

SKYE O'NEILL



A weekend in Zurich's old town with Marktgasse Hotel (sponsored)

In mid-November I travelled to Zurich as a guest of [Marktgasse Hotel](#), a historic boutique hotel in the heart of the old town. It started life as two adjoining 15th-century inns and the current building incorporates some of those heritage elements into a design-led minimalist interior that is both cosy and welcoming. Rooms are decorated with attention to detail, with welcome flourishes like Aesop products in the bathrooms and art books by the bed. In the communal area you'll find a book-lined library and adjoining salon, a selection of teas and coffees from [Schwarzenbach](#), whose lovely shop is just around the corner, and a fabulous selection of travel and design books and magazines for you to sit and leaf through. I ate at both its restaurant, [Baltho](#), and its café, [Delish](#), which was packed most of the time with locals. I thoroughly enjoyed my stay and would recommend it both for its convenient location and its comfortable charm.



The hotel is surrounded by the winding streets and alleys of the historic old town centre by the Limmat river. I'd never been to Zurich (or indeed Switzerland) before, and it was a bit of a revelation – I hadn't expected to find such charming streets, full of old buildings which give a flavour of Zurich's history as a centre of trade (many of the historic guildhalls still remain) and also as a centre of religious reform. Its Protestant cathedrals are well worth a visit, both for the views (the tower at Grossmünster church has wonderful panoramic views of the city) and for their modern stained glass, with windows by Giacometti at Grossmünster and by Marc Chagall at Fraumünster.

The thing I most enjoyed was simply wandering the streets of the old town – some of the highlights were the Villa Tobler, a mansion built in 1853 with an adjoining park that is open daily to the public for free, and the streets around it, in particular Trittligasse, Neustadtgasse and Frankengasse.



Towards the river I found that the best streets for photography were Predigergasse, Neumarkt, Augustiniengasse, and Spiegelgasse. On the other side of the river you'll find the lovely area of Schipfe, which is well worth a wander on your way up to Lindenhof, a park at the top of a hill which overlooks the city and has wonderful views, in particular at sunset.



As far as cafes go, I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to [Confiserie Sprüngli](#), where I tried their *café gourmand* – a tasting menu of little cakes and the chocolates they're famous for. It was hugely popular with the locals as well as tourists, and their shop on the ground floor was like an Aladdin's cave – my children would have loved it! As it was I stocked up on honey cakes and chocolates to take home with me, as well as their famous macarons, or Luxemburgerli as they're called.

[Café Schober](#) and opposite it the café at [Schwarzenbach Kolonialwaren](#) were also lovely places for a coffee stop near the hotel.





I feel like I only scratched the surface of Zurich, and would have loved to spend longer there exploring the areas beyond the old town – as it was I had time for a brief trip to [IM Viadukt](#) and to [Frau Gerold's Garten](#), but would have liked to explore those areas more. I'd also have loved to visit a few places that were recommended to me but that I didn't have a chance to try: [ACID](#) cafe, [Bank](#), [Juicery 21](#), and [Kindli](#) in particular. Something to go back for!

Disclaimer: I travelled to Zurich courtesy of Marktgasse Hotel. However the views and opinions expressed in this blog post are my own and it has not been drafted in collaboration with the hotel.





