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SWITZERLAND : TRAVEL DIARIES – WEEKEND IN ZURICH

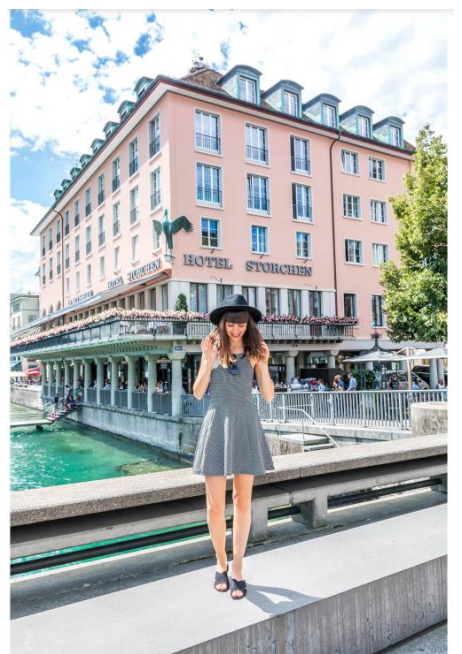
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I fell in love with Zurich the first time I visited a year ago, when I joined Daniel's annual business trip to the city, and it was clear to me that I wouldn't skip another visit to the city this year. If in the past I thought Zurich was another nice European city, but not one worth visiting (especially considering the high costs of the city), last year when I traveled around there and got to know all the hidden corners, I was completely charmed.

When we arrived in Zurich this year, after an especially dreamy weekend in the Swiss Alps (you can read more about this [here](#) and [here](#)), I no longer felt like a tourist in a foreign city. On the one hand I love to travel to places I've never visited before, and on the other hand there's something very special about returning to a place that gives you a warm feeling of home away from home.

Surprisingly, Zurich has become like this for me. I had visited only once before, but I had spent a whole week there, alone for most of the time. Daniel came to the city for work and for the first time in my life I found out how it feels to discover a new destination completely on my own.

Since Zurich isn't a city with a million checklists written about "places you shouldn't miss in the city", I knew the city from a much less touristy and much more local point of view – just like I love it.





Already in my first post about the city (where I gave [my recommendations for things to do in Zurich](#)), I wrote that the old city is a place you must visit to soak up the unique and authentic atmosphere of Zurich. So when we were invited to stay for our last weekend in Switzerland at the chic boutique **Marktgasse Hotel**, which is in one of the oldest and most beautiful buildings in the center of the old city, we responded positively to the invitation without thinking twice.

The **Marktgasse Hotel** combines all the things I expect from a high-quality urban vacation – a sophisticated design, high-class culinary, a fun room to indulge in after a day of running around the city and one particularly important criterion – location, location, location 😊 Even though the public transportation in Zurich is one of the best in the world, and moving from place to place is particularly simple even if you book a non-central hotel ([like where we stayed at the beginning of the week](#)), there's no doubt that it's particularly fun to stay in a hotel that's in the middle of everything.





This may sound weird to you, but the truth is that from the first day we arrived in Zurich, I waited for the weekend to come.

Unfortunately, unlike last year, the whimsical European weather really didn't play in my favor and the forecast predicted gray and rainy weather right up until Thursday. I was encouraged by the fact that at least at the end of the week, when we'll move to the stunning central hotel and Daniel will be on vacation, we could enjoy the sunny and warm weather together.

This time, I decided to write my experiences from this perfect weekend in Zurich just like a diary - let me know what you think in the comments below and maybe I'll continue writing posts like this in the future!

Thursday, July 27th : Check-in, shopping in the old city and pink pizza

- 13:30 - Drive to the [Marktgasse Hotel](#) : The sky cleared just when I had to check out of the first hotel we stayed in! I ordered a taxi and drove toward the old city, and the whole way the taxi driver praised the boutique hotel we were going to stay at 😊 From the moment we entered the old city with the taxi, a big smile spread across my face. Finally, the sun came out and I was back in my favorite place in the city. We made our way through the narrow, cobbled alleys of the old city and passed picturesque houses, boutique shops, coffee shops and chocolatiers until we reached our final destination - the [Marktgasse Hotel](#). I said goodbye to the nice driver and took the elevator to the lobby on the first floor of the hotel.





- 14:00 Check-in and lunch : After a very warm reception, which included a detailed explanation about the hotel (for example, that it's located in one of the historic buildings in the old city, built in 1291 and is one of the oldest inns in Zurich!), its restaurants and the area and the 2 vouchers for free drinks in the sweet café under the hotel, I put all of our suitcases in the room and decided to go straight back to the street to look for a quick lunch. In the elevator, a poster caught my attention with the hotel's restaurant menu, which offered a business meal at a very surprising price (around 20 CHF - very cheap for a meal in Zurich!), and I, as a business lunch enthusiast, couldn't help but check it out myself. The hotel's restaurant, **Baltho Kitchen & Bar**, not only looks like a prestigious chef's restaurant, that's exactly what it actually is. This was without a doubt one of the best meals I ate in the city - for the first course I ordered vegetable soup, which came with bread, and for the main course I ordered fish served on a bed of couscous and pesto that was perfect. After that meal, I knew I had to take Daniel there one evening.





- 15:40 - Settling into the room and a room tour in my Insta-stories: Stuffed and pleased, I went back to the room. I'm not used to checking into a hotel alone, and since Daniel was at work I had to be totally excited by the gorgeous room we got all by myself (and yes, it included jumping on the huge king-size bed 😊). I turned the air conditioner on that looked a bit like a Robotic, which froze the room in a second, and I did a live room tour on my Insta-stories (not following on Instagram yet?). This small boutique hotel has only 39 rooms, and we were given a room called GENEROUS, which, as you can tell by its name, was very spacious. The decor of the room was exactly my taste - Scandinavian minimalist wrapped in chic with attention to the smallest details. From the oak floor, through the gray panels that were completely restored on the walls of the room to the meticulously selected super-designed modern furniture - the design was immaculate. Since we got a corner room, there were three huge windows in the room with a view of the alleyways of the old city that brought in a soft light that filled the room from the early morning until late in the evening. The bathroom was also spacious and designed in a minimalist black and white color scheme and was equipped with luxurious products by Aesop.

The only two things I was missing from the room to make it perfect were a mini bar (which the previous hotel oddly didn't have either, perhaps it's a Zurich thing?) and a Nespresso machine. True, there's a Nespresso machine and a variety of tea bags in the lobby, and this isn't a suite room, but in this kind of luxury hotel I would expect a Nespresso machine in every room.





- 16:30 - Shopping in the old city: Daniel finished working and returned to the hotel just in time for a shopping trip in the old city. We went down to the hotel's beautiful lobby to get an energy injection in the form of a short espresso coffee and set off on our way. The hotel is surrounded by picturesque alleys of the old city, which are full of unique boutique shops {my favorite is **FIZZEN**, which sells clothing, accessories and home decor and for the men out there **WOMO** - a store with men's fragrances and beauty care products}, a few of the best chain stores {COS and LUSH for example} and a lot of restaurants, cafes and small chocolatier shops.



- 19:00 - Short rest in the room before dinner : After we ran around the old city we decided to return to the room, take a shower and rest a little before dinner. This is where the luxurious king-size bed with a warm blanket, light as a cloud, came into the picture.



- 20:00 - Dinner : After a short rest in the room we headed out to **Stripped Pizza**, that serves perfect pizzas and salads, which are based on healthy and natural ingredients and free of additives. The menu includes a variety of special pizzas (if you wonder, the pink one is with beet sauce!), but you can also make your own pizza from a variety of fresh doughs, sauces and toppings. **Highly recommended!!**



- 21:30 - Cocktails at RAZZIA : We continued the evening at an especially chic bar serving excellent cocktails and is located a short walk from the pizzeria and from there we returned to the hotel, ready to sink into the cozy and comfortable bed.

Friday, July 28th: A dreamy breakfast, excursions around the city and dining in the hotel's restaurant

- 9:30 - Good morning!: A soft morning light filled the room and the street noises came through the windows of the room *{they really had to think of double glass windows in such a busy area}*, and despite all this I found it hard to get out of the warm, soft bed. Daniel woke up about two and a half hours before and he left for work, and I began the day slowly, an appropriate indulgence for the final days of vacation. The only thing that got me to get up in the end was the thought of the breakfast waiting for me downstairs in the hotel's café, Delish. I got up, looked out the window, and saw that the weather had returned to be gray and a little worrying. I glanced at the weather app which showed a good forecast coming up, got organized quickly, and went down to breakfast.

- 10:30 - But first, coffee: The café, located on the hotel's ground floor and operating throughout the day, serves breakfast for the hotel guests as well as locals who choose to start their day with freshly baked pastries, muesli or amazing eggs. Breakfast is a bit odd - it's all-you-can-eat, but it's not buffet-style - you order dishes and drinks freely from the menu directly from the counter. The concept is a little strange and not the most logical in the world because it creates a queue and waiting time that I wouldn't expect to wait at a hotel's breakfast, but the delicacies served there are completely worth the wait. A variety of fresh baked pastries, with the café's famous cinnamon buns, eggs of all kinds, a variety of cheeses and sausages, a make-your-own fruit salad, chia pudding with mangoes and more. I ordered breakfast at the counter and settled by the bar table overlooking the street. I had a great morning cup of coffee alongside the cinnamon pastry which was really too good to describe in words. A few minutes later, they brought me the Green Eggs dish which was perfect! Well, what could be bad about brioche toast, poached eggs and a lot of avocado? ♡



- 11:30 - E-mails & more: I went back to the room and took advantage of the bright work area to go through emails, blog comments and Facebook comments. I got sucked into [Pinterest](#) for an extra half an hour and got ready to leave.

- 12:30 - A little more shopping for the soul: I went out again to the old city, not only to take advantage of the last day of shopping, but also to absorb the special atmosphere, to get inspired by the designed shops and to eat fine pralines in the chocolateries. In the middle of the day I passed by a classical orchestra that played with astonishing professionalism across from the hotel, right at the entrance to the COS store, and from there I continued toward Bahnhofstrasse, the famous shopping street of the city, a short walk away from the hotel, where I told Daniel I would meet him. All of the famous international chains, such as ZARA and H&M, as well as couture boutiques such as Chanel, Dolce & Gabbana and others, are located on the Bahnhofstrasse. Another recommended shop that I particularly liked was the huge Globus department store, located in the center of the street. It's divided into different departments *{fashion, makeup, home decor, kitchen, paper products and more}* and besides familiar brands, you can find special products that are hard to find elsewhere.

- 18:00 - Back to the hotel: We returned to the room to arrange our suitcases for the flight back home the next day. We also packed a shared bag with swimwear and a change of clothes since we planned on spending the last hours before the flight at the spa of the hammam and fitness area called Fitnesspark Hammam Münsterergasse, which is a 3-minute walk from the hotel and gives hotel guests free admission. When everything was ready, we refreshed ourselves and went down to dinner at the restaurant.

- 19:30 - Food and drinks at Baltho Kitchen & Bar: After enjoying a great lunch at the hotel's brasserie on my first day at the hotel, I had to go back and try new dishes from the restaurant's rich menu and their special cocktails. We started the meal with two great cocktails that immediately opened our appetite - Daniel ordered a gin-based cocktail called Summer G&T and I ordered another gin-based cocktail specially made for me by the nice bartender *{who even came to us after to make sure I enjoyed the drink 😊}*





For the appetizers we ordered **steak tartare**, served with wonderful burrata cheese, tomato chutney, hot red chili pepper and great pesto, and a **tomato tart** with mozzarella cheese, Roquette salad and basil oil. The steak tartare was very seasoned and not as traditionally served, but I loved their interpretation of the dish. The tart was simple and tasty, a very successful combination of flavors. For the main course, Daniel ordered **American-style pork chops**, served with barbeque sauce, crispy hot country fries and grilled corn on the cob. As an avid fan of American food, Daniel devoured the dish with pleasure, but I on the other hand don't love the genre and I preferred to focus on my main course – **entrecote steak alongside an excellent green salad**. The steak was delicious and juicy, and the roasted vegetables served with the steak were great. However, at the beginning of the week, I managed to eat again at the famous “Rolli's Steakhouse” restaurant (*I wrote about it and more [restaurants to eat at in Zurich in this post](#)*) and there's no doubt that steak served on a hot stone will always beat steak served on a plate, no matter how good it is. On second thought, maybe I should have ordered another dish from the menu... 😊 We ended the meal with the homiest apple pie that came along with super high-quality vanilla ice cream. Just as I thought, dinner at the restaurant was also one of the best we ever had in Zurich.







- 21:20 - Bedtime stories : As usual, we were excited by the restaurant's menu, which made us order too much and eat too much... The food eventually beat us, so instead of another night stroll in the alleys of the old city, we just fell on the bed for a 10-minute rest, which became half an hour, which became "Daniel, maybe we should stay in the room?" 😊 Last preparations for check out tomorrow and we sunk into another night's sleep under the cozy blanket.

Saturday, July 29th: Carbs, quality time at swan lake and some more carbs (and fats!)

9:30 - Rise & Shine : I got up again from the noise on the street just before the alarm clock started ringing. When I wake up, my stomach wakes up with me, so I woke Daniel up and hurried him down with me to another perfect breakfast at Delish.

- 10:00 - Breakfast in the main square : The weather in the morning was much more pleasant than yesterday, so we decided to sit at the tables on the sidewalk in front of the café. Daniel made me wait in line to order for both of us - 2 macchiatos, a cinnamon pastry for me and a berry pastry for him, two dishes of green eggs, some cheeses, sausages, bread and chia pudding. As if it wasn't enough, at the end of the meal he sent me to get another croissant for dessert! #diet_starts_tomorrow 😊







- 11:30 - Last preparations in the room and check-out: The time came to say goodbye to our dreamy room, check-out and leave the luggage in the storage room until the flight. We were a bit upset that we weren't able to check-out late because the flight was only at 10:30 at night, but the hotel was totally booked so we didn't have many choices...

- 12:30 - Weekend Market: The tip to go to the weekend market *{which takes place every weekend the weather allows}* near the lake I received from one of my lovely Israeli readers who moved to Zurich recently. In the market, there were dozens of booths selling second-hand items, some more appealing than others, but what's certain - all of them were priced according to the expensive Swiss currency. We didn't find bargains there, but it was very nice to walk around the various stalls and soak up the atmosphere.





- 14:00 - Fast stop at Sternen Grill : We left the market and crossed the Limat river to Sternen Grill to enjoy the wonderful Bratwurst sausages with the place's spicy mustard and to buy 2 more small mustard jars to take home.

- 14:20 - Swan Lake : We finished eating, took two more small rolls with us and headed to the river bank, where you can enjoy a spectacular view of magnificent white swans and little ducks against the blue water. As soon as we began to throw tiny pieces of the rolls into the water, a large group of swans and ducks came closer to us and fought for every crumb!



- 15:00 - Rest in the hotel library : We returned to the hotel to rest a little and decide whether to spend the afternoon until the flight at the spa near the hotel or continue to walk around the city. We took a cup of coffee and tea from the hotel lobby and decided to go down half a floor to the designed library, which was completely empty and was a great substitute for the room, to rest on the couches and browse through the magazines offered. After about an hour of rest we decided to skip the spa and head for the main branch of **Sprüngli**, which is located in the Paradeplatz square, to enjoy the perfect cakes for the last time on this trip.





- 16:30 - Cakes and pralines : Restraint isn't our strong side when we travel abroad, so when we looked at the shiny showcases at Sprüngli we decided to order not only one cake, but two! I chose an incredible chocolate cake and Daniel went for a wild berry cake, but we ended up pigging out and ate from each other...



- 17:00 - Window shopping on Benhofstrasse : We were already in the area, so why not? 😊



- 18:45 - Last drink by the hotel : We remembered that we didn't use the vouchers I got when I checked-in for the café under the hotel just in time for happy hour!

- 19:15 - The goodbye hamburger : Believe it or not, after everything we ate that day, Daniel wanted a last hamburger before the flight and managed to convince me, too! We chose to eat near the hotel at a local chain store called "The Butcher", which serves the burgers in dreamy brioche buns... there's nothing to say, it was a pretty good way to say good-bye to the city 😊

- 20:45 - Departure to the airport and back to Israel : We returned to the hotel, took our suitcases and got on a taxi which took us to the airport. Check-in for the flight, a meticulous inspection, which revealed that I had forgotten to pack my face cleansing oil in the big suitcase (*somehow, on almost every trip, I come back without the oil and have to buy a new one!* 😊) and with that they also took the two mustard jars that we mistakenly left in our backpack (*no doubt, our tiredness did a great job...*), and we boarded the plane!

Bye Zurich - it was a pleasure 😊

