

Via Alpina hiking passbook

Motifs explanation

Stamp N° 1	Vaduz Castle	Vaduz Castle is the hallmark of the capital of Liechtenstein and stands out from miles away. Said to date back to the 12 century, the castle was acquired by the House of Liechtenstein in 1712 and served as the bailiwick's seat. It was later expanded under the order of Prince Franz Josef II, who took up permanent residence in the castle with his family in 1939.
Stamp N° 2	Porcini mushroom	If you look carefully, you can find porcini mushrooms growing around Sargans. Beech forests with a lot of fallen dead wood, as little grass growth as possible and gaps in the canopy that allow warming rays of sunshine to reach the forest floor make particularly promising sites. However, these edible mushrooms may only be collected in small quantities for personal use.
Stamp N° 3	Ibex	Ibexes were reintroduced to the Weisstannen Valley near Mels a good 100 years ago. The animals' most striking feature is their horns, which are large and imposing on males and smaller and finer on females. You'll need a head for heights if you want to catch a glimpse of one though, as ibexes are usually found climbing in rocky regions far above the treeline.
Stamp N° 4	Cairn	Every now and again up on the Foo Pass you'll discover a cairn – a small mound or tower of stones usually built in a prominent location. They are an archaic form of signpost designed to help hikers find their way across rough and complex terrain, particularly in high mountain regions.
Stamp N° 5	Martinsloch	For a few minutes twice a year, the morning sun shines through here and directly onto the church tower of <i>Elm</i> , on 12 or 13 March at 8:52 a.m. (CET) and 30 September or 1 October at 9:33 a.m. (CEST). In actual fact, the sun shines through the rock opening every morning for over a month, but this is only visible from the western outskirts of the village.
Stamp N° 6	Stoat	<p>The stoat was Switzerland's animal of the year in 2018 and can be found on the edges of forests and settlements nearly all over the country up to an altitude of 3,000 metres.</p> <p>Larger than a weasel, measuring approximately 30 centimetres and weighing up to 350 grams, stoats often prey on mice. They are solitary animals with the exception of mothers raising their offspring.</p>
Stamp N° 7	Muttsee dam wall	As part of the Linthal 2015 expansion project, the volume of the Muttsee was increased from approximately 9 million to 23 million cubic metres. The construction of a 1,050-metre-long, 35-metre-high gravity dam raised the water level of the lake by 28 metres, up to 2,474 metres above sea level. It is the longest dam in Switzerland and the highest in Europe.

Stamp N° 8	Uri bull	Urnerboden is the largest alp in Switzerland, with many also believing it to be the most beautiful. It features a church, a village shop and a handful of houses, and is surrounded by nothing except verdant vegetation and pointed peaks reaching up to the heavens. Straight out of a picture book, Urnerboden is home to only 40 people. Perhaps this is why more than 1,000 dairy cows and around 700 other cattle spend the short summer months up here.
Stamp N° 9	Alpine roses	The Klausen Pass is famous for its Alpine roses. They are among the best known plants in the Alps and, with their bright red flowers, some of the most beautiful. Despite the name, however, the plant is actually a member of the humble heath family. It thrives particularly on shady mountain slopes of acidic rock such as granite or gneiss.
Stamp N° 10	Tell Monument	This monument to Switzerland's national hero stands in the centre of the Rathausplatz in Altdorf and is made entirely from bronze. It was created between 1882 and 1895 by the sculptor Richard Kissling. Politicians gave him specific instructions for his commission: Tell had to be portrayed as a proud, bold and determined man in traditional country dress.
Stamp N° 11	Alpine blessing	On the Surenen Pass, a tradition that is widely practised throughout the Catholic mountain regions of Switzerland is kept alive and well: Alpine prayer, also known as "Betruf". Using a milk funnel to amplify their voice like a microphone, Alpine farmers sing their request in four or five reciting tones, seeking "to protect and preserve everything that is and belongs to their alp".
Stamp N° 12	Titlis	You will only ever experience one season up on the peak of Engelberg's local mountain: winter. Titlis hosts the only accessible glacier in Central Switzerland. From here, you can enjoy beautiful panoramic views of snow-covered mountains and untouched Alpine peaks. And the spectacular Titlis Cliff Walk, Europe's highest suspension bridge, awaits at an altitude of 3,041 metres.
Stamp N° 13	Alpine chough	You can't help but be fascinated: yellow-billed choughs, also known as Alpine choughs, are one of the few mountain inhabitants to live high up on the Joch Pass throughout the entire year. These fantastic flyers have coral-red feet, yellow beaks and a shimmering matt-black plumage. As soon as you draw close to the peak, you will spot curious choughs flying close by.
Stamp N° 14	Carlina thistle	Found on the Engstlenalp, this prickly beauty is one of the most well-known and popular Alpine flowers. Its petals close in the evening or rainy weather, forming a conical roof to protect the flower head. People previously used silver thistles to forecast the weather, earning the plant the informal name "weather thistle" (Wetterdistel). They are a protected species.

Stamp N° 15	Meringues	Meringues are widely believed to be a Swiss creation. The story of an Italian confectioner who invented them in Meiringen in 1600 is told time and time again. Taking inspiration from the village in the Bernese Oberland, he reportedly called his creation of sugar and egg white a “meringue”.
Stamp N° 16	Alpine bellflower	Campanula alpina, which is found on the Grosse Scheidegg, is a member of the bellflower family. The flower grows on the perimeter of forests and trails, up to an altitude of 2,400 metres. Its downy stem supports funnel-shaped bellflowers. The flower produces violet-blue blooms between June and September. The Alpine bellflower can grow up to one metre in height.
Stamp N° 17	Eiger north face	For years, it was thought to be unconquerable. And even after the first ascent in 1938, tragedies continued to play out on the Eiger north face. However, this has never dampened the fascination of many mountaineers, who dream of reaching the summit of the most infamous north face in the Alps once in their lifetime. It is one of the ultimate Alpine challenges.
Stamp N° 18	Marmot	These cute rodents rely on the shelter of their burrows to protect them from enemies on the exposed terrain of the Kleine Scheidegg. At the slightest hint of danger, they disappear in a flash into their burrows or down an escape route, which can reach one to two metres in length. Towards the end of September, the marmots retreat into well-insulated winter burrows to hibernate.
Stamp N° 19	Staubbach Falls	At almost 200 metres in height, Staubbach Falls is the third tallest waterfall in Switzerland. In summer, warm winds swirl the waters to create a fine spray. It is these droplets that give the stream and waterfall its name (“Staub” in German means dust). The waterfall is said to have inspired the poet Wolfgang von Goethe to pen the poem “Song of the Spirits over the Waters”.
Stamp N° 20	Chamois	Although you will spot chamois on the Sefinafurgga, they are not actually mountain animals. Despite being found up there all year round, their natural habitat is on the tree line. When summer comes, the chamois hike up great heights to graze on fresh grass and herbs. Their special hooves, with a hard shell surrounding a soft core, make them one of the best climbers in the animal kingdom.
Stamp N° 21	Alpine salamander	The Alpine salamander, which can be found on the Griesalp, is a particularly peculiar and unusual amphibian. Having separated itself from open water, it is an incredibly bad swimmer. Nevertheless, being in a moist environment is vital for it to survive. It can therefore be found in Alpine pastures and meadows that are not too dry, as well as beside mountain streams.

Stamp N° 22	Hohtürli	Lying at 2,778 metres above sea level, the Hohtürli is a pass connecting Kandersteg to Kiental. It cuts between the Blüemlisalp massif in the south and the Dündenhorn massif in the north, lying exactly on the border between the Alps and Pre-Alps. A natural arch that collapsed at the beginning of the 20th century gave the pass its name.
Stamp N° 23	Lake Oeschinen	The deep-blue Lake Oeschinen, lying at an altitude of 1,587 metres above sea level, is one of the best-known and most-photographed lakes in Switzerland. Reaching a depth of up to 50 metres, it is fed by mountain streams that flow in from the surrounding 3,000-metre peaks. The mountain lake has been listed as part of the Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch UNESCO World Heritage site since 2007.
Stamp N° 24	Mountain hare	Mountain hares are perfectly adapted to the Bunderchrinde landscape. Real quick-change artists, they moult three times a year, from grey-brown in spring to brown in summer and white in winter. Only the black tips of their ears remain unchanged. They have shorter ears and legs than European hares and are extremely nimble.
Stamp N° 25	Vogel-Lisi	The Vogel-Lisi is a famous Swiss dialect song that has become an Adelboden trademark. It was composed quite spontaneously in the 1950s in a local pub. The song refers to a herb woman who actually lived in Adelboden and was always accompanied by a raven when gathering herbs.
Stamp N° 26	Golden eagle	If you ever hear a solitary, sharp whistle when travelling on the Hahnenmoos Pass, the King of the Alps cannot be far away. Marmots are by far the most common meal for these elegant birds of prey. During the summer months in particular, adults have to bring a lot of food back to the nest to rear their young. These nests are usually located in alcoves on the rock face and are often used by the same pair of eagles for decades.
Stamp N° 27	Alpine festival	The Lenk i. S. Alpine festival boasts culture and customs. Cows adorned with flowers and cowbells and their herdsman celebrate the end of the grazing season in the Alps. Voting for the four-legged Miss Lenk takes centre stage. And every hour, a cow parade known as a “Züglete” takes place, during which the lovingly decorated cows are led through the village.
Stamp N° 28	Edelweiss	The hallmark of the Alps can also be found on the Trütlisberg Pass, often growing alongside the bright violet flowers of the Alpine aster. When it catches the light, the edelweiss often seems to shimmer in silver, making it recognisable from afar. It is strictly a protected species and must not be picked.
Stamp N° 29	Saanen goat	This goat, which has a short, white coat, no horns, and is often rather large, originates from the Saane Valley in the Bernese Oberland. Today it can be found throughout Switzerland, and its exceptional milk production has led it to be crossed with many different breeds worldwide. Almost all high milk-producing goats can be traced back to it, making it one of the most prolific breeds in the world.

Stamp N° 30	Dry stone wall	The dry stone wall on the Col de Jable lies directly on the linguistic border, which is also the division between the cantons of Bern and Vaud. The 199-metre-long wall was probably built in the 16th century. An elaborate campaign led to its restoration between 2016 and 2018. One tonne of stones was used for every metre of wall, totalling 199 tonnes.
Stamp N° 31	Alpine cheese	Etivaz is a popular hard cheese made from raw milk and produced in around 100 Alpine cheese dairies in the canton of Vaud. The cheese is made according a traditional recipe, by hand and over an open fire. The raw milk is processed directly on site and is full of the flavours of fine Alpine herbs. This gives Etivaz its distinctive aromatic and fruity taste, with a light nutty note.
Stamp N° 32	Grand Chalet	The Grand Chalet at Rossinière beats every record: 500 m ² of floor space over five floors, 113 windows and a 2,800-letter dedication painted onto its façade. It is the largest wooden residence in Switzerland. The cellar was responsible for the sheer magnitude of the chalet: it was designed to store 600 cheese wheels until they fully ripen.
Stamp N° 33	Cheese fondue	The restaurant at the Col de Chaude serves an outstanding fondue. The Swiss national dish is surrounded by many traditions and habits. For example, it is customary for anyone who drops their piece of bread into the fondue pot to buy a round of white wine, schnapps or other drink, or get up and sing a song.
Stamp N° 34	Rochers-de-Naye	The 2,042-metre-high Rochers-de-Naye has long been a popular destination. Taking the cog railway from Montreux to the peak is well worth the journey. The summit offers a breathtaking view. You can see Lake Geneva as well as the Vaud, Bernese, Valais and even French Alps.
Stamp N° 35	Freddie Mercury Statue	The singer of the rock group Queen settled in peaceful and relaxing Montreux, where he recorded his final album with the band: "Made in Heaven". To commemorate his stay, a bronze statue of Freddie Mercury has looked out from the promenade since 1996. His fans continue to adorn the monument with flowers every day.