



Art in Switzerland

Great collections, lovely towns, sublime landscapes

27–31 August 2026 (MM 142)

5 days

Speaker: Mary Lynn Riley

Fine and varied art collections, some in the collectors' homes or in brilliant recent buildings.

Impressionism, Post-Impressionism and classic modernism figure prominently, also European Old Masters, decorative arts and Oriental art.

Excursions to collections outside the city centres pass through picturesque countryside.

Can be combined with *Music along the Rhine*, 31 August–7 September 2026 (MM144).

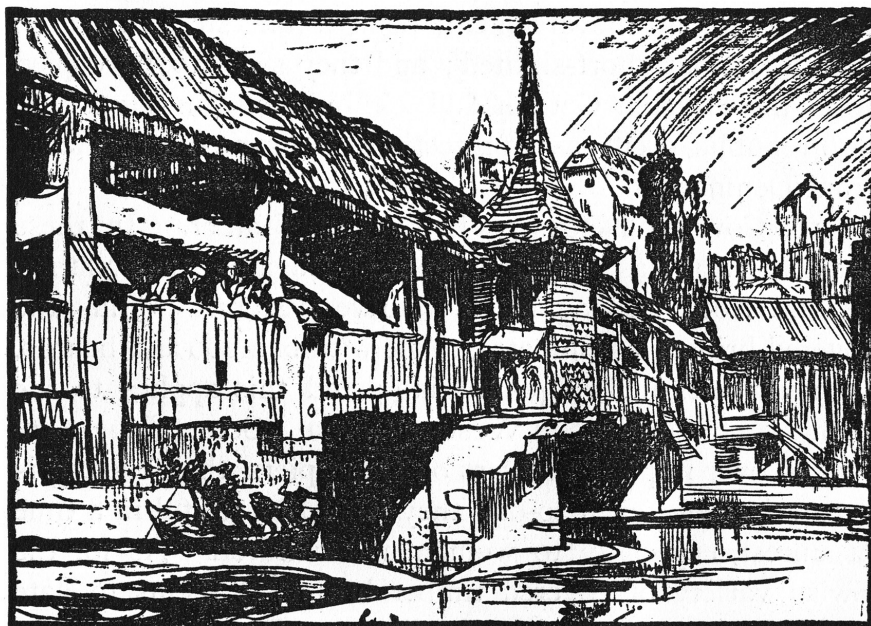
Switzerland possesses some of the finest of the smaller art collections in Europe. There is no Louvre here and no Uffizi, but several Courtauld Institutes and Burrell Collections.

More than in most countries the cultural map has been formed during the last hundred years by the devotion to art of wealthy industrialists and men of commerce. There were no kings and princes in Switzerland to lay the foundations of the present-day collections. With a long tradition of relative autonomy and self-sufficiency the cities and cantons have also played a part in creating the current magnificent public art collections.

While artists who were Swiss or who lived in Switzerland are of course amply represented (including Holbein, Fuseli, Hodler, Klee and Giacometti), the whole gamut of western art is to be seen here, with the French Impressionists and Post-Impressionists particularly prominent. An added attraction is architectural: some of the collections remain in the collectors' former homes and others have recently been re-housed in brilliant new buildings. And when aesthetic exhaustion sets in there are lakes and mountains and picturesque old cities to refresh the palate.

Itinerary

Day 1: Lucerne. Fly from Heathrow to Zurich at c. 9.15am. Drive to Winterthur to visit the Oskar Reinhart Collection 'am Römerholz' at the collector's home in tranquil woodland above the city, a marvellous display of Old Masters and Impressionists (reopening after renovation spring 2026). Continue to Lucerne for the first of two nights.



Lucerne, Todentanzbrücke, from 'A Book of Bridges' by Frank Brangwen, 1915.

Day 2: Baden, Zurich. In the morning drive to Baden where, in a 1900 villa, the Langmatt Foundation displays a fine collection, especially of Impressionists (including 24 Renoirs). The afternoon is spent in Zurich. Visit two churches that have stained glass by Chagall and Alberto Giacometti. The Kunsthau Zurich is Switzerland's largest art gallery, displaying Swiss and international art from the Middle Ages to the present day. Overnight Lucerne.

Day 3: Lucerne, Basel-Riehen, Basel. Lucerne, at the juncture of mountains, rivers and lake, has a most attractive historic centre with mediaeval, Renaissance and Baroque buildings. The Sammlung Rosengart is an excellent collection of 20th-century art, particularly strong on Picasso and Klee. Upon arrival in Basel walk via the mediaeval minster to the Kunstmuseum, an excellent collection notable for paintings by one-time resident Hans Holbein. First of two nights in Basel.

Day 4: Basel, Berne. All-day excursion: with its promontory setting and arcaded streets, Berne is perhaps the most attractive city in Switzerland. The purpose-built Paul Klee Centre (Renzo Piano) houses a huge collection of the artist's works, and the Kunstmuseum has a good and varied collection of western art. Overnight Basel.

Day 5: Basel. Drive to Basel-Riehen where the Beyeler Foundation has a top quality collection

of classic modern art in a stunning building by Renzo Piano. Return to the old city centre for some free time. Fly from Basel, arriving Heathrow c. 8.00pm.

Participants joining *Music along the Rhine* board the ship from 4.00pm. There is a time to settle in before dinner and the first concert.

Lecturer

Mary Lynn Riley. Resident on the Côte d'Azur and a specialist in 19th- and 20th-century modern and contemporary art. She designs and teaches art courses and art appreciation workshops for adults at the Musée Bonnard in Le Cannet and lectures at other area museums. She completed her Master of Fine Arts at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, USA and previously worked at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.

Practicalities

Included: hotel accommodation; travel by private coach; breakfasts, 1 lunch and 4 dinners with wine, water and coffee; admission to museums and galleries; all tips; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager.

Accommodation. Romantik Hotel Wilden Mann, Lucerne (wilden-mann.ch): 4-star hotel dating back to the 13th century located

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in the heart of the historic town centre. All double rooms in the hotel have two single mattresses on one bed frame, as is the usual style in Switzerland. Single rooms are doubles for sole use. **Hotel Teufelhof, Basel** (teufelhof.com): located in Basel's historic centre, this characterful 3-star hotel is housed in two integrated, historic townhouses from the 18th century. *Neither hotel has air-conditioning but fans can be provided in particularly warm weather. Single occupancy rooms are doubles for sole use throughout.*

How strenuous? As you would expect this tour involves walking through town centres and standing around in galleries. You can expect to be on your feet for long periods of time. Average distance by coach per day: 70 miles.

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.