

# **Swiss Winter Holiday**

**Trip #2009-09**

**February 14-22, 2009**

## The trip

Join us for a fun week in the scenic Swiss Alps. We will be staying in Engelberg, a friendly village with unspoiled countryside and an impressive mountain backdrop. An extensive cable car system takes you in all directions with good restaurants and cozy mountain huts.

Engleberg is situated in the center of Switzerland. A Benedictine monastery, built in 1120, with an ornate church presides over the village. There are three mountain areas surrounding the village. Each offers areas for hiking, snowboarding, downhill skiing, sledding and walking. There are also trails for cross-country skiing. The village area also offers ice skating, indoor swimming pools, sauna and curling. The leaders will not be responsible for those who are downhill skiing or snowboarding. They intend to walk and cross-country ski.

There are downhill ski areas and sledding areas suitable for all age children. Downhill and cross-country ski lessons are also available through the ski center for both adults and children.

Trip participants may take advantage of any or all of the winter activities as they wish.

The hotel is centrally located and will serve a breakfast buffet daily. Our dinners will be served at a nearby hotel. The rooms are European style and double occupancy with a shared bathroom down the hall.

We will be planning daily trips, cross-country skiing or walking based on the weather and the interest of the group. If participants prefer to downhill ski or snowboard on their own, they will have a choice of 3 ski areas. One of these is strictly beginner. The other two are geared to advanced skiers. The Goekes have found from past experience that children who go to ski school in the morning are best taken by their parents in the afternoon.

The local ski school offers a variety of programs such as evening snowshoe tours, igloo building, avalanche course, Nordic walking, cinema evening for children, airboarding, curling, ski and snowboard tours as well as lessons.

Other activities include:

- 1) Horse drawn carriage rides in and around the valley
- 2) Glacier grotto/cave on Titlis
- 3) Igloo village at Trubsee
- 4) Terrain park Titlis at Jochpass

- 5) Yeti Park Ristic for children with 2 handle tows and 3 “magic carpets” to the special kids ski runs
- 6) Snowli Village ski area for children and beginners

The village includes 49 Km of winter walking trails over a wide variety of areas, ranging in length from 20 minutes to 3 hours.

The 40 Km of cross-country trails are groomed for skating as well as classical skiing. The 1.5 Km extended World Cup route near the Sporting Park is floodlit on Tues and Thurs evenings.

There are two sled runs suitable for families of 1.2 and 2.5 Km in length, as well as a more challenging run of 3.5 Km which is lighted for night sledding 2 nights a week.

Childcare is available through the local ski school Monday through Friday.

Further local information may be obtained at [www.engelberg.ch](http://www.engelberg.ch)



**The Hotel** Towards the end of the nineteenth century places such as Engelberg became resorts for affluent Europeans and Americans. As a result grand hotels were built. Today they have been modernized to serve both winter and summer guests. We have chosen one that has a limited number of rooms with bath but the trip is planned for the rooms where the bath is down the hall. (The rooms with bath cost an extra \$50 per day). Our hotel serves only breakfast – a typical European buffet. It makes arrangements so that dinner can be taken in another nearby hotel.

**Trip Difficulty** Winter walking will be on plowed trails and planned for at least three hours duration at a time. The cross-country skiing is on packed trails and can be track or skating. Cross-country trips will be planned as all day events with a carried lunch or lunch at a hut. We hope that participants have skied enough to enjoy such days and not struggle with such trips.

**Trip Cost** The cost of the trip includes two meals a day and is \$1200. A deposit of \$200 is expected to reserve a place on the trip. Of this amount \$50 is not refundable. A payment of \$600 is expected on December 1. From that time on refunds will only be given if a replacement is found for the participant. The final payment of \$400 is due January 15. The leaders will provide suggestions as to the airline and flights. The trip begins in Zurich where the group will take the train to Lucerne and then the train to Engelberg.

## Personal Trip Extension

The AMC trip formally terminates on Sunday, Feb 22. However, some individuals may choose to extend their visit in Europe. They can make their own personal plans starting from Engelberg that morning or from the Zurich airport. Participants should notify the leaders of their plans so the leaders can make arrangements for each participant.

## Trip size

The group will be limited to 18, including the trip leaders. Minimum age for the trip is 5 years old. The leaders reserve the right to select a smaller group. Once the trip is full, prospective participants may be accepted to a wait list. The deposit for waitlisted participants is \$500. If an accepted participant cancels, the leaders will look first to the wait list for an additional participant. The \$500 wait list deposit will be refunded to prospective participants not offered a space on the trip.

## Cancellation and Refund Policy

Refunds to participants canceling from the trip will be based on our ability to recruit replacements and/or adjust expenses. Cancellation refunds are described under trip costs.

## Trip Insurance

Trip insurance is highly recommended, since job requirements, illness, accidents or a death in the family can interfere with your travel plans. We will provide information on how to obtain trip insurance through the AMC.

## Transportation

We'll use local transportation (that is train) to get from Zurich to Engelberg. We may elect to use buses and/or cable cars on our excursions.

## Equipment

A complete list of required clothing and equipment will be sent to accepted participants. Weather conditions are unpredictable and can be quite varied, so participants need to be prepared for cool, sleet/freezing rain/snow, and bright sun. Participants should have previously used their equipment and be sure of its fit and functionality. Renting equipment locally in Engelberg is an option.

## Risks

Based on previous experience the Engelberg valley is occasionally closed by avalanche. Should this happen the leaders will locate an alternate location in the Lucerne area. Because winter walking is included in this trip and some of the cross-country trails are on the plateau above the valley, lack of snow should not be a problem.

## Leaders

Betsy Goeke has been a member of the AMC since 1960 when she graduated from college. She was active in Not Too Old when it was the singles group. She has been skiing since childhood and hiking an equal length of time. She has been a member of the Major Excursions Committee for over thirty years. She visited Engelberg with her family 2 years ago.

*Ginette Beaudoin* is a Maine AMC chapter trip leader and has been an AMC member since 1985. She took the Leadership training course offered by the NH chapter of AMC in 2007. She took the Major Excursions training in 2007. She is active in hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, photography and traveling. She has extensive experience in European travels. Most recently she has colead a hut to hut cross country ski trip in northern Maine, and a hiking/biking trip in Acadia National Park.

**Application** To apply, contact Ginette for an application form then send the completed and signed Application/Questionnaire and your deposit check to Ginette Beaudoin. A leader will contact you by phone, upon receiving your application and deposit. Once an acceptance decision has been made, a leader will again contact you. Your deposit check will not be cashed until your application is accepted.

## Additional Information

Ginette Beaudoin can be reached at [ginettehikes@yahoo.com](mailto:ginettehikes@yahoo.com) or by phone 207-294-6302

Elizabeth Goeke can be reached at [betsyg@space.mit.edu](mailto:betsyg@space.mit.edu) or by phone 781-729-8484

