



Storylines Summer 2023

Lenk-Simmental: Summit meeting of the beauties

Here the marmot and the lynx greet each other, here the most beautiful of the world's famous cows is elected Miss Lenk. Here the inhabitants are proud of their tradition and origins. Here, alpine and mountain farming life is brought closer to the guests under the title AlpKultur®. Here you will find rushing mountain streams, impressive waterfalls and crystal-clear mountain lakes, eyes in the rocks and a panoramic viewing platform. In the 19th century, Europe's aristocracy relaxed here, and today hikers can race back to the Stone Age. Here, outdoor sports enthusiasts, nature lovers and non-hikers all get their money's worth. Here you can be driven up the mountain with Mona the cow, Flöckli the goat or Moritz the marmot.

The Simmental surprises and amazes. From the lovely valley floor over the alpine pastures to high up on the striking mountain peaks.

On the following pages, these and other secrets are revealed and curiosities and peculiarities, as well as highlights and suggestions for a visit to the Lenk-Simmental holiday region are listed. With short descriptions, they give an impression of the diversity of the region. Unusual and exciting topics from which interesting stories can emerge.

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ALPKULTUR®

A special kind of beauty contest

The Simmental cows are known all over the world. A special attraction for the public is the election of Miss Lenk, which is always crowned at the Älplerfest in October. The audience chooses the most beautiful cow from 25 finalists of the herd shows held the week before.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/alp-festival-and-brunch

When the cows swing the bells

At the beginning of September, after four months of summering, the alpine herdsmen of the various alpine dairies of the Dürrenwald Alp above St. Stephan return to the valley. The focus of the alpine descent is on the 120 or so cows carefully decorated with flowers and ribbons and the proud alpine dairymen in their traditional costumes. The event in the valley is rounded off with the sound of alphorns and yodelling, folk music and numerous market stalls with local produce.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/alp-descent-in-st-stephan

A visit to the alp

Alpine farming is very important in the Simmental. On numerous alpine pastures, interested visitors can take a look at the alpine cheese production, taste the "Britsche" and smell the good aroma of the cheese kitchen. Afterwards, enjoy a snack of bread and cheese, marvel at the many wheels of cheese in the cheese cellar, talk to the alpine family and learn first-hand about the hard life on the alp. The fresh alpine milk in the Simmental is mostly processed into Berner Alpkäse AOP and Berner Hobelkäse AOP. The many different herbs and grasses of the alpine pastures and the mountain water produce the healthy and rich alpine milk. Alpine cheese is only made on the alp in summer. The alpine milk is cheesed on the spot on the alp.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/inspirations/all-our-tales/alpkultur

Mature performances

Various regional products such as Berner Alpkäse AOC, Berner Hobelkäse AOC, Lenker Berg Bleu, Lenker Trockenfleisch, Lenker Burewurst, Simmental beer, farmhouse ice cream, herbal tea and syrups, honey and much more are produced locally.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/inspirations/all-our-tales/alpkultur

Simmental cattle as globetrotters

Export hits from the Simmental: Exports of Simmental cows from the Bernese Oberland to neighbouring countries are known from as early as the 16th century. In the middle of the 19th century, animals from the Simmental were also exported to Africa. Today, the Simmental breed is at home on all continents and, with approximately 50 million animals, is one of the world's most important cattle breeds. As a classic dual-purpose breed, the Simmental cow has come under increasing pressure in Switzerland. A convinced pure breeder explains the challenge of preserving and promoting the pure Simmental breed. www.original-simmentaler.ch (in german)

Simmental cattle as a lucky charm

Funny cow patty lottery: In this unusual game of chance, the aim is to guess where two cows will drop their patties in the chessboard-like playing field on the grounds of the school/TEC Lenk. The prize for each correct guess is 500 Swiss francs. If the fields overlap, the larger amount will always be decided by theodolites or by the referee. The professional evaluation is carried out by the engineering office Steiger. The organiser of the cow pat lottery, which always takes place in the week of the New Year, is the Lenk Ski Club. The proceeds from the raffle tickets sold benefit the junior JO skiers and are invested in the purchase of equipment. www.skiclub-lenk.ch (in german)

Horses in the Simmental

When Switzerland became a horse trading country around the year 1500, four famous horse breeds emerged: the Erlenbacher, the Einsiedler, the Emmentaler and the Jura horse. The Erlenbacher brought money to the Simmental and so the Simmental and the rest of the Bernese Oberland

became famous for its horses. After the advent of the railway, the horses became secondary and the Erlenbacher died out over time. Today, cows dominate the meadows in the Simmental, but the horses have not completely disappeared. The beautiful Simmental houses also bear witness to the success of earlier times.

[www.academia.edu/8836093/Zur Pferde-
zucht in der Schweiz - 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert](http://www.academia.edu/8836093/Zur_Pferdezucht_in_der_Schweiz_-_16._bis_19._Jahrhundert)
(in german)

From tree trunk to smart chalet

For the traditional Lenk company Chaletbau Freidig AG, ecology means sourcing the raw material wood from the region and processing it with modern machinery, as well as using the waste products to generate heat and energy. The sawmill of this Lenk-based company processes around 1,200 cubic metres of roundwood annually, 95% of which is felled in Lenk and the rest in the Simmental. Georg Nellen, the business owner, finds the best quality wood at an altitude of 1,300 to 1,600 metres above sea level. Together with the forest owners and the forester, he selects the healthiest firs, which are then processed in his company. The short transport routes contribute to a positive ecological balance. The fully automatic CAD precision machine is controlled directly by the computer and the 3D animated software enables the experts to plan all technical processes virtually. The large amount of waste products is also used ecologically. These are processed into wood chips and then used to generate heat and energy for the production rooms and for over 40 flats and the retirement home in Lenk. www.chaletbaufreidig.ch (in german)

From spruce to shingle roof

Wooden shingles are a piece of nature and have a long history in AlpKultur®. However, the know-how of this craft is in danger of being lost in competition with modern materials. Against this background, the local artist and writer Martin Loosli spent a year photographically following the development of the wooden shingle - from the selection of the tree to its attachment to a roof. The photo book is a snapshot that does not deplore a disappearing tradition, but describes the idealism of a few craftsmen who try to preserve the style of historic rural buildings, sometimes with thoroughly modern tools and methods. www.martinloosli.ch, www.schindeldach.ch (in german)

Pioneer of agrotourism

"How not much can be made into a lot": Farmer Christian Haueter has been an agrotourism provider from the very beginning. Together with his family he runs the Mittlist Morgeten alp above Oberwil. He was one of the first in the Simmental to set up tourist offers such as "Crossgolf" or "Alpwellness" far away from the noise and traffic.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/our-simmental/valley-villages/oberwil

Herbal Experience Simmental

The aroma of sun-kissed alpine herbs from controlled organic cultivation in the Bernese Oberland wafts towards visitors to the production facility of SAH (Swiss Alpine Herbs). After the guided tour through the production, you will know what it takes to prepare the herb mixtures and other products that are beautifully presented in the kitchen. www.swissalpineherbs.ch (in german)

Medicinal plant garden in the Simmental

Hundreds of medicinal plants: medicinal plants have accompanied Susanna Krebs, a trained herbalist, since her childhood. As a native of Emmental, she feels at home above Boltigen in Obersimmental and is happy to introduce people to the effects of medicinal plants. In the rural hamlet of Adlemsried (1,050 m above sea level) on a sunny terrace above the Simmen valley lies her idyllic and diverse medicinal herb garden with over 100 native and associated medicinal plants to discover, experience and contemplate. In addition to guided tours, day seminars and medicinal plant walks, ointments, mother tinctures, massage oils, Bach- or soul-flowers, herbal salts or vinegar buds can also be made.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/simmental-healing-plant-garden

Yodelling trail St. Stephan

The first interactive theme trail on yodelling in Switzerland provides an insight into the origins, technique and diversity of this singing art at eight stations distributed along the circular trail. On the way with the yodeller, conductor and composer, Ueli Moor from St. Stephan, who is well-known beyond the yodelling scene, interested visitors will learn stories about the region, the origin of the yodelling trail and of course about yodelling! Ueli is sure to sing one or two "Jützi" (yodels), which you can yodel along to your heart's content. Back at Alp Dürrenwald, visitors will be welcomed by Susi and Chrigel Moor in the Alpbeizli Dürrenwald. There they enjoy a lovingly prepared snack with cheese produced directly on the alp and meat and sausages from the region. And by the way, the yodelling trail can of course also be visited individually and at any time between June and October. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/yodelling-trail-st-stephan

Scissors cut art from the Simmental – insights into a filigree traditional craft

The sharp scissors cut through the paper with millimetre precision. Little by little, the pencil lines give way to clean edges. Again and again the sheet is held up to the light to see exactly where a little bit more needs to be cut off. In the Simmental, people still take the time to make silhouettes - and so this tradition is still alive here. The art of silhouette cutting originated in China and is as old as the beginnings of paper production. In Switzerland, this craft has its roots in the Bernese Oberland. Johann Jakob Hauswirth is considered the father of traditional Swiss silhouette. In the 18th century he brought paper cutting to the Saanenland. His best-known motif, the alpine procession, is a reminder of the original life in the mountains. www.lenk-simmental.ch/inspirationen/alle-unsere-geschichten/scherenschnitte

FAMILIES

Fun and games on 7'000 m² for young and old alike

The 7'000 m² AlpKultur® playground at Lenkerseeli, most of which is wheelchair-accessible, brings the alp into the valley. By means of various play elements, fireplaces and one of the oldest alpine huts in the Obersimmental, alpine life is brought from the mountain to the valley. Our guests, both young and old, are given an understanding of the traditional life of privation on the alp. The many play equipment made of natural materials, such as tyrolienne, rope suspension bridge, water table, sensory path, hedge labyrinth, climbing mikado, wheelchair seesaw, crawling tube, slides etc. invite the whole family to play and have fun. The popular "Strubeli Bähnli", a miniature steam train to ride, enriches the AlpKultur® playground Lenkerseeli. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/alpkultur-play-area-lenkerseeli

Up the mountain with Mona the cow, Flöckli the goat or Moritz the marmot

In keeping with AlpKultur®, you can also take a ride on the gondola lift to the Leiterli in twelve lovingly decorated gondolas. Mona the cow, Flöckli the goat and Moritz the marmot tell stories about their everyday lives. The amusing story continues on the descent. The stories can be heard in dialect or French. www.lenk-bergbahnen.ch/fr/telecabines-thematiques

On the way to the marmots

On the Murmeli Trail, young and old nature explorers can immerse themselves in the world of the marmots. The playful discovery trail is about 3 km long and leads from the Leiterli mountain station to the Stoss middle station. The big highlight on the marmot trail is the marmot cave, which was newly built in summer 2021. Big and small cave explorers can explore the sleeping quarters of the marmots in a playful way. The realm of the alpine inhabitants is presented in an understandable and child-friendly way with various light, sound and touch elements. The interactive building is located directly at the Leiterli reservoir and can be reached on foot in about 10 minutes from the Leiterli mountain station. The «Murmeli ointment» is also in great demand! www.lenk-bergbahnen.ch/fr/sentier-des-marmottes

Leiterli alpine playground

The Leiterli alpine playground with its bouncy cushions, small wooden chalets connected to each other via an alpine telephone, slide, climbing pyramid, wobbly footbridge and net swing is great fun for children and adults alike. www.lenk-bergbahnen.ch/fr/home

Keenly observed

The Simmental is also a habitat for the lynx. The shy wildcat will elude the eyes of hikers, the lynx trail starting at the Leiterli mountain station captivates young hikers in particular. Play stations made of logs delight children. Lynx and fox tracks as well as life-size dummies of the lynx, but also of its prey such as deer and chamois, provide excitement along the trail. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/lynx-trail-betelberg

NATURE, WATER, HIKING

Relaxing in front of the source

«D'Sibe Brünne» – the source of the Simme, which gives the valley its name, lies on the Rezlberg above Lenk, directly at the foot of a mighty limestone wall. There the Simme comes to the surface foaming white. In summer, up to 2,800 litres per second flow from the seven springs. The "Siebe Brünne", a magical waterfall, is considered a designated source of power and is a beautiful place to linger. The hike begins at the Simmen Falls on the Lenk. After about half an hour's hike, you reach the Barbara Bridge. The ice-cold water that cascades over the bridge serves as a welcome cool-down. The hike continues to the Rezlberg to the spectacular source of the Simme. www.lenk-simmental.ch/sibe-bruenne-und-simmenfaelle

Roaring waters

The roar becomes louder and louder and suggests that the Iffigfall is larger than expected. The excitement about what the impressive waterfall will look like increases and the steps presumably become faster. The white spray already penetrates through the trees. At the last bend, the finest droplets of water envelop visitors. The water plunges more than a hundred metres over several cascades into the depths. It is an unbelievable force that can be felt here. The Iffigfall is part of the Gelten-Iffigen nature reserve and, with its natural course, one of the largest and most beautiful waterfalls in Switzerland. In addition to the Iffigfall, there are countless smaller and larger water spectacles to discover and admire throughout the Simmental. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/inspirations/all-our-tales/water

Wallbach Gorge

Over centuries, the water of the Wallbach has carved metre-deep, cylindrical holes in the limestone. Only a few minutes from the centre of Lenk village, the Wallbach rushes through its gorge. The water takes its course at the top of this side valley and many small tributaries along the way. It flows through bubbling holes in this small canyon and ends in a waterfall. It is hard to imagine that a restaurant with a bowling alley once stood back here, in the middle of the gorge, a long time ago. On warm days it is nice and cool in the gorge. The water in the wide stream bed invites you to splash around and build "Steinmandli". The hiking trail has been renovated for the summer of 2023 and upgraded with various surprises. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/wallbachschlucht

Crystal clear mountain lakes

Lake "Iffigsee", located in the Gelten-Iffigen nature reserve above Iffigenalp, invites you to linger, fish or cool off in the wet. The ascent from Iffigenalp is rewarded with a fantastic view of the sapphire-blue lake, beautifully nestled between the sheer rock face on one side and the open arena of mountain meadows on the other. Water rats venture into the refreshingly cold water at best. Fishermen can cast a line. Those who find flat stones can try their hand at "slating". For those who long for more mountain lakes, a hike to Flueseeli or Rawilseeleni, both located about halfway to the impressive Wildstrubel, is recommended. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/iffigsee

Plaine Morte

The Plaine Morte glacier (dead plain) is flat, up to 200 metres thick in places, and drains mainly towards Lenk but also into the Rhone Valley in the Valais. An impressive experience is a hike with a mountain guide across the glacier and then to the summit of the Wildstrubel. After the 2018 eruption, which was the largest to date, work began in 2019 to bore an 800-metre-long channel through the glacier so that the water can drain away continuously. Draining in 2019 began on 24 August and thanks to the spillway, there have been no major floods on Lenk so far. During the Little Ice Age, in the mid-19th century, the glacier extended much further down the northern slope between Gletscherhorn and Wildstrubel. After the glacier retreated, the Rezligletscherseeli formed at 2,265 metres above sea level. The ice volume of the plateau glacier has also decreased considerably over the last 100 years. Scientists assume that the glacier will have largely disappeared by the end of the 21st century. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/inspirations/all-our-tales/hiking

Reservoir lakes – a touch of the Caribbean in the midst of the mountains

The lakes created in recent years to make snow for the ski areas in Lenk have become worthwhile destinations for excursions in summer. The crystal-clear, turquoise water gives you the feeling of being somewhere in the Caribbean. The lakes are places to enjoy a summer retreat in the mountains and the tranquillity of nature. Both lakes are easily accessible with the cable cars at Metsch and Leiterli and on beautiful hiking trails.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/brenggen-reservoir-lake or www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/leiterli-reservoir-lake

Sulphur water as the source of tourism

When Christen Perreten received permission from the Bernese authorities to operate a bath in 1689, no one knew that the «Balm Spring» was the most important and strongest sulphur spring in the Alps. The spring rises in the area «Uf de Balme» at an altitude of 1,359 metres above sea level and brings 40 to 50 litres per minute to the surface. The first spa guests travelled to Bad Lenk as early as the beginning of the 17th century. The old famous spring still bubbles today, and if you cross the stream at the Lenkerhof or the valley station of the Betelberg cable car, the sulphurous smells will fill your nostrils. At the nearby «Schefelbrünneli», the water, which in earlier times was considered particularly beneficial, can be drunk or bottled and taken home.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/our-simmental/valley-villages/the-valleys-history

Mountain hiking, over hill and dale

With over 600 km of signposted hiking and mountain trails, the Simmental is an absolute hiker's paradise. Pristine and mystical, mysterious and yet familiar in equal measure. When the snow gives way to lush green alpine meadows in spring, the green valley of the Simme awakens from its winter sleep and emerges as a lovely hiker's paradise. Thanks to its special characteristics, the Simmental offers hiking routes for every taste. The flat valley floor invites you to take long walks, but is also the starting point for demanding high-mountain tours. The crossings into the neighbouring valleys or over the Rawil Pass into the Valais have a special charm.

www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/hiking-and-mountain-trails

Circuit d'altitude de Gryden

The crater-like, bizarre landscape at the Betelberg not only inspires geologists and biologists - the Gryden are a highlight for hikers who are looking for something special, peace and quiet and a wonderful view. The motto is: Hike - Marvel - Enjoy! www.lenk-bergbahnen.ch/fr/circuit-gryden

Proud farmhouses, rock solid barns

There are many magnificent buildings with impressive façade paintings along the «Simmentaler Hausweg». Along the hike from Lenk via Zweisimmen and Boltigen to Wimmis, there are masterful examples of carpentry to discover. Detailed information on the age, architecture and special features of Simmental carpentry can be found at the individual houses, in two brochures or via the "hauswege.ch" web app. www.hauswege.ch (in german)

Trip to the Stone Age and over a 111 m long suspension bridge

The «Schnurenloch» is the only Stone Age resting place in the valley, situated above the valley floor. A three-hour hike begins in Oberwil and leads to the 26-metre-long cave, an impressive testimony to a prehistoric settlement. The route continues over a 111-metre-long and 111-metre-high suspension bridge over the Morgeten Gorge to the Leitern pasture and down over steps past a small waterworks to the Weissenburgbad. This is where Europe's aristocracy used to relax in the 19th century. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/leiternweide-oberwil-suspension-bridge

Eyes in the rock and viewing platform

This is where rocks make big eyes: right next to the panorama restaurant, a tunnel leads to the Panorama viewing platform in the north face of the Stockhorn and shows the environment with the "Stockhorn eyes". From here you can enjoy a breathtaking low and wide view of the city of Thun, Lake Thun, the Aare and Gürbetal valleys, the midlands all the way to the Jura and, on a clear day, as far as Alsace and the southern Black Forest. The fantastic distant view is a delight for young and old, big and small. The new panoramic viewing platform is also easily accessible for people in wheelchairs or with walking difficulties and families with prams. For guests who are particularly interested in geology, for families and school classes, there are numerous information boards in the summit gallery and in the grotto near the platform. The unique specimen of a beautiful large calcite crystal from the mountain region can also be marvelled at there. www.stockhorn.ch/en

AlpnessTrail – the relaxing alpine hiking route

The AlpnessTrail offers long-distance hikers a circular route with 13 stages across the Alps of the Saanenland and the Obersimmental. Hikers are guided to the most impressive places of experience, where background knowledge is imparted on the theme of each stage. The naturalness, encounters with people and animals, rushing or quiet water spectacles, history and stories, alpine flora, traditions and simple cuisine on the mountain intensify the experience of nature and lead to a decelerating experience. With a local expert hiking guide, the AlpnessTrail is experienced even more consciously and in greater detail. www.alpnesstrail.ch/en

OUTDOOR SPORTS

Cycling

From normal bikes to scooters to racing bikes, mountain bikes to e-bikes - in the Simmental, with its gentle pre-Alpine, but also mountainous landscape, friends of two-wheeling will certainly get their money's worth. Flowing enduro tours on natural single trails are just as available as leisurely routes on gravel and asphalt roads with beautiful panoramas. If you don't want to pedal uphill for hours, the mountain railway will take you to the starting point of your tour. The crossings into the neighbouring valleys in Saanenland or Engstligen/Kandertal are also attractive. In order to make the trails safer and more sustainable, but above all to improve their joint use by hikers and mountain bikers, the Lenk-Simmental holiday region will optimise its trail network over the next few years by means of targeted measures. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/biking

Trailrunning

Running off the beaten track. Where there is no paved path, the trail running experience really begins. It may sound like an extreme sport to explore nature on hiking and mountain trails in running shoes. But like everywhere else, you can start small and run short distances with few metres of elevation. There is always room for improvement. The Simmental with its varied landscape and different terrain is full of trails for every level. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/trail-running

Climbing

Climbing outside on the rock on prepared and well-maintained topos or in a via ferrata. At the top you are rewarded with the feeling «wow - I've achieved something» - and often you also enjoy a beautiful view. At the «Adventure Park Rufeli» in Lenk, action, fun and thrills are on the agenda. Experienced guides ensure safety on the Tyrolienne, a via ferrata or a rope bridge. If the weather is bad or you want to improve your climbing skills, the «BoulderSchüür Lenk» and the climbing hall

at the Hotel Simmenhof in Lenk offer further attractive climbing opportunities. www.lenk-simmental.ch/klettern und www.boulderschuer.ch (in german)

Paragliding

The dream of flying is in the nature of man. Take off and enjoy the Simmental from a bird's eye view for once. You will be amazed at how many Simmental cows there are or where touring skis leave their tracks in winter. Whether you are an experienced flyer alone or in pairs with an experienced pilot: the weightless glide, like an eagle, is sure to provide unforgettable experiences. [Htt-
www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/fly-a-paraglider](http://www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/fly-a-paraglider)

CULINARY

Culinary delights by Lenkerhof

Lovers of culinary delights get their money's worth in Lenk. The two restaurants in the 5-star Lenkerhof Gourmet Spa Resort leave nothing to be desired. In the «Spettacolo» (17 Gault Millau points), a selection of 6 out of 15 dishes is offered daily. The refined creations, which chef Stefan Lünse and his team prepare fresh every day, feature mainly local and Swiss products. The so-called icing on the cake is the cheese buffet with over 30 cheese specialities. The Italian-French Riviera is the theme in the restaurant «Oh de Vie» (14 Gault Millau points). Candlelight, a relaxed atmosphere, calm and dignified service. The à la carte selection is perfect for a romantic evening. Particularly tasty: dishes for two, presented and arranged at the table. Whether à la carte or a 3-course menu, the guest decides according to his or her own taste. www.lenkerhof.ch/en/gastronomy/restaurants

CULTURAL EVENTS

Alpine Jazz Fever

Don't worry if fever rages in Lenk: It's July and time for the biggest New Orleans Jazz Festival in the Alps. Every year, renowned jazz bands from a wide variety of backgrounds are guests and play on the Kronenplatz in a cosy open-air atmosphere. During the day, the passionate musicians entertain holidaymakers and locals with concerts on the street or on one of the numerous sun terraces. www.jazztagelenk.ch (in german)

Midsummer Festival

Selected acts enthral the audience in front of the beautiful Simmenfall in an enchanting ambience at mid-summer. The small and fine festival on the Lenk pays tribute to the values of the Simmental: cosiness, togetherness, a unique experience and regional delicacies are on the programme. www.mittsommerfestival.ch (in german)

Hangar Rockin`

Every year at the end of June/beginning of July, the European custom & hot rod scene traditionally meets at the airfield in St. Stephan. The breathtaking backdrop of the Simmental trembles under roaring V8 engines and raging rock'n'roll music. www.hangarrockin.com

HISTORICALS

The heyday of spa culture

The traditional history of the **Lenkerhof gourmet spa resort** began with a bathhouse and the hotel's own Balm spring 350 years ago. The eventful past has been excitingly translated into today's interior design of the «7sources beauty & spa» wellness area, creating one of the largest feel-good landscapes in Switzerland on 2'000 m². The water can still be drunk today in the nearby sulphur fountain. www.lenkerhof.ch/en

In the 19th century, the Weissenburg thermal spring enjoyed world fame. Until the Second World War, the bourgeoisie of Europe and Switzerland recovered in the spa house of the same name. The aristocracy thus helped Weissenburg to gain the reputation of a well-known thermal and climatic health resort. Today, only the ruins bear witness to its great importance as a meeting place for the high nobility and high finance. A visit to the historical sites and the famous thermal spring give a good impression of this eventful and impressive history of the Weissenburg spa. Thanks to its high status, many historical photo documents by touring photographers exist today. www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/erlebnisse/weissenburg-bad

The brown gold

In December 1948, the shovels and picks were hung up and the carbide lamps were extinguished in the mining galleries in the Bernese municipality of Boltigen. Previously, brown coal had been mined in these tunnels during various eras. The coal from Schwarzenmatt was in great demand, and the chemical industry in Basel was also a customer. Although some older Simmental residents may still remember the mine, the history of coal mining in Boltigen is slowly being forgotten. A virtual tour of the era (on the website) revives this piece of Swiss history. www.kohlenbergwerke-boltigen.ch (in german)

Time travel with Müesli bowl

In the summer of 2005, Bernese archaeologists found the oldest wooden vessel in Switzerland on the Schnidejoch. The cup with a hole as a handle resembles a modern-day Müesli bowl, but is dated to be 6,500 years old. The Müesli bowl from the Schnidejoch is the first evidence that the 2,756-metre-high pass had already been traversed 1,700 years before Schnidi (and over 1,000 years before Ötzi). The researchers were astounded by this result. For it was generally assumed that our Stone Age ancestors tended to avoid the harsh conditions of the mountains. The Schnidejoch was a prehistoric crossing into the Valais and the Rawyl was known as a cattle export and cheese export pass to the south. www.lenk-simmental.ch/unser-simmental/tal-doerfer/geschichte-tal

THIS AND THAT

Over 35 years of excellence in model making

Three generations of Alfred Friedli (Fred, Fredl and Fredi) build fine small series models of all kinds using etching and casting techniques. The desire for perfection prompted Alfred Friedli to visually improve a Trix Ae 4/4 for the first time 35 years ago. In the meantime, three generations work in the small company and countless models in H0 and H0m have been modified, optically improved or completely newly developed. The production as well as all assembly work is done in the various small rooms of the company at Lenk. The etched sheets of 0.4 mm are folded, soldered, sand-blasted, painted and stamped (labelled) here. The extremely elaborate and loving production amazes every visitor. Small quantities of about 30-100 pieces go through countless steps and are taken into the hands umpteen times. www.friholenk.ch (in german)