

SWITZERLAND – VAL D'ANNIVIERS VALAIS WINE & THE MATTERHORN

7-days/ 6-nights or 11-days/ 10 nights easy to moderate self-guided inn-to-inn secret valley walk



The spectacular region of Sierre / Salgesch in southern Switzerland is located on the banks of the River Rhone. Sierre is one of the driest regions in the country and the rich alluvial soils and bright sunshine explain the abundance of vineyards with exceptional cool climate white wines with a fresh, fruity bouquet.

Here too are many kilometres of well-marked walking trails through spectacular picture postcard scenery. Our circular walking route takes you from Sierre through to Chandolin / St-Luc, Zinal, Grimetz and to Vercorin. Each day offers some truly exceptional mountain and valley panoramas, wonderful picnic spots and the chance to see an unspoiled traditional community of farms and small villages. On the last day, we suggest a trek to the Vallon de Réchy or the Vineyard Trail, which links Sierre to Salgesch, with a visit to the Valaisan Museum of Wine. There is chance here to learn more about the more than 500 wines from 70 cellars and to taste some rare vintage wines and schnapps from the Valais fruit orchards.

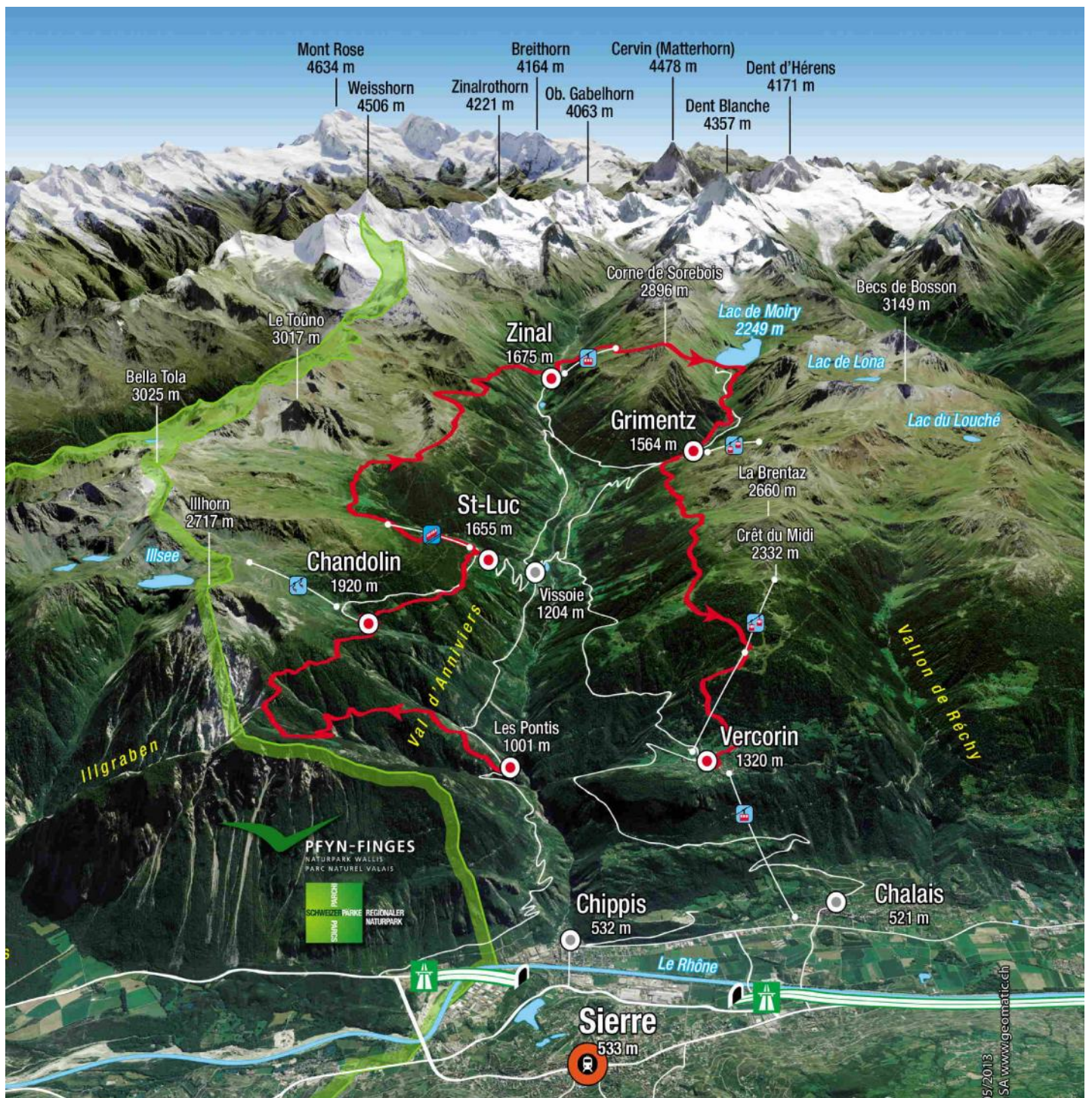
Departs: Daily from 22nd June to 6th October 2019. **Starts & Ends:** Sierre / Salgesch

Cost from: **7 days / 6 nights:** \$1740 per person twin share Single supplement \$1045
11 days / 10 nights: \$2690 per person twin share Single supplement \$1615

Included: 3-star hotel accommodation with private facilities; breakfast, picnic lunch and dinner daily; luggage transfers (1 bag per person, max 20kg); hiking map of the Val d'Anniviers; 2 postal bus vouchers per person; Anniviers Liberty Pass including transport offers on lifts and postal bus between Val d'Anniviers resorts.

Grading: Easy to moderate, with some harder options – about 5 hours' walking each day. The terrain is varied, following mountain trails and valley walking tracks, with many ascents and descents each day. You can shorten some days using public transport. Paths are well signposted.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details & reservations



Suggested Itinerary: 7 days / 6 nights tour

Day 1 Arrival in Sierre

Plan to arrive in Sierre by mid-afternoon. Sierre is easily accessible by train, on the line for Geneva, Lausanne, Zurich, Bern or Brig. If time permits you may like to explore the Rue du Bourg in the town centre, with its picturesque historic houses.

Day 2 Sierre / Salgesch to Chandolin / St-Luc

choice of 5-hours or 6.5-hours walking

Use one of your provided postal bus vouchers and take the postal bus along the Route d'Anniviers to the Pontis stop at the area called "Fribougze" after an old mountain hut, then walk up a steep slope to Soussillon (1388m) and on to the foot of the village of Chandolin. Or, more experienced walkers can hike to the mountain pastures of Ponchet (1950m). From Ponchet a wide forest track takes you to picturesque Chandolin – at 2000 metres it is one of the highest villages in Europe that is inhabited year-round. Explore the rare flora here amidst the unspoilt countryside. You either stay in Chandolin or walk on to St-Luc for the night.

From Chandolin there are two ways to reach St-Luc (1655m), either down through La Toueille and Lebing or higher up following the Sierre-Zinal foottrace path through a pine forest to Tignousa (2186m). Perhaps take the 7-minute funicular train ride to St-Luc instead of walking. St-Luc, with its astronomical observatory located at 2200m, has an interesting 6-kilometre planetary walk with the planets of our solar system. There are views of the famous **Matterhorn** and on the riverbank the watermills dating from the 18th Century are still working.

Day 3 Chandolin / St- Luc to Zinal

about 5-hours walking

From St-Luc we suggest that you go to Tignousa by funicular train. From there enjoy the splendid panoramic view of the Alps including the Dent Blanche and the Matterhorn.

Cross the Roua alpine pastures (Chalet Blanc 2179m) and start the climb to the Hotel Weisshorn, a hundred year old hotel built, rather unusually, in a traditional English style (2237m).

A pleasant walk takes you to Bella Lé, then to the pastures of Barneuza (2211m). The scenery starts to change as you descend towards Zinal which is located at an altitude of 1670m. The footpaths here offer views of the famous imperial crown of five summits all over 4000m high: the Bishorn, the Weisshorn, the Zinalrothorn, the Obergabelhorn and the Dent-Blanche. The Besso, slightly lower than the others, provides the foreground to the Matterhorn behind it. With its numerous glaciers, waterfalls and the copper mine, this area offers plenty of opportunities to explore or simply to relax and soak up the atmosphere.

Day 4 Zinal to Grimentz

about 6-hours walking

For this third stage we recommend you use the cable car directly to Sorebois, however, if you wish to walk, follow the Navizence river (1653m) then take the winding footpath to Sorebois via Fêta d'Août (2254m). When you get to Sorebois, via the alpine pastures the top is about 1 hour and twenty minutes away.

Keep an eye out for marmots which are very common in this area. As you come to the Col de Sorebois (2835m), look down to the Moiry dam (2250m) with its stunning turquoise waters. The walk down to the dam takes about an hour. Walk across the dam wall to reach the path on the banks of the Gougria River which leads to Grimentz (1564m).

The enchanting villages of St-Jean and Grimentz, with wooden barns browned by the sun and charming balconies adorned with flowering geraniums on houses are picture perfect and ideal for photos. Grimentz can best be described as authentic, full of traditional charm and character. In its cellars, the renowned glacier wine which has been maturing for over 100 years is stored in casks of larch wood.

Day 5 Grimentz to Vercorin

about 4-hours walking

From the start of the cable car, the path crosses alpine pastures following the cable car route. After walking to Le Chequet, follow the footpath through a very perfumed larch tree forest to the pastures of Orzival (2100m). Here you have two choices: either walk up in the direction of the Brinta (2660m) then continue on towards the Crêt du Midi (2331m) and go down on foot or by cable car to Vercorin (1342m). Or, you can go on towards the alpine grazing pastures of Tracuit (1898m) and then on to Sigeroulaz (1861m), finally finishing in Vercorin.

Vercorin is a small village / ski resort with a delightful outlook and climate; it has maintained its unique and verdant vegetation amongst a wild and fragile alpine environment. The Vallon de Réchy, to the west, is a protected nature reserve where you can find almost all varieties of fauna found in the Alps.

Day 6 Vercorin and surrounding area (then postal bus to Sierre) Or the Vallon de Réchy at Louché Lake

**about 4-hours walking
about 7-hours walking**

From Vercorin, a short stroll to the Vallon de Réchy to discover the Vercorin 'bisse' (irrigation stream) and the Buvette de la Lé (1643m) with its imposing panorama over the Rhone valley and the impressive view of the waterfall that cascades down from the Ar du Tsan above you. Return via the same path or walk alongside the torrent and turn right via Les Vernys to reach Vercorin.

For a longer walk exploring the Vallon de Réchy nature reserve, take the cable car to the Crêt du Midi (2331m). Then either traverse a high route through forest or follow the lower-level forest footpath to the Ar du Tsan for a wonderful view over the Rhone Valley. It is then a pleasant walk to Louché Lake through varied and sometimes rare marshland flora, including the Linaigrette which has small cotton pompon like flowers. To return, take the path on the other side of the hill, going via the Potoc marshland (2468m) and the Fâche which offers a stunning view over the Ar du Tsan. Descend steeply alongside the waterfall to the bisse shelter. From there follow the bisse (irrigation stream) to Vercorin.

As the route from Vercorin to Sierre on foot is steep, we suggest you use your second postal bus voucher to return to Sierre by postal bus.

Day 7 Depart Sierre

Tour ends after breakfast

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Please note the **11 day / 10 night itinerary** stays in the same places as the 7 day / 6 night itinerary, and includes extra nights in St-Luc, Zinal, Grimentz and Vercorin, to allow you time to explore the countryside and do some extra walks from these locations. There are close to 500 kilometres of hiking trails in the Val d'Anniviers offering almost limitless options for walking, from one-hour nature walks to circuits ascending to high Alpine lakes to challenging traverses of the high cols.



Outdoor Travel offers many other walking holidays in Switzerland including walks in the **Bernese Oberland** and the popular **Tour du Mont Blanc** which circles Mont Blanc walking in three countries: Switzerland, France and Italy. Guided walks in small groups or self-guided walking holidays with inn-to-inn luggage transfers and meals are available in many other regions of Europe including in France the **Dordogne**, the **Vermillion Coast**, **Corsica**, **Burgundy**, the **Loire Valley**, **Provence**, and the **Cevennes**.

In Spain **Outdoor Travel** have walks in **Andalucia**, the **Alpajurras** and **Picos de Europa** in the north. In Italy try guided or self-guided walks in the **Dolomites**, on the **Amalfi Coast**, **Cinque Terre**, in **Tuscany** or **Umbria**.

For long distance routes we offer the **Camino de Santiago**, the **Way of St James** from Le Puy in France to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, or the less-travelled **Camino Portuguese** from Porto to Santiago. In Italy consider the **Via Francigena**, the pilgrims' road to Rome. In England we offer walks such as Wainwright's challenging and rewarding **Coast to Coast** route, the **Cumbrian Way** in the beautiful **Lake District**, the **South Downs Way** along the scenic coast of Sussex, and walks in the **Cotswolds** near Stratford-upon-Avon. In Scotland consider the wild and scenic **West Highland Way** or the **Great Glen Way** tracing a famous route through the Highlands from Fort William to Inverness.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more itinerary details and reservations

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