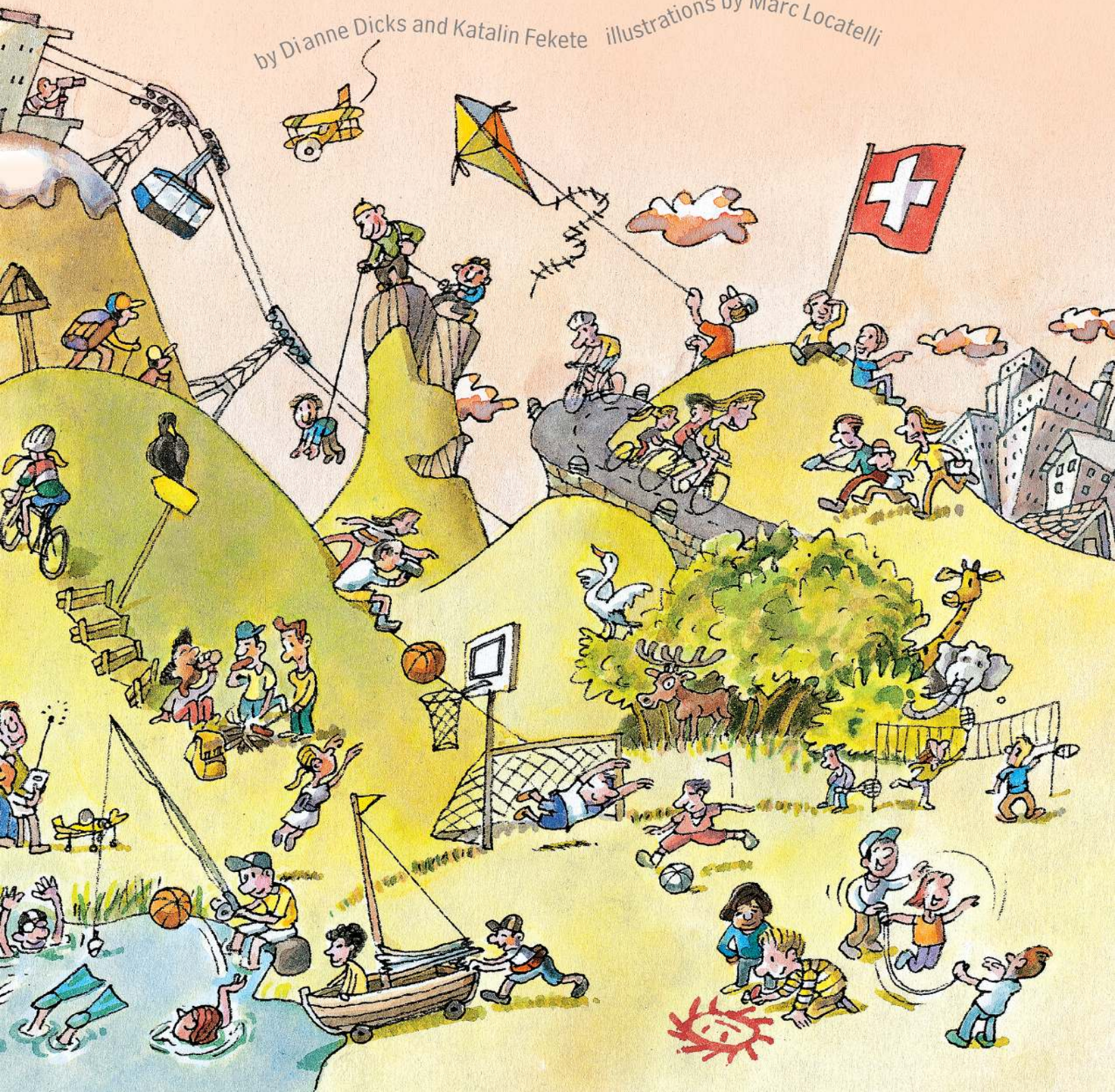


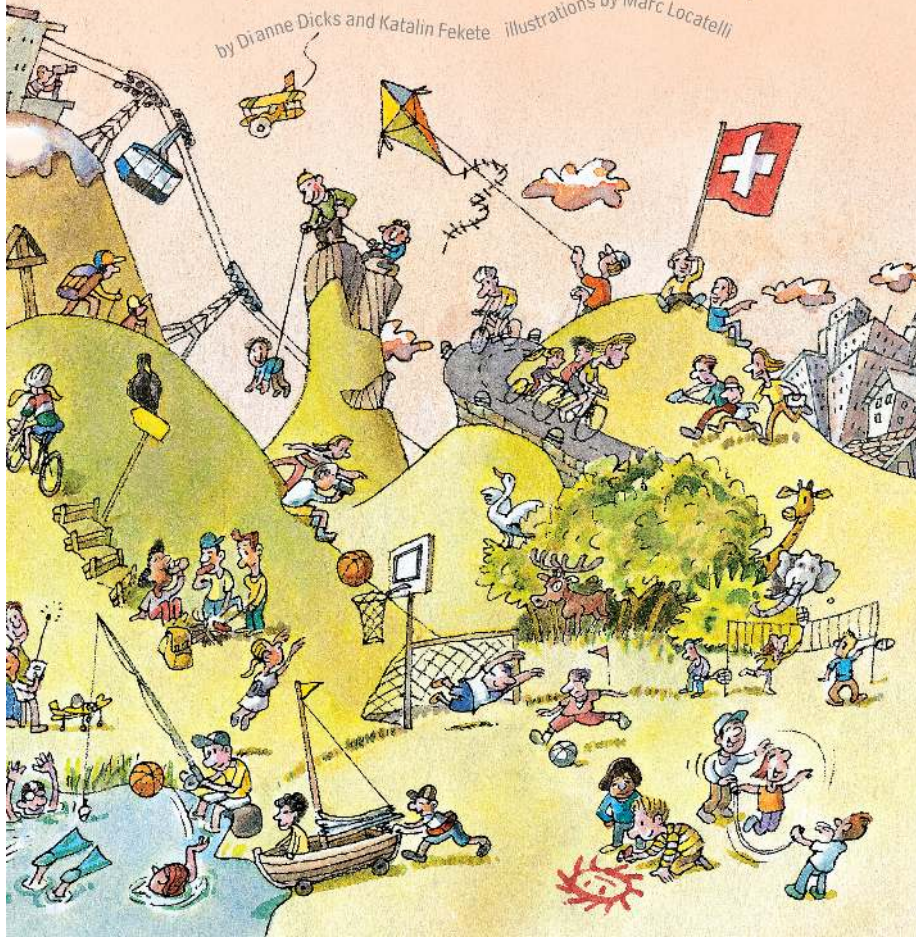
Ticking along with Swiss Kids

by Dianne Dicks and Katalin Fekete illustrations by Marc Locatelli



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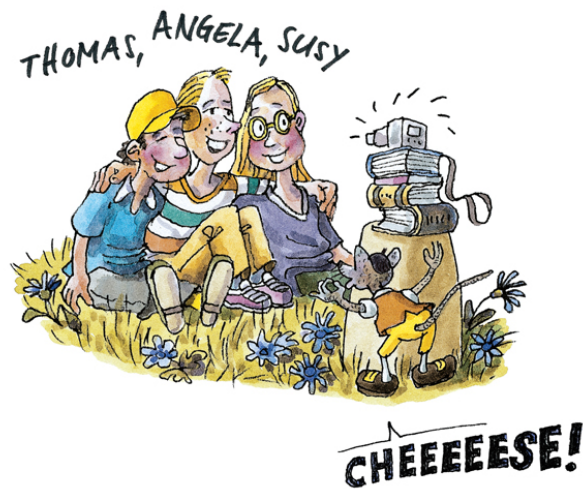
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In memory of

Angela Joos

1958 – 2005

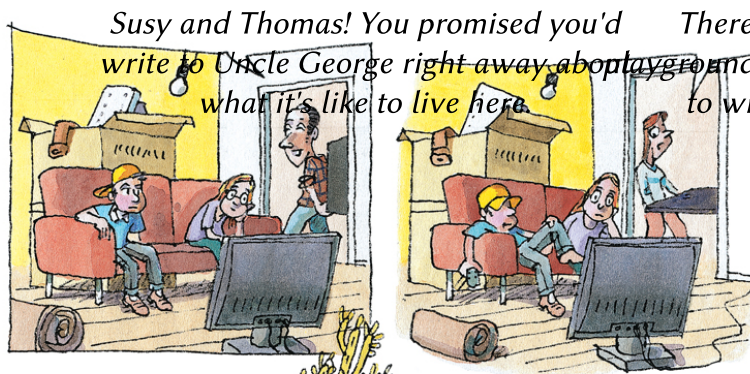
the bookseller of Basel
who always enjoyed finding
just the right books for
children of all ages



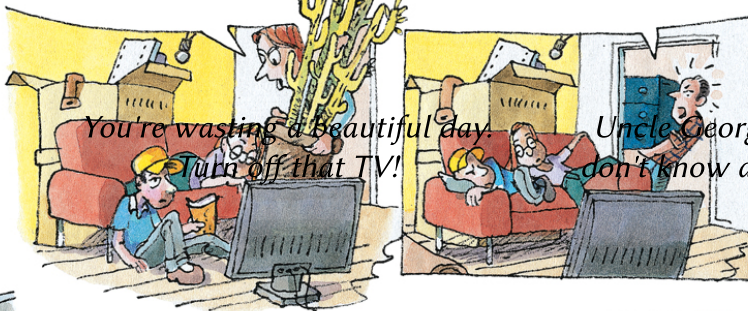
Thomas and Susy have just moved to Switzerland. They promised their Uncle George back home that they would write to him right away to tell him about their new life and what kids do here. They find it is such a confusing place with so many different languages and viewpoints. Their parents are new to it all too, and so busy with the move that they have little time to find out about the country and how things work. Fortunately, Susy and Thomas meet Angela on their new playground. She becomes a friend like they've never had before. She loves reading books and enjoys finding interesting and fun things to tell Thomas and Susy about Switzerland. Together they go through piles of Angela's books, explore the country, share experiences and discover all the essential things kids living in Switzerland need to know. Here's how it all began . . .

Are you new here?





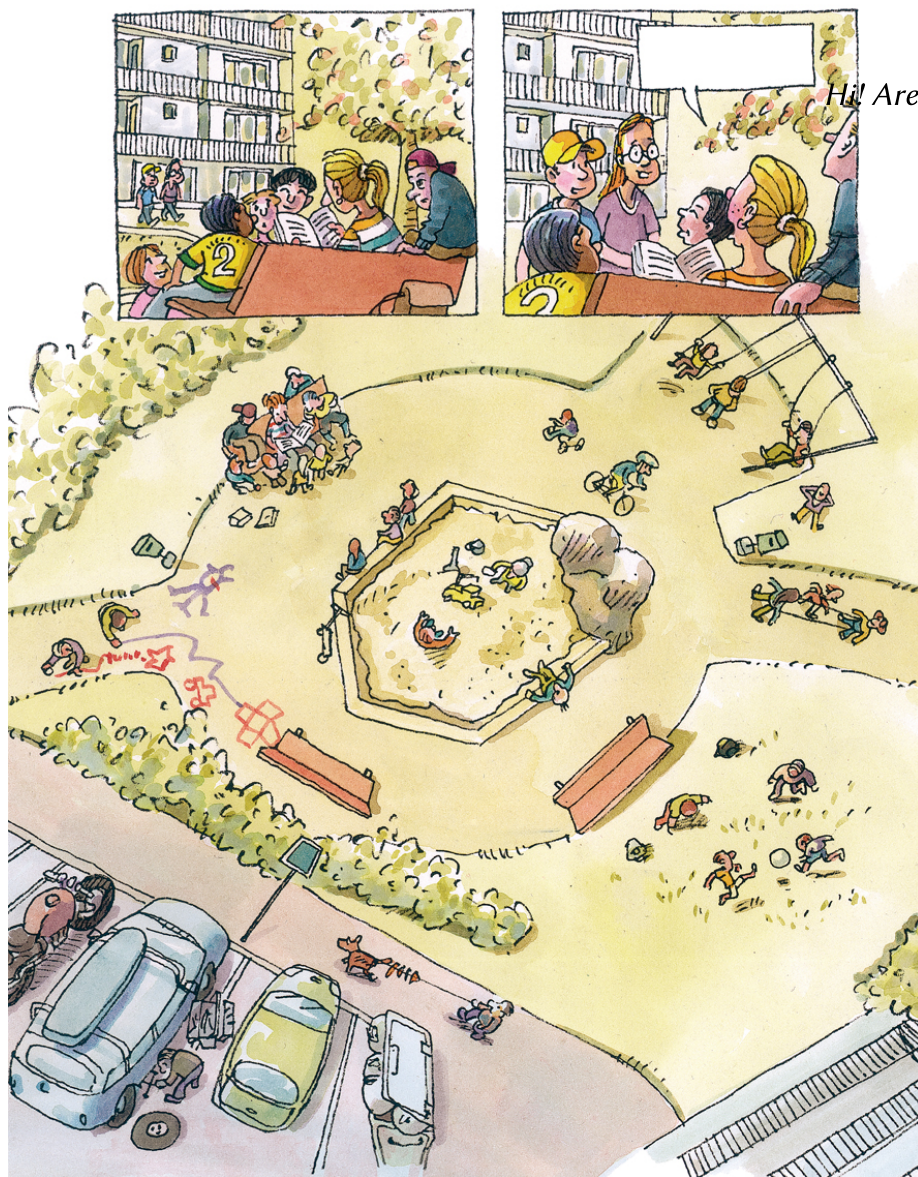
Susy and Thomas! You promised you'd write to Uncle George right away about playground and what it's like to live here. There're lots of kids on the to write to Uncle George.



You're wasting a beautiful day. Turn off that TV! Uncle George will complain if you don't know anything about life here!



Uncle George wants to hear from you soon!



Yes and we've gotta write like in the stories
to our Uncle George back home to tell him what
and Heidi, right?
Switzerland's really like.



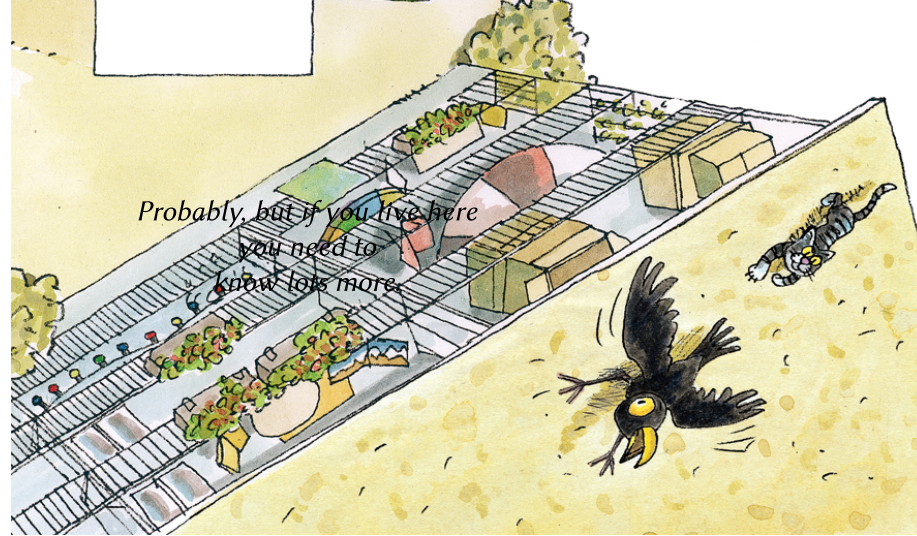
Those are just stories. They
aren't true. Great stories but
they don't tell you much about
Switzerland today.



But they are in books.



And life is just like it was
back home, isn't it?



Probably, but if you live here
you need to
know lots more.



Prehistoric people

Well, let's start at the beginning
Who discovered Switzerland?

Columbus,
right?



No,
The Vikings, the Romans!
right?

Stone Age (150,000-4,000 BC)

In the 'Old' Stone Age (until 15,000 BC) people were nomadic. They lived in caves above glaciers, and produced more sophisticated tools and weapons. During the New Stone Age (8,000-4,000 BC) people started farming and domesticating animals. They settled, built more permanent housing, and crafted more specialized tools like ploughs.

In the 4th millennium BC, people in what are now Neuchâtel, Biel, Zug, Zurich and Constance started building houses on stilts on the edge of lakes. The lakeside dwellers went hunting, fishing, grew grain and reared cows, sheep, goats, pigs and horses, which they used as working animals.



The Romans

121 BC: the Romans conquered the territory of the Allobroges on Lac Léman.

58 BC: they overthrew the Helvetians living in the western part of the country.

After 58 BC: the country gradually came under the rule of the Romans, who controlled it until 400 AD. It was a relatively peaceful time with an improvement in the overall quality of life, as the Romans drew to Italy.

5th c. AD: the Romans withdrew.

5th c. AD

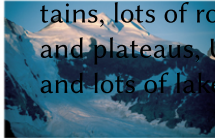
The Rhaetians

400 - 500 BC:

the Rhaetians, a non-Celtic tribe, settled in the eastern part of today's Switzerland. The Romansh language is sometimes referred to as Rhaeto-Romanic.

Prehistoric geography

Switzerland's landscape is very diverse. It's got high mountains, lots of rolling hills, plains and plateaus, U-shaped valleys and lots of lakes and rivers.



The Dravolezza area with Mount Palù



Hills around Menzingen, canton Zug



View from Weissenstein on the Aare

Juf in Aversal, canton Grisons

View from the Rigi over Lake Lucerne

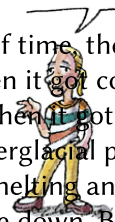
But the landscape has not always looked like this.

About 600,000 years ago, the country was all covered in glaciers. Most of the territory of modern-day Switzerland, especially the Swiss plateau, was covered by a 500-1,200 meter-thick (1,640-3,937 feet) sheet of ice.



Morteratsch Glacier canton Grisons

In the course of time, the glaciers grew when it got colder and receded when it got warmer. During the interglacial periods, glaciers were melting and people started to settle down. But when the cold periods came, people packed up and left again.



Huge 'Findling' in Flüelen



Glaciers left their marks on the landscape. Valleys were formed by erosion. Moraines came about when deposits of rocky debris were transported by the ice and piled up to form ridges.

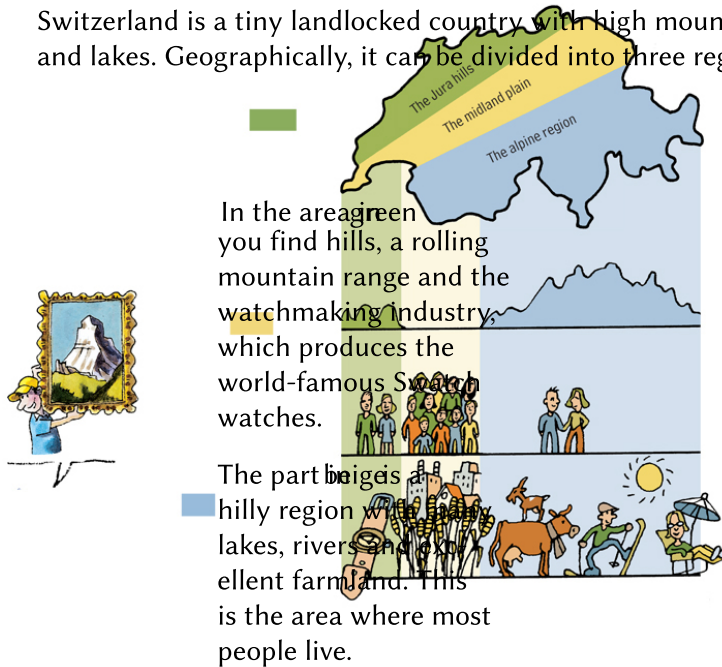
When hiking around in the countryside and the Alps, keep your eyes open for pebbles, rocks and even huge boulders, so-called 'Findlinge', that look different from those around them. These different-looking rocks were carried along by glaciers miles from where they originated.

Go to the Glacier Garden in Lucerne to find out more about the Ice Age.

These glacial and interglacial periods lasted several 10,000 years each. The last ice age ended about 10,000 years ago.

Landscape

Switzerland is a tiny landlocked country with high mountains, valleys, rolling hills, rivers, and lakes. Geographically, it can be divided into three regions.



The blue part is where the high, steep mountains are, so there are fewer people living here.

*(4,480 meters /
14,697 feet above
sea level)*

Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau are three of the highest mountains, but the highest Swiss peak is the Dufourspitze at 4,634 meters (15,203 feet) above sea level.

