

GRUYÈRES

TRAVEL BACK IN TIME TO THE MIDDLE AGES

The small picturesque town of Gruyères appears to have emerged straight out of the Middle Ages. A visit to the fortified 13th century Gruyères castle, where a fascinating multimedia show takes you on the journey through time, is a must. The castle has magnificent exhibitions, which are a hit with history buffs as well as art lovers. Roaming through the castle with its Knights' Hall, turrets, battlements, defensive walls and garden is a fantastic experience in itself. When you are able to take your eyes off the wonderful panorama of the surrounding Pre-Alps region from the castle terrace, you can stroll through the small historic town of Gruyères with its traffic-free streets. New photo opportunities present themselves at every step. The Museum and Bar of H.R. Giger, who won an Oscar for designing the xenomorphs in the film *Alien*, offers a completely different kind of cultural experience, as does the Tibet Museum. Traditional restaurants serve the legendary specialties of the Fribourg Pre-Alps,

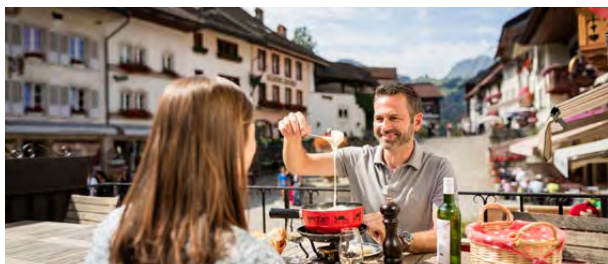
such as fondues and dishes from the Bénichon menu. In the shops, you can stock up on delicious products – first and foremost Le Gruyère AOP cheese and chocolate from the nearby Maison Cailler – as well as souvenirs. Every year, around 1 million people visit Gruyères, the tourist gateway to La Gruyère.

According to legend, Gruyères was founded in 400 B.C. by the Vandal King Gruerius. He saw a crane ("grue" in French) flying across the crimson evening sky and decided to build his town on that very spot. This is why the coat of arms of Gruyères depicts a crane on a red background. The symbol of the erstwhile heraldic bird of the Count of Gruyères still has a strong presence in the small town and throughout the region.

www.la-gruyere.ch/gruyeres



PACKAGE



La Gruyère Passport: This package offers the most cost effective way of discovering the region. Two nights starting from CHF 125.- are bookable together with, for example, a fondue evening, public transport, discounts on mountain railways and vouchers for tourist visits, including Gruyères Castle, the H.R. Giger Museum, the chocolate factory Maison Cailler and La Maison du Gruyère demonstration cheese-dairy.
Tel. +41 (0)848 42 44 24 www.la-gruyere.ch/pass

GRUYÈRES CASTLE



Storyteller: We are off to meet Chalamala, the contemporary witness and living history book! The last jester from Gruyères Castle still has first-hand knowledge of the myths. Counts and birds followed in quick succession, while the same old Chalamala related their victories and defeats to the people in simple verses. His tales allow modern-day visitors to experience the emotions of past centuries.
Dominique Pasquier, Tel.+41 (0)79 530 82 35, dompasquier55@gmail.com

HIKING



Worthwhile: An easy hiking trail takes you from the foot of Gruyères Hill to the "Chapelle des Marches". There are wonderful views of Moléson, Dent de Broc and the Vanils mountain range, while the old swaying bridge takes hikers across the River Sarine.

DEMONSTRATION CHEESE-DAIRY



The favourite cheese of most Swiss people: La Maison du Gruyère, a demonstration cheese-dairy, is dedicated to the king of cheeses, the world-renowned Le Gruyère AOP. This is where 36 farmers come twice a day to deliver the milk from their cows that graze in the lush green meadows and alpine pastures. Visitors are invited to watch the cheese production demonstrations from 9.00 am or from 12:30 am. An interactive and entertaining tour tells visitors everything they need to know about Le Gruyère AOP, culminating in a tasting. www.lamaisondugruyere.ch

KEY DATES

13th c. - Gruyères Castle was first mentioned
1938 - Canton of Fribourg buys the Castle and turns it into a museum
1998 - Inauguration of the H.R. Giger Museum
2009 - The Tibet Museum opens
2014 - Award of the most beautiful village in western Switzerland (Illustré)

NUMBERS

Population 73 inhabitants (town),
2,136 inhabitants (municipality)
Language French
Altitude 810 m above sea level