

GGSWE INTOPS Trip to Switzerland 2019



Day 1

Well here we are. We have successfully negotiated an EasyJet plane, Basel bus and Switzerland's finest rail service and to all safely arrived at Kandersteg International Scout Centre (KISC), our home for the next 6 nights. It's been a long day and we arrived about 10pm in the dark but can make out some impressive mountains which surround us and there is lots of snow.



Day 2

We have had a really busy day today. We started the day with a delicious continental breakfast and made our packed lunches. Then we all worked together to build an impressive ice fort / igloo.



This afternoon we walked in to Kandersteg town had a quick wander round the shops before ice skating. Despite some girls not feeling confident everyone who got on the ice had a great time. We enjoyed a well deserved hot chocolate after before boarding the bus back to KISC. This evening after Goulash we took part in the flag break and raising ceremony in the snow. We have met scouts from Birmingham and West Lancashire and from Spain and Colombia! We are having an early night before getting an early train to the thermal spa tomorrow.

Day 3

First we got up early to go to breakfast and then took a train and a bus for an exciting trip to Brigerbad to the thermal swimming pool. This was amazing! We ate lunch outside in the café, and then took the train and bus back to Kandersteg.



Next, we had calm time and chilled in our rooms or the leisure room and then went off to dinner. Afterwards, we played a very competitive game of Winter Olympics, and obviously won. Go SWEGG!!! (South west England girl guides!!).

Day 4

Today we got up half an hour later than yesterday and headed off to breakfast. We split into two groups to do the snow activities - either with Shawn from Canada or Pedro from Portugal. Firstly we took the gondola up the mountains and did snowshoeing for the first two hours, which took some time getting used to and was very tiring!



Next we had a lunch break on the sunny mountain where we watched people paragliding, skiing, sledging, walking, snowshoeing and snowboarding. Then we sledged all the way down the mountain (5k and took an hour) which was equally terrifying as it was amazing fun. When we reached the bottom we tried curling with hilarious results! Finally we took the bus back to the centre, visited the shop before eating dinner and going back to our rooms. A very action-packed but exciting day!



Day 5

"Right on!"- In the words of Shawn our (Canadian) instructor, today was great. Campfires and alpine animal explorers were some of the activities that we did. Half of the group had a morning of free time for exploring the local town of Kandersteg whilst the other half learnt all about the winter animals of Switzerland. After lunch the group swapped to enjoy the other activity. Rice and chicken and mushroom made a delicious dinner to fill us up ready for the evening activities. Dinner eaten, we headed to our rooms to get changed into some warmer clothes. Obviously the day wasn't over yet; we had the light trail and campfire still to follow! Splitting into 3 groups, we set off on the thought provoking trail. Meaningful quotes and questions inspired us to reflect on a personal and global level. After that we gathered around the campfire and had hot chocolate and dampers on a stick (bread cooked on the fire). No matter what we were doing today it was loads of fun!



Day 6

Today's activity was cross country skiing. After a big breakfast to set us up for the day, we took the bus into Kandersteg where we collected our skis and boots. We then spent the morning practising our technique with our instructors, ending up at KISC where we ate lunch before skiing back to Kandersteg, using everything we had learned during the day.



We then had free time during which we packed ready to head to Geneva (via Our Chalet) tomorrow. For dinner we had some very Swiss fondue with bread and apples, and afterwards competed to make the best snowman (well done Sophie, Zoe, Naomi and Tabitha!).



Day 7

After possibly the earliest morning ever and singing happy birthday to Shannon, we managed to get our suitcases to the bus without falling on the ice path of doom and started the journey to Our Chalet. The speedy change over between train and bus was smooth and then we began the final leg to the snowy Chalet. We attended the pinning ceremony and Anna, leader, was presented with her Queens Guide award. We learnt about the history of the Chalet on a guided tour. Next was the war of the pegs (which we won) and the wood carver. Then on to Geneva and the fastest run down a platform ever to be achieved with suitcases. After we reached Geneva we enjoyed pizza and lots of birthday cake.



Day 8

We started off the day by getting up later than normal (YAY) and then meeting in the hotel dining area for a lovely breakfast of traditional French food such as croissant, pain au chocolat and red coloured eggs! However we had to eat lightly because next we had a chocolate tour of the city. The lady who toured us was a total chocoholic, but also insanely knowledgeable about each chocolate shop, the history of Swiss chocolate, the production of chocolate, different types of chocolate and also all about the history of Geneva, which was very interesting. She told it in stories which were fun and easy to understand. We stopped in each chocolate shop to try some as well as iconic places in the city including an awesome play park which had a roundabout with lots of seats so that you had to pedal to make it move!



When the tour was over we thanked the lady and made our way to a Coop for lunch. After lunch, we split up into small groups so we could all explore the city focusing on what we wanted to see and met back at the hotel at 6. Finally, we went out for dinner in the evening in a traditional Swiss restaurant in which people ate pasta or raclette and delicious ice cream for pudding! We got into bed extremely tired but after a very fun day.

Day 9

The last day of our trip started with breakfast and then a trip on the bus to the Red Cross museum. The exhibition was definitely thought provoking and moving, with stories of people in both natural and manmade disasters. After this, we took a short walk to the front of the United Nations and took many photos with the 'broken chair'. Then we had the biggest burger in the world and a coach journey to the airport.



Switzerland had been absolutely amazing and we had an amazing last day to end the experience.