

VareseNews

Looking for Santa Claus among the sweets and local street markets

Pubblicato: Lunedì 16 Novembre 2009



From mountain villages to city streets, there are more than 130 markets and events connected with the Christmas festivities. Guided by the scent of cinnamon, an essential ingredient in biscuits and sweets, and of mulled wine, you can discover the traditional products of every region.

Region of Zurich – Winterthur: Christmas atmosphere in the town of photography.

Decorated for the festivities, 100 wooden houses live up the Christmas street market in Winterthur from 1 – 23 December. Here, you will find on sale everything that gives joy at Christmas. Let yourselves be enchanted by the attractive atmosphere pervading the town of photography, during a guided Christmas tour, and enjoy a lovely glass of mulled wine.

When: from 1 – 23 December

Where: Winterthur, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Bremgarten: the largest street market!

With more than 100,000 visitors, 320 stalls and merry-go-rounds, it is considered to be the largest street market in Switzerland. The stalls line the narrow streets that fill the old town, on both sides of the River Reuss. Restaurants offer live music, with the inevitable Christmas choirs, to create a truly unique atmosphere.

When: from 3 – 6 December.

Where: the Old Town, Bremgarten (Aargau).

Central Switzerland- Lucerne: the lights and tastes of tradition.

The square next to the Franciscan Church is livened up with lights and stalls throughout the month of December. The heady scent of cinnamon-flavoured biscuits, of punch and mulled wine invites you to discover the local crafts. At the same time, in the station you can visit the “Mercato del Bambin Gesù”, (Infant Jesus Market) with its colourful mix of sweets and spicy food; there are not only Christmas specialities, but also “cerveletas” and sausages.

When: from 3/12 to 20/12, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Where: Franziskanerplatz and the station, Lucerne.

The St Nicholas Procession

In the centre of Switzerland, 20km south of Lucerne, the procession dedicated to St Nicholas takes place

every year in the streets of Sarnen. This small town, which overlooks the lake of the same name, is the starting point for excursions on snowshoes and for cross-country skiing. Keen skiers can enjoy 40km of prepared pistes in the Langis pine forest.

When: 28 November, starting at 7 p.m.

Where: Sarnen.

Hunt for St Nicholas

On the eve of St Nicholas' Day, the village of Küssnacht, on the shores of Lake Lucerne, glows in the light of nearly two hundred enormous bishop's mitres made of card. The mitres, which are known as "Iffele" or "Infuln", are worn by men and women as they accompany St Nicholas on his way through the village. The streets echo with the sound of heavy bells carried by powerful men, the sound of horns and, above all, the characteristic rhythms of wind instruments, accompanying the words "Mänz, Mänz, Mänz, Bodefridimänz" in the background. In the 1920s, Clemenz (Mänz) Ulrich tried unsuccessfully to change the tradition of the time, of the wild chasing of St Nicholas by the village youths, to something more civilised. This undertaking was achieved by his successors, who, in 1928, founded a society for the protection and preservation of the "Klausjagen", or "Nicholas Chase".

When: 4 December

Where: Küssnacht am Rigi.

Region of Lemman-Montreux: infinite charm.

On the shores of Lake Lemman, 140 crafts, placed in decorated and brightly lit chalets present an abundance of original gifts: local products, jewellery, carved and decorated Christmas objects. And to whet the appetite, there are fondues, sausages, raclette, gratins and "boscaioli" tea. In the covered market and on the mezzanine floor, the workshops are all dedicated to children.

Further north, in Caux, towards Rochers-de-Naye, the Christmas Village welcomes families and small children, with magicians and clowns, Santa's animals, street singers and rides on ponies, creating a party atmosphere. And there is Santa's rack train, which takes you up to the house at the top of the Rochers-de-Naye to meet Santa Claus in person!

NB: The train only runs on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.

When: from 26/11 to 24/12

Where: the promenade, Montreux.

Lausanne: the nativity scene.

A rich and varied calendar of events fills the streets of Lausanne during December. In Piazza Saint-François, 53 chalets are set up for the traditional Christmas markets. In Piazza de le Louve, you can see one of the loveliest live nativity scenes in Switzerland, complete with cow and donkey. Gospel and Christmas choirs will be performing on 18, 21, and 23 December. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday is jazz night, with the Macadam Jazz Band and the Indian Jazz Band.

When: from 27/11 to 24/12

Where: various locations, Lausanne

Region of the three lakes – Neuchatel markets

More than 100 stands selling local crafts, Christmas decorations and foods and wines from the three lakes region. On your visit to the markets, you have to have lunch in one of the characteristic inns of Neuchatel, such as "La Taverne neuchâteloise", which is specialised in raclette and fondue, or "La Brasserie Le Jura", which is famous for tripe and for St Martin's Dish.

When: from 05/12 to 06/12, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Where: Old Town Centre, Neuchatel.

[Redazione VareseNews](#)

redazione@varesenews.it

