

Brienz, Switzerland (Summer 2003)

By Geoff Clelland

Brienz is a little town located by the shore of Lake Brienz near Interlaken in the middle of Switzerland. This town is set in a very picturesque part of the Swiss countryside. Cottage industries here are woodworking, jewellery, watches and cuckoo clocks. The whole area is one of peace and serenity - a great place to kick back and relax

Getting There

We drove from Germany through the border at Thayngen, where I had a good chat to the Swiss border guard and even got a photo with him. From there, it was a relatively short drive through Zurich, Luzern and up the range to Brienz. My next visit to this area will see me on a motorcycle riding up and down the ranges. This is pure biker's heaven, with great pubs in every town. I will just have to remember to bring the wet weather riding gear. There are some quite twisty roads, but they are in good repair

Where to Stay

We had organised a homestay Bed and Breakfast in a chalet style accomodation in Brienz. The hostess was a lovely lady who was only to happy to help us with the tourism side of things in and around Brienz. Contact them at Talstrasse 17 CH-3855 Brienz

Tel / Fax 033 951 23 74.

I was very impressed with this B&B.

Eating Out

There are a few restaurants in Brienz that we tried, but the service was poor and the food overpriced for what it was. Try the local pubs, they are a much better option for a feed and a beer, and you are more likely to engage one of the locals in conversation and find out where all the good stuff is.

Tours

You can hire a bicycle and ride around Lake Brienz, or you can take any of the local trains up the mountainside to the peaks for a panoramic vista. You may also like to take one of the ferries that regularly ply the lake going to Bonigen, Interlaken and Brienz.

We took the car and drove to Interlaken to look at the town and do a bit of local shopping. We found the best buys to be Swiss Army knives. We all bought at least one, with one guy in our group buying several as gifts. Chocolate is the other bargain to be had. All of us bought heaps of Swiss chocolate at the supermarket, along with several bottles of Spanish and Italian red wines. All at very reasonable prices - needless to say, our 500 card game that night was a chocolate and red wine soiree!

Summary

The true beauty of Brienz lies in it's location at the foot of mountains like the Eiger, Jungfrau, Brienzer Rothorn and Hohgant. With these mountains above, and the still waters of Lake Brienz aside, this was one of the most breath-taking views that I experienced on my trip. I would rate Brienz as a great place to relax, either by yourself or with friends or family.