



MUSEUMS & CASTLES

«An art book is a museum without walls».
- André Malraux

Steeping yourself in culture and history is not difficult in Zurich. And for the kids, the city and region offer diverse and playful ways to join in.

LEARNING BY DOING

Here's where to enjoy hands-on learning that's fun. In colder months and on rainy days enjoy a child-friendly haven that offers active and interactive learning and fun in groups. Museum workshops and tours for kids also allow for more in-depth understanding.

MUSEUMS & LEARNING CENTRES

ZÜRICH CITY:

Bärengasse Museum

Bärengasse 20-22, 8001 Zürich, 01 211 1716,
baerengasse@slm.admin.ch, www.musee-suisse.ch
Directly off Paradeplatz in the heart of downtown Zurich, this permanent exhibition 'Mind and Passion: Zurich 1750 –1800' comprises three floors and gives a glimpse into the lives of people living in the city during that time. *Kinderzimmer* (The Children's Room) exhibits toys. Displayed on the ground floor are dolls and animals created by Sasha Morgenthaler, a famous artist who lived in the first half of the twentieth century. Not interactive, objects cannot be touched, so this is better suited to older children.

Beyer Watch Museum

Uhrenmuseum Beyer,
Bahnhofstrasse 31, 8001 Zürich, 043 344 6363,
museum@beyer-ch.com, www.beyer-ch.com
Best suited for older children, this well-hidden museum is in the basement of a watch shop near Paradeplatz. Here's watch history clocked all the way back to when sundials measured the passing hours,

all the way up to the technical wizardry of mechanical watches. Some highlights: a painting completed in the 1800's with a musical clock set into the church tower and a water clock, the oldest counter of time, made of an old stone bowl filled with water that dripped through a little hole at the rate of ten drops per second, navigational clocks, pocket watches, wall clocks, a candle marked to count the passing night hours, the Dondi astronomical clock from the year 1364 and sand dials.

Ethnology Museum, University of Zurich

Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich,
Pelikanstrasse 40, 8001 Zürich, 01 634 9011,
mufethno@vmz.unizh.ch, www.mufethno.unizh.ch
Beautifully set in the *Alter Botanischer Garten* (Old Botanical Gardens), visits to this museum can be rounded out with a stroll through the grounds. Workshops, guided tours and activities are offered to school children throughout the year. There are vending machines near the downstairs exhibition hall.

Kulturama – Museum of Man

Kulturama – Museum des Menschen,
Englischviertelstrasse 9, 8032 Zürich, 01 260 6044,
mail@kulturama.ch, www.kulturama.ch
Come here for lots of eye-grabbers: reconstructed versions of prehistoric man, Egyptian mummies, dinosaurs and human skeletons. The learning stations welcome hands-on interaction. There is a museum café and gift shop, and guided tours every first Sunday of the month (tours in English on request). A strong emphasis is placed on interactive workshops offered to young children, school kids and adults. The museum is wheelchair accessible.

Money Museum

Verena Conzett-Strasse 7, 8004 Zürich, 01 242 7678,
pager@conzett.ch, www.moneymuseum.com
Best suited to teenagers and adults, this museum revolves around money. They even have a money press. For younger kids there's the virtual museum online, enabling them to interact with the themes in a more playful way.

'Mühlerama' – Museum in the Tiefenbrunnen Mill

Mühlerama – Museum in der Mühle Tiefenbrunnen,
Seefeldstrasse 231, 8008 Zürich, 01 422 7660,

info@muehlerama.ch, www.muehlerama.ch

See the history of bread making as you wind through the four floors of this old industrial mill built in 1913 and still in use today. There are playful audio-visual exhibits for children. A surprise awaits kids at the end of the exhibition: take one of the flour sacks and slide down two storeys of the old flour chute. Birthday parties can be celebrated here and for those interested in watching the bread-making process it is best to come when a party is taking place (usually on Wednesdays). Bread is sold every Friday from 11:00.

North American Native Museum

Nordamerika Native Museum (NONAM),
Seefeldstrasse 317, 8008 Zürich, 043 499 2440,
nonam@ssd.stzh.ch, www.nonam.ch

The temptation to touch and feel the exhibition pieces, which are often exposed at a perfect height for little hands, makes a visit with younger children challenging. But for older ones it can be fascinating to learn about the rich and difficult history of the Native Americans.

Palaeontology Institute & Museum

Paläontologisches Institut & Museum der Universität Zürich,
Karl Schmid-Strasse 4, 8006 Zürich, 01 634 2339,
sekretariat.palaeontologie@pim.unizh.ch, www.palinst.unizh.ch

Come see a fossilised 100 million-year-old dinosaur egg or a fossilised aquatic reptile – a cross between a gigantic fish and a lizard – that swam the waters over 240 million years ago. Beware of the gigantic ancient pig skeleton, though. It has been known to send shivers down some spines. This museum offers a fascinating look at a time long past through fossils, pictures and reconstructed skeletons. Directly linked to the Zoological Museum.

Rietberg Museum Zürich

Gablerstrasse 15, 8002 Zürich, 01 206 3131, info line 01 206 3100,
museum@rietb.stzh.ch, www.rietberg.ch

A wonderful museum located in the midst of an exquisite park, there are exhibits from around the world, but the primary focus is on Asia and Africa. Sunday workshops are offered to kids ages 8-12 and a programme for grandparents and their grandchildren ages 5-10. An annual festival in late June/early July offers events and activities for children. Additional activities are offered in conjunction with Zurich's *Ferienpass* programme (see chapter 13 '*Kaleidoscope of Activities*').

Workshops for school children and courses for teachers.

Swiss National Museum

Schweizerisches Landesmuseum Zürich,
Museumstrasse 2, 8023 Zürich, 01 218 6511,
kanzlei@slm.admin.ch, www.musee-suisse.ch

Best suited to kids able to comprehend and find interest in historical facts. Located across from Zurich's main railway station, this castle-like building has a wonderful courtyard in the back that opens onto the Platzspitz Park (beautiful old trees, playground and view of the river). This outdoor courtyard has a café in the warmer months, houses special exhibitions and features music festivals and an ice rink during the winter holiday season. Inside, Swiss cultural history is presented from the Stone Age up to the present day, including old archaeological findings, watches and clocks, paintings and sculptures. The gigantic mammoth is a well-loved children's attraction as is the Internet corner.

Tram Museum

Limmattalstrasse 260, 8049 Zürich - Höngg, 01 341 5058,
postmaster@tramverein-museum.ch, www.tram-museum.ch

Learn about the history of Zurich's trams and even take a trip on the old museum tram to *Zürich Hauptbahnhof* and back.

Urania Observatory

Urania Sternwarte Zürich Zentrum,
Uraniastrasse 9, 8001 Zürich, 01 205 8484,
Weather programme: 01 211 6523

Come gaze at the evening stars and locate constellations with the help of an astronomer. During the day this is a great place to view the city. Afterwards you can stop downstairs at Brasserie Lipp, a French restaurant that is very child-friendly.

Zoological Museum

Zoologisches Museum,
Karl Schmid-Strasse 4, 8006 Zürich, 01 634 3838,
ausstell@zoolmus.unizh.ch, www.unizh.ch/zoolmus

Directly linked to the Palaeontology Museum, this is a great place for kids. Full of hands-on fun and room to roam around freely. A multitude of animal sounds to listen to, microscopes for peeking at tiny creatures, things to touch and feel, films to view and a gigantic mammoth skeleton to either run toward in glee or run from in fear

– depending on the child! Perfect rainy-day hang out.

Zurich's Museum of Art: *Kunsthaus Zürich*

Heimplatz 1, 8001 Zürich, 01 253 8484,
info@kunsthaus.ch, www.kunsthaus.ch

Throughout the year workshops related to either the permanent art collection or current art exhibitions are offered to children age five and older. During school vacations multi-faceted programmes offer everything from photography and theatre to painting and sculpture workshops. The museum's painting atelier is regularly made available for use by the public (minimum age five years) on specific Sunday mornings from 10:30 to 12:00. Call for details. Children are also welcome at the *Kunsthaus* restaurant.

Zurich Toy Museum

Zürcher Spielzeugmuseum,

Fortunagasse 15, 8001 Zürich, 01 211 9305

Housing the Franz Carl Weber Collection, toys in all shapes and sizes from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, this museum is perhaps more interesting to older children who can enjoy the displays without wanting to take them home! But for the little ones there is a play corner with Legos and picture books.

ZÜRICH REGION:

Air Force Centre

Flieger Flab Museum, Überlandstrasse 255, 8600 Dübendorf,
01 823 2324, info@flieger-museum.ch, www.flieger-museum.com

A century of military aviation can be seen in over 40 military aircraft and helicopters, balloon equipment, anti-aircraft artillery, radar and radio communications and aircraft engines. Visitors can board the aircraft and cockpits and a simple simulator allows kids the opportunity to sit in the pilot seat and get a feel for the real thing. Interactive computer terminals offer visitors information (German, English and French), and from a large gallery you can watch the contemporary military planes landing and taking off. Souvenir shop and restaurant. Note: not suitable for very young children.

Circus Museum

Fischmarktplatz 1, 8640 Rapperswil, 055 220 5757,
information@rapperswil.ch, www.rapperswil.ch

The history of the circus in Switzerland and Europe is shown here through costumes, paraphernalia, an old circus wagon and by means of videos. The exhibition includes a photo gallery and costumes from the Family Knie National Circus. Kids can draw and try on old costumes in the children's corner.

Dinosaur Museum

Saurier Museum Aathal,

Zürichstrasse 202, 8607 Aathal, 01 932 1468,

sauriermuseum@bluewin.ch, www.sauriermuseum.ch

See Tyrannosaurus Rex 'living' in an historical old textile factory turned Dino-museum! Everything you ever wanted to know about dinosaurs, including Dino-Kino, Dino T-Shirts in the '*Saurier-Shop*' and annual special exhibitions. Visit the restaurant for a lunch break with paper and crayons for drawing.

Doll House Museum

Puppenhaus Museum,

Steinenvorstadt 1, Barfüsserplatz, 4051 Basel, 061 225 9595,

www.puppenhausmuseum.ch

Come and stroll around four floors of teddy bears and baby dolls galore! Wheelchair and pushchair friendly with restaurant and gift shop, this museum is located on the well-known and centrally located Barfüsserplatz in Basel.

Glass Museum in the Hergiswiler Glass Factory

Glasi Hergiswil, Hergiswiler Glas AG,

Seestrasse 12, 6052 Hergiswil, 041 632 3232,

info@glasi.ch, www.glasi.ch

Learn about the history of glass through an entertaining automated tour (select from English, German, French or Italian).

Warning: the tour takes around 20 minutes and it's held in a darkened space that cannot be exited. Younger children may have difficulty. Visitors can also observe glass blowing and there is a hands-on section where experimenting can be done. There is a factory shop, a restaurant (indoors and outdoors) and a playground for kids with a huge tube slide located next to the lake.

Käpfnach Coal Mine Museum

Bergbaumuseum und Besucherbergwerk Käpfnach,

Bergwerkstrasse 27, 8810 Horgen, 01 725 3935,