

hot spots

Tschuggen Grand Hotel, Switzerland

Where is it? Nestled at a lofty 1,800 metres at the edge of the idyllic – and little known – Swiss hamlet of Arosa, at the end of the Schanfigg Valley, one of Graubunden canton's most picturesque dales. It is 3.5 hours southeast of Zurich by train.

Contemporary or classic? An old stalwart made anew, the hotel was built in 1883 as an alpine sanatorium. Destroyed by a fire in 1966 and rebuilt in 1970, the unremarkable 130-room block was given a welcome and whimsical multimillion-dollar makeover in 2004 by interior designer Carlo Rampazzi.

What's so different about it? Eschewing conventional alpine decor in favour of Technicolor trappings, Rampazzi has infused the hotel with a David Hockney-inspired palette. Added to that are scatterings of large cushions, embroidered headboards, deep-pile rugs and

sunken sofas, all in a dazzling whirl of violets, yellows and the designer's favourite hue, orange.

Who should visit? Tucked away with little nightlife or shopping, Arosa is popular with reclusive European holidaymakers (Liechtensteiners and Austrians who favour merlot-coloured trousers and old Mercedes-Benz estate cars).

What is there to do? The new, US\$28 million wellness centre – designed by architect Mario Botta – means most guests will make straight for the spa. Spread across four floors, topped by huge sail-like skylights and attached by a glass bridge to the hotel, the partly underground 3,500 square metre facility is appropriately called *Bergoase*, or mountain oasis. It features indoor and outdoor swimming pools, each kitted out with jets, waterfalls and synchronised hydrotherapy stations; several hot and



cold wading baths; a trio of saunas; and a pair of relaxation areas anchored by open fireplaces.

Outdoor purists will head for the walking and hiking trails that criss-cross the valley floor, go mountain-biking or take a dip in some of the many lakes in the area. In winter, the outdoors set hits the slopes and the village's world-class snowboarding facilities, courtesy of the new Tschuggen Coaster: a battery-powered pod-like railway that transports six adults at a time to some of the best ski runs in the Grisons mountains in minutes. Others will content themselves with horse-drawn sleigh rides and tobogganing, while the decidedly laidback can take afternoon tea in the lobby lounge.

What's on the menu? Three restaurants cater to nearly every gastronomic impulse. At Bündnerstube, a cosy wood-panelled pub serving pints of *weizenbier*, you can enjoy traditional Swiss cuisine such as *raclette* cheese and fondue, followed by candlepin bowling. The scene is more staid at La Vetta, where gourmands indulge in fine dining in a room of ochres and blues. La Provence, a popular lunchtime eatery, offers panoramas of the timbered hillsides and outstanding Mediterranean cuisine.

What's the bottom line? Rooms start at 390 Swiss francs (HK\$2,500) a night. Tschuggen Grand Hotel, Arosa, Switzerland; tel: 41 81 3789 999; www.tschuggen.ch. Farhad Heydari

spree London sportswear

As London gears up for the 2012 Olympics, visitors to Britain's most energetic city can find plenty of sport-inspired fashions. Since the late 19th century, Regent Street's (right) **Lillywhites** (24 Lower Regent Street, tel: 44 870 333 9600) has been dedicated to filling the five floors of its fine Victorian edifice with sportswear. Pick up a replica Premier League jersey (£39.49/HK\$620) to be instantly reminded of the country that invented football.

From vast, neon-lit Piccadilly Circus head to the hipper areas of Soho and Carnaby Street. London's premier music destination in the wild 1960s, Carnaby Street now appeals to more wholesome pursuits, with a stack of shops dedicated to surfing, skiing and yoga. **Puma** (52 Carnaby Street; tel: 44 20 7439 0221) is perhaps the best-known name in the street and this is its flagship store. Future Cat running shoes (£65) might just give you the speed of a leopard while the French 77 racquet grip bag in cobalt blue or forest green (£55) makes any tennis match much more colourful.

Those who like to combine sport and style should head to



Ricky Chung

Quiksilver & Roxy (11 Carnaby Street; tel: 44 20 7439 0436) for the ultimate in clothes and accessories for adrenalin heads. Even the store is a dynamic experience, featuring images of surfers braving the waves. Take your pick from the huge range of boardshorts and T-shirts that recall the spirit of 70s California.

Quiksilver & Roxy will keep male sports-style hunters happy but female sports fans aren't left out. Just off Carnaby Street is **SweatyBetty** (21 Beak Street; tel: 44 20 7287 5128) with sharp designs for women who want to achieve that sporty glow. The Astrid hoody (£45) in cotton with a zip

front and slouch pockets is loosely comfortable and just the ticket for a yoga or Pilates session. It is perfect teamed with Agatha capri pants (£35), which feature a roll-down waist cleverly designed to draw attention from lumps and bumps. Bundle that lot together with the yoga mat bag (£30) in black or pink, which also has handy compartments for your keys and gym card.

From Piccadilly Circus take the Underground to Knightsbridge and the landmark that is **Harrods** (87 Brompton Road; tel: 44 20 7730 1234). Take advantage of the store's quality service by having a riding hat or sports bra fitted, or grab something off the shelf from the store's dedicated sportswear section. Millie Fox's V-neck tennis top (left; £43) with contrasting trim will look as good on city streets as on court. *Nicolette Loizou*



pack it inflight travel clothes

Innovative travel-friendly textiles now make it easier than ever to arrive at your destination looking as stylish as when you set out.

Rohan's ultra-light (410 grams) tailored women's travel linen jacket (£79.50/HK\$1,200; www.rohan.co.uk) is perfect for warm-weather travel. The linen is mixed with synthetics to create a cool, crease-resistant fabric. Pair with the matching skirt (£55.50), with a comfortable wide waistband and hidden pocket for cash or credit cards, and which weighs only 340 grams. Both offer sun protection of SPF 15.

Another trick to arriving looking cool and composed is to change your clothing just before landing. En-day carries T-Box's innovative travel separates vacuum-packed in micro parcels. The cotton compressed blouse (US\$40; www.en-day.com) measures 20cm by 7.5cm when packed into a cone shape.

Boden has an elegant deep V-necked silk crinkle top (£39.00; www.boden.co.uk) that weighs a mere 90 grams and "thrives on being scrunched up in a suitcase".

For the environmentally conscious traveller, Dreamsacks recently unveiled the Journey Range, made from sustainable bamboo fibre. The three-quarter-sleeve top (US\$36; www.dreamsack.com) and matching long pants (US\$52) are suitable for casual travel wear.

Diane von Furstenberg may not seem like the first choice for practical travel wear but the pure cashmere Linda wrap dress in Miro flowers (left; US\$650; www.dvf.com) does not wrinkle and is amazingly light and comfortable to wear. Besides, if looking this elegant doesn't get you upgraded, nothing will.

Catherine Shaw



www.dvf.com