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- Railpass vs Car Rental

DEAR SUBSCRIBER

May 27, 1994

### Auto Rent War

As we enter the summer travel season a few airfare and rental rate skirmishes have flared.

There is a slugfest in the small to medium car rental categories. Through *Gemütlichkeit's* agreements with various European suppliers, subscribers can now rent a Ford Escort (same category as Opel Astra and VW Golf) in Germany for the astounding rate of \$115 per week, not including tax and collision insurance. This is the most popular rental category and the price offered is the lowest in perhaps 10 years. The Opel Vectra category in Germany is an equally astonishing \$126. Rates have dropped for other countries as well, though not as dramatically. On the other hand, weekly rates on larger cars have increased. For a specific price quote, call us at 800-521-6722. We do not expect rates to remain this low for very long.

Contributing editors Roger Holliday and Bruce Woelfel, both fierce defenders of train travel, had recently been making some headway in chipping away at my long-held belief that, when two or more persons travel together, a rented automobile provides the most flexible and least expensive way — though perhaps not the most romantic way — to see Europe. With the above rates, however, train travel becomes an expensive alternative. Here is a "for instance." Let's say Fred and Ethyl want to spend two weeks seeing Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Their best train option is probably the Europass which limits travel to three, four or five countries from among Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Switzerland. Austria can be added for a small charge.

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# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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

## ST. GALLEN

*Two of the most important attractions in St. Gallen are a textile museum and a church library. Not exciting? Well, trust us. The library is one of Switzerland's great indoor sights and the hand embroidery exhibition at the textile museum is spectacular in its own way.*

**T**hose planning a visit to the area around Lake Constance (the Bodensee) will find two or three days in St. Gallen a worthwhile addition to the travel itinerary.

The *altstadt*, though not a well preserved museum of the Rothenberg/Gruyères genre, has considerable charm. There are some truly fascinating things to see and many interesting day-trips can be constructed

using St. Gallen as a base.

Architecture in the old town is a mix of old and new but most notable are its many oriels — bay windows, usually with some intricate design. Each year a local bank gives an award for the best one and as a result oriels are being restored all over town. There are more than 80. The main attractions, however, are the Library and Cathedral of the Abbey, which dates to 720. The church is

similar in style to — and matches the grandeur of — the great Baroque cathedrals of southern Germany. (Be sure to find the bell just inside the fence that divides the chancel from the main part of the church. It is very old and the one the Irish monk Gallus, who founded the Abbey, is said to have used to summon his colleagues.)

The Abbey's dazzling rococo Library (*Stiftsbibliothek*) rates three stars — "worth a journey" in the *Michelin Green Guide for Switzerland*. Its treasures have remained essentially intact over the centuries.

St. Gallen has always been known for the quality of its textiles. In the middle ages, linen from St. Gall was much valued and it was the first Swiss town to have trade agencies abroad. Early in the 18th century, cotton began to replace linen and the weavers of St. Gallen sold more than their share. Turkish hand embroiderers were hired to teach their craft

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### Eurotunnel:

#### A Benefit for Travelers to Germany, Austria and Switzerland

**H**igh speed trains are chosen over jets by many Europeans for travel between large cities. In Germany, between Munich and Hamburg, ICE passengers watch television in large and comfortable seats, snack or eat more formal meals in a "Bistro" while speeding from Munich to Hamburg at 175 miles per hour. Sleek Italian ETRs travel between Rome and Milan at 155 miles per hour. *Trains a Grand Vitesse* (TGV), faster than Japanese bullet trains, streak across France and Spain at nearly 200 miles per hour. Soon most of these high-speed systems will be linked. And now a major new development has been completed which connects the Continent to Great Britain, extending the high-speed network, and making it easier to combine visits to Germany, Switzerland or Austria with a trip to Britain.

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## DEAR SUBSCRIBER

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Let us further stipulate that they decide to stop for a few days in some of the larger cities and so will need to travel only eight of their 14 days in Europe. The cost per person for the "8 days travel in 14 days" Europass is \$394, plus the \$35 to add Austria, for a total of \$429, or \$858 for the two of them. A regular Eurailpass for 15 consecutive days travel in all 17 Eurail countries would cost \$996, so Fred and Ethyl have saved \$138 with the Europass. But as we shall see in a moment, some flexibility has been lost.

If, on the other hand, Fred and Ethyl decide to rent a car in Germany, their cost for two weeks in an Opel Astra will be \$265 including tax. (Price predicated on their having a credit card that will provide collision insurance.) Add a generous \$225 for gas to run the car 3,000 kilometers (a substantial 214 km per day), plus \$100 for parking, and their total auto costs are \$590, a saving of \$268. As you can see, the conventional wisdom that says one saves money traveling by train in Europe is sometimes not so wise. Though a lone traveler can often go cheaper by railpass, two or more persons who plan to see a lot of country will nearly always pay a premium to ride the rails.

But for the sake of argument, let's say the romance of train travel overwhelms Fred and Ethyl and they decide the \$268 premium is worth it to hop those marvelous bullet trains, TGVs, ICEs, etc. Let's see what that will cost them in flexibility and convenience.

- To begin with, they are limited to four countries (remember their pass allows three of the five basic countries but they had to add Austria), which they must choose before they leave the U.S. If they are in Vienna and suddenly decide they'd like to see Budapest (or Paris or Brussels), it will cost extra to get there. In addition, on six of the 14 days, they cannot use their passes.

- Arriving in towns and cities, they'll always first have to deal with moving themselves and their luggage to a hotel. The choices I'm aware of are

bus, underground, taxi or on foot.

- I know there are good hotels near most European train stations, but a couple traveling by car can choose any of a city's hotels. Even if Fred and Ethyl stick to hotels near rail stations, there will be frequent carrying of luggage — down streets and through train, bus and underground stations.

- Since every time they move they will have to carry everything they own, they will have to pack light. Weight and bulk will be a major factor; not too many dresses, coats, shoes, books, maps, cameras, hair dryers, laptop computers and all those other nice-to-have-along items the auto traveler really doesn't have to worry about. When I pack, my chief concern is, will it fit in the suitcase? Traveling light is a discipline I am about as familiar with as, say, Tai Chi.

- Though we know European trains are frequent and scrupulously on-time, Fred and Ethyl will be limited to traveling when the trains do. That's pretty handy but not quite as flexible as traveling on your own schedule as auto travelers do (assuming no *stau* on the Autobahn, of course).

- And finally, they will have to stick close to those railroad tracks. No driving through the woods (unless in a taxi) to remote country hotels. Some of my favorite hotels are miles from the nearest train station.

Roger and Bruce are itching to rebut this. They'll get their chance next month.

### DER Lowers Fares

**DER Tours**, the Germany-based tour company which buys large blocks of seats from the major carriers and then resells them, usually at lower rates than the airlines themselves, now guarantees the lowest fares to Europe. The precise statement from a company flyer to travel agents is "We guarantee our price to be the same or lower than other available fares, for identical flight arrangements. If you find a lower price, fax us the details and we will match it, no questions asked."

DER is now offering Tuesday departures and returns, June through September, to Frankfurt on

### Lufthansa:

Atlanta	\$738
Chicago	\$739 (June only)
Chicago	\$778 (July-Sept)
Los Angeles	\$828
Miami	\$748

October prices are about \$150 less. DER offers low fares on other airlines from most major U.S. cities. Your travel agent can reach them at 800-782-2424.

### Swissair Price Reductions

Of course, the special fare reductions on **Swissair** remain in effect for *Gemütlichkeit* subscribers. This summer the per ticket reduction for subscribers and persons traveling with them to or from Europe on Swissair is \$50 off summer roundtrip sale fares, \$100 off regular roundtrip economy fares, \$400 off roundtrip business class fares and \$600 off roundtrip first class fares. To obtain fares and the current price reductions, call the main Swissair reservation number, 800-221-4750 and ask the reservationist to access "G-star, reference QL2JLQ." This will provide access by the reservationist to the area of the Swissair reservations computer system which contains information about the *Gemütlichkeit* program.

Please be aware that you must book and purchase your ticket directly through Swissair. The number to purchase tickets is 800-238-0399.

### New Magazine on Germany

Germanophiles will be interested in a new magazine, **German Life**. The first issue of this bimonthly publication, which bears a July 1994 imprint, carried three articles on Berlin, an interesting photo essay on Eastern Germany, the most complete information we've seen on German genealogy, a short piece on German cuisine, a synopsis of several travel guidebooks to Germany, a story on German football (soccer) and various other features. Subscriptions are \$15.95 for six issues and may be obtained by writing Zeitgeist Publishing, P. O. Box 609 Grantsville MD 21536, phone 800-314-6843.



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# GEMÜTLICHKEIT

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

**Editor & Publisher:** Robert H. Bestor, Jr.  
**Associate Editors:** E. Schiller, L. Troop  
**Contributing Editors:** C. Fischer, R. Holliday  
**Design & Composition:** Paul T. Merschorf  
**Consulting Editor:** Thomas P. Bestor  
**Subscription Dept.:** N. Badely, K. Steffans

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## HOTEL RESTAURANT RATING KEY

Rating Category	Scale	Hotel Rating Criteria	
Unacceptable	0 - 3	People/Service	30%
Adequate	4 - 7	Location/Setting	15%
Average	8 - 11	Guestrooms	30%
Above Average	12 - 15	Public rooms	5%
Excellent	16 - 20	Facilities/Restaurant	20%

### Special Designations

**G** By virtue of location, decor, special charm, warmth of management, or combination thereof, an especially pleasant establishment.

**\$** Offers significant value.

### Restaurant Criteria

Food	65%
Service	20%
Atmosphere	15%

## ST. GALLEN

Continued from page 1

to the women of Eastern Switzerland. By 1790 there were about 40,000 home embroiderers working for the wealthy merchants of St. Gallen. The invention of hand embroidery machines in the second half of the 19th century further quickened the pace and by century's end it is estimated some 100,000 embroidery machines were in operation. Aside from agriculture, virtually all industry in the region centered on the textile trades. The work was hard and frugality a way of life. Marriages among farm families took place very early in the morning so as not to interrupt the work day. Brides were married in black because the dress could then be worn on other occasions. Not surprisingly, in 1913, Switzerland's leading exporter was the embroidery industry, ahead of watches.

Though the depression ended the embroidery boom, a condition that lasted until the end of the Second World War, the production of fabric and textiles in and around St. Gallen is again in high gear. Many of France's leading *couture* houses come to St. Gallen for their fabrics. If it wished, St. Gallen could lay claim to being the brassiere capital of Europe; 65% of the total Swiss production of embroidery is in ladies' lingerie. But men have not been forgotten, those Lacoste crocodiles on your polo shirts were probably stitched in St. Gallen. Most Swiss embroidery machines are now computer controlled and the industry in Switzerland is unquestionably the world's most modern.

Though the winning Super Bowl quarterback always seems to pick Disneyland over St. Gallen's Textile Museum, you should give embroidery a chance. Seriously, the exhibition of hand embroidered lace on the museum's upper floor is not to be missed.

As to day-trips, the town is within an hour's drive or train ride

## ABOUT ST. GALLEN

**Population:** 71,917

**Altitude:** 2,211 feet

Approximate distances from:

Berlin	876 km	546 miles
Geneva	368 km	229 miles
Interlaken	257 km	160 miles
Lugano	240 km	150 miles
Milan	377 km	235 miles
Munich	264 km	164 miles
St Moritz	171 km	107 miles
Vienna	814 km	507 miles
Zürich	90 km	56 miles

### Tourist Information St Gallen

Bahnhofplatz 1a,  
CH-9001 St Gallen, Switzerland  
Telephone: 071/22 62 62  
Fax: 071/23 43 04

### Important Dates

**612** - The Celtic missionary Gall builds his hermitage in the Steinach Valley. In 720, the Abbey is founded on the spot where Gall died.

**9th/10th Century** - The Golden Age. St Gallen becomes a center of western learning and culture. Its famous manuscripts — many preserved to this day in the Abbey Library — are created in the St

Gallen scriptorium.

**926** - Invasion of the Magyars. Construction of the first wall around the abbey principality.

**14th & 15th Century** - Linen industry and linen trade flourish.

**1551** - Construction of the abbey library.

**1803** - St Gallen becomes the capital of the newly founded canton of the same name.

**End 19th Century** - Textile industry at its zenith.

### St. Gallen Notes

■ St Gallen's most famous export item is St Gall Sausage. Exactly 66, 234 of them were consumed at the All-Swiss Wrestling Festival in 1980. Laid end to end, this would correspond to a sausage measuring 13 km or 8.1 mi long.

■ The continent's first soccer club was FC St. Gallen founded in 1879.

■ Switzerland's first indoor swimming pool opened in St. Gallen in 1913.

■ Switzerland's first radiology institute opened in St Gallen in 1897.

### Rail To/From St. Gallen

Destination	Approx. Travel Time	First Class		Second Class	
		OW	RT	OW	RT
Zürich Airport	59 minutes	\$28	\$45	\$17	\$28
Geneva	4 hrs, 20 min	\$100	\$160	\$60	\$97
Lucerne	2 hrs, 10 min	\$50	\$81	\$30	\$49
Munich	3 hrs, 10 min	\$67	\$134	\$44	\$88

### In St. Gallen Don't Miss...

■ **The Textile Museum**, Vadianstrasse 2, open Mon-Fri 1000-1200 and 1400-1700, open Saturdays April 1-October 31.

■ **The Abbey's Cathedral and Library**. Cathedral open weekdays 0900-1800, Sundays 1215-1730. Library open mornings and afternoons. Closed on Sundays and Mondays during winter and all of November.

■ **The Remarkable Oriels**: House of the Pelican, Schmiedgasse 15; House of Strength, Schmiedgasse 21; Camel Oriel, Spisergasse 22; House of the Deep Cellar, Hinterlauben 10; House of the Swan, Kugelgasse 10; House of the Ball, Kugelgasse 8

### Embroidery and Fabric Shops

■ **Boutique Bambola**, Brühlgasse 35, phone 071/23 70 23

■ **Saphir Stickereien**, Bleichenstrasse 9, phone 071/23 62 63, fax 071/23 11 46



## ST. GALLEN

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from Zürich, Appenzell, the Säntis, Stein and its cheese-making demonstrations, Liechtenstein, Constance, Schaffhausen and the Rhine Falls, the quaint village of Stein am Rhein, the car ferry at Romanshorn and from there to the German side of the lake, Bregenz in Austria and, of course, the towns along the Swiss shore of the Bodensee.

A city founded by an Irishman would not be expected to be a center for *haute cuisine* and St. Gallen is not, but good meals at decent prices can be had in the town's numerous "first floor" (second floor to us) restaurants.

St. Gallen's hotels are convenient and comfortable but keep in mind the town is not a resort and depends on business as well as vacation travelers for its visitor revenue. Thus, with a couple of exceptions, hotels are of the no nonsense variety. Most rooms, for example, do not have separate sitting areas.

### St. Gallen Hotels

#### Hotel Einstein

There should be no argument about which is the number one hotel in St. Gallen. It is the elegant, modern Einstein, in a former embroidery factory on the edge of the old town.

**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

Guestrooms are identical in furnishings and fixtures, but offer such five-star amenities as bathrooms with huge, thick towels on heated racks.

The small, fifth floor restaurant/breakfast area, once the building's attic, is made especially cozy by several strategically placed lamps and a network of exposed beams. Most tables are banquettes nestled under the slanting ceiling. Skylights let in plenty of light, even on a bleak winter morning, and one giant half-circle window under the Doric peak provides a wonderful breakfast

view of the rooftops of St. Gallen's old town.

Though we lost our notes on meals eaten there, our recollection of the Einstein's restaurant is one of very good food, rather formally served, in a most inviting setting.

Parking everywhere in St. Gallen's *altstadt* is a problem. There is some street parking or the hotel will take care of your car for about 15 Sfr. per day.

Prices below are rack rates but there are times during the year when the Einstein is willing to deal. For example, if you're looking for a hotel over the Christmas holidays, the Einstein has attractive packages. Between December 17 and January 3, a double room including buffet breakfast is 170 Sfr. (\$121), a terrific holiday price for a hotel of this caliber. Address inquiries to Bettina Stöffel, sales manager.

**Address:** Hotel Einstein, Berneggstrasse 2, CH-9001 St. Gallen

**Phone:** 071/20 00 33

**Fax:** 071/23 54 74

**Location:** Central, near the abbey

**Rooms:** 65 total, including 49 doubles and 13 singles. Some nonsmoking rooms

**Proprietor:** Michel M. Resnik

**Prices:** Singles 195 to 250 Sfr. (\$138-\$177), doubles 280 to 340 Sfr. (\$199-\$241), breakfast not included. Buffet 19 Sfr. (\$13)

**Facilities:** Restaurant, bar with nightly piano music

**Credit Cards:** All

**Disabled:** Limited

**Closed:** Never

**Parking:** Some free spaces around hotel, otherwise public garage (15 Sfr./\$11 per day)

**Other:** 500 meters from rail station

**Hotel Rating:** ABOVE AVERAGE 15/20

#### Hotel Im Portner und Pförtnerhof

St. Gallen's most atmospheric hotel. We give especially high marks to the annex Pförtnerhof across the street from Im Portner.

Here you'll find an engaging mix of modern art, furniture (note the trendy Italian leather chairs) and light fixtures in a very old building. The focus is on the art throughout. Even the tiniest bedroom has several interesting pieces and there is a different artist for each room. All the pictures are from the nearby Erker Gallery, where the works of some of the world's best known contemporary artists are displayed. Over the years, most of them have stayed at Im Portner/Pförtnerhof.

The house's best room is Number 12 (280 Sfr./\$199), in a corner tower with five windows and a wood grill work ceiling. In this room hang pictures by the Russian artist, Serge Poliakoff.

We have one small quibble — and it applies to several other hotels we have seen in the last year: wall-mounted TV sets on swinging arms just below ceiling level are no doubt easily viewed but are too reminiscent of a hospital room. TV sets are best tucked away in a piece of furniture or simply set on a dresser or small table.

**Address:** Hotel Im Portner und Pförtnerhof, Bankgasse 12, CH-9000 St. Gallen

**Phone:** 071/22 97 44

**Fax:** 071/22 98 56

**Location:** Center of old town

**Rooms:** 24 total, 14 doubles, 10 singles

**Proprietor:** Olga & Hans Ulrich Egli

**Prices:** Singles 150 to 160 Sfr. (\$106-\$113), doubles 200 to 250 Sfr. (\$142-\$177), breakfast included

**Facilities:** French restaurant, grill room, bar

**Credit Cards:** All

**Disabled:** Not suitable

**Closed:** July

**Parking:** Five spaces for hotel guests or public garage for 15 Sfr. (\$11) per day

**Other:** 500 meters from rail station

**Hotel Rating:** ABOVE AVERAGE 14/20

### Hotel Ekkehard

Modern, but somewhat dull hotel on the other side of the city park. Guestrooms are nicely furnished, clean and functional and the welcome is exceptionally friendly.

**Address:** Hotel Ekkehard, Rorschacherstrasse 50 CH-9000 St. Gallen

**Phone:** 071/22 47 14

**Fax:** 071/22 47 74

**Location:** 10 minute walk through park to city center

**Rooms:** 29 total, 19 doubles, 10 singles

**Proprietor:** Ernst Leander

**Prices:** Singles 135 to 150 Sfr. (\$96-\$106), doubles 196 to 220 Sfr. (\$139-\$156), breakfast included

**Facilities:** Restaurant

**Credit Cards:** All

**Disabled:** One room, #410

**Closed:** December 24-30

**Parking:** Purchase on-street permit from hotel for 4 Sfr. (\$2.85)

**Other:** Three kilometers from train station

**Hotel Rating:** AVERAGE 11/20

### Rössligump

Just inside the front door of the Rössligump is a picture of the neon sign at Joe's Stone Crabs, for decades a hugely popular Miami Beach restaurant. The hotel's young owner once worked there and the picture is the visitor's first clue that the Rössligump is different. After all, there are hundreds of Hotels Rössli in Switzerland but only one Rössligump (horse jump). The fact that it is not your orthodox Swiss hotel, and that it offers double rooms for substantially less than \$100, are just two of the reasons we were intrigued by this friendly little inn. Another is that owner, Rene Jungreithmeier, a beer connoisseur, stocks more than 20 varieties of the stuff, including one of our favorites, the Czech beer Budvar, on draught. When we were there he was touting a new offering, Quöllfrisch, from an old Appenzell brewery.

**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

Guestrooms are rather plain but comfortable and exceptionally clean. Ask for Number 301, a corner double with exposed beams, a slanting ceiling with skylights and a small kitchen.

The hotel's lively *stube* is a gathering place for the young and hip of the neighborhood and the restaurant is a cheery place that puts a visitor immediately at ease. The day we were there, four women, none under 65, passed the afternoon playing cards.

The welcome at Rössligump is exceptionally friendly. The place is a little mod and the staff is young but we think you'll be captivated by the enthusiasm and friendliness.

**Address:** Hotel Rössligump, Zürcherstrasse 62, CH-9000 St. Gallen

**Phone:** 071/28 32 33

**Location:** Five minutes by public transport from the center

**Rooms:** 20 total including 6 small suites, 1 cottage

**Proprietor:** René Jungreithmeier

**Prices:** Singles 55 to 90 Sfr. (\$39-\$64), doubles 90 to 150 Sfr. (\$64-\$106), including breakfast

**Facilities:** *Gemütlich* restaurant, no elevator

**Credit Cards:** No

**Disabled:** Not suitable

**Closed:** Never

**Parking:** Some spaces for guests plus on-street

**Hotel Rating:** AVERAGE 8/20

### Hotel zur Linde

This country hotel in the village of Teufen, in the hills 8 kilometers above St. Gallen, caters to families. The atmosphere is homey and you'll get a bit more for your money than in St. Gallen. The Linde's best features are its inviting restaurant and pretty garden and grounds.

**Address:** Hotel zur Linde, CH-9053 Teufen

**Phone:** 071/33 28 22

**Fax:** 071/33 41 20

**Location:** In Teufen, eight km from St. Gallen

**Rooms:** 14 total, 8 doubles, 6 singles, including breakfast

**Proprietor:** Hans Jakob & Julian Lanker-Popp

**Prices:** Singles 85 Sfr. (\$60), doubles 150 to 170 Sfr. (\$106-\$121), including breakfast

**Facilities:** Garden restaurant, kids play area

**Credit Cards:** All

**Disabled:** Not suitable

**Closed:** Three weeks in July

**Parking:** Ample

**Other:** Caters to families

**Hotel Rating:** AVERAGE 10/20

## EATING IN ST. GALLEN

### Hotel Einstein

Our best St. Gallen meal was dinner at the Einstein. The restaurant, which is on the hotel's top floor, is quite romantic at sunset. And, with candlelight flickering off the angled ceilings and polished old timbers, it's also a lovely place later in the evening. Unfortunately, we misplaced our notes on the meal so cannot report in detail on our experience other than to say the food was traditional, tasty and rather formally presented.

Hotel Einstein, Berneggstrasse 2, phone 071/20 00 33, fax 071/23 54 74. Major cards. Moderate to Expensive.

**Rating:** ABOVE AVERAGE 13/15

### Restaurant Anker

You'll get generous portions of simple, hearty food in the center of the old town at Restaurant Anker, one of St. Gallen's several "first floor" restaurants. The small, low-ceilinged room, one flight up from the street, has no more than eight plain wooden tables.

A daily special of Hungarian goulash (chunks of beef in very rich reduction sauce), spätzle and sauteed carrots was just fair. More to our liking, however, was a juicy

*Continued on page 6...*

St. Gallen bratwurst, with onion sauce and rösti.

We were also served terrific rolls, called *Brülli*. With a hard crust and chewy, spongy interior they challenge San Francisco's famous sourdough bread.

Restaurant Anker, Schmiedgasse 20, phone 071/22 36 03. Closed Sundays. Inexpensive.  
Rating: AVERAGE 8/20

#### Restaurant Schlössli

Restaurant Schlössli is another "first floor" restaurant though it's cuisine has higher aspirations and prices than the Anker's.

Arriving without a reservation, we were first offered wine and cheese from a spread arranged on a table in the entry. But, anxious for dinner, we asked to be seated right away.

We were put in a room with red tile floors, salmon colored table cloths, candles, live plants and three ornate chandeliers, probably of Venetian glass.

The meal began with a small "gift of the house" course of crescent shaped puff pastries with a ham stuffing.

*Gurken Salat "Thailander Art"* (8.50 Sfr./\$6) consisted of cucumbers marinated in white vinegar and slices of red pepper. Too pickly for our taste.

One main course of *Perlhunbrusten* (guinea fowl, 32 Sfr./\$23) served on a bed of small lentil beans, diced zucchini, carrots, broccoli and something called "yellow carrot," was delicious. The portion of the bird served was the breast, sliced, and one leg. Guinea fowl white meat is darker and moister than chicken breast.

*Schweinfilet* (pork steak, 29 Sfr./\$21) came stuffed with pine nuts, dried apricot, a kind of seed (possibly pumpkin) and accompanied by spinach, carrots, cauliflower and slivers of zucchini. Scalloped potatoes, covered with cheese then

breaded and broiled, were not fully cooked.

Half a liter of *Dôle* (red) from Valais cost 18 Sfr. (\$13)

From a cart, we chose small portions of various cheeses for dessert.

It was a fairly satisfying dining experience but, at 100 Sfr. (\$71) for two, sans beverages, somewhat overpriced. The offer of wine and cheese at entry is an upmarket embellishment we've noticed lately in other European restaurants, but the Schlössli's practice of serving butter in individual, prepackaged, plastic tubs can only be described as tacky.

Though it does not influence our evaluation, some might like to know that our waitress spoke no English. The person who seated us did, however.

Restaurant Schlössli am Spise-  
tor, Zeughausgasse 17, phone 071/  
22 12 56. Closed Saturdays and  
Sundays. Major cards. Moderate to  
Expensive.  
Rating: AVERAGE 11/20

#### Restaurant Marktplatz

For a beer, snack or a very simple meal in the center of town try the Marktplatz. It is a comfortable sort of place — though not rustic — where locals come to idle over coffee or a beer. For 1/3 of a liter of Gallusbräu we paid 3.30 sfr./\$2.35. We saw customers reading the restaurant's newspapers, writing letters and one man even had his checkbook out and appeared to be paying bills. Restaurant Marktplatz, Neugasse 2, phone 071/22 36 41. Inexpensive. ☒

### EUROTUNNEL

*Continued from page 1*

This striking engineering achievement: consisting of twin single tracked 23 mile long rail tunnels, officially called Eurotunnel, was opened by the Queen and French President Mitterand on May 6, and will be fully operational in

six months. The connection between Folkestone, Britain and Sangatte, France which took 6.5 years and \$15 billion to build, will significantly shorten times between London, Paris, Brussels, and through Brussels, to Germany, Switzerland and Austria, as well as improving the quality of travel.

By early winter 1995, many former air travelers will prefer to climb on one of the sleek, new, high-speed Eurostar passenger trains that leave from the centers of London, Paris and Brussels. They will work, sleep, read or eat for three hours uninterrupted, rather than experience the hassle of getting to and from airports, which can take an hour or more each way. Some will continue their trips to other Continental cities.

#### **Save Time To/From Germany**

Trips between Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Great Britain will be hours quicker, with fewer transfers. Take a trip from Cologne to London as an example: at present a rail passenger could depart Cologne at 9:14 a.m. and, changing from rail to hydrofoil and back to rail, arrive in Victoria Station at 5:23 p.m. With the new schedule, the arrival time in Waterloo would be 1:39 p.m., including one change of train in Brussels, a saving of 3.5 hours. From Frankfurt a departure at 9:49 a.m. would currently mean an arrival in London at 8:47 p.m. From Munich, a day trip to London presently means leaving at 6:44 a.m. for the same 8:47 p.m. arrival. With Eurotunnel both journeys would be more than four hours faster, arriving at 4:39 p.m.

Until improvements currently underway are completed, not all of the ride will be at top speed. From Brussels and Paris, Eurostars will move at 186 miles per hour on the French side of the Channel, pass through an interchange in Lille and slow to 100 miles per hour through the Tunnel, continuing to London at the same pace. Even with these limitations, it will be quicker to



travel by rail to the closer cities than by either air or private automobile.

Day service commences between Paris and Brussels in late 1995 to Edinburgh, Newcastle, York, and Peterborough in northern Britain and to Manchester, Birmingham and Milton Keynes in the northwest. In late 1995 service is extended to Germany as overnight trains begin operation.

### **Hotel Trains**

A fleet of 125 miles per hour "hotel trains" will run from London to Cologne, Duisberg, Düsseldorf, Essen, Dortmund, Bonn, Koblenz and Frankfurt in Germany and to Rotterdam, The Haag, and Amsterdam in Holland. These sleepers will include compartments with private toilets and showers and a comfortable lounge for late night beverages or snacks. Simultaneously, night runs begin between Glasgow, Swansea and Plymouth in England and Paris and Brussels.

In five years, when the high speed tracks are complete on the English side, the trip will be 30 minutes quicker. Further improvements in 1996, will reduce time between London-Brussels to 2 hours 40 minutes and London-Amsterdam to 4 hours 30 minutes. In 2000, London-Amsterdam will be cut to 3 hours 10 minutes and a high-speed line will open between Brussels and Cologne reducing the time between London and Cologne to 6.5 hours.

Although it is a rail-only tunnel, passengers in cars or vans can make use of special trains that will ferry automobiles with their passengers inside, between the terminal in Folkestone on the English coast, and the French terminal in Sangatte, near Calais, directly across the Channel, saving a half hour over ferry times. Beginning this summer "Le Shuttle" will make four trips an hour during peak periods, and at least one an hour through the night. With loading and unloading time at either side, it will take about one

hour to get from France to England including the 35 minute journey through the tunnel itself.

### **What Will It Cost?**

Based on current exchange rates, car and passengers will pay from \$195 to \$465 depending on season and time of day. Rail travelers will pay as little as \$105 for a mid-afternoon weekday round trip London-Paris to as much as \$240 for first-class, peak time travel. In comparison, coach class, roundtrip air fare, London-Paris ranges between \$159 and \$270.

Aside from cost, the time saving and convenience of rail travel between major cities seems to be Eurotunnel's greatest benefit. Busses and automobiles connecting to ships, hovercraft, hydrofoils and even those using "Le Shuttle" will take longer than the trains. Even

minute schedule, is more competitive with "Le Shuttle" than the other ships which take 1.5 hours. Predictions are that half of the ferry runs will be eliminated.

Probably safe for the time being are the overnight ships between Harwich and Hook of Holland, although in a few years, when fast rail connections are complete between Amsterdam and London, these too may be affected. Even so, some ferries will undoubtedly continue to run to serve automobile patrons who may prefer water craft to a trip under water.

**Railpass possibilities:** Various arrangements may be purchased which make rail travel cheaper and more convenient. A new Europass is available which is tailored to shorter trips and more quality time in fewer places. The pass allows

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*A fleet of 125 miles per hour "hotel trains" will run from London to Cologne, Duisberg, Düsseldorf, Essen, Dortmund, Bonn, Koblenz and Frankfurt.*

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greater convenience and time saving will occur as the system is enlarged next summer to include nonstop trips to Germany as well as service to more cities in Great Britain.

### **What About the Ferries?**

One can expect that ferry service between Britain and the Continent will be reduced. Currently 16 million ferry passengers pass through Calais each year. Although efforts are currently being made to speed up the trips and improve the quality of meal service (which in the past has been mediocre to poor), the Dover and Calais car ferries run by P&O and Sealink will be severely impacted. P&O runs 15 boats a day each way, Sealink 18 per day, and Hoverspeed 21 per day. Hoverspeed, which carries automobiles on a 35-

between 5 and 15 days of train travel within the five countries of Spain, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland at a cost, depending on the length of travel, from \$280 to \$660. Travel to Austria, Portugal and a combination of Belgium and Luxembourg can be added for \$22 to \$35. Those traveling more frequently by rail will need a Eurailpass which covers unlimited first-class travel in 17 countries for between \$498 and \$798. Other possibilities include a Eurail Flexipass which allows five days of first-class travel in two months for \$348 or a Saverpass which discounts first-class travel for two or more people traveling together. Other plans are available which combine rail travel with car rental. Railpasses may be purchased from most travel agencies. 

# READERS' FORUM

## Hotels Recommended

My husband and I had a walk through Steyr, Austria, last spring on a Sunday when it was nearly deserted. The buildings were so interesting and the walk back from the rivers to the Church was delightful.

The Wachau-Danube drive was, we agree, wonderful, as was the Abbey at Melk. We stayed in Dürnstein at **Gasthof Blondel** (A-3601 Dürnstein, ph. 02711/253), which is much more charming than **Schloss Dürnstein**, and took day trips to Vienna via train from Krems. They had delicious food and were gracious hosts. We really heartily recommend it.

We also agree that **Swissair** and the Zürich airport are the best. Next time you fly into Zürich, do stay at the **Rote Rose** (phone 01/85 31013, fax 01/85 31 559) in Regensburg and eat at the **Restaurant Krone**. Undoubtedly you know about this delightful little village but if you haven't stayed at the Rote Rose you're missing a real treat! It is very close to the airport and a wonderfully peaceful place to have jet lag.

When we go to Lake Constance next May we might stay in Stein. Do you have any recommendations for moderately priced places there?

If your latest trip included Lake Constance we hope to soon read more of what to see and do there.

We are always eager to hear more about the small, rural, charming, comfortable places you visit. **Pension Heim** in Seeg (*Gemütlichkeit*, April 1992) was our idea of the ideal place to stay in Europe and we too prefer a "**Gasthof Hirsch**" (*Gemütlichkeit*, April 1992) dinner most nights with a once a week splurge at a "Krone".

Caroline Jordan, San Rafael CA

P.S. Grossglockner and it's glacier - YES!!!

*(Sometime this year we will report on the Lake Constance region. In Stein am Rhein try Hotel Rheinfels, ph. 054/41 21 44, fax 054/41 25 22, on the river. — Ed.)*

## Limberg an der Lahn

As a subscriber working/living in Budapest and Prague, I always look forward to your publication. Because I travel frequently, I am able to visit some of the places reviewed. I have a recommendation for you.

I recently spent four days in Limberg an der Lahn, 70 kilometers northwest of Frankfurt, off the A3 Autobahn. The old town has many nice shops and it overlooks the large Dom. I stayed at the **Dom-Hotel** (Grabenstr. 57, D-65549, phone 06431/24077, fax 06431/6856) which was comfortable. Check this town out.

Edward Raether, Budapest

## Black Forest Hotel

Have just returned from a trip that included the Black Forest where we stayed at **Zur Blume Gasthaus** (D-7612 Haslach-Schnellingen ph. 07832/23 82) and found the family Franz Josef Moser so very accommodating. The food was outstanding and the Jehle Export *vom fass* delightful. We will return to Zur Blume, not only for good beer and food, but to enjoy *gemütlichkeit* engendered by this very considerate German family. Erskine Havens, Hendersonville, TN

## More on Steyr

I was delighted to find your latest issue, highlighting Steyr, among my mail upon returning from a very brief trip to Europe. For some time, Steyr has been one of the smaller communities used as a destination in our "Imperial Austria" program. (You may recall it operates on a hub and spoke basis and focuses on the over-55 market.)□ In addition to Steyr's *altstadt*, the town has a fascinating area along the Wehrgraben canal which should attract those interested in industrial archaeology. For 500 years, the canal has supplied water power for various types

of mills. In the industrial revolution in the mid-1800's, factories, precursors of the Steyrwerks, grew up. Today, there is an active move toward restoration, including a Museum of Industrial Work. It is possible to tour many of the old areas including early social housing. Unfortunately, particularly for younger German-speaking visitors, anything related to armaments has a very negative context. Although Steyr should be proud of the history of this area, we have found tourist office guides quite reluctant to show it.

Steyr is an excellent center for day trips, some of which are listed in the enclosed leaflet, such as the abbeys of St Florian and Kremsmünster, the Steyrtal steam railway, and even excursions into Bohemia. We agree with your hotel evaluations, preferring the Mäder to the Minichmayr for accommodations, perhaps the reverse for cuisine. The Mäder is a little difficult for older people since the rooms ramble over several buildings. Some are a delight; others are quite pedestrian. The only elevator is a service lift at the rear.

Richard Davidson, Austria  
Tours, Houston TX

## New This Month: Classified Advertising

*Gemütlichkeit* has added a separate classified advertising section (the newsletter itself remains unchanged). Those who wish to reach *Gemütlichkeit's* approximately 8,000 readers, travel book & map buyers and car rental customers can now do so. Our loyal subscribers are frequent travelers to Europe and elsewhere.

**Rates:** 75 cents per word, minimum charge \$20. No charge for zip code. **Boldface** or ALL CAPITAL words, 20 cents additional. **Deadline:** 15th of each month. **For information or to place an ad contact** Andrew Bestor, 800-521-6722.