

Thun

Canton of Berne · Switzerland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Thun lies where the Aare river leaves Lake Thun, with the Alps behind it. A castle with four corner towers stands on a hill above the old town. The river splits the centre into channels and an island.

The town is calm and good for a day or two. Many visitors use it as a base for the lake and for the Bernese Oberland.

When to visit

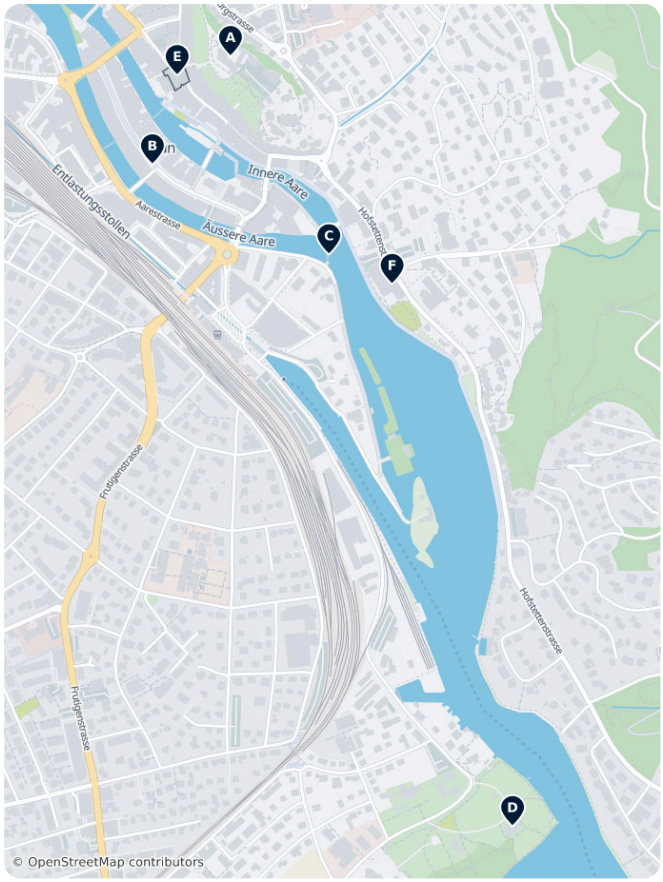
May to September is the best time for the lake, boats and walks. Summer is warm. Autumn is mild and good for hiking. Winter is cold and often grey, and the castle has shorter opening hours. Rain is common in late spring and summer.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for watersports	4° / 10° Feels like 0°	-2° / -9°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Poor Poor for watersports	6° / 13° Feels like 1°	-2° / -11°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 18° Feels like 6°	1° / -5°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for cycling	14° / 21° Feels like 11°	4° / -2°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 25°	9° / 3°	18 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Good Good for sightseeing	22° / 28°	13° / 7°	17 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 30°	14° / 9°	17 rainy days · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 31°	14° / 9°	15 rainy days · Calm winds
September	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 26°	11° / 5°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	16° / 23°	7° / 1°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	9° / 17° Feels like 6°	2° / -5°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for watersports	5° / 11° Feels like 1°	-1° / -9°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

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

Top sights

- A Schloss Thun is a medieval castle on the hill. The museum inside shows local history, and the tower has views of the lake and the Alps.
- B Bälliz Fussgängerzone is a pedestrian street on an island in the Aare, with shops and cafés.
- C Scherzligschleuse is a historic wooden lock and bridge where the lake flows into the river.
- D Schloss Schadau is a small castle in a lakeside park, a short walk from the old town.
- E Rathausplatz is the main square of the old town, with the town hall.
- F Kunstmuseum Thun shows Swiss art in a lakeside building.



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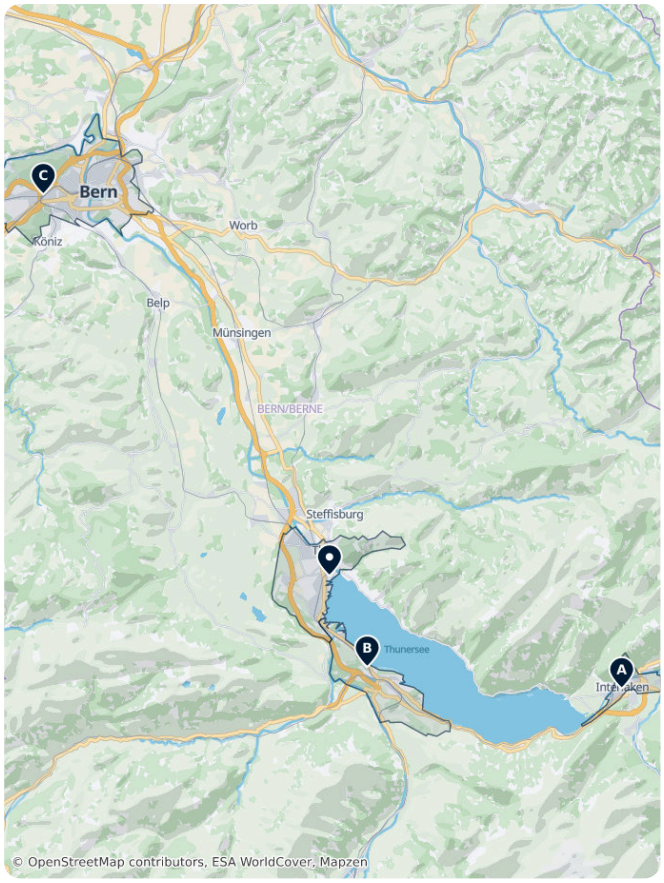
What to experience

- Take a lake boat to Spiez or Interlaken.
- Walk the raised pavements and old streets near Rathausplatz.
- Visit the parkland around Schloss Schadau.
- See the tanks and vehicles at Panzermuseum Thun.
- Walk or cycle on the Aare path along the water.
- Climb to Ruine Strättligen for a short hike with lake views.

Day trips

- A Interlaken is the gateway to the Jungfrau region. It is about 25 minutes away by train, and boats also cross the lake.
- B Spiez is a small lake town with a castle, about 10 minutes away by train.
- C Bern is the Swiss capital, about 20 minutes away by train.



Where to explore

- Spiez and Interlaken lie on the same lake and are the closest larger towns.
- Bern is the nearest city.

Getting there

- By air: most visitors fly into Zurich or Geneva and take the train.
- By train: Thun is on the main line between Bern and the Oberland. Trains from Bern take about 20 minutes. Check times on SBB.
- The station is on the edge of the old town, about 10 minutes on foot from the castle.

Getting around

- The old town and lakefront are easy to walk.
- City buses link the station with the lakeside and the surrounding districts.
- Boats on Lake Thun leave from the lake docks near the station.
- The Aare path is good for cycling or walking. Bike rentals are available at the station.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town and lakefront are compact. The castle hill has steep steps.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

The terrain is flat along the Aare and the lake. Bike paths are well marked.

Driving

- A car is not needed in the old town. Parking is limited in the centre.
- Use a car park near the station and walk in.
- A car can help for the villages along the lake, but boats and trains reach most places.

Food & drink

Try cheese fondue, raclette and rösti. Lake fish such as perch and whitefish are common on menus. Bernese specialties such as Berner Platte appear in traditional restaurants.

The old town and the lakefront have many cafés. Prices are high, as in all of Switzerland.

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

- Thun is very safe.
- Watch your bags in crowded places in summer.
- Tap water is safe to drink.
- The current in the Aare is strong, and swimming in the river is not for beginners.

History

Thun grew around its castle in the 12th century. The town became part of Bern in 1384 and later a base for the Swiss army. Soldiers have trained here since the 19th century.

In the 19th century the lake and the mountains attracted early tourists. Painters and writers visited the area, and steamships began to run on the lake.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Switzerland at a glance:

CURRENCY
CHF CHF

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



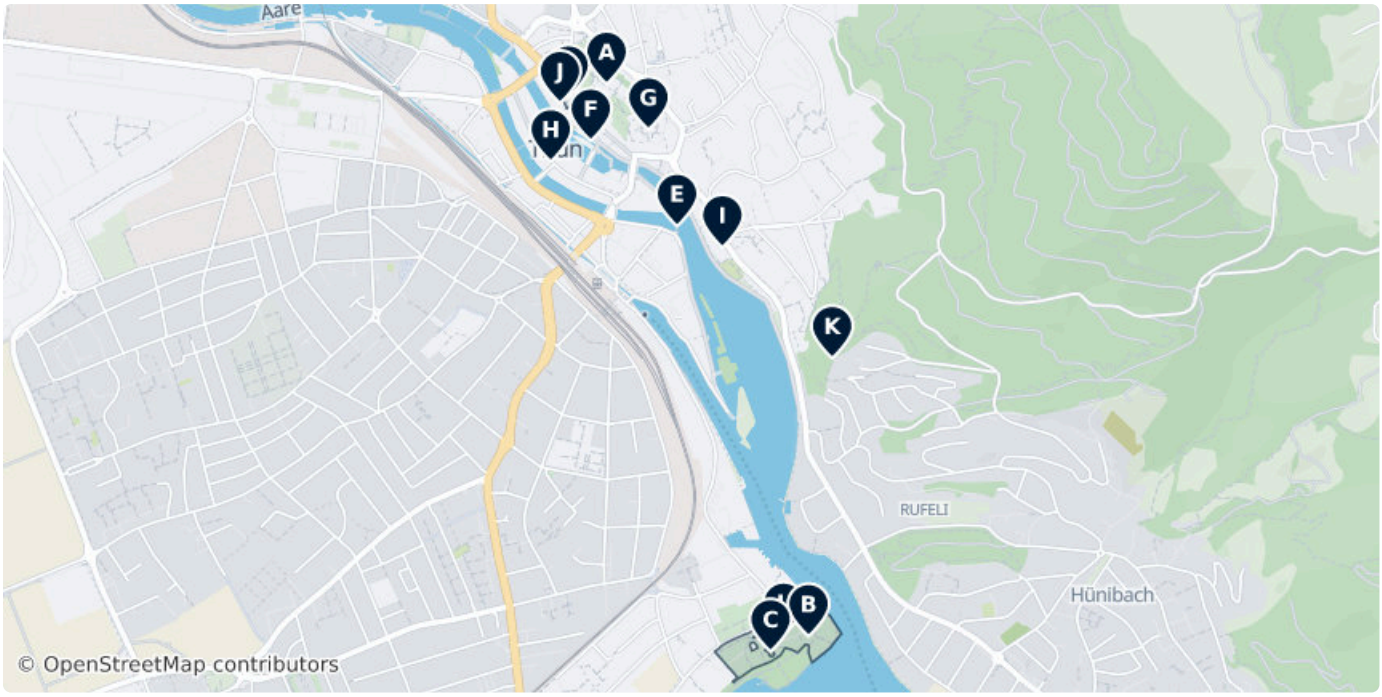
Type C / Type J
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German, French, Italian, Romansh

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Thun Essentials

Thun serves as the gateway to the Bernese Oberland, situated where the Aare river meets Lake Thun. This selection highlights the 12th-century Thun Castle and the lakeside Schadau Castle, alongside the historic wooden locks of Scherzligschleuse. The list explores the medieval Old Town's architecture, from the central Rathausplatz to the world's oldest surviving circular painting, the Thun Panorama, and the panoramic views of the Bernese Alps from Jakobshübeli.





A Thun Castle

Thun Castle is a castle in the city of Thun, in the Swiss canton of Bern.

Schlossberg 1, 3600 Thun, Switzerland (46.75994, 7.62996)

schlossthun.ch, +41 33 222 25 00



B Schadau Castle

Schadau Castle is a castle on the south side of the Aare near Lake Thun in the city of Thun, Canton Bern, Switzerland.

45 Seestrasse, Thun 3600, Switzerland (46.74612, 7.63733)

+41 33 225 88 11

C Wocher Panorama

The world's oldest circular panorama is a true masterpiece depicting more than 300 figures in the old town.

3602 Thun, CH (46.74574, 7.63595)

Tu–Su 11:00–17:00

thun-panorama.com, +41 33 223 24 62



D Rathausplatz Castle

The central historic square of the Old Town, anchored by the 16th-century Town Hall and offering a direct view up to Thun Castle.

3 Rathausplatz, Thun 3600, Switzerland (46.75959, 7.62856)



E Scherzligschleuse

A historic covered wooden lock bridge used to regulate the water level of the Aare river.

16 Scherzligweg, Thun 3600, Switzerland (46.75638, 7.63253)

F Mühleplatz

A riverside square on the Aare that served as the city's industrial mill center until the late 20th century.

(46.75851, 7.62938)

G Stadtkirche Thun

Reformed church featuring a 14th-century tower and a Baroque hall from 1738, accessible via a historic covered staircase from the town center.

(46.75879, 7.63148)

H Bälliz Fussgängerzone

A pedestrianized shopping district situated on an island between two arms of the Aare river.

(46.75800, 7.62792)



I Kunstmuseum Thun

Situated in a former luxury hotel building, it now houses an impressive collection of Swiss art from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Hofstettenstrasse 14, 3600 Thun, Switzerland
(46.75585, 7.63418)

Tu	10:00–17:00
We	10:00–19:00
Th–Su	10:00–17:00

kunstmuseumthun.ch, +41 33 225 84 20

J Rathaus

The city's administrative center, originally constructed around 1500, featuring a late-Gothic architectural style.

(46.75946, 7.62826)

K Jakobshübeli

A hilltop viewpoint providing a panoramic perspective of the Old Town, Lake Thun, and the Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau peaks.

17 Untere Wart, Thun 3600, Switzerland
(46.75307, 7.63820)

L Schadau

An English-style park on the shores of Lake Thun, housing Schadau Castle, the Thun Panorama, and mature botanical gardens.

47A Seestrasse, Thun 3600, Switzerland
(46.74616, 7.63642)

DATA SOURCES

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