

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

A TALE OF TWO BUDGETS

Zurich, for Richer or Thriftier

Switzerland's largest city may feel like a no-go zone for vacationers who aren't loaded. The secret is knowing where your francs get the biggest bang—and where to scrimp smartly. Adam H. Graham tallies up two well-spent days



The Dolder Grand, long the hotel of choice for cash-flush VIPs.

High: \$4,800 a day

Accidental splurges are a bona fide hazard in high-cost Zurich. Plot your stay carefully by taking in the rarefied sites that tourists seldom see.

SLEEPING QUARTERS Iconic and Swiss-owned, the Dolder Grand is a twin-turreted hotel palace atop a woody hill in Zürichberg. It's unfazed by VIPs, having hosted Churchill, Einstein and the Rolling Stones. A glassy architectural wing was designed by Norman Foster in 2008 and more blue-chip art fills its common spaces than many city museums. The hotel's private Gulfstream G650 jet can come fetch you on demand, and a dedicated butler can organize wheels from a fleet of Mercedes Benzes and BMWs. But with an on-site Michelin two-starred restaurant, and a rambling 4,000 square meter spa, you may experience little wanderlust. Cash strapped? The hotel accepts bitcoin.

COST from about \$540 a night. [Kurhausstrasse 65; doldergrand.com](#)

CULTURE FIX Löwenbräu-Areal, a 19th-century brick brewery turned quasi-industrial art complex, houses three must-see institutions whose names are mouthfuls: Kunsthalle Zurich, Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst and international power gallery Hauser and Wirth. With the coming exhibition "Bauhaus Constellations," running from June 9 to Sept. 14, Hauser and Wirth will commemorate the centenary of the German art movement, selling collectible works by Max Bill and his colleagues Josef Albers, Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee.

COST free; [loewenbraeukunst.ch](#); [Limmatstrasse 270; hauserwirth.com](#)

OUTDOOR EXCURSION

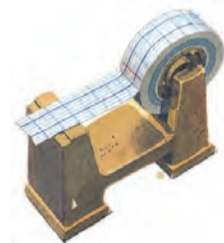
Come spring, Zürchers take to the swimming *badis* (pools), parks and terraces along the city's glacially fed lake and rivers. For a splashier splurge, charter the Pedrazzini Capri, a 23-foot, Swiss-made mahogany runabout, suitable for five, with a white leather bed and a bathing ladder. Its captain—included in the cost—will show you where to snap the best vernal alpenglühfen and steer you to secret snorkeling spots.

COST \$3,000 for half day, 41-79-775-04-12, [zurichboats.com](#)

MIDDAY MEAL Two-Michelin starred Ecco is open daily for dinner, but only serves lunch once a week, on Sundays; book ahead for a terrace table. It's located in the Atlantis, a

modernist 1960s hotel, shrouded in a sanctuary of larchwoods and pines on the slopes of Uetliberg mountain. When its 37-year-old chef, Stefan Heilemann took over the stoves in 2015, he inched the cuisine toward lean and light, emphasizing Asian flavors. A few recent highlights: Shaved white asparagus and silky buffalo crudo and Pyrenees lamb with cucumber-yuzu dashi, juniper and tuna.

COST Eight courses for two people from \$520; [Döltschweg 234; atlantisbygiardino.ch](#)



SOUVENIR Jeje up your desk back home with a selection of design-forward office items, many of them Swiss- or German-made, at haute office-supply shop, Fabrikat, hidden on a

side street off Langstrasse. Items include vintage 1940s pencil sharpeners, ergonomic copper scissors, waxed canvas aprons and snazzy, brass tape-dispensers that are built to last and sure to impress snoopy bosses.

COST Tape dispenser, \$270; 76 [Militärstrasse, fabrikat.ch](#)

DINNER Maison Manesse, run by Aussie chef Fabian Spiquel, brought a Michelin star to the Hasidic hood of Manesseplatz. There, within whitewashed brick walls, is a spartan theater for his theatrical superfood cuisine. His low-carb version of Rösti, a typical Swiss dish of hash-browned potatoes, relies on rutabaga, bitterleaves and beurre rouge. And a simple 63-degree egg gets royal treatment with truffled sunchokes and macadamia nuts. A la carte is available, but this cooking merits the tasting menu

COST Six courses from about \$140 each, wine flight \$85 extra. Total: \$450 for two. 2 [Hopfenstrasse, maisonmanesse.ch](#)

NIGHTCAP After an extensive makeover a few years back, the 14th-century Storchen Hotel re-emerged with a jewel-box lobby. There, you can stare at Japanese screen prints of its namesake bird and sip a whiskey-spiked hot chocolate by a cozy marble fireplace. In warm weather, grab a rosé and a stool on the terrace overlooking the Limmat river.

COST Two glasses of rosé, \$19; 2 [Weinplatz, storchen.ch](#)



Seebad Enge, a lakefront lido, where you can spend the day for a mere \$8 a person.

Low: \$370 a day

As a testament to the locals' demand for a high quality of life, transportation, plus many cultural events and outdoor diversions are remarkably affordable, if not free.

SLEEPING QUARTERS Though saturated with luxury and low-budget properties, Zurich suffered from a lack of elegant midrange hotels until a few years ago. Then came Motel One, overlooking the old botanical gardens and Schanzengraben, a bucolic 18th-century moat. Inside a former post office, turquoise velvet-egg chairs, gauzy pendant lanterns designed by Tom Dixon and vintage model boats offer a grown-up alternative to the "DJ in the lobby" genre of hotel. In the guest rooms, linen wallpaper depict floating clouds and the headboards are shaped like Alps to remind you of your whereabouts.

COST from about \$140 a night, [motel-one.com](#)

CULTURE FIX Europaallee, a mixed-use development of shops, offices, cultural spaces and restaurants that's a couple of years old, stretches along a formerly inaccessible rail yard now connecting Zurich's main train station to gritty Langstrasse and its red light district. The "alley" is home to Google's biggest office outside America, employing 5,000 "Zooglers."

The linchpin of the development is glassy Kosmos, an art space with its own bar, club and bistro. Kosmos hosts workshops, films, and dialogue exchanges, in multiple languages of course. Spring events include book salons, surf movies and a daily "pay what you can" morning meditation session.

COST free or \$5 donation for meditation; 104 [Lagerstrasse, kosmos.ch](#)

OUTDOOR EXCURSION On Lake Zurich's western coast sits Seebad Enge, a floating lido open year-round. Thirtysomething German expats particularly like its nude sauna, energy-balancing workshops and SUP yoga, but the fruity apero spritzes from the bar and cafe—with views of the snow-frosted Glarus Alps—have universal appeal.

COST admission, \$8 a person. SUP rental with paddles and lifejacket, \$35 each. 9 [Mythenquai, seebadenge.ch](#)

MIDDAY MEAL Don't bother with a table at Brasserie Louis, a sluggish and expensive feeding ground for tourists strolling

through old town. Line up at its takeout kiosk and order one of the excellent takeaway *pepitos*—grilled baguette sandwiches. Whether you go for the steak, chicken, lamb or grilled veggies option, smear on the spicy mayonnaise to give the sandwich



some much needed heat, a rarity in spice-barren Switzerland. You can brown bag it on the waterfront or the Sechseläuten plaza in front of the opera house. Refill your own reusable bottle from one of Zurich's 1,200-plus decorative fountains, every one spewing alpine H₂O.

COST two sandwiches, \$18; water, free. 10 [Niederdorfstrasse, brasserie-louis.ch](#)

SOUVENIR Though you can spend twice as much on cheese at spendy department stores, you won't find better quality curds than the cave-aged Gruyère or hay-milk raclette at Coop, Switzerland's ubiquitous supermarket. A good hunk costs less than \$6, and most hard cheeses are shrink-wrapped and ready to throw in your luggage. Because Switzerland subsidizes (and overproduces) dairy, a visit to the supermarkets in the evening will yield a bevy of cheeses marked up to 50% off.

COST \$6 per half pound, [coop.ch](#)

DINNER Patronized by local artists and architects, the all-day Volkshaus restaurant sports neon-lined ceiling pipes that cast a glow on reinvented classic European dishes. In spring, try the Graubünden mountain lamb ragout with rhubarb.

COST Two starters, two mains, bottle of Swiss wine, \$149; 60 [Stauffacherstrasse, restaurantvolkshaus.ch](#)

NIGHTCAP The organic Gelateria di Berna hawks eccentric, local flavors like poppy seed, marzipan and alpine mint. It's located in the residential Kreis 3 neighborhood—slurp your gelato in one of the area's many plazas, where local architects and designers tend to hang out picturesquely.

COST Gelato for two, \$7; 196 [Weststrasse, gelateriadiberna.ch](#)