

ESTAVAYER & PAYERNE

CHARMING CONTRASTS

The small medieval town of Estavayer-le-Lac is situated on the south bank of Lake Neuchâtel. Narrow lanes brimming with history invite visitors to stroll and linger, as does the spacious shoreline of the lake. Sandy beaches and coves and a first-class water sports centre are a hit with keen swimmers. Estavayer-le-Lac has been a haunt of wakeboarders for many years. Visitors can enjoy cool, fun-packed rides and try out or simply watch – the 800 metre cable ski has it all!

Payerne, a small town in the Broye valley, only a few kilometres from Lake Neuchâtel, is steeped in history. The medieval town centre is dominated by the magnificent 11th century Abbey. The largest Romanesque building in Switzerland is regarded as a classic example of Clunian architecture. First-rate exhibitions and concerts offer visitors to the Abbey and its museum a wonderful cultural experience.

The Grande Cariçaie, one of the most beautiful wetland areas in Europe, gives visitors an excellent insight into the ecosystem. It extends for approximately 40 km along the south bank of Lake Neuchâtel. The 3,000 hectare reserve is reputed to contain one quarter of the flora and fauna of Switzerland, i.e. around 800 plants and over 10,000 animal species. Numerous endangered animals breed here or stop over during the migratory period. The marked trails make this area very accessible to walkers and cyclists.

The oldest relics are to be found in the lake, namely the remains of prehistoric lake dwellings. They were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2011. A Neolithic settlement as it would have looked 5,000 years ago has been reconstructed in nearby Gletterens. Visitors can explore this prehistoric period on their own initiative or take a guided tour.
www.estavayer-payerne.ch



NEOLITHIC VILLAGE



An experience: Switzerland's prehistory comes alive in the model Neolithic settlement in Gletterens on Lake Neuchâtel. Events and workshops provide a unique insight into the life of the lake dwellers around 4,500-800 B.C. Children and adults can learn to make a fire, throw a spear, produce jewellery, a lamp or a stone-age knife, using the techniques of that age. It is advisable to book an overnight stay in a Tipi at the same time. *May to October.* www.village-lacustre.ch

SUMMER ON THE LAKE



High spirits: Whether it's cool action on a sailing course, windsurfing, water skiing or wakeboarding on the cable ski or a leisurely trip on a stand-up paddle or in a canoe or pedalo: whatever you choose, the address is the Alphasurf Water Sports Centre on the Nouvelle Plage. You can chill out on the waterfront here and even the fondue in the Restaurant La Dérive is an occasion for a barefoot chat. The holiday feeling is enhanced during the Estivale Open Air from 31.7. – 4.8.2019. www.alphasurf.ch

HISTORIC



Walking tour: with 16 stops that reveal the fascinating heritage of the town, including Chenaux Castle, the Saint-Laurent Abbey Church, the monastery, gates and towers. Audio commentaries through QR code supplement brochures and boards.

NATURAL PARADISE



Discover: Estavayer-le-Lac is situated in the centre of the Grande Cariçaie, the 3,000 hectare nature reserve on Lake Neuchâtel. Fifty kilometres of hiking trails and cycling paths lead through the wetland area with its diversified ecosystem, and there are observation platforms and lookouts, information boards and plenty of space and time for individual discoveries in the realm of 800 plants and over 10,000 animal species. The nature centres La Sauge near Cudrefin and Champ-Pittet, as well as individual experts, offer guided tours. www.grande-caricaie.ch

KEY DATES

- 1000 - Construction of the Romanesque Abbey Church, Payerne
- 1284 - Construction of Chenaux Castle
- 1982 - Creation of the Grande Cariçaie Reserve
- 2011 - Inclusion of the prehistoric lake dwellings in the UNESCO World Heritage List

NUMBERS

- Population** 10,239 inhabitants (Payerne), 6,311 inhabitants (Estavayer-le-Lac)
- Language** French
- Altitude** 448 m above sea level