

# GRUYÈRES

## TRAVEL BACK IN TIME TO THE MIDDLE AGES

The small picturesque town of Gruyères appears to have emerged straight out of the Middle Ages. A visit to the fortified 13<sup>th</sup> century Gruyères Castle is a must. As well as magnificent exhibitions, a new augmented reality audio guide app vividly brings the rich history of this remarkable building to life. Roaming through the Castle with its Knights' Hall, turrets, battlements, defensive walls and garden is a fantastic experience in itself. When visitors are tired of looking at the panorama of the Alpine foothills from the Castle terrace, they can stroll through the traffic-free streets of the small town. New photo opportunities present themselves at every step. The Museum and Bar of HR Giger, who won an Oscar for designing the xenomorphs in the film 'Alien', offers a completely different kind of cultural experience, as does the Tibet Museum. Traditional restaurants serve the legendary specialties of the Fribourg Pre-Alps, such as fondues and traditional Bénichon dishes. The

Fondue Academy gives visitors an insight into the art of fondue preparation by master cheesemakers. Chocolate fans can reserve a place in a workshop at the Chocolaterie de Gruyères or indulge their sweet tooth with the impressive range of delicious treats on offer. Nearby is Maison Cailler, the Swiss Chocolate Factory, which takes visitors on an unforgettable voyage into the world of chocolate.

According to legend, Gruyères was founded in 400 B.C. by the Vandal King Gruerius. He saw a crane ('grue' in French) flying across the crimson evening sky and decided to build his town on that very spot. This is why the coat of arms of Gruyères depicts a crane on a red background.

In December 2021 Gruyères was awarded the 'Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO' label in recognition of its tourism development strategy which respects and promotes the local heritage, local communities and nature. >>





## PACKAGE



**La Gruyère Passport** – This package offers the most cost-effective way of discovering the region. Two nights starting from CHF 175 are bookable together with, for example, a traditional dish, public transport, discounts on mountain railways and admission vouchers for attractions like Gruyères Castle, the HR Giger Museum, Maison Cailler, the Swiss Chocolate Factory, and La Maison du Gruyère demonstration cheese dairy. >>

## GRUYÈRES CASTLE



**Storyteller** – We are off to meet Chalamala, the contemporary witness and living history book! The last jester from Gruyères Castle still has first-hand knowledge of the myths. Counts and birds followed in quick succession, while the same old Chalamala related their victories and defeats to the people in simple verses. His tales allow modern-day visitors to experience the emotions of past centuries. >>

## HIKING



**Worthwhile** – An easy hiking trail takes you from the foot of Gruyères Hill to the 'Chapelle des Marches'. There are wonderful views of Moléson, Dent de Broc and the Vanils mountain range, while the old swaying bridge takes hikers across the Sarine river. >>

## DEMONSTRATION CHEESE DAIRY



**The favourite cheese of most Swiss people** – La Maison du Gruyère demonstration cheese dairy is dedicated to the king of cheeses, the world-renowned Gruyère AOP. This is where 36 farmers come twice a day to deliver the milk from their cows that graze in the lush green meadows and Alpine pastures. Visitors are invited to watch the cheese production demonstrations between 9 am and 12.30 pm. An interactive and entertaining tour tells visitors everything they need to know about Gruyère AOP, and ends with a cheese tasting experience. >>

## KEY DATES

- 13<sup>th</sup> c.** First mention of Gruyères Castle
- 1938** Canton of Fribourg buys the Castle and turns it into a museum
- 1998** HR Giger Museum opens
- 2009** Tibet Museum opens
- 2021** Gruyères awarded the 'Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO' label

## IN NUMBERS

- Population:** 63 inhabitants (town), 2,241 inhabitants (commune)
- Language:** French
- Altitude:** 810 m