

WORLD HERITAGE
EXPERIENCE  SWITZERLAND



World Heritage Manual **Guide's kit**

WORLD HERITAGE
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World Heritage Experience Switzerland - WHES

One of the tasks of World Heritage Experience Switzerland (WHES) is to raise public awareness of the attractiveness and significance of UNESCO World Heritage properties in Switzerland. In addition to its commitment to valorisation, WHES also supports World Heritage properties in the areas of management and cultural mediation in schools. To find out more, visit www.ourheritage.ch to stay up to date and follow us on our social media channels: when you visit one of 13 sites, tag us with

@worldheritageswitzerland #worldheritageswitzerland #ourheritage



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Welcome

WORLD HERITAGE
EXPERIENCE  SWITZERLAND

Dear Guides,



Thank you for taking an interest in the World Heritage properties in Switzerland. Indeed, these natural and cultural assets have plenty to offer: enchanting cities, unique landscapes, historic legacies and hidden treasures. Much of this heritage was left to us by our ancestors, but nature has also played its part in making the World Heritage properties an endless source of amazement. There are four natural and nine cultural assets in total – and as unique as each site is, they all have one thing in common: the universal value that they share with the global community.

The enclosed documentation offers you an broad insight into the diversity and uniqueness of the UNESCO World Heritage in Switzerland.

If you have any questions or suggestions, you can contact us at any time. We look forward to collaborating with you.

Kaspar Schürch
Director WHES

our Heritage

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Summary

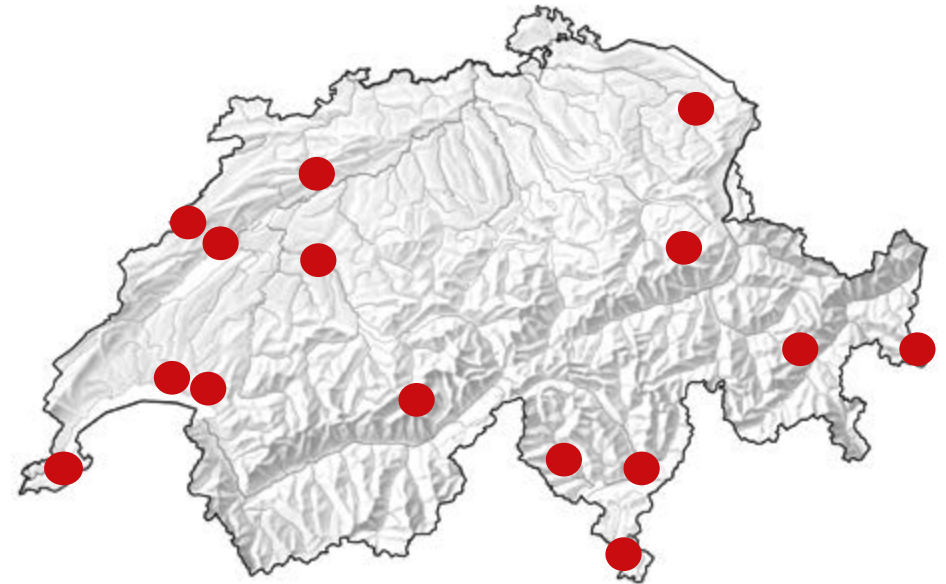
The most important facts

There are 13 UNESCO World Heritage properties in Switzerland, and they are divided in:

- 9 Cultural sites
- 4 Natural sites

UNESCO World Heritage properties can also be categorised as transnational (i.e. Monte San Giorgio between Switzerland and Italy) and/or part of a series of elements (i.e. the Prehistoric Pile Dwellings counting 111 elements of which 56 archaeological sites in Switzerland).

Each site is unique and proves to have of Outstanding Universal Value (OUVs), meaning a cultural or natural relevance that is exceptionally important, outside regional or national borders and being significant for all humanity today and future generations.



UNESCO World Heritage in Switzerland

More information:



Local treasures of global importance

UNESCO World Heritage

Four outstanding natural phenomena and nine great cultural achievements in Switzerland bear the most sought-after emblem of UNESCO, as Natural and Cultural World Heritage properties. Each of them stands for authenticity, quality and diversity for many generations to come. These values are part of the identity and mentality of the Swiss population.

World heritage goes back to a revolutionary idea: that the protection and preservation of extraordinary cultural achievements and unique natural phenomena should be placed in the hands of the whole human race. This idea was first put into practice with the rescue of the temples at Abu Simbel. In 1972, it gave rise to the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

More than 1'000 sites in 167 countries are now inscribed on the World Heritage List, including thirteen in Switzerland. These thirteen World Heritage properties bear witness to the history of the world and humanity. They speak of the emergence and formation of our country. As unique as each site is, they are all related to each other – shaped, inspired and formed by the interplay of the creative forces of nature and culture.



Unknown Heritage

Many people in Switzerland are familiar with places like the Palace of Versailles, the Great Barrier Reef and the Grand Canyon. This is also because they are on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Thirteen sites in Switzerland also belong to this exclusive list and are therefore protected for the entire world population. Unfortunately, the majority of people in our country are unaware of this. For the second time in five years, the umbrella organisation for World Heritage, World Heritage Experience Switzerland (WHES), together with the company blue eyes marketing GmbH, has conducted a representative survey on World Heritage in Switzerland.

Despite the work of local World Heritage organisations and the activities of various stakeholders at national level, these contemporary witnesses and their universal values are still unknown to many of the Swiss population. In the unaided 2023 survey conducted by blue eyes marketing GmbH, **only 10%** of respondents were able to name one or more World Heritage sites. The figures are slightly higher in the aided survey, but here too the best figures are only 40%, which means that not even half of the Swiss can name at least one World Heritage site.

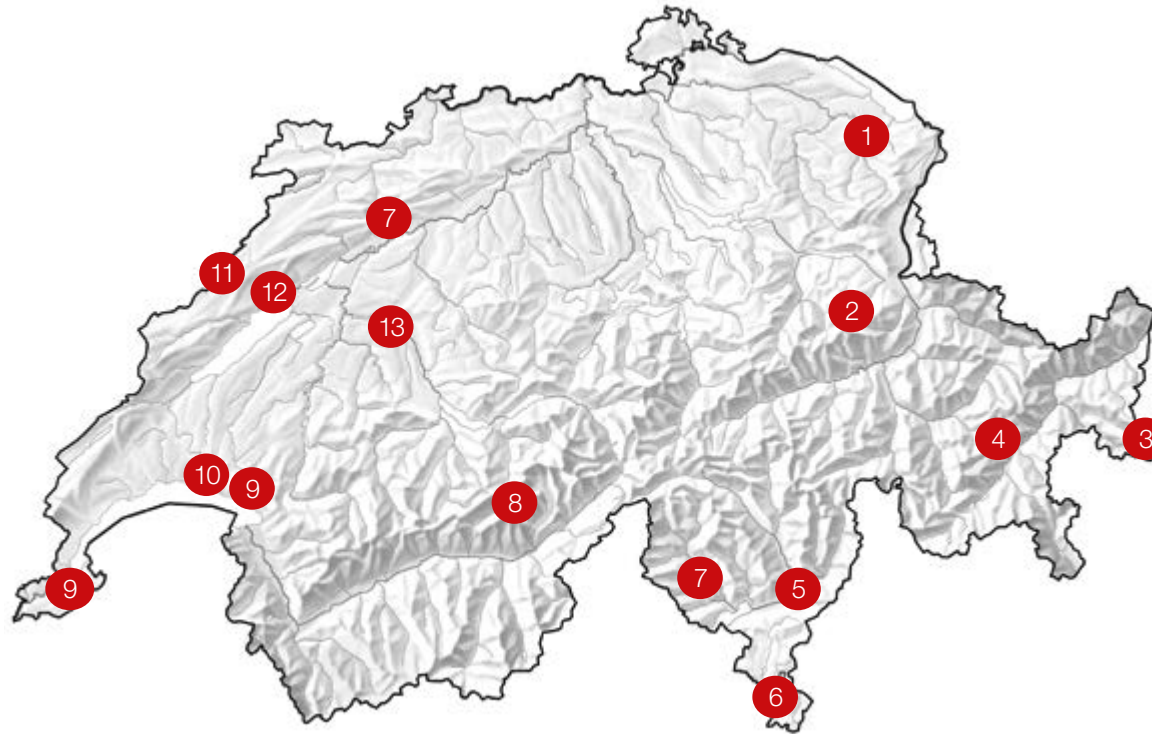
Criteria of inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Operational Guidelines define outstanding universal value as cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. This definition is understood through the criteria used to justify the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List.

Criteria	Description
i	Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius.
ii	Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on development in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.
iii	Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.
iv	Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.
v	Be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.
vi	Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria.)
vii	Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.
viii	Be outstanding examples representing major stages of Earth's history, including the record of life, significant ongoing geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features.
ix	Be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.
x	Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation.

Communicating the UNESCO World Heritage in Switzerland

13 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Switzerland tell the history of our cultural achievements and the formation of our natural landscape: four natural and nine cultural sites bear the most sought-after emblem of UNESCO. In the following pages you will find the key information and description of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of each site.



- 1 Abbey of St. Gall
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Abbey of St. Gall

1400 years of cultural history

The foundation stone for the abbey was laid in 612 by the Irish itinerant monk Gallus. A good 100 years later, Abbot Otmar revived the monastery and transformed it into an important centre for writing activities and book illumination. The spirit of the Benedictine monks can still be felt in the historically impressive walls today. Over the entrance of the Abbey Library of St. Gall there is an ancient Greek inscription meaning “pharmacy of the soul”. The library is the oldest and one of the most attractive rococo rooms in Switzerland. Besides the 170,000 books, it also accommodates one of the most important autochthonous collections of medieval manuscripts in Europe. The Abbey Plan of St. Gall, the “Evangelium Longum” and the oldest conserved German language book, the “Abrogans”, are particularly worthy of note.

Did you know?

- 333 explanations of typical abbey buildings are to be found on the famous Plan of St. Gall, which dates back to 825.
- The Alcuin Bible, produced around the year 800 has 840 pages and weighs about 20 kg.
- The Abbey of St. Gall can look back over a unique and continuously documented history of more than a thousand years.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Abbey of St. Gall meets criteria II and IV for its inscription.

- **Criterion (ii):** The Abbey of Gozbert (816-837) exerted a significant influence on the development of monastic architecture following the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, as demonstrated by the famous plan of St. Gall of the 9th century, which comprises architectural drawings of 341 inscriptions on parchment that may be perceived as the ideal layout for a Benedictine abbey.
- **Criterion (iv):** The Abbey of St. Gall may be considered a typical example of a large Benedictine monastery, centre of art and knowledge, with its rich library and scriptorium. In their diversity, the successive restructurings of the conventual space attest to an ongoing religious and cultural function.



UNESCO World Heritage since 1983

More information:





Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona

How mountains form

The collision between Africa and Europe caused the formation of the Alps millions of years ago. Layers of rock were pushed on top of one another, folded and broken. Along the so-called “Glarus main thrust fault”, a line that can now be seen from afar, layers of rock that were 250-300 million years old were pushed together with much younger rocks that were 35-50 million years old. There is nowhere else where the traces of these tremendous forces are so visible as in the mountain landscape around Piz Sardona in the border region of the cantons of St. Gall, Glarus and Grisons. The area has great value for schools and research. It is of great interest to hikers and nature lovers too.

Did you know?

- In the Tectonic Arena Sardona the mountains stand on their heads: older strata of rock have shifted to lie above younger layers.
- Over the past 200 years or more, seminal findings into the way mountains were formed have been made at the Sardona UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Swiss tectonic arena Sardona meets criteria VIII for its inscription.

- **Criterion (viii):** Earth’s history, geological and geomorphic features and processes: The Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona provides an exceptional display of mountains building and has been recognised as a key site for geological sciences since the 18th century. The clear exposure of the Glarus Overthrust is a key, but not the only significant, feature. The exposures of the rocks below and above this feature are visible in three dimensions and, taken together, have made substantial contributions to the understanding of mountain building. Its geological features can be readily appreciated by all visitors. The property can be differentiated from other similar sites by the combination of the clear exposure of the phenomenon in a mountain setting, its history of study, and its ongoing contribution to geological sciences.



UNESCO World Heritage since 2008

More information:





Benedictine Convent St. John in Müstair

The nuns open their doors

According to legend, the monastery complex in Val Müstair in the canton of Grisons, was founded in the 8th century by Charlemagne and was never fully destroyed. Well preserved, it still reveals building styles from several eras, and holds art treasures from more than twelve centuries. The wall paintings in the convent church were decisive for its acceptance on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This is one of the largest and best-preserved fresco cycles from the early Middle Ages. The nuns are still active in the convent today in the spirit of “ora et labora”, pray and work. Convent life, cultivation, the museum, research and restoration all merge to form a unique whole.

Did you know?

- St. John's monastery in Müstair is a centre of Benedictine life since 1250 years.
- If you count the number of rooms in the building complex, you come to the amazing total of 235.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Benedictine Convent St. John in Müstair meets criterion III for its inscription.

- **Criterion (iii):** The Benedictine Convent St. John in Müstair is one of the most coherent architectural works of the Carolingian period and High Middle Ages, with the most extensive cycle of known paintings for the first half of the 9th century. The Roman era's figurative paintings, especially the Carolingian period, are particularly important for understanding the evolution of certain iconographic Christian themes, such as the Last Judgement.



UNESCO World Heritage since 1983

More information:





Rhaetian Railway in the Albula / Bernina Landscapes

A triumph of railway engineering

The line of the Rhaetian Railway between Thusis and Tirano (Italy) is a true masterpiece. It is a unique example of a railway which has been harmoniously integrated into the high-mountain landscape. Narrow radii, sophisticated engineering structures and impressive tunnels: the many gorges, mountain barriers and gradients were overcome using a range of innovative ideas, and the 122 km-long route has been slotted pleasantly into the wild natural environment. The journey is a voyage of discovery for connoisseurs. Railway enthusiasts can admire the pioneering creations at close quarters, and those with a thirst for knowledge might like to visit the Albula railway museum in Bergün.

Did you know?

- The Rhaetian Railway winds its way through the Bernina Pass up a 7% gradient without the help of a rack-wheel, climbing from 429 m to 2,253 m above sea level.
- The 62 km long Albula Line was built in just six years (1898 –1904).

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Rhaetian Railway in the Albula/Bernina Landscapes meets criteria II and IV for its inscription.

- **Criterion (ii):** The Rhaetian Railway in the Albula/Bernina Landscapes constitutes an outstanding technical, architectural and environmental ensemble. The two lines, today unified in a single transalpine line, embody a very comprehensive and diversified set of innovative solutions that bear witness to substantial interchanges of human and cultural values in the development of mountain railway technologies, in terms of its architectural and civil engineering achievements, and its aesthetic harmony with the landscapes through which they pass.
- **Criterion (iv):** The Rhaetian Railway Albula/Bernina is a very significant illustration of the development of mountain railways at high altitudes in the first decade of the 20th century. It represents a consummate example of great quality, which was instrumental in the long-term development of human activities in the mountains. It offers diversified landscapes in conjunction with the railway that are significant of this period of the flourishing of a relationship between man and nature.



UNESCO World Heritage since 2008

More information:





Fortress of Bellinzona - Three Castles, Defensive Wall and Ramparts of the Market-Town of Bellinzona

Journey through the Middle Ages

Once acting as a barrage to the Alps and now a World Heritage property, the three impressive castles of Bellinzona are among the most significant examples of medieval military architecture. They were built by the Dukes of Milan to bar the route southwards to the Swiss. Bellinzona occupied a strategic position between north and south back then too. Over the course of the centuries, the three castles of Castelgrande, Montebello and Sasso Corbaro have been reconstructed and restored many times. With its walls, towers, battlements and gates, this impressive defensive complex remains a source of wonder to those who view it today.

Did you know?

- The castle of Sasso Corbaro was built in just six months.
- The castles were built by the Dukes of Milan and have only belonged to Swiss Confederation since the start of the 16th century.
- During the Swiss period of occupation, the castles were renamed Castello di Uri, Castello di Svitto and Castello di Unterwaldo.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Three Castles, Defensive Wall and Ramparts of the Market-Town of Bellinzona meet criterion IV for the inscription.

- **Criterion (iv):** The fortified ensemble of Bellinzona is an outstanding example of the late medieval defensive structure guarding a key strategic Alpine pass.

UNESCO World Heritage since 2000

More information:





Monte San Giorgio

A sea of memories

Monte San Giorgio rises up between the southern arms of Lake Lugano. Besides the magnificent view of the lake landscape, the 1,097-metre high mountain provides a window to prehistoric times. 240-million-year-old fossils can be found within it. Where there was once a sea basin with different reptiles, fish and plants, Monte San Giorgio formed along with the development of the Alps. Perfectly maintained fossils have been found and investigated here for 150 years. The region is one of the best testimonials to sea life from the Triassic period. The Museum of fossils in Meride, which has been renovated by the architect Mario Botta, ensures insights into this long extinct world.

Did you know?

- Thanks to virtual and augmented reality experiences, it is possible to dive in the Triassic sea and admire the creatures from that period.
- 240 million years ago, the region around Lake Lugano was a sub-tropical sea.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. Monte San Giorgio meets criterion VIII for its inscription.

- **Criterion (viii):** Monte San Giorgio is the single best-known record of marine life in the Triassic period and records important remains of life on land as well. The property has produced diverse and numerous fossils, many of which show exceptional completeness and detailed preservation. The long history of study of the property and the disciplined management of the resource have created a well-documented and catalogued body of specimens of exceptional quality and are the basis for a rich associated geological literature. As a result, Monte San Giorgio provides the principal point of reference, relevant to future discoveries of marine Triassic remains throughout the world.



UNESCO World Heritage since 2003

More information:





Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch

A glorious world of glaciers

Impressive mountain chains, quaint valleys and the largest connected glaciated area in the Alps. The World Heritage site is one of the most spectacular high-mountain landscapes in the world. It represents the heart of the Alps with the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau as well as the huge 824 km² Aletsch glacier. The region brings together the most diverse habitats from glacier to steppe, and gives a clear view of the effects of climate change. The countryside has played just as important a role in European literature, art, mountain climbing and alpine tourism. Few other places on this planet could offer a comparable variety of contrasts and treasures.

Did you know?

- If the Great Aletsch Glacier melted it could give a litre of water to each person living on the planet every day for the next 3,5 years.
- The Jungfrauoch railway station is the highest in Europe at 3,454 metres above sea level and is located in the middle of the World Heritage property.
- Currently, around 280 km² of the World Heritage site is covered in glacial ice. If we assume a rise in temperature of 3-5° C, about 20% of it will remain by the year 2100.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch meet criteria VII, VIII and IX for the inscription.

- **Criterion (vii):** The impressive landscape within the property has played an important role in European art, literature, mountaineering and alpine tourism. The area is globally recognised as one of the most spectacular mountain regions to visit and its aesthetics have attracted an international following. The impressive north wall of the High Alps, centred on the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau peaks, is a superlative scenic feature, complemented on the southern side of the Alpine divide by spectacular peaks and a valley system which supports the longest glacier in the Alps.
- **Criterion (viii):** The property provides an outstanding example of the formation of the High Alps resulting from uplift and compression, which began 20-40 million years ago. Within an altitude range from 809 m to 4'274 m, the region displays 400 million-year-old crystalline rocks thrust over younger carbonate rocks due to the northward drift of the African tectonic plate. Added to the dramatic record of the processes of mountain building is a great abundance and diversity of geomorphological features such as U-shaped glacial valleys, cirques, horn peaks, valley glaciers and moraines. This most glaciated part of the Alps contains the Aletsch glacier, the largest and longest in Europe, which is of significant scientific interest in the context of glacial history and ongoing processes, particularly related to climate change.
- **Criterion (ix):** Within its altitudinal range and its dry southern/wet northern exposures, the property provides a wide range of alpine and sub-alpine habitats. On the two main substrates of crystalline and carbonate rocks, a variety of ecosystems have evolved without significant human intervention. Superb examples of plant succession exist, including the distinctive upper and lower tree-line of the Aletsch forest. The global phenomenon of climatic change is particularly well-illustrated in the region, as reflected in the varying rates of retreat of the different glaciers, providing new substrates for plant colonisation.

UNESCO World Heritage since 2001

More information:





Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps

Unique witnesses of prehistory

The “pile dwellings” are remains of prehistoric settlements in lakes and marshes around the Alps. The serial property includes 111 sites in six countries (CH, D, F, I, SLO, A) and 56 of them are located in Switzerland. The artefacts – organic materials such as wood, textiles, plant remains and bones provide fascinating insights into life around 5,000 to 500 B.C. Many finds are difficult or impossible to access as they are underwater, on the shores of lakes or in marsh areas. This makes their exhibition in museums even more important, such as at the Laténium near Neuchâtel, where you can gain a detailed impression of the lives our ancestors led.

Did you know?

- Along our lakeshores, Neolithic people contributed to the extraordinary global expansion of cultivated wheat, which now covers more than 2.25 million km².
- The first environmental damage occurred in the time of the pile dwellings over 5,000 years ago with the mass deforestation of woodland areas for farming.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps meet criteria IV and V for the inscription.

- **Criterion (iv):** The series of prehistoric Pile Dwelling sites are one of the most important archaeological sources for the study of early agrarian societies in Europe between 5'000 and 500 BC. The waterlogged conditions have preserved organic matter that contributes in an outstanding way to our understanding of significant changes in the Neolithic and Bronze Age history of Europe in general, and of the interactions between the regions around the Alps in particular.
- **Criterion (v):** The series of Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps has provided an extraordinary and detailed insight into the settlement and domestic arrangements of pre-historic, early agrarian lake shore communities in the Alpine and sub-Alpine regions of Europe over almost 5'000 years. The revealed archaeological evidence allows a unique understanding of the way these societies interacted with their environment, in response to new technologies, and also to the impact of climate change.



UNESCO World Heritage since 2011

More information:





La Chaux-de-Fonds / Le Locle, Watchmaking Town Planning

Two towns that tick alike

The towns of La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle, situated in the Jura mountains of the Canton of Neuchâtel, bear witness to the successful symbiosis between their urban setting and their watchmaking industry. After suffering devastating fires, their reconstruction in the early 19th century was carefully planned. The grid design of the roads and constructions was specifically adapted to the requirements of the thriving industry. Many of the buildings displayed a well-thought-out combination of living quarters, production areas and offices. Today, they are a testimony to the history of local craftsmanship and industry. The fact that the region is still an important international watchmaking centre is proven by the many well-known watch brands which have their headquarters here.

Did you know?

- In 1900, more than half of the world's watches were made in La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle.
- In less than ten years, (1878–1887), three world-renowned figures were born here: Louis-Joseph Chevrolet, Charles-Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) and Blaise Cendrars.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle meet criteria IV for the inscription.

- **Criterion (iv):** La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle constitute a unique urban and architectural ensemble, wholly dedicated to watchmaking from the 18th century until the present day. Watchmaking space and living space co-exist in an extremely close relationship. The rational, pragmatic, and open planning of the urban space has encouraged the sustainable development of this mono-industry, as a “manufacturing-town”.

UNESCO World Heritage since 2009

More information:





Old city of Berne

A tour through the centuries

The city, founded in 1191, is enthroned on a peninsula high above the Aare and still bears witness today to the ambitious scale of urban development in medieval Europe. It is a positive example of how a medieval city structure can be retained and yet adapted to also meet contemporary requirements. With its impressive closed rows of houses, its attractive roof landscape, arcades, cellars, towers and fountains, which have largely retained their original form, the federal capital city invites you to go on a tour through the centuries.

Did you know?

- Bern's colourful street signs, in red, green, yellow, black and white, date back to the time when the city was occupied by Napoleon's troops. They showed the drunk French soldiers the right way home through the alleys of the Old Town.
- Albert Einstein developed his famous theory of relativity in Bern.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the World Heritage List, World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Old City of Bern meets criterion III for its inscription.

- **Criterion (iii):** The Old City of Berne is a positive example of a city that has conserved its medieval urban structure whilst responding, over time, to the increasingly complex functions of a capital city of a modern State.

UNESCO World Heritage since 1983

More information:





Lavaux, Vineyard Terraces

A winegrowing culture that goes back generations

Vineyard terraces were created on the steep slopes of Lake Geneva under the direction of the monks as early as the 11th century. Since then, generations of winegrowers have cherished and taken care of this unique landscape. They benefit from the abundance of the “three suns” here: the sun itself, its rays reflected by the lake, and the warmth stored in the walls of the vineyards. The wine estate extends across 40 kilometres and is one of the largest winegrowing areas in Switzerland. With its 14 villages, it reflects the cultural landscape in an impressive way, and this has developed thanks to the balanced interplay between the residents and the environment.

Did you know?

- If lined up all together, the wine terraces in Lavaux would stretch from Bern to Frankfurt, a distance of 400 km.
- The chief grape variety in the region is the Chasselas, creating a wine that is suffused with dry and fruity aromas.
- Some winegrowing families have been cultivating their estates for more than 20 generations.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Lavaux Vineyard Terraces meet criteria III, IV and V for the inscription.

- **Criterion (iii):** Lavaux, Vineyard Terraces demonstrates its evolution and development over almost a millennium in a highly visible way through the well-preserved landscape and buildings that demonstrate a continuation and evolution of longstanding cultural traditions specific to its locality.
- **Criterion (iv):** The evolution of the Lavaux Vineyard Terraces, as evidenced on the ground, illustrates very graphically the story of patronage, control and protection of this highly valued wine-growing area, all of which contributed substantially to the development of Lausanne and its region and played a significant role in the history of the geo-cultural region.
- **Criterion (v):** The Lavaux Vineyard Terraces is an outstanding example that displays centuries of interaction between people and their environment in a precise and productive way, optimising the local resources to produce a highly valued wine that was a significant part of the local economy. Its vulnerability in the face of fast-growing urban settlements has prompted protection measures strongly supported by local communities.



UNESCO World Heritage since 2007

More information:





The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement

Architecture that crosses continents

Scarcely any architect has characterised modern construction worldwide as much as Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, better known as “Le Corbusier”, who grew up in La Chaux-de-Fonds. 17 selected buildings in Argentina, Belgium, Germany, France, India, Japan and Switzerland are testimony to his incomparable creativity and versatility in a variety of contexts. Two of these buildings are located in Switzerland: “La Petite villa au bord du lac Léman”, also called Villa “Le Lac”, next to Lake Geneva in Corseaux and “Immeuble Clarté” in Geneva. Le Corbusier is a key figure in the internationalisation of architecture and town planning, which have marked urban landscapes around the world in the 20th century.

Did you know?

- Le Corbusier was one of the first architects in the world to have built or designed on all five continents.
- Although Le Corbusier built Villa “Le Lac” in Corseaux and “Immeuble Clarté” in Geneva, he also constructed several other buildings in Switzerland, notably in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Le Locle and Zurich.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier meets criteria I, II and VI for its inscription.

- **Criterion (i):** The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier represents a masterpiece of human creative genius, providing an outstanding response to certain fundamental architectural and social challenges of the 20th century.
- **Criterion (ii):** The property exhibits an unprecedented interchange of human values, on a worldwide scale over half a century, in relation to the birth and development of the Modern Movement. The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier revolutionized architecture by demonstrating, in an exceptional and pioneering manner, the invention of a new architectural language that made a break with the past. The property marks the birth of three major trends in modern architecture: Purism, Brutalism and sculptural architecture. The global influence reached on four continents is a new phenomenon in the history of architecture and demonstrates its unprecedented impact.
- **Criterion (vi):** The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier is directly and materially associated with ideas of the Modern Movement, of which the theories and works possessed outstanding universal significance in the twentieth century. The series represents a “New Spirit” that reflects a synthesis of architecture, painting and sculpture. The Work materializes the ideas of Le Corbusier that were powerfully relayed by the International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM) from 1928. The series is an outstanding reflection of the attempts of the Modern Movement to invent a new architectural language, to modernize architectural techniques, and to respond to the social and human needs of modern man. The contribution is not merely the result of an exemplary achievement at a given moment, but the outstanding sum of built and written proposals steadfastly disseminated worldwide through half a century.

UNESCO World Heritage since 2016

More information:





Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe

Conquering a continent

Beech is the most important tree species in Central Europe and is characterised by its ability to adapt to different climatic and geographical conditions. However, human intervention has put great pressure on the ancient and primeval beech forests, of which only a few vestiges remain. With trees over 170 years old and a total area of more than 1000 hectares, the two forest reserves in the Lodano, Busai and Soladino valleys (TI) and Bettlachstock (SO) are a valuable genetic reserve, not only for beech trees but also for many associated animal and plant species that depend on these habitats. The two Swiss forest reserves, now on the UNESCO World Heritage List, are part of a transnational serial site consisting of 94 beech forests located in 18 countries.

Did you know?

- Beech has survived the glaciations of the last million years and has been able to colonise the entire European continent.
- It is estimated that beech forests are home to up to 10,000 animal species.

Overview of the OUVs

To be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the UNESCO World Heritage properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value and meet at least one of ten selection criteria. The Beech Forests meet criterion IX for the inscription.

- **Criterion (ix):** The Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe are indispensable for understanding the history and evolution of the genus *Fagus*, which, given its wide distribution in the northern hemisphere and its ecological role, is globally significant. These complex, largely undisturbed temperate forests show comprehensive ecological patterns and processes of pure and mixed stands of common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) across a variety of environmental gradients, in particular climatic and geological conditions, at the scale of almost all beech forest regions. Forests are included in all altitudinal zones, from coastal areas to the forest edge, and include the best remaining examples in the range of the common beech. Beech is one of the most important tree species in the temperate broadleaf forest biome and represents an outstanding example of recolonisation and development of terrestrial ecosystems and communities since the last ice age. The continuous northward and westward expansion of beech from its glacial refuge areas in the eastern and southern parts of Europe can be traced along stages and natural corridors across the continent. The dominance of beech in vast areas of Europe is living testimony to the genetic adaptability of this tree, a process that is still ongoing.



UNESCO World Heritage since 2021

More information:



World Heritage Days

A weekend dedicated to the World Heritage



Every year during the second weekend in June, the sites will offers unique insights into various natural and cultural wonders and opens their doors to places normally closed to visitors.

The motto "You only want to protect what you know" aptly summarises the purpose of the World Heritage Days. It is important that the local population is aware of the significance and value of the World Heritage properties, because only then can they actively campaign for their protection and preservation. Special programmes and open doors create the opportunity for people to experience and understand their World Heritage properties at first hand. This not only raises awareness of cultural heritage, but also promotes pride and identification with one's own region. Together, we are laying the foundations to ensure that these unique sites are preserved for future generations.

World Heritage Days

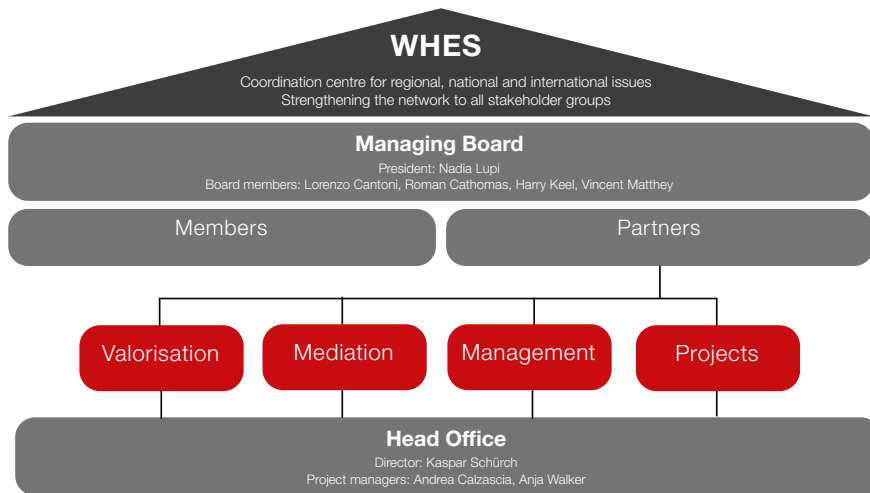
More information:



World Heritage Experience Switzerland

The nationwide network

For 15 years, World Heritage Experience Switzerland (WHES) has been defending the concerns of its members in the UNESCO World Heritage environment in Switzerland. WHES organises and manages an annual programme of activities involving all affiliated partners of the UNESCO World Heritage Network in Switzerland. WHES focusses on the development of activities in the field of valorisation, mediation and management. All partners in the network can benefit from synergies and a joint work programme. The work of WHES is financed by contributions from members and partners. WHES also develops projects financed by NPR and Innoutour funds or through mandates.



Goals

- Raise awareness of the World Heritage among the general public
- Forster the desire to visit among the population
- Joining forces at national level
- Creating a framework for the exchange of experience and knowledge transfer
- Creation of platforms for joint actions
- Realisation of cross-border actions with related organisations
- Strengthening the common identity
- Increasing awareness and communication in schools

Contacts

Happy to collaborate with you!

The network of World Heritage properties in Switzerland allows an optimisation of information stream. Do you need more information from our Partners? Follow the links below.

World Heritage	Contact Person	Website
Abbey of St. Gall	St.Gallen-Bodensee Tourismus Cornelia Schoop tours@st.gallen-bodensee.ch	www.stiftsbezirk.ch www.st.gallen-bodensee.ch
Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona	UNESCO-Weltnaturerbe TektonikArena Sardona Felix Zogg felix.zogg@unesco-sardona.ch	www.unesco-sardona.ch
Benedictine Convent St. John in Müstair	Stiftung Pro Kloster St. Johann Müstair Dr. Romina Ebenhöch museum@muestair.ch	www.muestair.ch www.val-muestair.ch
Rhaetian Railway in the Albula / Bernina Landscapes	Bahnmuseum Albula Roman Sommer contact@bahnmuseum-albula.ch	www.rhb.ch/welterbe
Fortress of Bellinzona (Three Castles, Defensive Wall and Ramparts of the Market-Town of Bellinzona)	Fortezza Bellinzona Barbara Pedrazzini info@fortezzabellinzona.ch	www.fortezzabellinzona.ch
Monte San Giorgio	OTR Medrisiotto e Basso Ceresio info@mendrisiottoturismo.ch	www.mendrisiottoturismo.ch www.museodeifossili.ch www.ticino.ch
Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch	Stiftung UNESCO-Welterbe SAJA Raphael Schmidt r.schmid@jungfrau-aletsch.ch	www.jungfrau-aletsch.ch
Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps	Laténium Daniel Dall'Agnolo animation.latenium@ne.ch	www.latenium.ch www.palafittes.org
La Chaux-de-Fonds / Le Locle, Watchmaking Town Planning	Tourisme neuchâtelois Kevy Zeller kevy.zeller@ne.ch	www.watch-cities.ch

Welterbestätten Mitglieder von WHES



Altstadt von Bern
Vieille ville de Berne
www.bern.com



Festung von Bellinzona
Forteresse de Bellinzona
www.fortezzabellinzona.ch



Lavaux, Weinberg-Terrassen
Lavaux, vignoble en terrasses
www.lavaux-unesco.ch



La Chaux-de-Fonds / Le Locle
La Chaux-de-Fonds / Le Locle
www.watch-cities.ch



Alte Buchenwälder und Buchenerwälder Europas
Forêts primaires et anciennes de hêtres d'Europe
www.valledilodano.ch

Biens du Patrimoine mondial membres de WHES



Kloster St. Johann in Münstair
Couvent Saint-Jean à Münstair
www.muestair.ch



Schweizer Alpen Jungfrau-Aletsch
Alpes suisses Jungfrau-Aletsch
www.jungfraualetsch.ch



Rhätische Bahn, Albula / Bernina
Chemin de fer rhétique, Albula / Bernina
www.rhb.ch/unesco



Prähistorische Pfahlbauten
Sites palafittiques préhistoriques
www.latenium.ch

Beni del Patrimonio mondiale le membri di WHES



Stiftsbezirk St. Gallen
Abbaye de Saint-Gall
www.stiftsbezirk.ch/



Monte San Giorgio
Monte San Giorgio
www.montesangiorgio.org



Schweizer Tektonikarena Sardona
Haut lieu tectonique suisse Sardona
www.unesco-sardona.ch



Das architektonische Werk von Le Corbusier
L'Œuvre architecturale de Le Corbusier
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