



Press release

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Swiss-made creativity hits Milan

One year exactly before the Expo 2015 kicks off, Switzerland inaugurated today at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan the *Giro del gusto*, which will bring to a number of Italian cities a taste of Switzerland, inviting the public to discover the country through its culinary specialities and through a rich programme of activities revolving around culture, science and the economy. The roadshow is intended to showcase Switzerland as a country that is open and creative and show how both Switzerland and Italy rely on their solid, deep-rooted relations for their development. The commissioner-general of the Swiss Confederation to Expo 2015, Dante Martinelli, and the mayor of Milan, Giuliano Pisapia, opened the House of Switzerland to the public in the presence of delegations from the city of Milan and from the partner cantons of the Swiss pavilion. The House of Switzerland will form the centrepiece of the Swiss village during the first stage of the *Giro del gusto*, from 30 April to 11 May.

Today the Swiss Confederation launched the Giro del gusto, along with the Gotthard partner cantons – Ticino, Uri, Graubünden and Valais – and the cities of Zurich, Geneva and Basel. Designed to tie in with Switzerland's participation in Expo Milano 2015, the aim of this project is to showcase the various fields in which Switzerland excels. The main theme of the universal exhibition, "Feeding the planet, energy for life", is the starting point for a voyage of discovery based on a common and universal denominator: taste.

"It was warmly received at the Sochi Winter Olympics, and the House of Switzerland has now made it overland all the way from Russia to be in Milan for the first stage of the Giro del gusto. 'The mountains won't stand in our way' is the slogan we've adopted to strike up a successful dialogue with the Italian population around Expo 2015," says Nicolas Bideau, head of Presence Switzerland at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. *"We have a great opportunity to show off Switzerland's outstanding merits through the combined creative forces of our food, our architecture, our culture, our transport and our tourism."*

"Despite the very close bilateral relations enjoyed by our two countries, our analysis of our image shows that in Italy, Switzerland is often perceived along rather limited, stereotypical lines. Through the combined creative forces of our food, our architecture, our culture, our transport and our tourism we intend to turn that perception on its head. A St Bernard by the name of Barry is the mascot we have chosen to embody the quintessential Swiss qualities of openness, creativity and reliability."

There are two sides to the Taste of Switzerland: not only does it propose a culinary tour of our country's specialities, it will also be a voyage of discovery encompassing Swiss culture, history, tourism, design, architecture and transport.

In the first stage, Switzerland will be in Milan on the Piazza del Cannone, in the historical Parco del Sempione, where it will set up the Swiss village, with the House of Switzerland at its centre. The country will be represented in all its diversity by a wide variety of installations, including the Swiss Tourism playground and the container set up by the Swiss Federal Railways and Federal Office of Transport to offer a virtual reality experience, simulating a ride through the new Gotthard tunnel – a symbol of how closely bound the two countries are.

Throughout the twelve days of the event, visitors will be able to sample culinary delights from the various Swiss regions in the Swiss village market square: quality AOP/IGP produce in collaboration with Swiss Cheese Marketing, alongside niche products from the Gotthard cantons (Graubünden, Ticino, Uri and Valais) and the cities of Basel, Zurich and Geneva. On top of that, there will be a whole programme of concerts, crafts, activities, workshops and conferences. The take-away restaurant in the House of Switzerland will provide a selection of delicious products and traditional fare.

Participating in the inauguration were the mayor of Zurich, Corine Mauch, the president of the cantonal council of Basel Stadt, Guy Morin, the deputy mayor of Geneva, Sami Kanaan, and the delegate for Expo 2015 of the canton of Ticino, Luigi Pedrazzini. The Gotthard partner cantons – Ticino, Graubünden, Valais and Uri – signed the Expo 2015 participation contract with Presence Switzerland in the festive setting of the House of Switzerland.

After Milan, the *Giro del Gusto* will continue its journey to the capital, where from 22 to 26 September 2014 at the Villa Maraini, home to the Swiss Institute in Rome, the issue of food security will be examined in depth. Alongside the culinary delights of Taste of Switzerland, there will be a number of initiatives and events organised in the areas of science and culture. Finally the Taste of Switzerland will arrive in Turin, where from 23 to 27 October 2014 the last stage of the *Giro del gusto* will take place at the *Salone Internazionale del Gusto*. The Swiss village will allow the Italian public to sample the products and find out about their origin through a programme of activities including workshops, conferences and tastings.

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Links:

Swiss pavilion:
<http://www.padiglionesvizzero.ch>

Swiss pavilion Expo Milano 2015:
<http://www.dfae.admin.ch/eda/en/home/topics/prskom/siteet/milan.html>

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