

Monday, 5th – Saturday, 10th October, 2009



The annual live firepower demonstration by the Swiss Air Force is incredible to say the least – made even more spectacular by holding it in the Alps! Aircraft and helicopters come flying down, and in between (!), the mountains (see photo left)! Nowhere else in the world can you see such a truly memorable and spectacular event.

Make sure you have plenty of film or memory cards – you will need them to get all the action!

We have also allowed for a full day at Meiringen airbase which is used by all the fixed and rotary wing aircraft participating in, and supporting, the FD.

Photo courtesy of: Rene Kurzenberg

We spend all Friday at Payerne airbase watching/photographing the resident F-18C/Ds - and the Mirage IIIs which are scheduled to be there at this time. A request to go on-base has been submitted.

On our last day you have the option of either spotting/photographing at Zurich Airport, or visiting the excellent Swiss Air Force Museum at Dubendorf.

It goes without saying of course, that flying through the mountains requires perfect weather and any sudden change can put an immediate end to that day's flying. However, our itinerary allows us the opportunity of attending the last practice day on the Tuesday and both the Wednesday and Thursday firepower demonstrations. It is also worth noting that the event has only been cancelled a very few times in its long history.

Please bear in mind that all 3 public viewing areas are located at or near to the top of the mountain which is reachable partly by chairlift, but mostly on foot up narrow, winding paths. Please see details on page 4, and the excellent website: <http://www.utopia-photography.ch/action/b/info.html>

We fly on the scheduled services of British Airways from Terminal 5 of London's Heathrow Airport, to Zurich; travel around Switzerland is by de-luxe coach; and we stay 4-nights at the Hotel Rebstock in Meiringen, and 1-night at the Hotel Elite in Fribourg, both on a bed and continental breakfast basis.

For aviation, action-packed week, this has to be one of the best this year!

PROVISIONAL ITINERARY (all times local)

DAY 1: Monday, 5th October

Between 09:30 and 10:30 please meet your Ian Allan Tour Manager and fellow enthusiasts in "Departures", which is located on the first floor of Terminal 5 at London's Heathrow Airport. They will be stood next to Column 'G' in the centre of the terminal. Latest check in time we recommend is 10:30.

✈ Heathrow Airport, Terminal 5
✈ Zurich

Flight: BA 714

Departs: 12:10
Arrives: 14:50

Meeting our local driver we board our coach for the drive to the Hotel Rebstock in Meiringen, where we stay 4-nights on a bed and continental breakfast basis. Website: www.hotel-rebstock.ch

Meiringen is approximately 12 miles from the village of Axalp.

DAYS 2 - 4: Tuesday, 6th October – Thursday, 8th October

We have a 3-day 'window' in which to attend the firepower demonstrations and Meiringen air base. Tuesday is the live firing and demo training day (pictured right is the Swiss national aerobatic team), and the Wednesday and Thursday are earmarked for the actual event.



Photo courtesy of: Rene Kurzenberg

Also, just outside Meiringen, is the Swiss Air Force airbase which is used to support the firepower demonstrations: Hornets, helicopters and transport aircraft will be flying in and out of the base. Close to the airfield is the hotel/restaurant "Rössli" who offer cold/warm food the whole day, and the "Fliegertreff" restaurant.

On the days we propose to attend the training day and the 2 actual days, the itinerary will be:

- 05:00: depart hotel by chartered coach for the village of Axalp.
- 05:30: we take our place in the queue for the Windegg chairlift, and grab a coffee from the adjacent hotel (taking the chairlift saves a 1-hour walk up the mountain).
- 16:30: end of firepower demonstrations, start to go back down the mountain.
- 17:30: arrive back in Axalp and return to the hotel.

DAY 5: Friday, 9th October

This morning we drive to Payerne, and spend the day at the Swiss Air Force base, home to F-18C/Ds, and during 5th – 9th October Mirage IIIs. If our request for an official visit is not approved we will park-up on the approach and/or perimeter.

We stay tonight in Fribourg at the Hotel Elite, on a bed and continental breakfast basis. Website: www.elitefribourg.ch

DAY 6: Saturday, 10th October

At 08:30 we leave for Zurich where you have the choice of spotting/photographing at this busy international airport, or going to see the Swiss Air Force Museum at Dubendorf.

Early afternoon its time to check in with British Airways for our flight back to London; latest recommended check-in time is 13:50.

✈ Zurich Flight: BA 715 Departs: 15:30
 ✈ Heathrow Airport, Terminal 5 Arrives: 16:20

Awaiting our luggage in Baggage Reclaim, we bid each other farewell – until we meet again!

TOUR PRICE PER PERSON	TOUR: 227924
from £ 798.00	Package price based on sharing a twin bedded room on a bed and continental breakfast basis
from £ 80.00	Single room supplement
On request	Land-only (NO flights) <i>PLEASE SPEAK WITH ONE OF OUR CONSULTANTS BEFORE BOOKING</i>

TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Flights on the scheduled services of British Airways from London's Heathrow Airport, as stated
- UK & Swiss airport taxes and UK Passenger Service Charge but subject to change
- All coach transfers and transportation as stated
- 5-nights hotel accommodation in rooms with private facilities
- Continental breakfast each morning at the hotels
- Services of an Ian Allan Tour Manager throughout
- Gratuity for coach driver



Photo courtesy of: Rene Kurzenberg



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NOT INCLUDED

- Meals, other than as stated above
- Admission to the Swiss Air Force Museum
- Travel insurance – see General Information
- Visas – see General Information
- Chairlift (approximately CHF15.00 each way)
- Personal expenditure, e.g. telephone calls, laundry, drinks, etc.
- Tips and gratuities (other than for coach drivers)

INFORMATION ON AXALP & THE SWISS AIR FORCE FIREPOWER DEMONSTRATIONS

The official viewing sites for everyone attending the firepower demonstrations and practice days are situated near to the top of the mountain. For obvious safety reasons these are the only places you can see the action!

If one is in a normal physical condition it should not be a problem for you to walk up the mountain. For people with circulation or heart problems it is advisable **to consult your doctor before booking on this tour.**

As the show takes place in October it will already be quite cool so bring appropriate (warm, winter) clothing with you. The weather can change very quickly in the mountains, therefore it is recommended that you also include fresh clothes in a backpack. When you arrive at the viewing areas it is advisable to change out of any sweated clothing, for example, your shirt, it can be cold and windy at the viewing areas, although when the sun comes out later in the day it gets warmer.

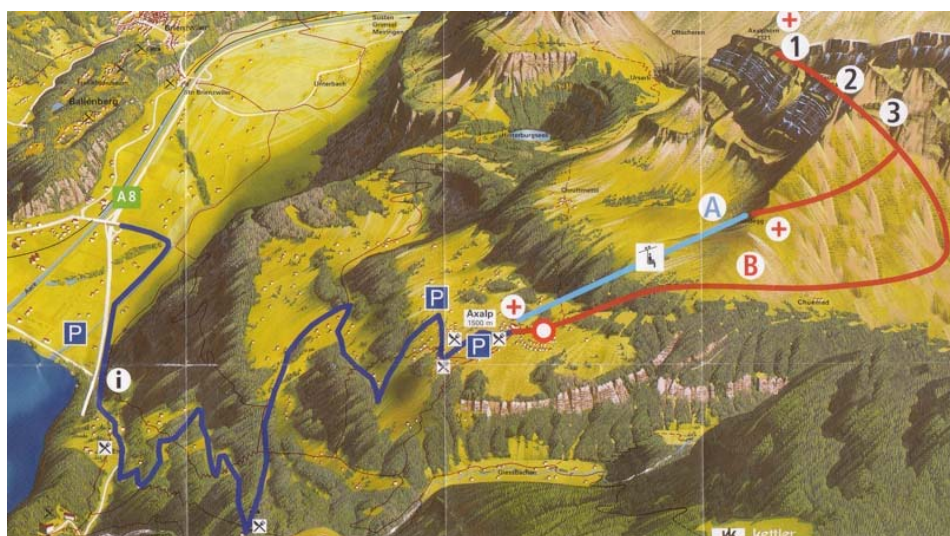
Apropos weather - this is beyond Ian Allan's control. On the mountain the sun is shining but you don't see anything flying because the aircraft/helicopters can't take off if there is fog down at the departure airbase. It can also be the other way round: good conditions on the airbase but the range is in the clouds or fog – so again no flying can take place. The local weather forecasts are posted at various places, as well as being announced on the radio and television. The worst scenario: the weather is unco-operative and both firepower demonstrations are cancelled. Although a rare occurrence, you need to bear this in mind.

Useful items to take up the mountain with you: hiking (or a good pair of walking) boots, extra clothes, flask of tea/coffee/soup, snacks/sandwiches, Also, a torch as it will be dark in the early morning when we set off, first using the chairlift and then the path.

It is possible to go up to the viewing areas on the Monday and Tuesday training days (the lift does not normally operate on these days), when you might also see training flights for the official demonstration, for example, Puma and Hornet displays, Patrouille Suisse (pictured on page 2) etc.!

Firing practice normally starts around 09:00 on the Monday and Tuesday, and it is essential to depart Axalp village around 06:00 to give you time for as easy an ascent as possible; and also because the authorities close the pathway from Axalp just before the actual practice starts! Firing usually takes place between 09:00-11:30 and 14:00-16:30.

The official Axalp firepower demonstrations take place on the Wednesday and Thursday, starting at 14:00 each day and last for around 1½ hrs. In the morning normal shooting takes place.



On the 2 training days you need to take food and drink with you, but on the Wednesday and Thursday drinks and snacks are sold in the three spectator areas.

The map shows the way from the direction of Meiringen to Axalp village (dark blue line) Viewing areas are marked 1, 2 and 3. The light blue line is the chairlift. Red lines are the two walking routes.

Payment for Ian Allan Aviation Tours

A deposit of £250.00 per person should accompany your Booking Form, with the balance due 10 weeks prior to the tour's departure. Please see your Booking Confirmation/Invoice for the exact date. Please note that a reminder of the payment date will not be sent.

Passports and Visas

Citizens of the UK are required to be in possession of a Full UK Passport, which must be valid for at least 6 months from the date of your return. You may also refer to the World Travel Guide website: www.wtgonline.com for general information on passports, visas and health requirements.

UK passport holders do not require a visa to enter Switzerland.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) Consular Advice

The FCO's consular service is a major operation. Every hour of every day consular staff around the world are advising and helping British nationals. For up-to-date passport, visa and security information on the destination you intend visiting, we suggest you visit: www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo

In addition, the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) provide an Information Line, telephone: 0901 201 505 (calls currently charged at 50p per minute).

Baggage Regulations – British Airways (BA) – London Heathrow Departures Only

Hold baggage - BA's baggage rules, for Economy Class, currently allow 1 piece in the aircraft's hold, up to a maximum weight of 23kgs (51lbs). Where it is clear that a passenger cannot manage one bag of 23kgs, they will be able to check-in an additional bag free of charge, as long as the sum weight of both bags when totalled does not exceed 23kgs. Any amount in excess of 23kgs and excess baggage charges are likely to be applied.

Hand baggage - Passengers departing from or transferring through Heathrow can take 2 standard-sized bags no bigger than 56cm x 45cm x 25cm (22" x 17.5" x 9.85") including wheels, pockets and handles. There is no weight limit for cabin bags, provided passengers can lift the bags, unaided, into the overhead lockers in the aircraft cabin.

Restrictions remain in place for the carriage of liquids, gels, and creams in hand baggage for all passengers departing from and transferring through all EU airports. Some other airports around the world operate their own restrictions. Customers are advised to check before they travel.

Limited quantities of liquids (individual containers must not exceed 100ml or 3.5 fl oz), are allowed as hand baggage but must be carried separately through security in a clear plastic, zip-top or re-sealable bag that does not exceed 20cm x 20cm (8 inches x 8 inches), or quart size. Items must fit in the bag comfortably and the bag must be completely closed.

The bag can only contain liquids such as shampoo, suntan lotions, creams, toothpaste, hair gel and hair spray, perfumes, cosmetics such as mascara and lip gloss, water and other drinks, soups and syrups and other items of a similar consistency.

Cigarette lighters are NOT permitted in hold baggage or through the security search. These may be purchased airside.

Hand baggage can also include electronic equipment such as mobile phones, digital cameras and MP3 players (such as i-Pods). Laptops must be removed from the bag for x-ray.

Prescription medicines in liquid form, e.g. diabetic kit can also be included.

At security all remaining items should be placed in the tray provided for screening, e.g. car keys and fobs, cash, solid food, books, newspapers, cigarettes and tobacco, belts and shoes. Pushchairs and walking aids are permitted but must be x-ray screened. All wheelchairs will be subject to search. Please note: you may be subject to a hand search by the security team and required to remove footwear to be x-ray screened.

If flying from any other airport on BA, i.e. on connecting services to/from Heathrow, the allowance differs depending on the airport and you are advised to check beforehand.

Baggage Weight Restrictions – UK Airports

Since 1st June 2004, any single piece of checked baggage weighing more than 70lbs (32kgs) has not been accepted at check-in by any airline operating from London's Heathrow Airport. The BAA may introduce this limit at their other airports in the UK (and so might non-BAA airports), in an attempt to reduce manual handling injuries amongst airport staff. Please bear this in mind when packing your suitcase.

Meals

On this tour continental breakfast each day at the hotel is included in the tour price.

Health Requirements

There are no known mandatory or recommended precautions for visiting Switzerland; however, we strongly recommend you consult your local doctor or health centre for the latest information.

Climate and Dress

The weather in October is likely to be on the "cool side" but sunny (around 10°C, but colder up the mountain), so we recommend warm, winter clothing which is also waterproof. A backpack (or haversack), hiking, or strong walking boots, a vacuum flask, and a torch are also recommended.

Currency

Please note that the currency of Switzerland is the Swiss Franc (CHF), not the Euro (€).

Travel Insurance

For citizens of the United Kingdom, Ian Allan Travel Ltd are able to offer competitive and comprehensive insurance cover. However, if you do not wish to take out our insurance, you must ensure that comparable or greater cover is taken. The number of your Insurance Policy should be written, if known, on your Booking Form at the time of making the reservation, but no later than the date when final payment is due. A copy of the policy must be forwarded to Ian Allan Travel Ltd.

Individual insurance policies are arranged through CoverMore Insurance Services Limited; the premiums for which will vary according to your circumstances. Full details are available on request.

These policies also include cover for non-scheduled flights, i.e. pleasure flights, where the aircraft is licensed and insured to undertake such flights, and where a payment is made.

Wheelchair Assistance at Airports.

This tour is not suitable for anyone using a wheelchair, nor anyone who cannot walk up a mountainside unaided.

Flexible Itinerary

We are very happy for enthusiasts to take time away from the printed itinerary to pursue their own interests during multi-day stays in the same place, so long as they inform the Tour Manager. It will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that they re-join the group in the hotel at the stated time on the day of departure.

Land Only Price

For enthusiasts who would prefer to join the tour in Switzerland (instead of flying from the UK with the main group), we will be very pleased to provide a 'Land Only' price.

You are strongly advised to contact us before making your own flight arrangements in the event that there has been a change to the published itinerary. This is particularly relevant regarding the specified domestic flights which form part of the tour itinerary.

Please note that the 'Land only' price is based on you meeting the tour at the hotel in Meiringen and no airport transfers are included. However, should your flight arrival and departure times at Zurich Airport coincide with those of the main group from London, a seat will be offered if available for an appropriate supplement.

Flight Timings & Connecting Travel Arrangements to Departure Airport

All flight departure and arrival times are correct at the time of preparing each itinerary; however, airlines may change these times with little or no prior warning. In practice such changes are only a few minutes either way and the final itinerary will show the actual times. Clients making their own arrangements to get to the departure airport by air, rail, coach etc., should bare the above in mind if purchasing non-refundable or non-changeable tickets. Ian Allan Travel cannot be held responsible for any changes to flight times and any privately arranged travel tickets to the airport becoming invalid.

Pre-departure

For connecting flights from UK regional airports - please call Ian Allan Travel on 01932 255627 for the latest special offers available.

Airport Hotel and/or Car Parking - we can offer special rates for the above at most UK airports, please ask for details.

Pleasure Flights – Disclaimer

Should you decide to undertake any pleasure/sightseeing flights which have not been offered or sanctioned by us, Ian Allan Travel Ltd will not be held liable for any injuries or death resulting thereon.

Tours Affected by World Events or Unforeseen/Unplanned Circumstances

In an ever-changing world, events may occur immediately before or during a tour that result in cancellations or changes to the tour itinerary. For example, an increase in security may result in an approved visit being cancelled by the host, etc.. Ian Allan Travel Ltd cannot be held responsible for any tour being cancelled, or itineraries affected, due to world events or circumstances beyond our control.

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