

# YOU CAN'T SAIL IN SWITZERLAND...

**...a major misconception.  
And one that I am only too happy to rectify.**

By Yvonne Linssen

My love for Switzerland was literally instilled in me at a young age. As a child, I spent a large part of my summer holidays there with my parents, who now actually live in this beautiful country. Mountains, lakes, fresh air and endless peace and quiet: Switzerland is deeply rooted in our family. And yes, in my boating heart too. Who says you can't go sailing in Switzerland? Nothing could be further from the truth.

My first real introduction to the Swiss lakes dates back to 1986 – I was then seven years old – with a Zodiac on Lake Murten. We were staying in Hotel Schiff, in Murten at the time. What followed was an annual exploration of the country's most beautiful lakes. Every summer a different lake, a different view, a different feeling.

In 1987, we sailed on Lake Thun, with Leissigen as our mooring

place and the charming Hotel Kreuz as our home base. A year later, we explored Lake Geneva, from picturesque Lutry. Lake Geneva feels more worldly, bigger, more spacious. You cruise past big cities like Montreux and Lausanne, but at the same time you feel the tranquillity of the rippling water. France sparkles on the other side.

In 1989, we went to Lake Constance and stayed in Arbon,





where the steel-blue water seemed almost endless. (The maximum depth of the lake is a whopping 251 metres!) Lake Constance lies at the meeting point of Germany, Austria and Switzerland – a unique location that makes your boat trip even more special. Around the lake, medieval towns, vineyards and alpine panoramas alternate. Visit historic Lindau (D) with its charming harbour, cultural Bregenz (A), and the flowery island of Mainau. Lake Constance is not only big (63 km long), but also grand in atmosphere and beauty. On the Swiss bank are such gems as historic Stein am Rhein, with its colourful facades, and Romanshorn, which is an important hub with good ports. Charming Arbon, with its promenade and half-timbered houses, and lively Rorschach are also worth a visit. From the water, you can see the Alps looming behind rolling vineyards and orchards.



*Lake Lucerne*

In 1993, we discovered Lake Lucerne from Küsnacht am Rigi. On Lake Lucerne, you sail between steep mountain flanks, past chapels and castles, with the city of Lucerne as the radiant centerpiece. It is like sailing in a painting. The lake is jagged in shape, with branches cutting deep into the landscape. You can cruise around for days without the scenery repeating itself.

Each lake has its own character, its own atmosphere. And always that combination of water and mountains, of fresh mornings and warm memories.

Later, with our Fjord 'Henri Mer' (1994-2000), sailing became even more comfortable. In 1996 we sailed on Lake Lucerne again, this time from Hergiswil with as home base Hotel Pilatus, and in 1998 we enjoyed the Mediterranean flair of Lake Maggiore, with Club Nautico Patriziale Ascona as our base. It is

*Our Fjord "Henri Mer"*

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### Henri Mer

Our boat was named Henri Mer – coined by Peter Linssen – and inspired by the Jura wine estate Henri Maire, but also a nod to the French word for sea: mer. A little wine, a little water... and that's just the way we like it.



## SEELAND (3 JURA SEEN)

Lake Neuchâtel is the largest lake entirely within Switzerland. It is 38.3 km long and 8.2 km wide at its widest point. On the northern bank is the town of Neuchâtel, on the western side Yverdon-les-Bains.

The Broye Canal provides the connection to Lake Murten. This is the smallest of the three lakes

at 22.8 km<sup>2</sup> in area. It is 8.2 km long and up to 2.8 km wide. On the southern shore is the town of Murten (Morat).

On the northern side is the wine region of Le Vully. Lake Biel can be reached via Lake Neuchâtel and the Zihl Canal. Lake Biel is 39.3 km long. The town of Biel (Bienne) lies at the

north-eastern tip. Near Biel, you can sail up the Nidau-Büren Canal and continue along the River Aare to the centre of Solothurn. In the south, via the town of Erlach, you can reach the St. Petersinsel peninsula, where you can also spend the night at the jetty.







*The turquoise colour on Lake Brienzsee*

a lake for leisurely cruises, enjoyment and occasional stops at a good restaurant or local market. Locarno and Ascona are vibrant, with Italian flair and Swiss precision. Nature is lush, the sun shines more often, and the boating season is long. The contrast between palm trees and mountain peaks is nowhere more palpable than there. Sailing between Switzerland and Italy on the water. Very special! In Ascona, we stayed at Hotel Tobler. Incidentally, the owner of this hotel was also a

Linssen owner and first owned a Linssen Dutch Sturdy 320 AC and later a Grand Sturdy 410 AC.

In 2001, we took a Nidelv out on Lake Thun, and in 2002 we sailed on Lake Brienz for the first time, mooring in Bönigen, with its almost emerald green water and steep banks. In 2003 and 2004, we sailed on Lake Thun again, mooring at Faulensee. Lake Thun, located on the western side of Interlaken, is the larger and better-known of the two, with picturesque towns like Thun and Spiez on its shores. On the east side lies Lake Brienz, known for its turquoise colour and tranquillity. Here you will find charming Brienz, known for woodcarving, and have views of waterfalls and steep mountain sides. Both lakes are popular with boating enthusiasts,

hikers and those seeking peace and quiet – and together they form a magnificent backdrop for a boat trip in a Swiss atmosphere.

In 2004, we introduced both Grand Sturdy 29.9 models, AC and Sedan, developed and built simultaneously, and it was an instant success and the start of our LOGICAM production method. Much of the first batch of 29.9s went to Switzerland. From 2005 onwards, we spent seven years sailing on the three Jura lakes again, with our 'Henri Mer', the Grand Sturdy 29.9 Sedan based in Cheyres, and later with a slightly larger Zodiac NZO on the Jura lakes (2013-2019).

Time and again that feeling of coming home on the water. Our home base was always Hotel Bad Muntelier in Murten.

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*Grand Sturdy 29.9 Sedan "Henri Mer" on home base Hotel Bad Muntelier in Murten*

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Length: approx. 8 km  
 Area: 22.8 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 40 km/h  
 Smaller and intimate,  
 with charming villages  
 and direct access to  
 the Canal de la Broye,  
 which connects  
 Neuchâtel and Murten.



7. Lake Murten (Lac de Morat)

Length: approx. 15 km  
 Area: 39 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 40 km/h  
 A lively lake, known for  
 its wine villages on the  
 northern shore and  
 direct connection to  
 the network of canals  
 between the Jura lakes.



8. Lake Biel (Bielersee)

Length: approx. 38 km  
 Area: 217 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 40 km/h  
 A peaceful lake  
 surrounded by vine-  
 yards and nature  
 reserves. The largest of  
 the three Jura lakes.



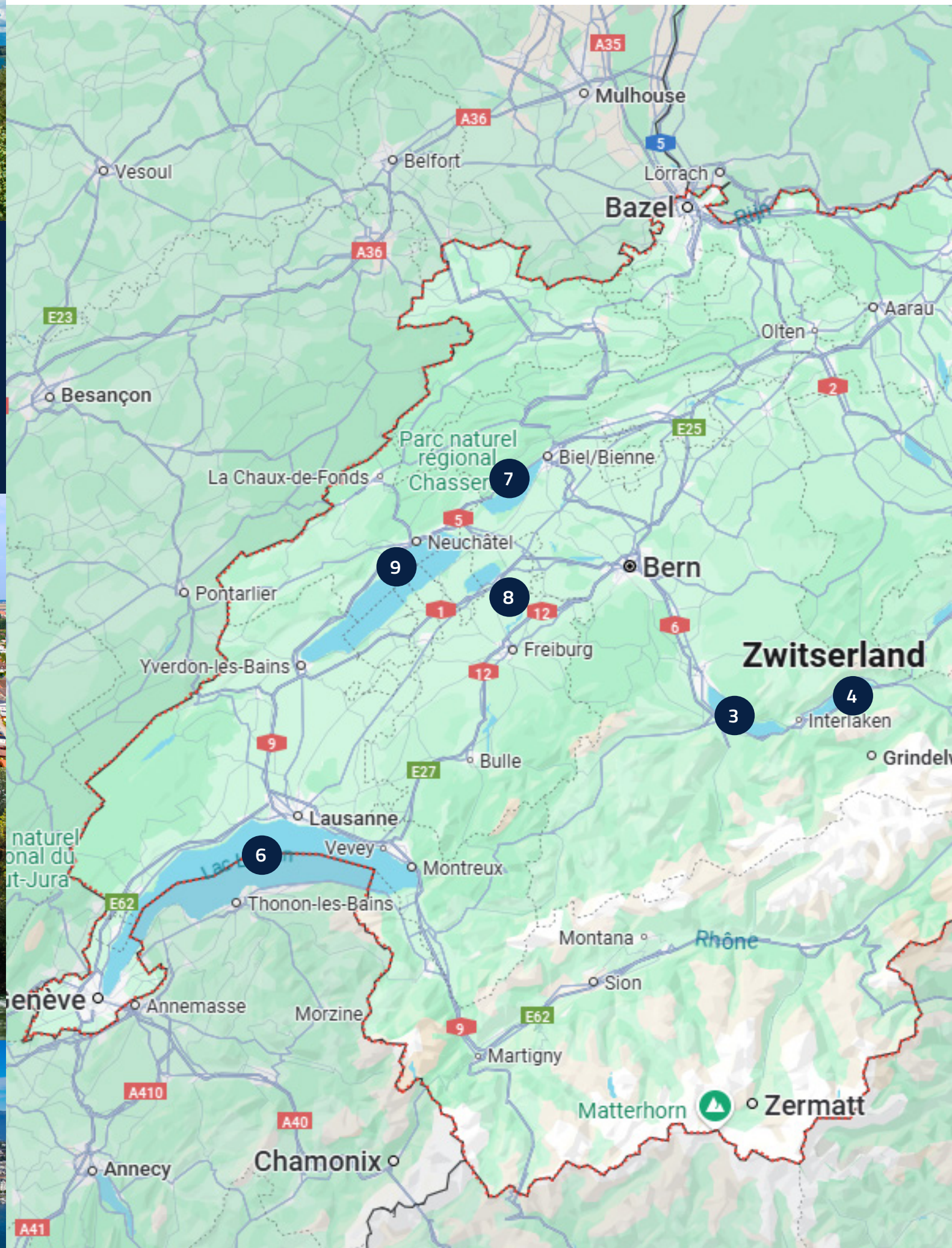
9. Lake Neuchâtel (Lac de Neuchâtel)



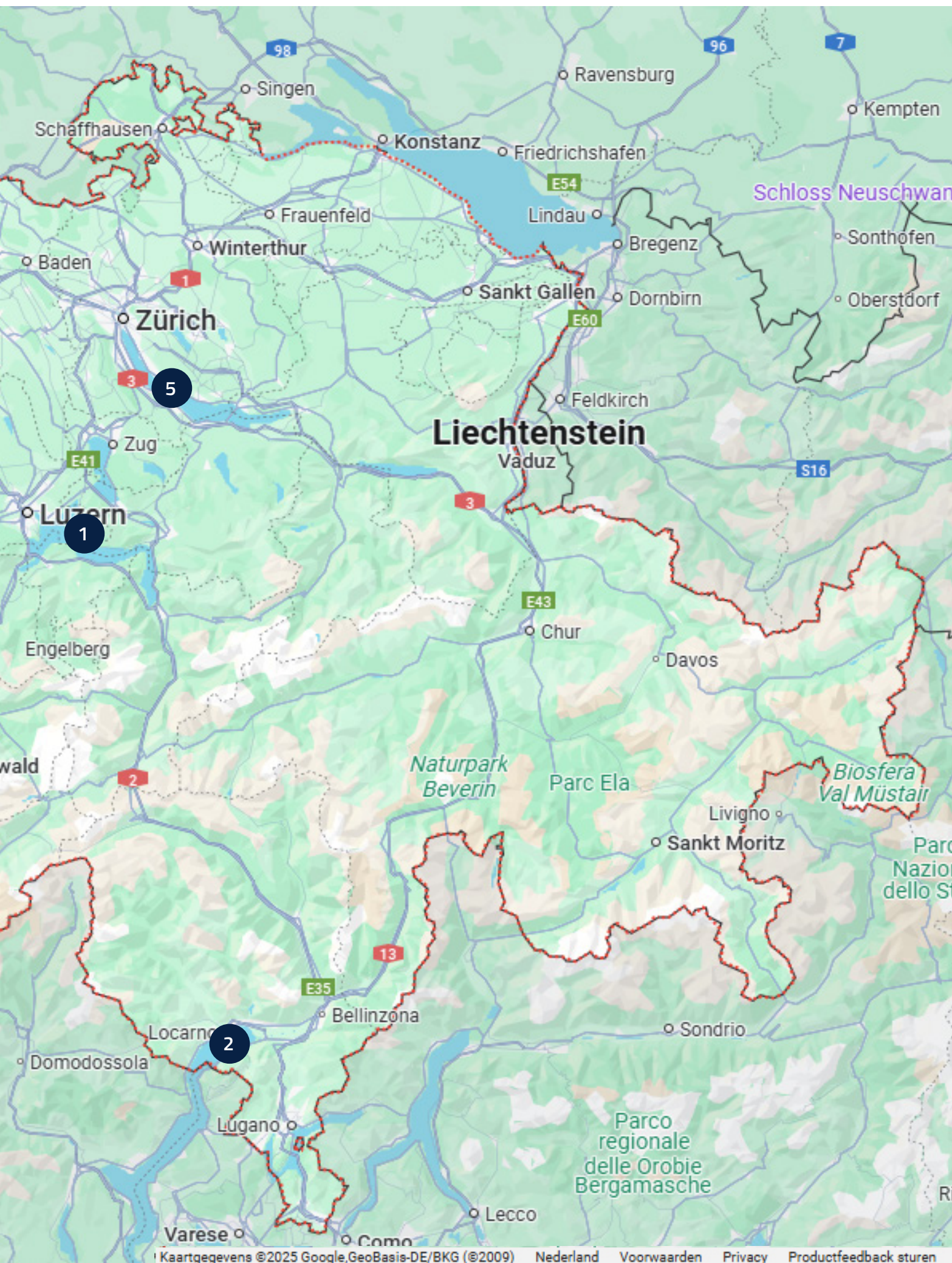
Length: approx. 73 km  
 Area: 580 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 50 km/h  
 on open water  
 The largest lake in  
 Central Europe, with  
 sophisticated lake-  
 side towns such as  
 Geneva, Lausanne and  
 Montreux.



6. Lake Geneva (Lac Léman)







Length: approx. 38 km  
 Area: 114 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 30 km/h  
 Switzerland's most iconic lake, surrounded by steep mountains and historic towns such as Lucerne and Weggis.

1. Lake Lucerne (Vierwaldstättersee)



2. Lake Maggiore

Length: approx. 65 km  
 Area: 212 km<sup>2</sup> (shared with Italy)  
 Max. speed: 60 km/h  
 Italian-Swiss lake with Mediterranean flair, palm trees on its shores and charming towns such as Locarno and Ascona.



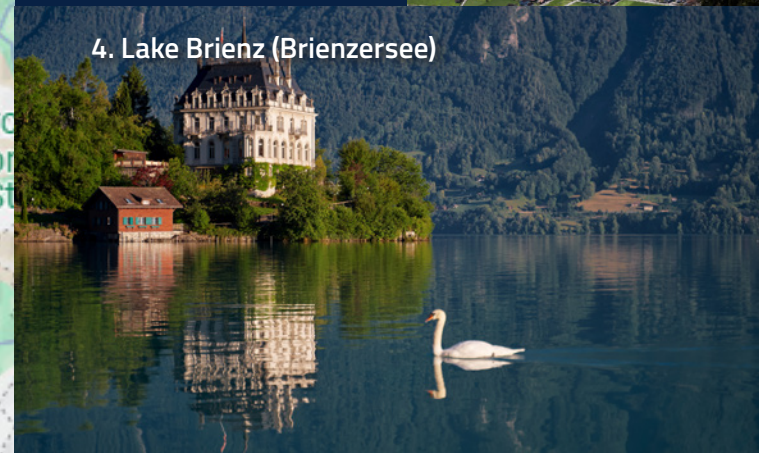
Length: approx. 17.5 km  
 Area: 48.3 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 40 km/h  
 Large mountain lake with views of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. Along its banks are atmospheric towns such as Thun, Spiez and Interlaken.

3. Lake Thun (Thun)



4. Lake Brienz (Brienzersee)

Length: approx. 14 km  
 Area: 29.8 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 40 km/h  
 Spectacular lake with clear turquoise water. Quieter than Lake Thun, it is surrounded by steep mountain sides and charming villages like Brienz and Iseltwald.



Length: approx. 40 km  
 Area: 88 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Max. speed: 30 km/h  
 Perfect for combining city and nature, with Zurich right on the water.

5. Lake Zurich (Zürichsee)





# SWITZERLAND? NAVIGABLE? ABSOLUTELY!

Yvonne Linssen



TRAVEL STORY



*You're never too young to learn on the Zodiac NZO*

For me, it also brings back memories of my first time sailing in Switzerland on the Zodiac, the boat trips with my mum and dad, learning to manoeuvre the Fjord, and just being together.

What started as holidays became a tradition. And what became a tradition grew into a lifelong bond with this country.

I am reminded of Mr Hürlimann's statement in our Facebook group: "Es linsselt immer mehr auf den Seen!" The smile returns to my face automatically. After all, it's true. It 'linsselt' indeed. Not loud, not grand, but steady and sincere. And I hope many more may follow.

Switzerland? Navigable?  
Absolutely!

Yvonne Linssen

When our Zodiac NZO was sold, we did not sail in Switzerland for several years. There was no possibility for us. After 3 Lacs Yacht Charter was launched, we got the itch again and rented 'La Gourmandise' (Grand Sturdy 35.0 Sedan) in 2023 and 'La Barrique' (40 SL AC) in 2024 with our family. During this latter boating holiday, mum and dad also joined us for a few days. We have many fond memories of our wonderful holidays! Mathijs and Sophie also got to experience sailing on the Swiss lakes. They happily enjoy it just as much.

Of all the lakes in Switzerland, the Seeland lakes are still our favourite. Not only are they picturesque, but also very accessible. And with three lakes, connected by two canals, it is a beautiful

and vast cruising area with many possibilities. Quiet villages along the banks, vineyards that reach down to the water, and a sailing area that lends itself perfectly to relaxed, slow cruising. For displacement yachts of around 9 to 13.5 metres, this is the perfect area. You will therefore encounter most Linssens here.

The feeling of carefree enjoyment on the water is hard to put into words. It is the moment when you moor in a small port, or drop your anchor somewhere. The moment you open a local bottle of wine on a terrace. Or on a clear morning, observe the snow-capped peaks of the Alps from your aft deck or cockpit. It's sitting on the deck with family, enjoying the evening sun and a glass of wine, while the mountains turn red in the fading light.



## 3 Lacs Yacht Charter

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*Paul, Mathijs, Sophie, Jos, Rina and Yvonne together on the 'La Barrique' on the Drei Juraseen in 2024*



