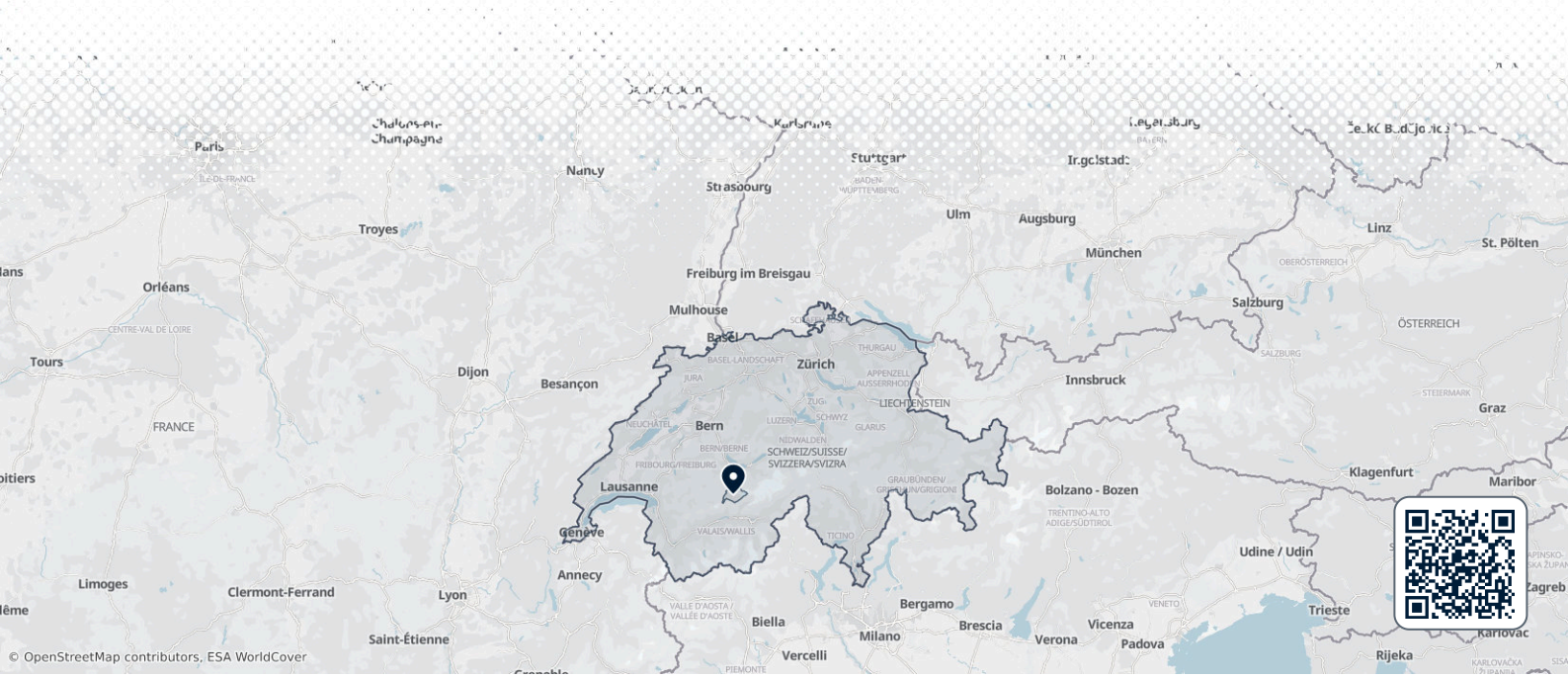
Kandersteg

Canton of Berne · Switzerland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Kandersteg is a mountain village at the head of the Kander valley in the Bernese Oberland. High cliffs and glaciers surround it. The village is quiet and has long been a base for hikers and cross-country skiers.

Its best-known sight is Lake Oeschinen, a deep blue lake high above the village. Kandersteg is also the northern end of the Lötschberg railway tunnel.

When to visit

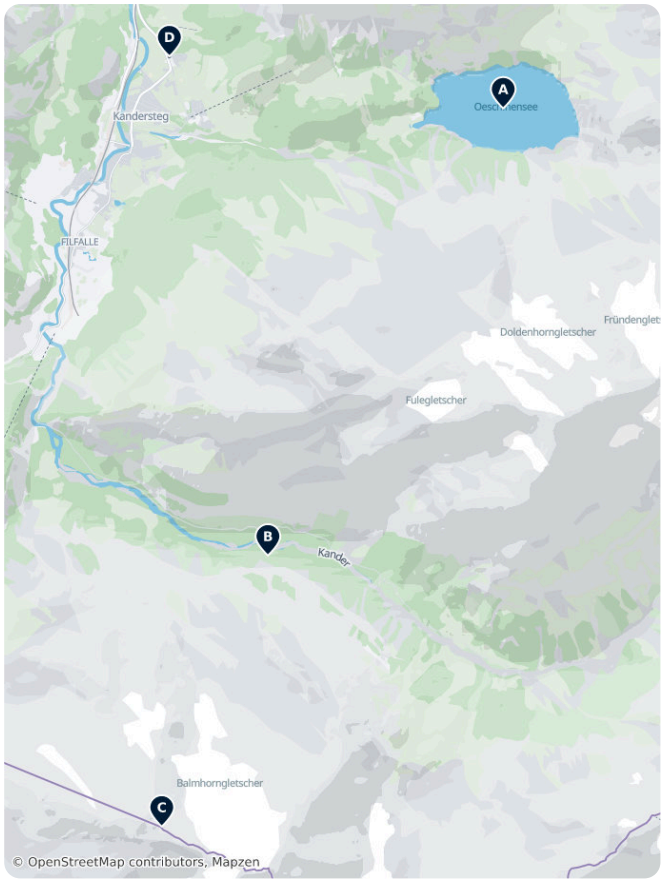
June to October is the best time for hiking and for the lake. Snow can block high paths until late June. December to March is the season for skiing, sledging and winter walks. Spring and November are quiet, and some lifts and hotels close.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for skiing	1° / 6° Feels like -3°	-7° / -14°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for skiing	2° / 8° Feels like -2°	-6° / -15°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for skiing	5° / 12° Feels like 2°	-3° / -10°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 17°	1° / -6°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Fair Fair for cycling	15° / 21°	6° / 0°	19 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Fair Fair for hiking	19° / 25°	10° / 5°	18 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
July	Fair Fair for hiking	20° / 26°	11° / 6°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for hiking	21° / 27°	11° / 6°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
September	Good Good for hiking	17° / 23°	8° / 2°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	13° / 20°	4° / -1°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for skiing	6° / 14° Feels like 3°	-1° / -10°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Great Great for skiing	2° / 7° Feels like -2°	-5° / -13°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Oeschinensee is a lake in a bowl of cliffs, reached by gondola and a short walk. You can swim, row or walk around it.
- B Gasterntal is a wild valley south of the village, reached by a narrow road or a cable car.
- C Altels is a high peak with a glacier, seen from the valley.
- D Seilbahnmuseum shows the history of local cable cars.



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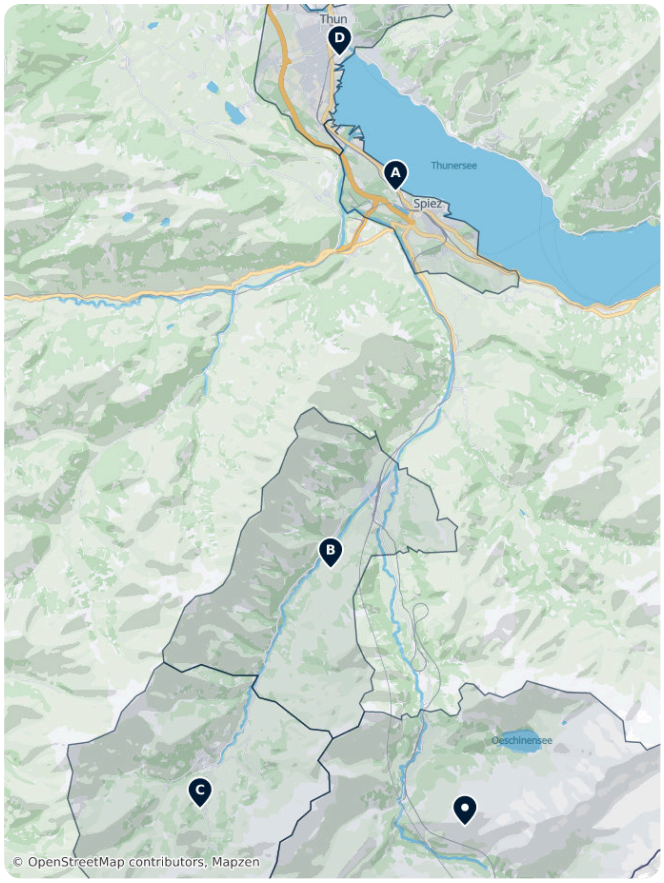
Scan to download the app

What to experience

- Take the gondola to the lake and walk around it.
- Swim or row on the lake in summer.
- Hike in the Gasterntal.
- Try cross-country skiing or sledging in winter.
- Visit the cheese dairy or cable car museum in the village.

Day trips

- A Spiez is on Lake Thun, about 30 minutes away by train.
- B Frutigen is the small main town of the valley.
- C Adelboden is a ski resort in the next valley.
- D Thun has a castle and a lakeside old town, about 50 minutes away.
- The Gemmi Pass path leads from the Oeschinen area towards Leukerbad in the Valais.



Where to explore

- Frutigen and Adelboden are the nearest villages in the same region.
- Spiez and Thun are on the lake to the north.

Getting there

- By air: Zurich and Geneva are the main airports.
- By train: Kandersteg is on the line from Bern and Spiez to the Valais. Check times on SBB.
- Trains from Bern take about 1 hour.
- A car train carries vehicles through the Lötschberg tunnel to the Valais.

Getting around

- The village is small and easy to walk.
- A gondola leaves from the village for the lake.
- Local buses and trails link the nearby valleys.
- A path leads along the stream to the lake. It is steep in parts.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The village is small and flat. Mountain trails and the lake paths climb steeply.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The valley floor is flat. Roads to the side valleys climb.

Driving

- A car is not needed for the village.
- The Lötschberg car train runs through the mountain to the Valais.
- Parking at the gondola is limited in summer.

Food & drink

Try rösti, cheese fondue and raclette in the mountain restaurants. The lake has a mountain inn with simple dishes. Local cheese comes from alpine farms.

People speak German with a Bernese dialect. English is widely understood.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Birchermüesli
A raw-oat, fruit, and yogurt breakfast invented by a Zurich doctor around 1900, now standard on breakfast buffets.

LUNCH

Rösti
A fried, shredded-potato cake, originally a Bernese farmer's breakfast, now a national side dish.

DINNER

Cheese Fondue · Fondue
Melted Gruyère and Vacherin cheese in a shared pot, eaten by dipping bread cubes on long forks.

Raclette
Cheese melted tableside or under a grill and scraped over boiled potatoes, pickles, and onions.

Zürcher Geschnetzeltes
Sliced veal and mushrooms in a creamy white-wine sauce, traditionally served with rösti.

Älplermagronen
Alpine herder's macaroni gratin with potatoes, cheese, and cream, often topped with fried onions and served with apple sauce.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Cervelat
Switzerland's best-known sausage, usually grilled and often called the country's unofficial national dish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Swiss Chocolate · Schweizer Schokolade
Switzerland pioneered milk chocolate in the 19th century; look for small-batch chocolatiers alongside the big national brands.

Basler Läckerli
A dense, spiced honey-and-candied-fruit biscuit from Basel, traditional around Christmas.

DRINKS

Swiss Wine · Vin Suisse
Mostly consumed domestically rather than exported; Valais and Vaud, along Lake Geneva, produce the best-known Chasselas whites.

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Safety & health

- Kandersteg is very safe.
- Mountain weather changes fast. Check the forecast before a hike.
- Do not walk on snow slopes or glaciers without a guide.
- Rockfall can occur on steep paths.

History

Kandersteg was a small farming and pass village for centuries. Walkers crossed to the Valais over the Gemmi Pass. In the 19th century visitors began to come for the mountain views.

The Lötschberg railway tunnel opened in 1913 and made the village a stop on the north-south route.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Switzerland at a glance:

CURRENCY
CHF CHF

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

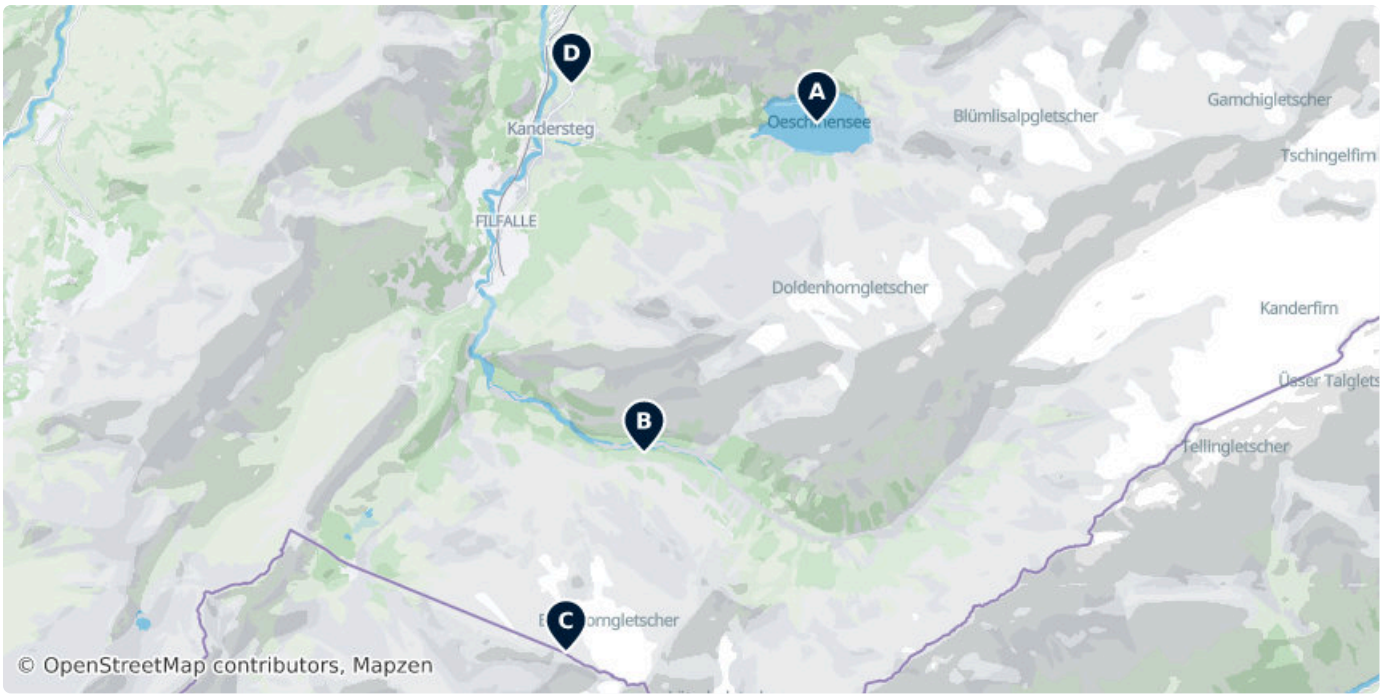


Type C / Type J
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German, French, Italian, Romansh

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Top sights





A Oeschinen Lake

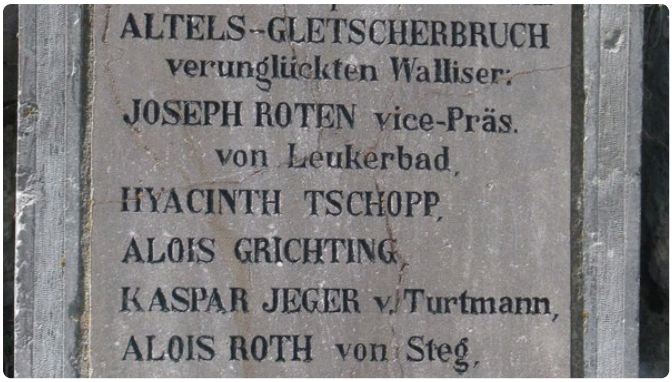
Oeschinen Lake is a lake in the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland, 4 kilometres east of Kandersteg in the Oeschinen valley.

3718, Switzerland (46.49838, 7.72648)



B Gasterntal

3718, Switzerland (46.45517, 7.69349)



C Altels

The Altels is a mountain of the Bernese Alps, located on the border between the Swiss cantons of Bern and Valais.

3718, Switzerland (46.42896, 7.67860)

D Seilbahnmuseum

Aeussere Dorfstrasse 146, 3718 Kandersteg
(46.50340, 7.67967)

seilbahnmuseum.ch

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