Sightseeing Switzerland –
at the Swiss Open-Air Museum

Discover Switzerland at the Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg using all your senses

109 historic buildings from all regions of Switzerland, over 200 farm animals and craftsmanship from
days gone by: at Ballenberg you experience Switzerland with all your senses. The spacious grounds
of Switzerland’s only open-air museum stretch between the communities of Hofstetten and
Brienzwiler, above Brienz, in the heart of the Bernese Oberland.

Every time you visit the Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg you’ll discover something new. Start your
Ballenberg visit with a stroll through one of the 109 historic buildings. From the modest home of a day-
labourer to the impressive farmhouse of a large Bernese farming family: take a look into parlours, kitchens,
dining rooms and bedrooms and imagine the daily life of the inhabitants. In 13 different regions – from the
Jura to Central Switzerland, Ticino to high up in the Alps – you can visualise the domestic situation and rural
life of a bygone era. The residential and farm buildings at Ballenberg couldn’t be preserved in their original
locations and were therefore carefully taken down and rebuilt in the 66 hectares of museum grounds.
Besides the residential buildings there are stables, barns, storehouses, washhouses and drying ovens to
discover.

66 hectares of cultivated landscape

The buildings in the Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg are all situated in well-tended cultivated landscapes.
At Ballenberg, land is traditionally cultivated with old tools and equipment. Seeds are still sown in the fields
using horses, a team of oxen ploughs furrows in the field. Farmers’ gardens are laid out according to historical
patterns and almost forgotten varieties of vegetables and fruit are often grown in them. In Switzerland
gardening and care of the countryside were essential for survival: over centuries people have studied the
climate, the soil, the flora and fauna – this ancient knowledge is actively fostered, maintained and passed on
in the open-air museum. Discover the varieties that grow and flourish in the Ballenberg gardens and experience
all the care and maintenance work that is necessary during the seasons. Watch our employees sowing and
harvesting, learn how vegetables and fruit were preserved in the past and with luck be able to fill your bag
from the market stall with freshly picked produce from the gardens and fields before you make your
way home.

Over 30 traditional crafts

Can you smell it too? The smell of freshly baked bread is in the air! In the bakery belonging to the ‘Stöckli’
from Detligen/Radelfingen BE, fresh Ballenberg bread is baked every day. Watch the bakers as they carry
out their work or pay a visit to the alpine dairy from Kandersteg BE to discover how tasty Ballenberg
“mutschli” are made using fresh milk. It’s not only food production that can be followed daily at the Swiss
Open-Air Museum Ballenberg. Many old crafts are actively practised in the workshops: do you know what
filoching is? How does traditional rope-making work? The Ballenberg experts present over 30 different
traditional crafts, skills and professions. Many of the products made here can be purchased directly on site in
the craft-houses and Ballenberg shops. Maybe you’ll discover a new hobby on your next visit to Ballenberg!

What about trying your hand at pottery, forging or being an alpine herdsman? Many of the crafts
demonstrated can be learnt in the Course Centre next to the Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg.
More than 200 farm animals

Besides architecture, crafts and numerous exhibitions and activities, more than 200 farmyard animals bring life to the open-air museum. Observe the slow-paced but powerful oxen grazing, watch the awkward foal taking its first steps, let the cheeky goats tease you or please the little piglets with a caress. Here and there flocks of chickens cluck their way through the museum’s grounds or geese refresh themselves with a splash in the stream. There is always something going on in the pastures and stables at Ballenberg.

Easy to reach by car, train and bus

It’s never boring at Ballenberg: walk through woods and over meadows and experience Switzerland with all your senses. If you are hungry and thirsty after all your discoveries, have something to eat in one of the Ballenberg restaurants or buy a snack from a food stall directly inside in the museum’s grounds. Homely meals, traditional Swiss specialities and tasty snacks are provided for your refreshment. The Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg is open daily from the middle of April to the end of October from 10.00 to 17.00 hrs. You can enter the grounds directly from the entrances at Hofstetten (West) or Brienzwiler (East). Parking spaces are available at both entrances. If you are using public transport take the train to Brienz or up to the Brünig Pass and from there take the "Postauto" (post bus) directly to the open-air Museum. Please visit the Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg’s website for information about admission fees, special offers and packages – www.ballenberg.ch

Important facts – at a glance

The Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg is the only open-air museum in Switzerland. Covering an area of 66 hectares it shows everyday life in rural Switzerland. 109 historical buildings from all parts of the country can be discovered and visited at the Swiss Open-Air Museum Ballenberg. In addition to the buildings, over 30 traditional crafts are demonstrated on site, 200 farmyard animals can be seen and discovered and numerous exhibitions and attractions invite visitors to join in.

Opening times
Mid April to end October 10.00 to 17.00 hrs

Admission Prices
Day admission, adult CHF 28.00
Day admission, child 6-16 years CHF 14.00
Child under 6 years free

Find out about current rates and offers on our website www.ballenberg.ch

Attractions
Take a look at the daily schedule (www.ballenberg.ch) to find out what will be going on at the Swiss Open-Air Museum on your specific visiting date.