

INSIDE:

- Low Winter Fares
- Pontresina Restaurants
- Danube Christmas Cruise
- Auto Route to Pontresina

# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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

DEAR SUBSCRIBER

September 27, 1993

## Such a Swissair Deal

As a *Gemütlichkeit* subscriber, you are about to receive, by mail, an attractive offer from **Swissair**. From now until December 31, 1993, fly on a Swissair First, Business or full-fare Economy Class adult roundtrip transatlantic fare to Europe. You will automatically earn a free roundtrip companion ticket, in any class, to Europe, valid on your next trip to be taken between January 1 and May 31, 1994. The offer does not extend to sale fares. You will receive more detailed info in the packet from Swissair.

But for you only, darling *Gemütlichkeit* subscriber, there is more. The best part is that your special *Gemütlichkeit* price reductions of \$600 for First Class, \$400 for Business Class and \$100 for Economy Class apply *for all tickets purchased under the above program*.

To obtain the lower fares you first must book directly with Swissair at 800-221-4750. Then, for ticketing, call Shirley at 800-238-0399. After confirming that you are a current subscriber, she will issue your tickets at the reduced price. Of course, you may simply wish to take advantage of Swissair's current sale fares, in which case the price reduction is \$50 per ticket and the booking and ticketing procedure is exactly the same.

## Favorite Cities

The magazine *Traveler* has announced the results of a

*Continued on page 2*

# PONTRESINA

*Though this Swiss mecca for skiers, walkers and hikers is almost unknown compared to its world famous neighbor, we at Gemütlichkeit prefer its authenticity and more country ways.*

**T**wo small Swiss towns, less than five miles apart.

They share the same canton, the same climate and the same mountain setting. Both offer the usual array of summer and winter Alpine recreational pursuits. Both boast a range of lodgings including enough five-star luxury to suit the average oil sheik or prime minister. One town is so famous it has copyrighted its name. Mention the other, though, and even experienced travelers look puzzled. It's in Italy, right?

The two Swiss towns are in Graubünden (Grisons) in the southeastern corner of the country—the Engadine. The famous one, the one you can't name a soft-drink, candy bar, sweater or fragrance after, is St. Moritz. The lesser known—but in our view, more charming—town is Pontresina.

Where St. Moritz has been somewhat spoiled by success—post-war architecture, traffic, commercialism—Pontresina has main-

*Continued on page 3*

*Typical Engadine houses in Pontresina.*

*Budget Hotels...*

## Prague, Zell am Zee

*Introducing a new correspondent, John Plunkett, a finder and connoisseur of good lodgings at bargain prices.*

Prague's Villa Eva

**E**verything about Prague is twice as good as you've already heard. I think it is the most beautiful city I have ever visited. Even more enticing, Prague is also a bargain bonanza. We loved the Bohemian food and were surprised to pay only \$5.00 each for dinner with beer at the best-known restaurant in the city.

But our favorite Prague hotel is the greatest find. Located just ten minutes from the city center, the Villa Eva is a place that we highly recommend. Its owner, Milan Matousek, is a most congenial host in the true Bohemian style. He offers eight clean and comfortable guestrooms with toilet and shower. Our corner room on the third floor offered a fantastic vista of the

*Continued on page 6*

## DEAR SUBSCRIBER

Continued from page 1

survey in which readers were asked to name their favorite travel destination cities. Survey respondents were asked to judge cities on a scale of one to five based on four criteria — cultural enrichment, restaurants, ambience and people. The winner was San Francisco. Vienna placed second; Lucerne, Switzerland was 13th and Munich was 20th. No other cities of Germany, Austria or Switzerland finished in the top 20.

Since I didn't participate in the poll, nor have I visited all the cities, I won't complain about the results. But I will cast my ballot here for my favorite cities (over 200,000 population) in Germany, Austria, Switzerland. With a few embellishments — favorite sight, restaurant, hotel and walk in each city — here are my top five.

**1. Vienna.** My favorite; not just in this part of Europe but in all the world. Gets to me in a way that no other city does. Maybe it's my Bohemian heritage, but this town is in my blood.

*Sight:* The **Capuchins' Crypt** or **Kaisergruft**, containing the fabulously ornate coffins of 12 emperors, 16 empresses and more than 100 archdukes of the Hapsburg family. (Weirdly, while their bodies are in the Kaisergruft their hearts are in the Church of Augustinians and their entrails are in the catacombs under St. Stephen's Cathedral.)

*Restaurant:* **Smutny** (Inexp.)

*Hotel:* **Kaiserin Elisabeth** (Mod.-Exp.)

*Walk:* Down the **Kärtnerstrasse**, across the river to the **Prater**, a slightly scruffy but wonderful amusement park.

**2. Berlin.** A bigger thrill when it was behind the Wall, but still exciting. The

physical changes occurring in the eastern part of the city are marvelous to see.

*Sight:* The incredible display of food and beverages on the sixth floor of **Ka De We**, Berlin's big department store.

*Restaurant:* **Fofi's Estiatorio** (Mod.-Exp.)

*Hotel:* **Domus** (Mod.)

*Walk:* The length of the **Kurfürstendamm**, both sides of the street.

**3. Zürich.** The more we see the more we like. Not nearly as cold and methodical as its reputation.

*Sight:* The Chagall windows in the **Fraumünster**.

*Restaurant:* **Kronenhalle** (Exp.)

*Hotel:* **Florhof** (Mod.)

*Walk:* The **Bahnhofstrasse** and then across the **Limmat** to the old town.

**4. Graz.** *Altstadt* oozes with old-world charm. Not many tourists.

*Sight:* The carved facade of the **Hof Backerei**, the palace bakery.

*Restaurant:* **Kepler Keller** (Inexp.-Mod.)

*Hotel:* **Erzherzog Johann** (Mod.)

*Walk:* The old town

**5. (tie) Hamburg.** Hanseatic, sea-going ambience.

*Sight:* Go to the town of **Wedel** and the **Wilkomm-Höft** where ships passing on the Elbe are saluted by raising the flag of their country and playing their national anthem.

*Restaurant:* **Ratsweinkeller** (Mod.)

*Hotel:* **Abtei** (Exp.)

*Walk:* Through the sinful St. Pauli quarter and its famous **Reeperbahn**. Superior people watching.

**5. (tie) Munich.** Chic, cultured and all that beer.

*Sight:* The **Botanical Gardens** at **Nymphenburg Palace**, also the **Carriage**

**Museum** is not to be missed.

*Restaurant:* **Zum Bürgerhaus** (Mod.-Exp.)

*Beer Hall:* **Augustiner** (Inexp.)

*Hotel:* **Adria** (Mod.)

*Walk:* Through the **Englischer Garten** to the beer garden at the **Chinese Tower**.

### Lucerne Bridge Restoration

As you may have read in the Sunday travel section of your local newspaper, the landmark, 650-year old walking bridge of Lucerne was destroyed by fire last month. Only the octagonal stone tower was saved. However, work on rebuilding the bridge is already underway and will be completed sometime next spring. It is expected that a process of artificially "aging" the wood will be used and the restored bridge will be a replica of the original.

### Rothenburg Hotel

Subscriber and travel planner, Karen Pasold, says we should have included the **Burg-Hotel** in our issue on Rothenburg ob der Tauber. She considers it one of Rothenburg's best hotels and has brought to our attention its attractive offer for winter guests. Good from early January to early April, "Wintersleep" permits guests who stay two nights to pay for only one. As Ms. Pasold points out, it is rare — I know of no other instance — for a European hotel to make a two for one offer.

The Burg-Hotel has no restaurant, is operated by Gabriele Berger, and, according to Ms. Pasold, has lovely, mostly spacious, guest rooms and an abundant buffet breakfast. It is located very near the wall, not far from the Burggarten. Several of its 14 rooms have fine views of the Tauber Valley. Burg-Hotel, Klostersgasse 1, phone 09861/50 ☒ 07, fax 0086/14 07. Singles 150 to 180 DM (92-\$110). Doubles (\$129-\$184).

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## GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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- Dating Key:** **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.

## PONTRESINA

Continued from page 1

tained its identity as a Swiss mountain village.

Most of the town, which lies on a hillside at the beginning of the Bernina Valley, is gathered along one, long, sloping street. Buildings are typical of the Upper Engadine, with thick walls, arched entrances and small, deep-set windows. Many are decorated with the unique plaster designs known as sgraffito.

The town's setting offers a fine view across the Ova da Bernina, the river which runs through the floor of the valley below Pontresina, to the Bernina peaks.

Our last visit was in July and never have we seen so many hikers and climbers in any Swiss town. In the late afternoon they flow like rivers out of the mountains to fill up every sidewalk table on the village's main street. Many, of course, arrive via the Engadine's perfect little red railway cars, the Rhätische Bahn, to explore the region's more than 300 miles of tended paths. One of the most popular walks is a nearly level route between Muottas Muragl and Alp Languard, a distance of some four miles. Take the chairlift from the village to Alp Languard, at an elevation of a little over 8,000 feet, and walk eastward around the mountain to Muottas Muragl where there is a restaurant. You can descend on foot in about an hour and a half, or faster via the Muottas Murgl funicular.

The air in Pontresina is dry, refreshing and there is much sunshine. The weather is particularly lovely in summer, when there is little humidity and the nights are cool.

Though outdoor activities are the tourist mainstays, there are one or two more cerebral attractions. The small Santa Maria Church, located at the highest point in the

## PONTRESINA

Population: 1,726

Elevation: 5,863 feet

Approximate distances from:

Geneva	480 km	298 miles
Zürich	210 km	130 miles
Innsbruck	220 km	136 miles
Munich	300 km	186 miles
Frankfurt	620 km	384 miles

### Tourist Information

Tourist Office  
CH-7504 Pontresina  
Phone: 082/664 88  
Fax: 082/679 96

Hours of Operation

Mon.-Fri.	8:30 am-12 pm
	2 pm-6 pm
Sat.	8:30 am-12 pm
	2 pm-5 pm

### Getting There

**By automobile:** The approach passes, Julier, Maloja, Ofen and Bernina passes are open all year; Albulina in summer only.


**By rail:** Chur is the express train terminus. From there by the Rhätian railway via Samedan to Pontresina. Another branch of the Rhätische Bahn provides a way from St. Moritz, via Pontresina to Tirano, Italy.

**By air:** From Zürich (Kloten) airport via scheduled air taxi flights to Samedan (December through April).

### Ski Pass Rates

Six days unlimited use of 65 mountain railways, cable cars, skilifts, ski bus and indoor public swimming pool.

Adults	Sfr. 237	(\$166)
Children	Sfr. 174	(\$122)

Rental of skis and boots for six days is approximately \$120. Six days ski school instruction (four hours per day in groups of maximum eight persons) is about \$140. 

village, attracts visitors to its murals which date from the 15th century and cover virtually every inch of every interior wall. In St. Moritz, the Engadine Museum, is of interest.

A most pleasant Pontresina diversion in summer is the daily orchestral concert from 11 a.m. to noon in the Tais forest.

The best place we found to watch the comings and goings of Pontresina was on the town's main street from a table in front of the **Hotel Schweitzer Hof** where our favorite beer, Pilsner Urquell, is served on draft. It's a good spot for an *alfresco* lunch or a late afternoon refresher.

### HOTELS

While not inexpensive, hotels are cheaper than in St. Moritz. Most prices given below include breakfast and dinner. Hotels are within walking distance of the railway station, though all except the Hotel Bahnhof require an uphill climb.

Hotel Kronenhof

**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

The Kronenhof is about as grand as any hotel in Switzerland, and in a small mountain village its presence is unexpected. It offers a nice — and less expensive — alternative to the better-known Lifestyles-of-the-Rich & Famous bastions of nearby St. Moritz.

Its impressive wrought iron entry gate and large courtyard is accessed from Pontresina's narrow main street. The central wing of the massive turn-of-the-century building overlooks the river and acres of tennis courts, lawn and swimming pools. The view is stunning.

The tastefully appointed public rooms reek of top quality European luxury: magnificent Neo-Rococo paintings, Gobelin valances, Art Nouveau ceilings, priceless antique furnishings. Note the painted ceilings done by Otto

Continued on page 4



## PONTRESINA

Continued from page 3

Haberer in 1942 in the lobby and dining room.

Guestrooms are spacious and elegantly furnished, of course, with such amenities as hair dryers, 15 channel satellite TV, safes, heated towel racks, etc.

In addition to an array of restaurants; the elegant, cherry-wood Kronenstübl, the Sun Terrace, and La Court for fondue and raclette; plus such other five-star hotel favorites as bowling alleys, hair dresser, masseuse, bridge club, winter ice rink, indoor-outdoor swimming pool and tennis courts; the Kronenhof has a winery. Young wine, mainly from Italy, is brought to the hotel where it is filtered, barrel aged, bottled and labeled. Winery tours can be arranged at the Pontresina tourist office.

The Kronenhof is a great hotel and gets our highest rating.

**Grand Hotel Kronenhof:** V  
Kronenhof, CH-7504 Pontresina, phone 082-6 01 11, fax 082/

660 66, singles 170 to 340 Sfr. (\$119-\$238), doubles 320 to 660 Sfr. (\$223-\$461), including breakfast and dinner. Major Cards.

**Grand Hotel Kronenhof:** V

Hotel La Collina

**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

The comfortable La Collina is in a beautiful position on the high end of the village. It is unimpres-

sive from the outside but many of the hotel's 45 rooms, some with outstanding views, have been recently redecorated. Our corner room, Number 407, was big enough for a long stay and an expanse of windows provided panoramic views.

In addition to the main building

Quality guest rooms, friendly staff, superb views and a first-rate restaurant earn our enthusiastic recommendation.

Hotel La Collina, CH-7504, Pontresina, phone 082/601 21, fax 082/679 95, singles 125 to 175 Sfr. (\$87-\$122), doubles 240 to 350 Sfr. (\$168-\$245), including breakfast and dinner.

**La Collina:** III

Hotel Chesa-Mulin

Another hotel on the main street, about a 5-10 minute uphill walk from the railway station, the 27-room Chesa-Mulin, is Swiss-modern, bright, clean and comfortable.

The hotel has no restaurant but snacks are available. Arriving guests will find a basket of fresh fruit in their rooms.

Senior discounts of approximately 15% are offered during most of the summer and early fall and at certain times in the winter. Children 6-12 stay for 50% off, kids 12-16 get 30% off and children under six are free. Summer prices are about 10-12% lower than in winter. Best room is Number 25, a large corner double with two windows. The hotel is closed in November.

**Hotel Garni Chesa-Mulin:** II  
Hotel Garni Chesa-Mulin, CH-7504, Pontresina, phone 082/675 75, fax 082/670 40, singles 80 to 120 Sfr. (\$56-\$84), doubles 140 to 220 Sfr. (\$98-\$154). Major Cards.

**Chesa-Mulin:** II

Hotel Atlas

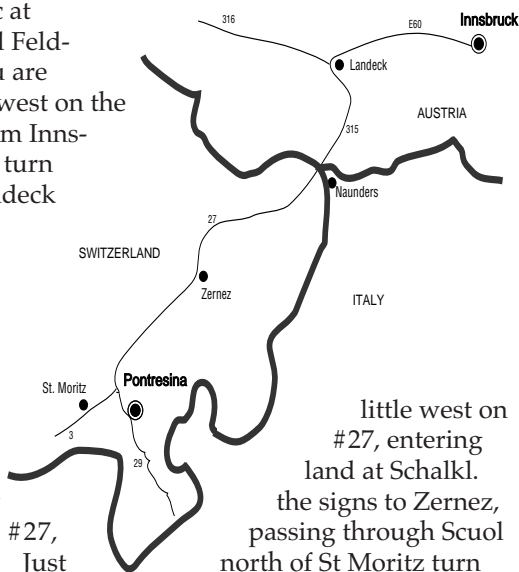
**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

Expect to find a lot of kids in the 82-room Hotel Atlas. It not only welcomes families, it caters to them.

## An Auto Route from Austria to Pontresina

The preferred route to reach southwestern Switzerland from western Austria is to stay away from the Arlberg Tunnel and the heavy traffic at Bludenz and Feldkirch.

If you are proceeding west on the highway from Innsbruck (E60), turn south at Landeck on red road #315. Just north of Nauders at the Italian border, veer right and a red road #27, entering Switzerland. Then follow staying on #27, and Zernez. Just left on red road #29 to Pontresina.



The route, only the first few miles of which is autobahn, offers a variety of scenery, ranging from pretty to spectacular. Once you reach Pontresina it is no trick to find your hotel as they are all well identified on signs throughout the town.

Use *Die Generalkarte* # 8 for Austria and *Die Generalkarte* #3 for Switzerland.

there are two annexes: Chesa Soldanella and Chesa Ladina with apartments and guest rooms serviced by the hotel.

"Stuvetta," La Collina's restaurant, is excellent. (See our story page five.)

The hotel dates to 1904 but the present owner, Ben van Engelen, took over in 1981.

Continued on page 8

# PONTRESINA RESTAURANTS

## Hotel La Collina

**T**he cozy Stüvetta restaurant in the Hotel La Collina is done in blond, knotty pine. Tables are covered by pink cloths with a wide, olive stripe. The effect is that typically Swiss, country elegance that seems to at once stimulate the appetite and relax the soul. Of course, good food, well served, is required for a successful dining experience and La Collina easily qualifies.

The most dish we tasted was *Poussin au roti* (34 Sfr./\$24) a broiler chicken cooked on a rotisserie with a rosemary stuffing, and carved whole at our table. The server first cut off legs and wings and breasts and those juicy bits from the back. One of each was served on the first plate and the rest kept warm for a second serving. Served with the chicken were two corn crepes — in which one could clearly taste the fresh corn kernels — and lightly sauteed slivers of zucchini and carrots. The second serving of chicken included the remainder of the zucchini, another crepe and green beans bundled with a strip of bacon.

*Papardella ai Funghi* (16 Sfr./\$11), a lasagna style pasta served with wonderfully flavorful mushrooms in a rich, cheese sauce, was another clear winner. It was a main dish but, because of its richness, would have worked even better as a first course divided between two persons; provided, of course, that one's next course doesn't — as with the *Poussin au roti* — call for a second plate.

A simple salad of fresh, intensely flavored tomatoes and chunks of tasty mozzarella cheese

(18 Sfr./\$13) owed its success to the quality of its components.

After these dishes, a refreshing dessert seemed in order and a citrus sorbet, in a long-stemmed, slant-lipped bowl, with slices of lemon and mint leaves and doused with champagne, filled the bill perfectly.

La Collina's cellar offers a good selection of wines but we opted to economize by choosing a small carafe of Chianti Classico (13.50 Sfr./\$9) from among several *offen* wines. Most European restaurants keep open bottles in several price categories. One can purchase as little as a quarter of a liter, or even just a glass, of some very good wines. Usually the most inexpensive of these bottles will be better than the "house wines" found in U.S. restaurants. The Chianti was smooth with a characteristic dryness that seemed almost dusty.

Hotel La Collina, CH-7504, Pontresina, phone 082/601 21, fax 082/679 95. Major cards. Moderate to expensive.

**Hotel La Collina:** ☆☆

## Sarazena

Perhaps in the U. S. we are more used to Asian food than are the people of central Europe. One sees the occasional Chinese or even Japanese restaurant in Berlin or Zürich or Vienna, but for the most part they are a rarity. The excellent reputation of Pontresina's Restaurant Sarazena appears due in large part to its Chinese dishes, which comprise the majority of its menu offerings. However, we wouldn't know whether that renown is deserved or not because we stuck to its more traditionally European

food; specifically a six course, fixed-price special *menu* costing 120 Sfr. (\$84) *per person*. We were ready for an extravagant meal and the Sarazena had been highly recommended.

We assumed such an expensive progression of dishes would offer the Sarazena's finest cooking and, to an extent, it may have; the dishes ranged from sensational at the start to lackluster at the finish. And that finish was a very long time in coming. The word marathon springs to mind, though the first 100 finishers in the last Olympic marathon took less time to run the 26 miles than it did for us to negotiate those six courses. In fact, like some of those Olympic runners, we had to dropout before the end.

The menu:

*Assiette gourmande*

•

*Consomme de tomates aux quenelles de serre*

•

*Roulade de saumon et scampi, sauce safran a la juilienne de legumes, riz sauvage*

•

*Selle de veau doree aux trois sauces, pommes dauphine et legumes*

•

*Sorbets varies et ses fruits*

•

*Café et liquers*

The *Assiette gourmande* — lachs, chilled scampi, a terrine of salmon and a salad of vegetables with bits of chilled white fish and sour cream was an inspired dish, the best of the meal. The seafood was crisp and fresh and the flavors subtle and mysterious.

*Roulade de saumon et scampi* turned out to be a cold, poached salmon filet covered in an opaque shrimp aspic and it, too, was unusual and delicious. It was served with a mound of perfectly

*Continued on page 8*

## BUDGET HOTELS

Continued from page 1

old city center a few miles away.

Breakfast is special with boiled eggs, cheese, four kinds of meat, good bread and superb Czech coffee. The first morning, Mr. Matousek gave us an excellent city map and a week's supply of tickets for the streetcar and bus.

The bus stop is less than 100 meters from the Eva and the streetcar stop is about three blocks away.

If you are arriving by train or air, take a taxi to the Eva. If by car, call Mr. Matousek when you reach the outskirts of Prague and he will drive out to meet you and guide you back. We managed to find our way there because we happened to buy a city map at a gas station a few kilometers outside of Prague. Mr. Matousek parked our car at his front gate so it would be safe. Warning: car theft is getting to be common in all former eastern block countries. Be smart when you park; empty the car of all your belongings and consider buying "The Club" or another theft deterrent for your rental car. We did and slept better each night.

The Villa Eva is for all travelers. Both vacation or business travelers will find Mr. Matousek and his villa to be a delight. Besides that, it's a terrific bargain. The double room with breakfast for *two persons* is about 50 DM (\$31).

The location is excellent though the neighborhood looks a little seamy. We weren't concerned, however, once we discovered most of the residential neighborhoods look the same. There are no problems here.

Villa Eva, Franty Kocourka 14,

150 00 Praha 5, Smichov, CSFR,  
phone 00422/534776.

Villa Eva: II G \$

Landhaus Kleeblatt  
Zell Am See, Austria

The Kleeblatt is on the east side of Zell Am See high above the village of Thumersbach. It has four double rooms with shower and is handsomely decorated. The Kleeblatt's most outstanding feature is its view. The bedrooms' balconies offer a phenomenal vista of the lake and the town of Zell Am See on the opposite shore. It is a sight that I will take with me to my grave.

To the southwest, about 10 miles distant is the Caprun Glacier enshrouded by several other Alpine peaks.

The village of Thumersbach is nothing to get excited about, but the town of Zell Am See is great fun. It's marvelous for strolling, shopping, dining (we recommend the **Hotel Steinwirt** in the *stadt-platz*), and all the other compelling reasons we love to visit the beautiful cities and towns of Europe.

Getting there by car is part of the beauty. From Zell Am See, drive around the north end of the lake (Zeller See). When just entering the village of Thumersbach, turn left, then right and start up the hill. The house is easily identified with its name printed on the wall. Ample parking is available in the yard. Frau Kleeblatt speaks zero English but don't let that deter you.

A double here with shower and breakfast is 500 AS (\$45). The breakfast is excellent.

Landhaus Kleeblatt, Erlberg 78,  
A-5700 Zell am See, phone 042/  
6664.

Landhaus Kleeblatt: II \$



## EUROPE TRAVEL BRIEFING

### A Christmas Cruise

"Christmas On The Danube" offers an itinerary that includes three days in wintry Vienna with a one-week cruise to ports of call in Austria, Slovakia and Hungary. The trip begins with a flight from the United States on December 19. December 20 through 23 are spent in Vienna with sight-seeing, museums, art exhibits and a special concert. On Christmas Eve, the first-class riverboat *M/S Rousse* travels upriver to the magnificent, 900-year old Abbey of Melk for a tour and Midnight Mass. Christmas Day is spent on the river with a special lunch, music and lectures and an evening at the historic Hungarian town of Esztergom. December 26 and 27 feature several options in Budapest. More cruising is scheduled for December 28, plus an optional program in Bratislava, capital of Slovakia, and an on-board concert. The return to the U. S. is mid-morning December 28. The price is \$2,095 double occupancy. Call **Elegant Cruises & Tours** at 800-683-6767.

### Salzburg Mozart Festival

The annual Salzburg **Mozart Festival** is an event wrapped around the birth date of the great composer on January 27. The festival dates this year are January 21 to 30, 1994. The program consists of three Mozart *Pasticcios* with medleys of arias from various operas, nine orchestral concerts (three with the Vienna Philharmonic), a choral concert, eight chamber music concerts, four piano recitals, four Masses



and other events. The main venues are the Mozarteum Academy of Music, the large Festival Hall, the Assembly Hall of Salzburg University, the Franciscan Church and the Cathedral. Partial subscriptions are offered for each of the four events. The Austrian National Tourist Office can provide program details. Ticket orders should be addressed in writing to Kartenbüro der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum, P O Box 34, Schwartzstrasse 26, A-5024 Salzburg, Austria, or faxed to 662/872 996. The voice phone is 622/873 154.

### **Cruising the Elbe from Dresden**

The paddlewheel steamer *Meissen* cruises down the Elbe alongside the Saxon Wine Road. The schedule includes an excursion from Dresden to Meissen, a wine tour between Diesbar and Seussnitz, and a jazz cruise. Information: Sächsische Dampfschiffahrts GmbH & Co, Georgenstrasse 6, D-01097 Dresden. Phone 351/502 3877, fax 351/53060

### **Potsdam Transport Tickets**

The Potsdam ticket gives visitors use of public transport for 24 hours for only 7.50 DM (\$4.60). It includes a city tour, cruise and a bicycle rental. Coupons also provide reduced entry fees for exhibitions. Contact: Potsdam Information, Friedrich-Ebert-Strasse 5, D-14467 Potsdam, phone, 331/21100, fax 331/23012.


### **Weekend in Tauber Valley**

Tauberbischofsheim, in the Tauber Valley a few kilometers southwest of Würzburg, offers a package called "Weekend with Style." The cost is from 172 DM (\$105) with two nights, breakfast, a four-course dinner, rental bicycle and city tour. Fremdenverkehrsamt, Postfach 1480, D-97934 Tauberbischofsheim, phone 9341/80313.

which not only include admission to their events but serve as roundtrip transit tickets, valid from two hours before to six hours after curtain time, on Vienna public transit (commuter trains within the city limits, subway, streetcars and buses). The tickets bear the special imprint *Fahrausweis Kernzone 100*. All three venues are near subway stops.

### **Austrian Tungsten Mine Tours**

High in the *Hohe Tauern*, in Salzburgland, a modern tungsten mine, begun in 1977, is a new tourist attraction. The entrance to the mine is at 3,850 feet in the Felber Valley above the town of Mittersill. Visitors are outfitted with coveralls and hard hats for safety and then taken through 25 miles of tunnels on a special tour bus. There are two versions of the tour: the first takes about an hour and a half and features the entrance area with an exhibit of minerals, various grottoes and an active ore extraction area with huge state-of-the-art mining machinery; the second takes two and a half hours and includes a vast underground crushing plant. The first tour charges adults 160 AS (\$14) and 120 AS (\$11) for kids 12 to 16 (children under 12 are

not permitted), the second is 240 AS (\$21) for adults and 180 AS (\$16) for kids. Good boots and warm clothing are required for the visit. Tours are available Monday through Friday at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., and 2 p.m. Reservations are necessary and can be made by calling 6562/41 37 or sending a fax to 6562/41 37 32. 

### **CHEAP WINTER AIR FARES**

Good news if you're planning a European trip between now and next April 1. It's looking like the fares wars over the Atlantic could get bloody this winter. **DER Tours** has announced low fares from most major U. S. cities to Frankfurt, Zürich, Athens, Amsterdam, Athens, London and Paris for the period November 1 through March 31, 1994.

DER buys in bulk from **Air Canada, American, Delta, Lufthansa, Northwest, TWA, United** and **U.S. Air**. The roundtrip fares listed below are just a sample of DER's offerings; there are many other destination and origination points. Prices are slightly higher over the Christmas holiday. Purchase through a travel agent.

	<u>Frankfurt</u>	<u>Zürich</u>
Atlanta	\$489	\$556
Boston	\$378	\$502
Chicago	\$489	\$506
Dallas /Fort Worth	\$489	\$656
Los Angeles	\$545	\$637
Miami	\$478	\$534
New York City	\$378	\$502
San Francisco	\$523	\$637
St Louis	\$489	\$589

### **Vienna Event Tix Include Subway Ride**

**Konzerthaus**, venue for many Vienna concerts; **Theater an der Wien**, currently home to the successful, long-running musical *Elisabeth*; and the **Raimundtheater**, which is about to present a German version of *The Kiss of the Spider Woman*, now all sell tickets

## PONTRESINA

Continued from page 4

This rambling, relaxed hotel sprawls over the hillside next to the smart Kronenhof and provides acres of grounds and extensive play facilities for kids. There is both an outdoor swimming pool and a special children's pool, a playground, a trampoline, ping pong tables, tennis courts, a jukebox, a billiards room and a playroom that provides free supervised care for kids age three and above. There is even a separate, small dining room equipped with plenty of high-chairs for families with small children. The Atlas can also provide strollers and baby backpacks.

Though the Atlas is a little worn at the edges it still offers many of the charms of a "grand" hotel: antique furniture, great, high-ceilinged public rooms and the same spectacular views of its neighbor, the Kronenhof. But we were most impressed with the attitude of a staff that obviously enjoys a hotel full of kids. We recommend it especially for those with young children.

Families, of course, are eligible for substantial discounts.

Atlas Hotel, CH-8024 Pontresina, phone 082/663 21, fax 082/679 92, singles 80 to 160 Sfr.

(\$56-\$112), doubles 140 to 310 Sfr. (\$98-\$217), including breakfast and dinner. Major Cards.

### Atlas Hotel: II G

#### Hotel Bahnhof

As one might surmise, the Hotel Bahnhof is across the street from the railway station where those clever little red trains of the Rhätische Bahn come and go.

This is a simple hotel; some rooms have only a washbasin. But it is clean and the bustling restaurant serves good country food. There is no elevator.


The Bahnhof is a busy friendly place and would be ideal for the rail traveler who doesn't mind Spartan accommodations.

Hotel Bahnhof-Briotta, CH-7504 Pontresina, phone 082/662 42, fax 082/673 90, singles 72 Sfr. to 93 Sfr. (\$50-\$65), doubles 136 Sfr. to 186 Sfr. (\$95-\$130), including breakfast and dinner. Major cards.

### Hotel Bahnhof: I

#### Hotel-Pension Hauser

Located in a quiet location above the village, on the path to the Church of Santa Maria near the Alp Languard chairlift, the Hauser offers 17 rooms, a few with toilet and shower.

Hotel-Pension Hauser, CH-7504, Pontresina, phone 082-6 63 26, singles 42 Sfr to 58 Sfr. (\$29-\$41), doubles 86 Sfr. to 148 Sfr. (\$60-\$103). No cards. 

### Pension Hauser: I

## RESTAURANTS

Continued from page 5

cooked *al dente* slivered vegetables that had been marinated in a vinaigrette.

The *consomme* served between those two courses was tasty, but a little too salty. Worst of all, there was a 20-minute pause between the soup and the salmon/scampi *roulade*.

Then came another 20-minute wait for the rather disappointing *Selle de veau*, roasted, thick-sliced veal with three sauces, one of reduced juices, one a Béarnaise and a third we couldn't identify. The vegetables were unadorned steamed cauliflower and carrots. Potatoes *dauphine* turned out to be pasty *croquettes*.

Then we waited more than 40 minutes for dessert. Not only did we wait, we became invisible. The Sarazena is a series of small rooms and the few times in that 40 minutes our waiter entered our room, he averted his eyes and slipped out again as quickly as he could. Also conspicuously absent was the somewhat bombastic and overbearing manager who, *much* earlier in the evening, had seated us and taken our order with great flourish.

We were not the only marathoners. A French couple at the next table had ordered the same menu and also endured the excruciating delays.

The sorbet with fruit

finally arrived with a half-hearted, mumbled apology. We quickly finished and departed, foregoing the *Café et liquers*. As we walked through the almost deserted restaurant, the manager and our waiter were nowhere to be seen. Only busboys folding linen were left to ignore us. In keeping with restaurant policy, they did.

The Sarazena is one of our stranger restaurant adventures. The first two courses showed that its kitchen can turn out marvelous dishes. Perhaps the Chinese menu items — which by the way, one could choose and pay far less for a meal than for the grander fixed-price menu — are the restaurant's strength. But the welcome and service, which began well enough, totally disintegrated. To make customers wait for such an extended period of time without explanation is inexcusable. A top-flight restaurant — no, even an ordinary one — deals with problems head-on and at the very least makes an explanation to the customer. To disappear when the going gets tough is unforgivable.

We don't have a rating category that fits the Sarazena. Thus we'll let you make up your mind based on the foregoing.

Sarazena, CH-7504, phone 082/663 53. Major cards. Expensive. 