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SUMMERTIME VIEWS

Chic Zurich and scenic St Moritz have a special charm as both cities blossom into summer

WORDS: DAISY PALMER

While the lure of the cosy metropolis is strong in winter, as the city blooms, Zurich becomes host to more than 40 outdoor lidos and pools, so pack your swimmers. For those who prefer mountains, St Moritz is an easy drive or a pretty train ride away. Stash away the ski gear and don the hiking boots for hearty romps through the Engadine Valley, before catching a Monday morning flight home.

STAY The Marktasse (marktassehotel.ch; rooms from CHF 234), in the centre of Zurich, is everything you want from a boutique hotel. Housed in two restored buildings that date back to 1291, its walls still show snippets of 16th-century friezes. Yet the mid-century furniture brings it up to the age of the modern traveller. Beautiful flowers from Urs Bergmann Florist adorn the light lobby and bedrooms. There are water stations on every floor with marble basins and carafes and glasses aplenty. With health in mind, cloth jogging maps are given out in every room, which were used on the first morning to explore the stunning riverside. Choose the junior suite with a terrace overlooking the dreaming spires and mountains beyond.

If the pull of the peaks proves strong enough, make a proper long weekend of it by heading to the mountains for a couple of nights. St Moritz

is less than three hours away and provides respite in some of the most stylish hotels in the region.

Suvretta House (suvrettahouse.ch; rooms from CHF 440) is a vast confection of a building, the hotel love child of Fellini and Wes Anderson. Tradition rules in the hotel's main areas — all swagged silk and twinkling chandeliers — but the 171 rooms and 10 suites have a lighter touch. Clad in pastels and beige, the windows showcase the Engadine peaks, and the walk-in cupboards are big enough to house a stylish hiking and dining outfit for every day of the month.

After a costly refurbishment, the Kulm Hotel (kulm.com; rooms from CHF 545), another grande dame of the town, has thrust itself into the high design category. The Pierre-Yves Rochon-designed rooms, with a balcony overlooking the lake, are worth splashing out on. The older rooms, clad in Swiss stone pine wood, offer the warmth of a chalet, but with cashmere armchairs, white faux leather desks and some of the most beautifully monogrammed towels.

EAT AND DRINK In Zurich, keep it chic with the modern Bank restaurant (bankzuerich.ch) and try the salmon and fennel with lemon mayonnaise. Or feast on traditional fare such as sliced veal at Kronenhalle (kronenhalle.ch). Seek out the Balho bar at the Marktasse for the best cocktails, or Old Crow (oldcrow.ch) for a nightcap, where the emphasis is on whiskies.



Above: an inviting suite at the Marktasse.
Left: refreshing views from the outdoor spa pool at the Kulm Hotel.
Below: enjoy a meal in the Marktasse's Balho restaurant and bar.



Take some hiking boots to work up an appetite for the feasts ahead in St Moritz. At the Suvretta House, the Grand Restaurant has a set four-course feast. In the chandeliered dining room, waiters with princely epaulettes execute faultless service beneath wooden friezes. There is a strict dress code (expect a jaunty tie from the concierge if you come unprepared). The Suvretta Stube serves less formal but hearty classics such as rosti.

One of the most stylish dining rooms in the area is the Kulm Hotel's Kulm Country Club, a former ice pavilion restored by Lord Norman Foster, a St Moritz resident. It includes pavilions for skating and features local sporting memorabilia. Yet this is very much a place for gastronomy. As diners sit on bespoke chairs, or banquettes clad in leather with brass and American walnut accents, local sparkling wine Weingut zur Sonne "Obrecht" whets the appetite. Here they are showcasing guest chefs such as Mauro Colagreco and the Michelin three-starred Daniel Humm.

Let off steam with an expertly mixed Negroni at Badrutt's Palace (badruttspace.com). More intimate is Chesa Veglia, the Badrutt's Palace's tiny upstairs bar, which also serves a sublime pizza.

DO Zurich has all the big brands one can expect. Scout out some take-home treats. Pimp up your summer tea party with the delicate fronds from teahouse H Schwarzenbach (schwarzenbach.ch), such as a Chung Feng jasmine. Jewellery magpies can browse at Gabriela Frei, at 33 Kirchgasse.

Those coming to St Moritz to buy cowbells and Lederhosen, look away now — it's turbo-powered spending here. Stock up on summer coats by Loro Piana (loropiana.com) or Bogner



skiwear (bogner.com). At Pur (puralps.ch), buy a wooden spoon or local *nusstorte* (nut tart). For exceptional spa-ing, the Spa at the Kulm Hotel is a triumph. As well as a heated outdoor pool, its faultless gym has forest-flecked views over the lake and excellent 1980s music. The salt steam room is a cleanser for any bad chest and the cold plunge pool is a treat. There's even a nude annex at the end of the corridor.

Although St Moritz has some vibrant nightlife — the hotspot in winter is the Dracula Club — keep the long summer hours for daytime fun. Hike along one of the many trails such as those around Muottas Muragl or Diavolezza, or enjoy stand-up paddle boarding on the lake via the St Moritz sailing club (scst.ch). British Airways (ba.com) flies daily to Zurich from London. Flights start from £43

Top to bottom: the indoor pool at the Kulm Hotel's exceptional spa; one of the tempting cocktails at the Marktasse's Balho bar; a terrace view of the Engadine peaks at Suvretta House