

A day in Zürich

By Wilhelm K. Weber*

Zürich, downtown Switzerland! I always smile when I read that description of the beautiful city I lived in for so many years. To anybody coming from a major metropolis, this clean and cosy place feels like a big village.

Zürich is not the boring banking capital it's made out to be. In fact Zürich is – whisper it softly – surprisingly hip and trendy. Hundreds of new bars, restaurants and clubs have opened since planning laws were changed in the late 1990s and Zürich now hosts Europe's largest annual street party. Visitors may at first think that this small, picturesque city with its church steeples that rise above crystal-blue water is pleasant rather than exciting. But then they're struck by the noisy cheerfulness of the cobbled Niederdorfstrasse on the eastern riverbank, and won over by the pleasures of the lake. So come and join me for a day in Zürich.

08:00 Get up early and take the Züri-Tram to Paradeplatz. Have breakfast in the Confiserie Sprüngli, one of Zürich's best-known cafés and the "mother of all chocolate shops". It's the same company that sells the delicious Luxemburgerli pralines at the airport.

09:00 The morning is the best time to take a walk on the famous Bahnhofstreet. Coming out of the Confiserie Sprüngli simply turn left and stroll down towards the main station. If you're interested in history, it's worth booking a guided tour at the Tourist Information in the main station. Shoppers will find all the major brands on Bahnhofstreet, and hidden treasures on the side streets of the old town.

10:00 At the end of Bahnhofstreet, turn left to have an espresso in Café 08/15. It's easy to find.

Those who don't like minimalist design may prefer the Café Felix.

10:30 Cross the River Limmat towards Central and take the Polybahn cablecar. There's a great view over the city and the lake from the terrace of Zürich's renowned technical university, ETH.

11:00 Back downtown, walk along the Niederdorfstrasse towards the Frauenmünster church with its famous Chagall windows. This side of Zürich is called the Dörfli and it's home to many trendy boutiques and art galleries. Bear in mind that the Dörfli starts the day at 11.00 so you won't find any restaurant open before that time.

11:30 Treat yourself to Zürich's best hot chocolate at Café Schober in the middle of the Niederdorfstrasse. The cakes are delicious, too.

12:30 After visiting the Frauenmünster, Bindella's terrace is a great place for a Mediterranean meal and a good glass of wine. Zürich traditionalists might prefer to cross the street to buy a *Bratwurst* hot dog from the stand outside the restaurant Vorderer Sternen. Or, if the weather is warm, try the ninety-minute Lunchboat cruise on Lake Zürich and tuck in to some typical *Fischchnusperli* while you soak up the sun.

13:30 Just around the corner from Bellevue Place is Zürich's modern art museum, the Kunsthaus. Don't forget to visit the well-known Giacometti exhibition. If the day is sunny, skip the museum and take a walk down to the lakeside casino, but don't bother with the Chinese garden – that's not what you came to Zürich for, is it?

17:00 Time for what the Swiss call *apero*; the Swiss usually have a glass of white wine. A good place to start the evening is the Seefeld district. It starts right behind the opera and its stylish bars and restaurants are frequented by Zürich's well-heeled younger crowd.

19:00 For dinner I love the modern restaurants like Scala in Schiffbau, Mishio or Nine, but if you prefer traditional food visit one of the *Zunft Häuser* and enjoy the classic *Zürigschnetzelt* with cream sauce and *Roesti* potatoes. If the weather is warm, a restaurant at the lakeside makes a romantic hide-away. My favourites are Seerose and Chez Felix, but you'll need to take a cab or you'll never find them. Around the corner from the Hotel Opera vegetarians can find Tibits by Hiltl, a self-service restaurant run and owned by the Hiltl group which has served vegetarian food since 1898.

23:00 Time for clubbing and nightlife! During summer the open-air spots are the places to be. Start out at the Rimini. After that you should go clubbing in Züri West and don't forget two old school classics: the Kaufleuten and the Mascotte.

04:00 If you're still not in bed and looking for a good bar to get a last drink, try the Splendid Bar in the Niederdorf or – if you're feeling strong – the Gräbli Bar just a few meters away.

Interested? Try Zürich for a weekend.

* Wilhelm K. Weber is a German who lived in Zürich for several years telling about his experiences.

Restaurants

- Terrasse
Limmatquai 3
8001 Zürich
- Vorderer Sterne
Theaterstrasse 22
8001 Zürich–Bellevueplatz
- Lunch Schiff
Am Bürkliplatz
- Scala
Rotbuchstrasse 1
8006 Zürich Kreis 6 (Unterstrass)
- Mishio
Sihlstrasse 9
8001 Zürich (ZH)
- Nine
Seefeldstrasse 40
8008 Zürich
- Zeughauskeller
Bahnhofstrasse 28a
beim Paradeplatz
8001 Zürich
- Chez Fritz
Seestrasse 195
8802 Kilchberg
- Tibits
Seefeldstrasse 7
8008 Zürich
- Lake Side Casino
Casino Zürichhorn
Bellerivestrasse 170
8008 Zürich Kreis 8 (Seefeld)

Bars

- Splendid
Rosengasse 5
8001 Zürich
- Gräbli
Gräbligasse 1
8001 Zürich
- Rimini (nur im Sommer geöffnet)
Am Schanzengraben
8002 Zürich

Cafés

- Café Felix
Bahnhofstrasse 104
8001 Zürich
- Café 08/15
Lintheschergasse 23
8001 zürich
- Confiserie Sprüngli
Bahnhofstrasse 21
Am Paradeplatz
8001 Zürich
- Café Schober
Napfgasse 4
8001 Zürich

Clubs

- Mascotte
Theaterstrasse 10
8001 Zürich
- Kaufleuten
Pelikanplatz
8001 Zürich

Sehenswürdigkeiten

➤ Fraumünster



➤ Kunsthaus
Heimplatz 1
8024 Zürich



➤ Grossmünster

