience.

### Restaurants

- ❖ Acceptable meals, but *only* if the price is right.
- ❖❖ Good food but not good value, overpriced.
- ◆ Serves good, plain food, typical of the region.
- ☆ A cut above other restaurants in its price category.
- ☆☆ Outstanding food and service.
- ☆☆☆ A great restaurant in every respect

### Special Designations

- G** By virtue of location, decor, special charm, warmth of management, or combination thereof, an especially pleasant establishment.
- Ⓢ Offers significant value.
- Ⓢ Stay away.

## KITZBÜHEL

Continued from page 1

from June to mid-September and also on Tuesdays during July and August.

Kitzbühel has a good selection of hotels in all price categories and for most of the summer finding accommodations is not a problem.

### Romantik-Hotel Tennerhof

On a hillside opposite the village is Kitzbühel's best hotel, the Tennerhof.

First-time arrivals know they are on to something special the moment they pass through the entrance gate and begin winding their way up the hill through the lovely grounds to the hotel. The weathered facade, and three-story high roof peak that rises above the modern structure beneath it, is testament to the Tennerhof's simple beginnings in 1679 as a farmhouse.

The Pasquali von Campostellato family, who have owned the property since 1927, have not allowed its origins to be fully erased. Under their stewardship, the Tennerhof has become one of Europe's most elegant farmhouses. The place is strewn with antiques. Intricately painted bed frames and armoires, thick rope bannisters and ancient lamps are echoes of the old homestead. But shiny marble floors, vaulted ceilings, good pictures and oriental rugs remind guests they are in a very posh hotel.

The beautifully decorated guest rooms, all different, are a perfect meld of traditional Tyrolean ambience, top-class luxury and comfort. They are among the most inviting we've ever seen.

Gault Millau places the Tennerhof's restaurant among Austria's top 10.

Naturally there are cozy bars, fireplaces, indoor and outdoor pools, quiet corners in which to hide with a book, and flowers everywhere.

The very best hotels exude an air of quiet confidence and competence, and that's what you'll breathe at the Tennerhof.

Romantikhotel Tennerhof, Griesenauweg 26, A-6370 Kitzbühel, phone 05356/31 81, fax 05356/31 81 70. Singles 870 AS to 1,220 AS (\$73-\$103), doubles 1,580 AS to 3,380 AS (\$133-\$284). Major cards.

### Romantikhotel Tennerhof: IV G

## KITZBÜHEL

Population: 7,872

Elevation: 2,500 feet

Approximate distances from:

Innsbruck	100 km	62 miles
Munich	120 km	74 miles
Salzburg	80 km	50 miles
Vienna	400 km	248 miles
Zürich	400 km	248 miles

Kitzbühel Tourist Office

Hinterstadt 18

A-6370 Kitzbühel

Telephone: 05356-21 55

Fax: 05356-23 07

A one week adult ski pass is 1,650 AS (\$139) in high season and 1,490 AS (\$125) in low season. A daily adult pass is 340 AS (\$29) in high season and 320 AS (\$27) in low season. Kids pay half the high season prices at all times.

### Sporthotel Reisch

The Sporthotel Reisch in the heart of the village. Despite rather dull guestrooms it offers a good level of comfort.

Of the Reisch's five restaurants, the most noted is **Kupferpfandl**, though we prefer the rough wood elegance of the **Hubertusstube** with its arched Gothic windows and blue table linen.

Most chambers offer a separate room for toilet and shower and a separate sitting area with a sofa that folds out as a third bed.

A typical double is Room #112 on the back of the hotel. It has a balcony and rents for 1950 AS (\$160) in the high summer season (more in winter).

Sporthotel Reisch, Franz-Reisch-Str. 3, A-6370 Kitzbühel, phone 05356/33 66-0, fax 05356/32 91. Singles 900 AS to 1,950 AS (\$76-\$164), doubles 1,200 AS to 3,300 AS (\$101-\$277). Major cards o.k. except Mastercard.

### Sporthotel Reisch: II

### Hotel Tiefenbrunner

Another centrally located luxury choice — but a better value — is Hotel Tiefenbrunner. Its guest and public rooms are at least as appealing as at the Reisch and at slightly lower prices.

Ordinary doubles and singles are well maintained and comfortable enough for an extended stay.

We saw two outstanding rooms: Number 117 is a gorgeous suite featuring a tile stove in one corner and a shiny, elegant marble bathroom; Number 501 at the top of the house is less formal, but with slanting ceilings, exposed beams and dormer windows, it has more charm.

Hotel Tiefenbrunner, Vorderstadt 3, A-6370 Kitzbühel, phone 05356/2141 or 2142, fax 05356/58 57 80. Singles 520 AS to 1,350 AS (\$44-\$113), doubles 1,040 AS to 2,560 AS (\$87-\$215). Major cards.

### Hotel Tiefenbrunner: II

### Hotel Schwarzer Adler

This oversized tourist catcher, located on the edge of the village, tries hard to be an authentic Tyrolean gasthof but succeeds only in being ersatz and slightly tacky. Ordinary double rooms are fairly small and quite plain. Some larger guestrooms have a private sauna. All rooms have a connection for cable TV but in some there is an extra charge of 100 AS (\$8.50) per day for TV. Every other hotel

Continued on page 4

## KITZBÜHEL

Continued from page 3

reviewed here offers better value. Be advised that two other Kitzbühel hotels are under the same ownership: the **Hotel Goldener Greif** and the **Hotel Maria Theresia**.

Schwarzer Adler, Florianigasse 15, A-6370 Kitzbühel, phone 05356/22 86, fax 05356/50 01. Singles 460 AS to 1,250 AS (\$39-\$105), doubles 920 AS to 2,500 AS (\$77-\$210). Major cards.

**Schwarzer Adler:** ☉

### Golf-Hotel Ramushof

This is an outstanding mid-priced golf resort hotel. While it won't make you forget the Augusta National or Pebble Beach, the Ramushof's little nine-hole layout is very pretty and nicely maintained. Most of the guestrooms have balconies with good views of the golf course. Though in winter the hotel has to put away the tee markers and flagsticks, during the second week in January guests have a front row seat for one of the world's most important ski racing events, the Hahnenkamm. Its finishing line is right in front of the hotel.

But the Ramushof doesn't need golf or ski races. It is an excellent hotel and can stand on its own. Such features as slanting ceilings, skylights, canopied beds, in-room fireplaces, balconies with fine views and a judicious use of weathered wood, give many of the guestrooms great appeal and warmth.

Room Numbers 124 and 222, both two-bedroom suites, would be ideal for two couples on a golfing vacation. Both rooms overlook the golf course. Number 124 has a particularly spacious living room and the skylights and slanting ceilings of Number 222, on the top floor, make it especially cozy. For a couple alone, the best

EDITOR'S  
CHOICE

room is a small suite, Number 114.

Other notable features are a sparkling indoor pool and a bright, airy garden room where breakfast is served in summer.

The golf course is open May to October. Weekday green fees for guests are 180 AS (\$15) during the week and 280 AS (\$24) on weekends. Carts are available for 250 AS (\$21).

Golf-Hotel Ramushof, Ried-Ecking 16, A-6370 Kitzbühel, phone 05356/52 52, fax 05356/5252-49. Singles 1,280 AS (\$108), doubles 1,840 AS (\$155), small suites 2,750 AS (\$231). Major cards.

### Golf-Hotel Ramushof: III

#### Hotel Haus Christophorus

The very best value we found in Kitzbühel is the **Hotel Haus Christophorus**. In a residential area, about a five-minute walk from the village center or ski lifts, this spic and span, typically Tyrolean charmer, has family management, quality guestrooms, pretty grounds and a snug, rustic *stuberl*.

Room Number 18, a corner double with a small balcony, has light pine furniture and walls, gleaming bathroom, color TV with cable and built-in wood table with padded benches. It rents for 700 AS (\$59) in summer and 1,100 AS (\$92) in winter.

It, and other rooms in the house, appear to have recently been renovated. Winter ski guests may want to inquire about one of the hotel's five apartments. The largest rents for 2,200 AS (\$185) and can accommodate six persons.

We found the Kühr family particularly welcoming and helpful.

Hotel Haus Christophorus, Marchfeldgasse 3, A-6370 Kitzbühel, phone 05356/27 83, fax 05356/27 85. Singles 250 AS to 650 AS (\$21-\$55), doubles 500 AS to 1,300 AS (\$42-\$109). No cards.

**Hotel Haus Christophorus: III G \$**

EDITOR'S  
CHOICE

### A Good Kitzbühel Restaurant

Restaurant Chizzo, outside the town gate but only a couple of minutes walk from the center of Kitzbühel, is an informal, bright, almost California-style bistro.

The menu is moderately-priced and the recipes a little lighter than traditional gasthof fare.

We started with good mixed salads, followed by breast of chicken that had been flattened and cooked like schnitzel leaving a crunchy, greaseless crust and juicy, tender meat; and *zwiebelrostbraten*, a small, pan-fried steak served under a thin brown sauce and fried onions. Accompanying potatoes had been cut into bite-size chunks and sauteed in butter and herbs. Everything was very fresh and cooked to order.

Salad and entree for two persons was 390 AS (\$33).

Chizzo, Josef Herold Strasse 2, A-6370 Kitzbühel, telephone 05356/24 75. Moderate.

**Restaurant Chizzo: ☆**

## YELLOW ROADS

Continued from page 1

the best wines of the Vaud, then turns north toward Switzerland's *Mittelland* and, at Bulle, east through the Jaunpass in the "Pre-Alps."

Actually we started our drive from **Hotel Débarcadère** in the Lausanne suburb of St. Sulpice. (See story, page 5). The map we used was *Mair's Die Generalkarte #2* for Switzerland.

Set your car's trip odometer to zero, turn left from the front of the hotel and follow the road as far as possible. Shortly you will have no choice but to turn away from the lake and intersect the main road, Route #1. Take a right and follow the signs to Vevey.

At about 4.2 km from the hotel is an optional right turn to visit Roman ruins. At the edge of

Lausanne is a roundabout where you must choose to either continue along the lake, following the Ouchy signs, or drive up the hill and go through town following the Vevey signs. Either way you return to the lake road.

After Lausanne you should be on Route #9. At about 12 km you'll begin to see the neat vineyards of Lavaux clinging to the steep hillside and crisscrossed by a network of stone fences.

At about 16.9 is **Vieux Molin**, a restaurant set among the vineyards with a terrace overlooking the lake. The views here, above Lac Léman, are stunning in every direction. Across the way is France and the Savoy Alps. There are several turnouts for picture taking.

On your left at about the 20 km mark note the waterfall tucked into the steep cliffs.

Approximately 24.5 km into the drive make a U-turn under the railroad tracks and start up the hill, following signs to Bulle and Fribourg. At 25.9 km take the left toward Chatel-St. Denis and get another great look at the lake, this time from a higher altitude. Soon you pass over the autobahn, then negotiate a few switchbacks through the vineyards. At 28.4 km turn right to Chatel-St. Denis and Bern. At the 36 km mark you should be on Route #12.

Once through Chatel-St. Denis the road breaks out into a wide, high valley. The drive has a new look. The rolling hills are dotted with farms.

Continue on #12 to Bulle — 55.9 km — where you will turn right following signs to Jaun, Gruyères and Chateau-d'Oex. At about 58.2 km go left toward Jaun, Broc and Charmey and into the mountains.

Jaun, a typical mountain village, is the dividing line between Romansh and Germanic Switzerland. Note the stone church on the left. Once through the town the road climbs again.

At about 79.1 km the road narrows considerably and gets a little scary, especially in places where there is no guard rail.

At the Jaunpass summit (1,508 meters/4,951 feet) — 84.4 km into the drive — are a couple of restaurants and a few summer

cabins. During the first portion of the descent the road has two lanes, guard rails and good markings before it narrows and the hairpin turns begin.

Turn left at 93.2 km to Interlaken on Route #11. Follow the Simme River noting several covered bridges which cross the river.

You have another decision to make at Spiez. The quicker way to Interlaken is to turn right and follow the south shore of the Thunersee. Otherwise, go left to Thun, turning right there and following the scenic road along the north shore. Thun is worth a half a day if you have the time. We had an excellent, inexpensive (less than \$9 per person without beverages) lunch there at the **Hotel Restaurant zu Metzgern** (Rathausplatz, CH-3600, Thun, phone 033/22 21 41). Other stops of interest on this side of the lake are the lakeside castles at Oberhofen and Beatenberg.

This drive is about 136 km the short way. Going by way of Thun adds about 20 km.

## GENEVA AIRPORT: A FIRST NIGHT HOTEL

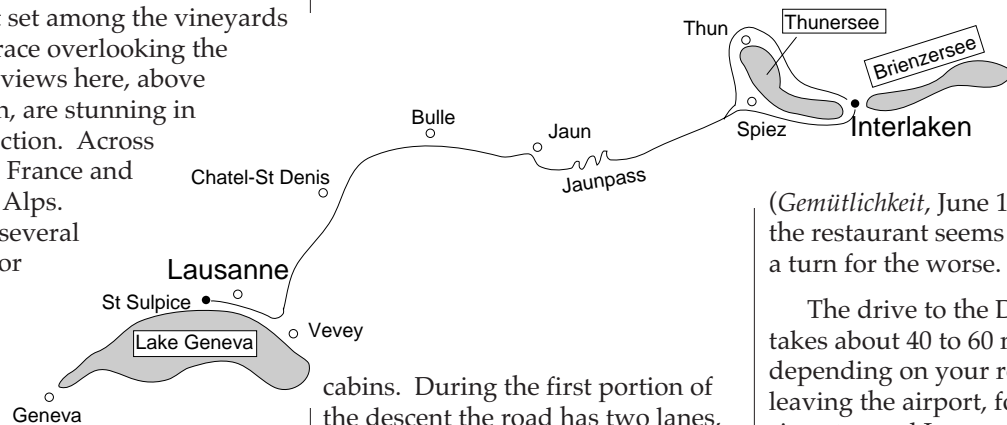
In keeping with our practice of putting some distance between ourselves and the airport after arriving in Europe, we recently chose for a first night stop the **Hotel Débarcadère** in St. Sulpice near Lausanne after a 5:30 p.m. arrival at the Geneva Airport.

It was a return trip for *Gemütlichkeit* and the hotel charmed us as before (*Gemütlichkeit*, June 1990), though the restaurant seems to have taken a turn for the worse.

The drive to the Débarcadère takes about 40 to 60 minutes, depending on your route. Upon leaving the airport, follow the green signs toward Lausanne. For a more relaxed drive off the autobahn, follow the first Coppett sign and turn right toward the lake. Just past Chateau Coppett (worth a stop, by the way, for the short, guided tour) turn left at the blue Lausanne signs onto a road which follows the curve of the lake. Continue to follow the blue Lausanne signs and soon you will be in the center of St. Sulpice.

This road passes through several towns of interest including Nyon, Rolle, St. Prex and Morges. You'll pass many beautiful homes, but particularly look to your left, usually on high ground above vineyards, for the occasional splendid private chateau. Those who are in no hurry can also choose the *Route du Vignoble* which winds through the vineyards.

The Débarcadère, a rambling three-story country house, is in a quiet, rather upscale neighborhood at the end of a peninsula in Lake



Continued on page 8

# READERS' FORUM

**Robert Gillespie** of Lake Bluff, Illinois has regularly traveled on business and for pleasure in Europe since the end of World War II. Here are comments abstracted from a recent letter:

**New Munich Airport** (Franz Joseph Strauss): *stunning, beautiful and superbly organized for the traveler. But a note of warning: American Airlines staff doesn't have it all together yet, even after a full year of operation, so allow extra time. Boarding gates are perhaps 300 feet from check-in, a far cry from conditions at Frankfurt, and it is almost comfortable to board a plane under these conditions.*

*The car rental return is on the lower level as are the world-class shopping areas that make Frankfurt's pale by comparison. It is important to take the car directly there if one is within an hour of departure. With a bit more time, curbside drop-off for passengers and luggage is routine, but it does take time to drive from "C" area where the U. S. carriers depart to "F" where car rental is located. Cars are checked-in at the garage but it is necessary to take the documents to the counters inside for fast service, then it's about a 10-minute walk through the underground shopping areas to the departure area.*

**Hotel Lindner** (Bad Aibling, Germany): *Very nice, as you said, but squeaky cheap at the edges. For example, don't expect a hot shower before 0530 because that's when they turn the water heater on. And the pressure in the new building is minimal, a fast drizzle at best, not what we red-blooded American boys are accustomed to. Bed linen is changed but once a week, so you'll sleep comfortably in well known linen until then. Of course it is changed when the room changes but if you stay it*

*stays with you for the week. No shoe polishers anywhere. Parking difficult. No ATM in town that will accept VISA, MC, Amex; EuroCard only. Ask the owner to give you a couple of hundred marks and add it to your bill and she'll nick you 5% or 6%; that's tacky and cheap. No eggs at breakfast unless you ask for one. No English TV channel although there are four or five available in southern Germany. But they are nice people and the hotel is nice for a short visit. We were there four days. Would I go again? If I had reason to be in the area; otherwise I would go on down the road.*

**Hotel Geiger** (Berchtesgaden, Germany): *You do have a true winner here. Stefan is a charming young fellow and my group from Cleveland had a wonderful time as his guests. You have hit on what is certainly one of the best hotels in Germany. The only thing I would add to an almost perfect place is one or two real Bavarian dishes such as Eintopf or Schwammel. The 'nouvelle' is delicious but once in a while I really want to load the tummy.*

Mr. Gillespie gives a strong recommendation to Germany's moderately-priced "Ringhotels." He points out they are not a chain but a group of individually managed hotels and he calls one of them a "gem," the **Hotel Götz Sonne-Eintracht** (phone: 07841/6450, fax: 07841/645645) in Achern (just off the Basel-Frankfurt autobahn 33 kilometers southwest of Baden-Baden). Double rooms are from 150 to 230 DM (\$89-\$136).

From **E. L. Gorgas** of Sonora, California:

*In a prior issue one of your readers mentioned staying at the **Gasthof Deim zum Goldener Hirsch** in Freistadt in eastern Austria and day traveling into the Czech Republic. Worthwhile. We recommend a trip to Cesky Krumlov (old castle, narrow cobblestone streets) but not Ceske Budojovice which is crowded and not very clean. On our way back into Austria we stopped at a roadside outdoor restaurant for lunch of beer, sausage, cheese, bread and a dessert. In paying our*

*waitress (a young, shy, extremely attractive Czech girl), I gave her the last of my Czech currency — about \$4.00 worth — as a gratuity. In German she refused it as "too much." After several attempts I asked my wife (whose German is many times better than mine) to tell her that we were leaving her country and would have no use for the money. She then took the Koren note and thanked us as several big tears rolled down her cheeks. We'll remember this.*

*If someone is wandering the Innsbruck, Zürich, Bern, Heidelberg route to depart from the Frankfurt Airport they should consider a night at the **Schlosshotel Bludenz**. Get a second or third floor room with balcony facing the town and valley and surrounding high peaks. Our fourth stop here since 1981. The manager has been at the hotel for 20 years and is most accommodating.*

*Like many of your readers we like to spend several days at a luxury hotel and then several days at one that doesn't empty your pocketbook. Our favorite in the first category is the **Brenner's Park Hotel** in Baden-Baden. It's world famous, of course, but I don't recall that *Gemütlichkeit* has ever mentioned it. If your room faces the *Lichtentaller Allee* and the river Oos, you wouldn't know that you were in a city. Accommodating? One evening we were having a 7 p.m. cocktail in the **Oleander Bar** and the barman asked if we were having dinner in the hotel's principal restaurant (the **Schwarzwaldler Grill** was closed). We answered that we did not feel up to the formality of the main restaurant and the barman suggested that he could arrange for us to eat on the terrace facing the gardens and the river. Perfect. Our recent stay was our fourth and as rewarding as the first.*

*Finally, a comment on dealing with the generally exorbitant rates at luxury hotels. Our recent trip began with a five-night stay in London where I attended a meeting. The convention hotel was the Intercontinental at which we've stayed before. I therefore wrote*

*Continued on page 8*

## EUROPE TRAVEL BRIEFING

### **Sorry, Wrong Number**

Last month's item in this space about **Eventnet**, the U. S. company through which reservations can be made for opera performances in Europe, contained an incorrect telephone number. The correct number for Eventnet is 800-729-8499. Eventnet's ability to book tickets, incidentally, extends well beyond opera performances. They have access to London theater tickets and tickets to most of Europe's major concert venues and music festivals. Their surcharge ranges from about 8% to 22%.

### **Pass Needed for Swiss Autobahn**

To drive the autobahn in Switzerland, your automobile must display a pass called a "Vignette" on the windshield. The stickers, good for one calendar year, cost 30 Sfr. (\$20) and can be obtained at border crossings and Swiss post offices. Cars rented in Switzerland carry the pass, those rented in other countries only carry them if a previous renter has purchased one.

### **Bike Trips**

The free brochure *Cycling Itineraries in Southern Switzerland* describes 17 bicycle trips of varying difficulty. Safety was a major concern in choosing the routes which are over minor roads and muletracks well away from main highways. Contact Swiss National Tourist Office, 260 Stockton Street, San Francisco CA 94108, phone 415-362-2260, fax 415-391-1508.

### **Olympic Museum**

A new **Olympic Museum** opened June 23 in Lausanne, home city for the International Olympic Committee since 1915. The museum is open every day except Monday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and until 8 p.m. on Thursdays.

### **Lufthansa Adds Train Connections**

**Lufthansa**, which says it is the first airline to replace domestic short-haul flights with its own train service, is expanding that service. It now offers 16 daily high-speed rail connections from its Frankfurt Airport hub north to Bonn, Cologne and Düsseldorf and four connections south to Stuttgart. Passengers travel in specially reserved, first-class compartments aboard regularly scheduled InterCity express trains. Lufthansa maintains check-in counters at the train stations where passengers obtain boarding passes both for the train and the connecting flight. Luggage is checked through to the final destination.

The connecting train tickets are free for transatlantic passengers. In addition, members of the airline's frequent flyer program, Miles & More, are credited with bonus mileage. The airline also offers special bus service between the Frankfurt Airport and Mannheim and Heidelberg.

### **Lech Package Deal**

Lech in Austria's Arlberg has a seven-day package during July and August called "The Dream Holiday." It includes rides on cable cars and chairlifts, entrance to the city's beautiful swimming facilities, a hiking excursion to area lakes, a daily selection of guided hikes and optional mountain climbing trips, free use of a bicycle for a day, free entrance to the cinema and lodging. Bed and breakfast prices for the week start at 2,370 AS (\$199) per person. Half-board at a three-star hotel is 4, 410 AS (\$370) per person. Kids from seven to 12 years-old pay 50% and those under six are free. Contact Lech Travel Bureau, A-6764 Lech, phone 05583/2161-15, fax 05583/3155.

### **Free Bikes in Zürich**

Bicycles are available free between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. each day through October 31 in central Zürich. An identity card

must be left as a deposit. The bikes can be checked-out from depots at Paradeplatz and Bellevue in the city center.

### **Austrian Operetta Festivals**

Operetta, a musical form that requires only the merest shred of romance to appreciate, flourishes in Austria. There are several summer festivals: the June 26-September 12 **Summer Arena of Baden**, just outside Vienna, includes Leo Fall's *Die Rose von Stambul* and Lehár's *Paganini*; the program at the July 11-September 4 **Operetta Festival Bad Ischl** (Franz Lehár's hometown) includes Lehár's *Das Land des Lächelns* (*The Land of Smiles*) and Johann Strauss's *Der Zigeunerbaron* (*The Gypsy Baron*) and the July 16-August 29 **Lake Festival of Mörbisch** offers Lehár's *Die Lustige Witwe* (*The Merry Widow*). For more information contact Austrian National Tourist Office, 11601 Wilshire Blvd., #2480, Los Angeles CA 90025, phone 310-477-3332, fax 310-477-5141.

### **Bregenz Festival**

For followers of more serious music, the July 20-August 22 **Bregenz Festival** offers some of the world's best musicians and ensembles including the Vienna Symphony and Moscow Radio Symphony. In addition, Verdi's opera *Nabucco* will be performed on the open-air "floating" stage at the shore of Lake Constance and Giordano's *Fedora* is in the Festival Hall. Contact Austrian National Tourist Office, 11601 Wilshire Blvd., #2480, Los Angeles CA 90025, phone 310-477-3332, fax 310-477-5141.

### **Austria Ski Expands**

Travel agents and group travel planners should note that **Austria Ski** has introduced a new product line featuring destinations in Switzerland and France. Contact Richard Davidson, Austria Ski, 1535 West Loop South, #319, Houston TX 77027-9509, phone 800-333-5533, fax 713-960-8966. ☒

## READERS' FORUM

Continued from page 6

to **Claridge's** indicating I'd prefer to stay there for five nights if they could give me a room rate within reason. The response: a most gracious letter from their general manager resulting in a huge two-room suite (bedroom, large living room with usable fireplace and oversized bathroom) plus a \$105 allowance toward dinner at the restaurant — all this at only \$100 per night more than my colleagues were paying at the **InterContinental** (about \$280) for a very conventional room.

As President and CEO of Dixie Saving Stores, subscriber **Herbert St. Goar**, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, is involved in the food distribution business. He is also a member of the *Confrie de la Chaine des Rotisseurs*. A restaurant recommendation from such credentials gets our full attention:

*For those of your readers who are real gourmets and who do not necessarily have to watch the price of their meals, I would like to recommend two restaurants in Munich which are great in every respect. They are **Restaurant Käfer-Schänke**, Prinzregentenstrasse 73, and the **Restaurant Tantris**, Fohann-Fichte-Strasse 7. The presentation, quality and service in these two restaurants far exceeds what one usually receives in a four-star restaurant.*

*I give you this information because you were instrumental in telling your*

*readers two years ago about my sad experiences at the **Restaurant Jacob** in Hamburg-Othmarschen.*

*Incidentally, while I was in Hungary, I purchased saffron and was amazed about the low price which you indicated earlier this year in your publication. You were absolutely right.*

Subscriber **Elliot Hubbard**, who at age 75 still takes annual ski vacations in Switzerland, raves about **Petermann's Kunststube** (*Gemütlichkeit*, April, '88) in Zürich-Küsnacht and Zürich's **Hotel Florhof** (*Gemütlichkeit*, April, '93). Mr. Hubbard "doesn't know how **Girardet** (near Lausanne and acclaimed by many as Europe's finest restaurant) could be better" and says he has been going for 10 years to the Florhof where "they always remember our name and couldn't be nicer."

And finally, subscriber **Cliff Lindsay**, who operates a bed and breakfast in Whidbey Island, Washington, suggests beer lovers visiting Rothenburg ob der Tauber try the **Brauerei Gasthof Landwehrbräu** (phone: 09865/833, fax: 09865/7 16) in nearby Reichelshofen. Double rooms are 110 to 135 DM (\$65-\$80). He also recommends a long-time *Gemütlichkeit* stop-over, **Schloss Neuhof** (phone: 09563/2051, fax 09563/2107) near Coburg, as a first-night hotel under three hours driving from the Frankfurt Airport. He reminds us that the Goebel factory (Hummel figurines) is nearby. Mr. Lindsay added one omi-

nous note, however. During his March visit only two of the hotel's rooms were booked and only two tables were occupied for dinner. ❏

## DEBARCADERE

Continued from page 5

Geneva. It borders the lake and is fronted by a wide, green lakeside park. Across the street is a square-turreted stone church. A picture-postcard setting.

Guest rooms come in varying shapes and sizes, all individually furnished and decorated.

The sprightly garden dining room overlooks the lake through wide windows. In good weather it extends to a pleasant terrace under a long, slopping awning. Tables are covered with starchy white cloths that bear a distinctive floral print. (You can buy them for 295 Sfr./\$198 each. The hard weave would no doubt last a lifetime.)

During dinner one sees Evian in France twinkling on the opposite shore. Part way through our meal the lights disappeared in a rather spectacular thunderstorm.

We began with a Vichyssoise, compliments of the kitchen, served in a tiny cup with a tiny spoon. The Menu du Saison, (65 Sfr./\$43) opened with a few pieces of chilled quail meat in a bland aspic. An ala carte salad's centerpiece was a small bundle of matchstick-size green beans laid on a bed of fresh greens with a light dressing.

Arranged around it on the edge of the plate were four or five small bites of sliced shellfish, including lobster. Tasty enough but at 28 Sfr./\$19 hugely overpriced.

With the knuckle of veal on the Menu du Saison came bland, flat noodles. Two tender veal fillets (46 Sfr./\$31), however, were bathed in a terrific lemony sauce and accompanied by two small *rösti* patties and, best of all, a heavenly timbale of finely chopped eggplant infused with a wonderful flavor we couldn't identify.

It, and the cheese cart that followed the main courses, were extraordinary. Cheese in this part of Switzerland and in France make you wonder if you've ever eaten the stuff before. It saved the dinner.

Without beverages we paid 154 Sfr. (\$103) for two persons. Meals at Débarcadère on an earlier visit were worth the money. This time only a couple of dishes merited their price tags.

Service in both the hotel and restaurant was friendly and efficient.

Hostellerie du Débarcadère, 7 ch. du Crêt, CH-1025 Saint Sulpice, phone 021/691 57 47, fax 021/691 50 79. Singles 130 Sfr. to 265 Sfr. (\$87-\$177), doubles 175 Sfr. to 310 Sfr. (\$117-\$207).

**Hostellerie du Débarcadère Hotel: III**

**Restaurant:** ❖ ❖ ❏

**Next Month:**

**Rothenburg ob der Tauber**