

GUIDE TO GENEVA

With its United Nations headquarters and a prominent luxury watch industry, Geneva is often seen as a weekday business destination. However, this gorgeous Swiss city has so much to offer beyond the office.

On weekends, Geneva empties. The resulting quiet is perfect for strolling around the lake undisturbed, lost in this elegant European city. In Carouge, Geneva's "Greenwich Village," crafts and antiques perch amid winding alleyways. The Old Town provides quaint backstreets and a wealth of Reformation history. There, from the top of St Peter's Cathedral, one can enjoy sweeping views. In the Quartier des Bains, Geneva's emerging contemporary art scene thrives.

Then, of course, there's the cuisine. Geneva has Michelin-starred restaurants and luxury Favarger chocolate shops everywhere. But perhaps the nicest way to spend an evening is to do like the locals: Order a good wine and some sharp cheese, and forget time at one of the many outdoor cafes.

by Danae Mercer

TOP RESTAURANTS

Izumi

Sexy and chic, this sky-high restaurant mixes trendy vibes with tasty bites. Dishes combine Japanese and Peruvian flavors, meaning that sushi comes with truffle, and lobster with foie gras. The intimate library setting (complete with a fireplace and views of the city below) calls for high heels and glam.

fourseasons.com/geneva/dining

Tsé Fung

Tsé Fung has just received a Michelin star, and it's easy to understand why. This Cantonese restaurant – all darkly decadent, with red velvets and black lacquer – highlights Chinese gourmet cuisine. Opt for the Peking-style roast duck, served in two stages.

tsfung.ch

Parc des Eaux-Vives

Brunching at the Parc des Eaux-Vives means gazing across a beautiful garden from a 16th-century manor house, all while sipping champagne. This Sunday meal is decadent, with rows of tiny tarts, delicate appetizers (try the pear-and-ham pancake) and hot mains.

parcdeseauxvives.ch

Andy Hayler's hidden gem Le Neptune

This restaurant on the river specializes in Alpine cuisine, making the most of the herbs and flowers that grow on the slopes of Switzerland's mountains. In the summer, there is outdoor seating in the small courtyard. Much use is made of local ingredients, such as feral lake fish and Plainpalais chard.

Le Neptune is building a growing reputation with local diners, and it is well worth a look.

leneptune.ch



Panoramic view from the lavish Sissi Suite at Hotel Beau-Rivage

TAKE THREE/// HOTELS

1. HOTEL DE LA PAIX

This Ritz-Carlton partner hotel beside Lake Geneva is currently undergoing renovation. The 84 rooms and suites are elegant and airy, featuring floor-to-ceiling windows, white linens and natural woods. Small touches – like cashmere throws in the suites and a chocolate fountain in the lobby (courtesy of award-winning chocolatier Philippe Pascoët) – add extra decadence. A caviar and champagne bar will open in June 2017. Until then, guests can dine at the Michelin-starred restaurant, the Living Room.

ritzcarlton.com/geneva

2. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL DES BERGUES

Elegant and historic, with neoclassical flourishes, Geneva's only Four Seasons hotel has attracted travelers since 1834. Like many of the area's five-star hotels, the property, on the northern shore of the lake, provides great mountain and city views. Interiors designed by Pierre-Yves Rochon mix contemporary and lavish French touches. For dining, the Michelin-starred Il Lago is exquisite, while the rooftop bar (open in the warmer months) is great for drinks.

fourseasons.com/geneva

3. HOTEL BEAU-RIVAGE

Still operated by the Mayer family, who built it in 1865, this luxury hotel (below) is replete with history. It's also handily located in the heart of Geneva's commercial district, along the lake. Interiors are ornate, with red-velvet chairs, gilded mirrors and elaborate chandeliers. A limousine service promises to take guests anywhere. Le Chat-Botté restaurant, which serves up modern French cuisine, has received one Michelin star and scored 18/20 in *Gault & Millau*.

beau-rivage.ch

TOP SUITES

ROYAL PENTHOUSE SUITE

Hotel President Wilson

One of the most expensive suites in the world, the Royal Penthouse Suite at the Hotel President Wilson spans 18,083 sq ft and offers an impressive 12 rooms. Bulletproof windows face the Alps and Mont Blanc. A private guard, chef and 24-hour butler are all provided, as well as a Steinway piano and an elevator directly to the spa. But with a gym and Jacuzzi, guests may never need to leave.

From \$75,000 per night. Contact Pablo Pizarro, general manager, p.pizarro@hotelpwilson.com, hotelpresidentwilson.com

GENEVA SUITE

Grand Hotel Kempinski Geneva

At 11,625 sq ft, the two-floor Geneva Suite at the Grand Hotel Kempinski Geneva is among the largest suites in Europe. Brazilian-wood furniture and handwoven carpets decorate the vast living room, while a spacious balcony provides panoramic views across the city. For relaxing, there's a hammam, pool room, sports room and bar. A guard, cook, servant and governess are also included in the booking.

From \$49,000 per night. Contact Martina dal Canto, reservations manager, martina.dalcanto@kempinski.com, kempinski.com/geneva

ORIENTAL SUITE

Mandarin Oriental, Geneva

The potential to entertain shines in the Oriental Suite at the Mandarin Oriental. This top-floor 1,615 sq ft suite is light and airy, with large windows facing out over the Rhône river. The separate dining room seats 10. Guests can then gather on the 323 sq ft terrace for after-dinner drinks while enjoying views toward Mont Salève. Goose-down bedding and a marble bathroom with a standalone tub are perfect for relaxing.

From \$10,400 per night. Contact Lars Wagner, general manager, mogva-reservations@mohg.com, mandarinoriental.com/geneva

Above: Oriental Suite at the Mandarin Oriental
Right: Jacuzzi in the Royal Penthouse Suite at the Hotel President Wilson

Below right: Geneva Suite living room at the Grand Hotel Kempinski Geneva



Late night Geneva from the concierge

Watch the sunset and take in the great views from **Mont Salève** (12 miles outside Geneva) while enjoying a private picnic basket.

geneva.info/saleve

▲ **Le Baroque** (above) and **Javaclub** are the most glamorous clubs in Geneva. They're both places to see and be seen.

lebaroque.com, javaclub.ch

For dancing, join a tango lesson with live music in the **Salle Saint Germain**.

tango-geneve.ch

Head to **Bain Bleu** for afterwork tapas and drinks. Then step into the venue's heated pool, which overlooks the lake and Jura Mountains (both relaxing and romantic).

bain-bleu.ch

Or enjoy the four annual **Nuit des Bains**, the best place to discover new modern artists amid Geneva's cultural elite.

quartierdesbains.ch

Julien Campioni, concierge of Hotel Metropole Geneve