

Information about the IFAJ-Congress 2005 in Switzerland

A very warm Welcome to the Lake Thun region

The historic castle and the picturesque old town, the parks and promenades, the lake and the alps in the background provide a unique setting for Switzerland's tenth largest city. Thun, the city of the Alps, has been a regional centre for centuries. The lake Thun region, in the very heart of Switzerland, enjoys a unique combination of lake and mountains. Blessed with a mild climate that lasts well into autumn, the region is often referred to as the "Riviera of the Bernese Oberland". Indeed, where else do guests have such a multitude of opportunities to travel through and explore such a well defined region and enjoy all kinds of activities, with something to suit each and everyone? In and on the water, on land, along the lakeshores, in the villages and in town, on panoramic mountain tops and even in the air.

Arrival at Zurich Airport or Geneva Airport

After arrival proceed to the railway station at the airport. At the desk with the IFAJ-Congress logo you will receive the ticket to Thun you booked in advance. In order to get a train ticket please present the voucher that we sent you by e-mail. There will be trains leaving for Bern and Thun almost every half hour.

Timetable for trains

Thun can be reached by train easily from both airports. A detailed timetable is available on the internet of the national rail services www.sbb.ch. As "from" destination choose Zurich Airport or Geneva Airport, the "to" destination is Thun. Please check if you have to change the train in Bern! A short version of the timetable is also attached or can be downloaded from the congress website www.ifaj2005.ch (registration).

Arrival at Bern Airport

Our transfer bus will take you to Thun.

Arrival in Thun by train

After arrival at the Thun railway station proceed to the Tourist Information. The desk is marked with a big "i". There, you will receive the City Card with which you can use the city bus network during the whole time of the congress. Line N° 1 takes you in a few minutes to the station "Schadausaal" and to your hotel. Please take Bus No 1 (Gwattzentrum/Spiez) until "Schadausaal". There are only two stops between train station and Schadausaal (see Registration/welcome Desk).

Buses will leave every 15 minutes from Thun railway station.

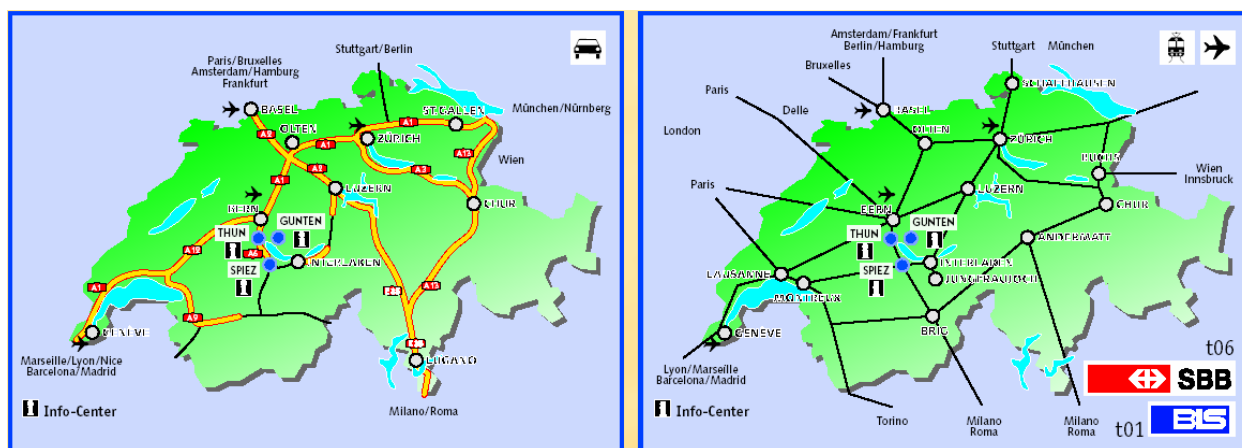
Your City Cards allows you unlimited journeys by public bus on the city network during the IFAJ-Congress.

Thun by road

You arrive in Thun either from Luzern/Interlaken or Bern. Exit the Motorway A6 at junction "Thun Süd" and follow the IFAJ signs, which guide you directly to the Schadausaal. The car parking beside the Congress Center is reserved for the participants of the IFAJ Congress. Please get a parking permit from the congress office at the Schadausaal.

The car parkings in the city and at the hotels are expensive (SFr 15.- to 30.- per day). We recommend to leave the car at the parking beside the Schadausaal during the Congress. You can get permits for the parking at the Welcome Desk for SFr 4.- per day. You won't need a car during the Congress. Most of the hotels are within walking distance, the others can be easily reached by bus. With the City Card, you can use the city bus network during the congress for free and with no restrictions.

Maps



Registration/Welcome Desk

The registration will take place at the Schadausaal in Thun on Wednesday, August 31st from 10am to 5pm. Participants will receive the congress bag and information. Parking tickets for the travellers by car are also available at the welcome desk.

At the foyer of the Schadausaal the Info Mart will be held. From the Schadausaal the hotels are in walking distance (Seepark, Holiday, Alpha) or can be reached by the public bus system (Krone, Freienhof, Zu Metzgern, Emmental). The City card offers you unlimited journeys on the public bus system.

For late arrivals (after 5pm), the registration will be at the Convention hotel Seepark. Phone Number Welcome desk: ++41 33 459 39 39

Important bus stops (Line N° 1):

Schadausaal (Congress Center): Bus stop "Schadausaal"

Seepark Hotel (Convention Hotel): Bus stop "Seepark"

Congress Office/Info Desk

The Info Desk/Congress Office will be at your disposal during the congress day, September 1st at the Schadausaal Foyer. The other days, the congress office can be reached at the Convention Hotel Seepark, 1st floor.

Information for First-timers

If you are a young journalist or a first-timer to an IFAJ Congress, please attend a special session just for you: Wednesday August 31st from 1.30pm until 2.30pm at the Hotel Seepark, Lobby 1st Floor.

Press Center

At the Seepark Hotel a work room will be at your disposal during the congress.

The program

The congress program is available on the congress website www.ifai2005.ch. You can download the newest version or print it directly from the site. You will also receive a printed program upon arrival in Thun.

Songbook: Please carry the songbook always with you during the congress.

Hotels

Congress participants will stay at these hotels:

(All hotels are connected by the bus line N° 1). Maps are in the congress program. Please note the correct names of the closest bus stops to the hotels Krone, Elite, Emmental and zu Metzgern below.

Convention Hotel Seepark

Seestrasse 47

CH-3600 Thun

Tel ++41(0)33.226.12.12. www.seepark.ch

Bus stop: Seepark

Hotel Freienhof

Freienhofgasse 3

CH-3600 Thun

Tel ++41(0)33.227.50.50 www.freienhof.ch

Bus stop: Bahnhof (Railway station)

Hotel Krone

Rathausplatz 2

CH-3600 Thun

Fax ++41(0)227.88.90 www.krone-thun.ch

Bus stop: **Marktgasse** (not Kyburg)

Hotel Holiday
Gwattstrasse 1
CH-3604 Thun
Tel ++41(0)33.336.67.67 www.holidaythun.ch
Bus stop: Strandbad

Hotel Alpha
Eisenbahnstrasse 1
CH-3604 Thun
Tel ++41(0)33.334.73.47 www.alpha-thun.ch
Bus stop: Strandbad

Hotel Elite
Bernstrasse 1
CH-3600 Thun
Tel ++41(0)33.223.28.23 www.elitehotel.ch
Bus stop: **Berntor** (not Burgzentrum)

Gasthof Emmental
Bernstrasse 2
CH-3600 Thun
Tel ++41(0)33.222.01.20 www.essenundtrinken.ch
Bus stop: **Berntor** (not Burgzentrum)

Zunftthaus zu Metzgern
Untere Hauptgasse 2
CH-3600 Thun
Tel ++41(0)33.222.21.41 www.zumetzgern.ch
Bus stop: **Marktgasse** (not Kyburg)

Weather and Climate

The climate is moderate with no excessive heat, cold or humidity. Weather broadcasts distinguish between the north side of Alps, southern Switzerland and the Engadin. Depending on the altitude the temperature range may vary. Temperature in Switzerland is measured in degrees Celsius. To convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit multiply by 1.8 then add 32.

The longterm average for temperature in Thun at lunchtime during August/September is 22°C.

Clothing

There are no dress regulations during the congress. For the trip to the Schilthorn summit we recommend to take with warm clothes and a raincoat. And don't forget your sunglasses and your camera. For the excursions we recommend a comfortable and a sturdy pair of shoes. The weather can change quickly. Be prepared for cool and wet weather as well as for warm and dry conditions.

For the farewell dinner on the ship we would appreciate if you turn up in a suit or a dress.

Cash/Credit Cards

The credit cards most used in Switzerland are Visa, Mater Card and American Express. Many bancs are equipped their ATM machines with the CIRRUS or MAESTRO system and you may use your bank card. Many other Swiss bancs offer ATM machines for cash advances with your credit card. It is recommended to have a small amount of cash on hand upon arrival in Switzerland.

Electricity

The current used trough out Switzerland is 220 volts (AC), 50 cycles. Most power sockets are designed for three pin round plugs. The standard Continental type plug, with two round pins is used for most small appliances. Many electrical travel products, i.e. hair dryers, razors, contact lens sterilizers etc. may be switched from 110 to 220 volts. In all other cases you will need travel converter.

Business Hours

The usual hours for shopping in Switzerland are Monday to Friday from 08.00 till 12.00 and from 13.30 till 18.30. Saturdays till 16.00 and businesses are often closed on Monday mornings.

Profile of Switzerland

Capital: Berne

Population: 7 million

Government: Parliamentary Federal State since 1848, direct democracy

Cantons: 26

Languages: German (64%), French (19%), Italien (8%), Romansch (1%), others (8%), English is widely spoken.

The name Switzerland comes from "Schwyz", one of the original cantons in the Confederation. The letters "CH" are the country's national designation and stand for "Confoederatio Helvetica", the Latin words for Swiss Confederation. The Swiss national flag consists of a white cross centered on a square field of red. Each Swiss canton and community has its own flag.

Telephone

Dialing to Switzerland

The international access code for Switzerland is “41”, then add area code (skip 0) and the number.

Dialing from Switzerland

The access code for international connection is “00” (on mobiles “+”) plus code of country to phone to.

Using your mobile phone in Switzerland

Before setting off, check that your mobile is activated for telephoning abroad. Your provider will give you information on this. You may need an adapter to recharge your mobile in Switzerland.

Travellers from USA and Japan

Phoning in Switzerland requires a triband device that works on both American and European networks.

The Swisscom Mobile network covers over 99% of the populated area of Switzerland. Upon entry to Switzerland the mobile phone generally searches on its own for a network. For example, SWISS GSM will appear on the Display.

Emergency phone numbers

Ambulance: +41 144

Police: +41 117

Fire brigade: +41 118

Pre-Congress Tour: West of Switzerland

Participants to the pre-congress tour will get the program separately.

Further information

If you have questions concerning the congress, please check the congress website www.ifaj2005.ch or contact the congress office. Mrs Astrid Wyss (Mobile +41 76 459 39 39) or Markus Rediger (Mobile +41 79 407 95 52) will be glad to give you assistance.