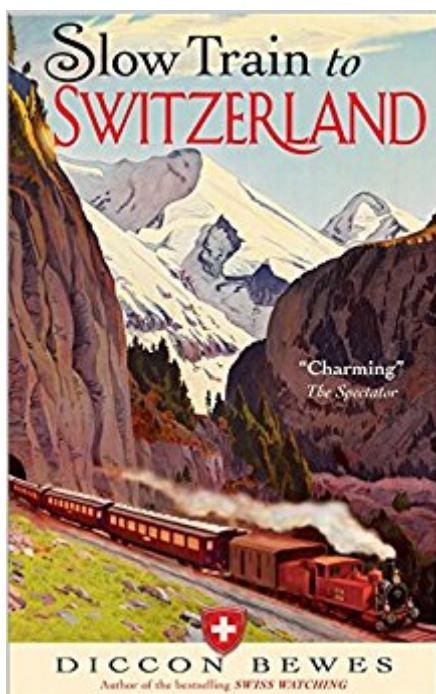


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Slow Train To Switzerland: One Tour, Two Trips, 150 Years and A World Of Change Apart



Synopsis

In June 1863 an English lady set off by train on the trip of a lifetime: Thomas Cook's first Conducted Tour of Switzerland. A century and a half later, travel writer Diccon Bewes, author of the bestselling Swiss Watching, decided to go where she went and see what she saw. Guided by her diary, he followed the same route to discover how much had changed and how much hadn't. She went in search of adventure, he went in search of her, and found far more than he expected. Slow Train to Switzerland is the captivating account of two trips through the Alps: hers glimpsing the future of travel, his revisiting its past. Together they make a journey to remember. This is a tale of trains and tourists, of the British and the Swiss, of a Victorian traveller and a modern-day Englishman abroad. It is the story of a tour that changed both Switzerland and the world of travel forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A delightful accessible throw-away style which is both amusing and endearing. •The Cultural Traveller A brilliant book. There is a strong story to tell of the burgeoning country that Switzerland was in the 1860s, and the utmost change the travel industry effected on the land. The differences and similarities between the two excursions make this time capsule well worth opening, the contrast well worth making, and this author probably the best to do so. •Bookbag Very enjoyable. Bewes is a charming guide. •Geographical This book gives an excellent history of our favourite country, not the usual battle of this or war of that, but at the much more personal level of the common people's everyday lives. Even those of us who think we know a lot about Switzerland will learn something new, and gain that knowledge in a very readable and entertaining way. If you

enjoyed 'Swiss Watching' then you'll need to get a copy of this book by the same author. Highly recommended. •Swiss Express Loquacious and genial. •The Independent Fascinating. Charming. Bewes' breezy prose makes him a pleasant travelling companion. •Spectator Bewes has become something of an expert on the Swiss. His first book, Swiss Watching lifted the lid on a country everybody knows of but knows little about. In his latest book, Slow Train to Switzerland he follows in the footsteps of Miss Jemima Morrell, a customer on Thomas Cook's first guided tour in 1863, and discovers how this plucky Victorian woman helped shape the face of modern tourism and Switzerland itself. •Wanderlust

Diccon Bewes is a travel writer. A world trip set him up for a career in travel writing, via the scenic route of bookselling. After ten years at Lonely Planet and Holiday Which? Magazine, he decamped to Switzerland, where he managed the Stauffacher English Bookshop in Bern. In addition to grappling with German, re-learning to cross the road properly, and overcoming his desires to form an orderly line, he has spent years exploring Switzerland. Following the incredible success of Swiss Watching he is now a full time writer. See his website at www.dicconbewes.com

If you are planning a trip to Switzerland you'll need a passport, suitcases, lots of money, "Swiss Watching" and "Slow Train to Switzerland". This book puts Swiss travel into perspective. Comfortably riding the rack railroads in the mountains today it is easy to forget the adventurous travel of 150 years ago. Conveniences, transport, hotels, even attire for a Swiss vacation that are taken for granted today by use of websites and ubiquitous travel agents were unknown when Thomas Cook first sponsored travel to Switzerland in the late 1800's. Easy and pleasant reading. A great read either before or after a visit to Switzerland. Where this is more of a story, "Swiss watching" is like a handbook; get them both!

Trains and Switzerland are two of my most cherished things on this planet, so I came into Diccon's book a tad biased. Plus I had already thoroughly enjoyed his earlier "Swiss Watching" project, and am pleased to share that "Slow Train to Switzerland" left me just as satisfied. Having worked in and written extensively about travel and tourism myself, I loved hearing about the origins of mass tourism through Diccon's Bryson-esque writing style. This is more than just a trip through Switzerland, but rather the foundation of what so much tourism is based on today. Anyone with an interest in Swiss travel, history, or simply the travel and tourism industry will be more than satisfied with this read.

I have been to Switzerland five times to different areas each time. This book is GREAT! So interesting to learn about the development of tourism, railroads, hotels, mountain adventures, personalities. The author's descriptions of Switzerland today were invaluable and informative, even to someone who has been there as a tourist over the last 20 years. Now that I have finished the book---I am ready to go again! Read the book from the library, and then ordered the book from because I knew I would want to refer to the book again and again.

Very fun and readable book. I was reading it just before and during my first trip to Switzerland, and could relate to much of what the author was saying. The concept of the book is an interesting take on travel writing - re-creating a journey taken 150 years ago and documented in a diary. The author's writing style is engaging and lively, and I emerged with some insight into travels during Victorian times and the beginnings of the leisure travel industry as well as a feeling for the people who live in the Swiss Alps. The old pictures and illustrations from the original traveler's diary add even more life to the story. I think anyone who has traveled, or is thinking of traveling, to Switzerland would enjoy this book. And it makes great airplane reading on the long journey to get there.

Fascinating story told by a talented writer. Diccon Bewes travels the same route as the 1863 first Cook's Tour of Switzerland, following the diary of someone on the tour. It's a travelogue with a difference, illustrating the history of travel and tourists, as well as observations about Switzerland then and now. It's educational as well as entertaining, and I loved it.

This book is great, particularly for those of us who have traveled or lived in Switzerland. Diccon Bewes has taken an 1860s travel diary and turned it into a fascinating account of the first Thomas Cook group tour in 1863 and added his own observations of the same trip and places, including Paris, Geneva, Chamonix, Sion, Interlaken and the Jungfrau area, Lucerne, and Neuchatel. A delight.

Fascinating story and history of the beginnings of tourist business and how it developed in Switzerland. Thorough research and interesting way the author followed in the tracks of this first tour group from London through Switzerland. The book can even serve as a travel guide to Switzerland today. Again, the author's witty style is captivating.

Having been to many of the places described in this book, I was genuinely pleased to find very accurate descriptions of the places the author visited. His journey, an attempt to recreate the journey of a woman made before Switzerland became a tourist destination, was fun to read.

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