



Geneva - City Business Guide

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Overview

Resting on the tip of Lac Léman in the French-speaking territory, with foreground hills rising against a backdrop of mountains, Geneva is Switzerland's third-largest city. The river Rhone bisects the city which centre is sited on both shores. Geneva is well known as a stronghold of private banks, but perhaps less as the home of 200 international organisations and the birthplace of Calvinism and the International Red Cross. Switzerland's famed neutrality had encouraged organisations as well as companies to locate their headquarters in Geneva. Today the foreign community accounts for one-third of Geneva's population making it a very cosmopolitan city. Geneva also plays a significant role in the manufacture of watches, scientific instruments, jewellery, and chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

Business Etiquette

The Swiss are extremely punctual and expect people at precisely the appointed time

* Many Swiss first names are hyphenated; in such cases, both names are always used

* Conservative dress is the norm and ostentatious displays of wealth are not appreciated

* The Swiss take a long time to establish personal relationships as there is a sharp divide between business and pleasure and a strong urge to protect one's privacy. But time and effort should help build a pleasant relationship

* Modesty and understatement are important virtues in Swiss culture

* Business is regarded with the utmost seriousness and humour has no place in negotiations

Chamber of Commerce

Geneva Chamber of Commerce, General Services

Bd du Théâtre 4, Box 1211; Tel.: +41 (0)22 819 91 11

French Swiss Chamber of Commerce

Route de Chêne 5; Tel.: +41 (0)22 849 05 70 ; http://www.cfsci.ch

Turkish Swiss Chamber of Commerce

Rue Pedro-Meylan 1; Tel.: +41 (0)22 700 57 67

Algerian Swiss Chamber of Commerce

17bis, Rue de l'Arquebuse; Tel.: +41 (0)22 800 02 48

Italian Chamber of Commerce

Rue du Cendrier 12 -14, Box 1211; Tel.: +41 (0)22 906 85 95

Chinese Swiss Chamber of Commerce

Boulevard du Théâtre 4-6; Tel.: +41 (0)22 310 27 10

American Swiss Chamber of Commerce

, Free calls deviation Tel.: +41 (0)22 738 72 55

Embassies and Consulates

American Consulate

Rue Versoix 7; Tel.: +41 (0)22 840 51 60

Australian Consulate

Chemin des Fins 2, Box 172; Tel.: +41 (0)22 799 91 00

British Consulate

Rue de Vermont 37-39; Tel.: +41 (0)22 918 24 00

Belgian Consulate

Rue de Molllebeau 58, Box 473; Tel.: +41 (0)22 730 40 00

Canadian Consulate

Avenue de l'Ariana 5; Tel.: +41 (0)22 919 92 00

Danish Consulate

Rue de la Gabelle 9, Box 1368; Tel.: +41 (0)22 827 05 00

Finnish Consulate

rue des Cordiers 14 ; Tel.: +41 22 786 42 66

French Consulate

Cour des Bastions 2; Tel.: +41 (0)22 319 00 00

German Consulate

Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28C, Box 171; Tel.: +41 (0)22 730 11 11

Greek Consulate

Rue Pedro-Melyan 1; Tel.: +41 (0)22 735 73 90

Italian Consulate

Rue Charles-Galland 14; Tel.: +41 (0)22 839 67 44

Japanese Consulate

Rue de Lausanne 80 -82; Tel.: +41 (0)22 716 99 00

Luxembourg Consulate

Chemin de la Rochette 15; Tel.: +41 (0)22 919 19 29

Mexican Consulate

Rue de Candolle 16; Tel.: +41 (0)22 328 39 20

Norwegian Consulate

Rue Jargonnant 2, Box 6045; Tel.: +41 (0)22 736 16 12

Netherlands Consulate

rue de la Scie 4; Tel.: +41 (0)22 787 57 30

Portuguese Consulate

Route de Ferney 220; Tel.: +41 22 791 76 36

Russian Consulate

Rue Schaub 24; Tel.: +41 (0)22 734 79 55

Swedish Consulate

Rue Rodolphe Toepffer 8; Tel.: +41 (0)22 700 47 00

Spanish Consulate

Rue Pestalozzi 7; Tel.: +41 22 749 14 60

Turkish Consulate

Route de Pré-Bois 20, Box 1901; Tel.: +41 22 710 93 60

Business Centers

Most large hotels also have business centers that offer many of the same services that independent centers provide.

Regus Business Center

rue du Rhône 14 ; Tel: +41 (0)22 819 19 19

Geneva Business Center

avenue des Morgines 12, 1213 Petit-Lancy ; Tel: +41 22 879 14 14 ; www.geneva-business-center.com

Skycom

Geneva Airport; Tel.: +41 (0) 22 717 78 00; www.skycom.ch

World Trade Center

route de Pré-Bois 29 1216 Cointrin ; Tel: +41 22 929 56 56; www.wtc-geneva.ch

Conference and Exhibition Centers

Palexpo

route François Peyrot 30, 1218 Le Grand-Saconnex; Tel.: +41 (0)22 761 11 11

International Conference Center Geneva

Rue de Varembé 15, Box 13; Tel.: +41 (0)22 791 91 11

Expo-Lac c/o Hotel Noga-Hilton

, Quai du Mont-Blanc 19; Tel.: +41 (0)22 908 90 81

Conventus

av. de Sécheron 14 ; +41 (0)22 906 85 70

Forum of Geneva

Rue de Lausanne 17; Tel.: +41 (0)22 393 56 78

Translation Offices

International Translator Association

Rue du Diorama 15; Tel.: +41 (0)22 781 61 14

AIT of Geneva

rue du Diorama 15; Tel.: +41 (0) 22 321 07 95

Berlitz

Courier/Messenger Services

Courrex 2000

Rue Ronzades 9 ; Tel: +41 (0)22 343 57 29 ; www.courrex.com

DHL

Tel.: +41 (0)848 711 711 (toll free within Switzerland)

FedEx

Tel.: 0800 123 800

UPS

Tel.: 0800 55-88-33 (toll free within Switzerland)

Internet Connection Place

Cyber Café 3000

rue de Genève 1226 Thônex ; Tel: +41 22 860 94 83

Cyber Café Fsys

rue du Conseil Général 18 ; Tel: +41 22 800 33 60

Point 6

rue Jean Violette 12 ; Tel: +41 22 800 26 00

Visas & Customs

Citizens of Brazil, Czech Republic, Italy, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Mexico, Germany, France, U.K., and the U.S do not need a visa to stay up to 3 months. Citizens of the People's Republic of China need to apply for visa. For adults entering from the non-EU countries, duty-free allowances are 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco; 1 liter of alcoholic beverage of more than 22 proof, or 2 liters of champagne and wine; 60 grams of perfume, and other goods to the value of GBP75. For adults entering from the EU countries, duty-free allowances are 800 cigarettes or 400 cigarillos and 200 cigars.

Phone Information

The country code for Switzerland is 41. The city code for Geneva is 022.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Police

117

Ambulance

144

Fire Department

118

Road Assistance

140

Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

When dialing a number within Switzerland omit the initial 0 from the local area code.

Most international numbers can be dialed direct from Switzerland using 00 before the country code. For information and collect calls dial 111. All operators speak English. Credit cards are accepted at some call boxes, but most take coins (minimum charge SF60) and Taxcards (phone cards purchasable in various denominations from post offices and kiosks).

Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

GSM is the cellular standard in Switzerland. PTT Switzerland / Swisscom is the main service provider. If you choose to bring your cellular phone into Switzerland, be sure to check with your home cellular service provider to establish compatibility of your phone with systems abroad. Rent a locally compatible cellular phone before you arrive to obtain reasonable rates and reliable service.

Money

The official currency is the Swiss franc (100 centimes).

Denomination for notes are SF1000, 200, 100, 50, 20 and 10, and denomination for coins are SF1, 2, 5, 50, 20, 10 and 5 centimes.

Foreign currency can be exchanged at banks, airports, main rail stations, and big hotels. ATMs are widely available.

Major types of travelers' checks--especially American Express and Thomas Cook--are accepted.

You will be able to use major credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard, Eurocard, and Access. American Express and Diner's Club are less widely accepted.

Tippling

The official line in Switzerland is that since hotels, restaurants, and bars are required by law to include a 15 percent service charge in bills, tipping is not expected. It has become customary, however, to acknowledge good service with a tip. You should generally tip with cash rather than adding it on top of a credit card bill.

* Restaurants Round up the bill to the nearest franc at least and up to the nearest SF10 for a perfect dinner in a top-class establishment.

* Bars No tipping, although small change may be left.

* Airport Porter The main international airports have a fixed rate of SF5 per bag; this is a good rule of thumb for other airports too.

* Taxis No tipping.

* Hotel Room Service No tipping.

* Parking Attendant/Valet No tipping.

* Haircare/Personal Services No tipping.

* Hotel Housekeeping No tipping.

* Hotel Porters/Doorman SF1 to SF2 per bag. Hotel Bell Desk No tipping.

Time Difference

Geneva is in the Central European Time Zone, which is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Daylight Savings Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

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VAT & Taxes

VAT is applies as follows: 7.6% standard rate, 2.4% reduced rate (e.g. food, medicine, newspapers, books and feed), 3.6% lodging services.

Voltage

The voltage/current is 220V/50Hz. Electrical Plugs Swiss plugs and sockets are not standard but usually have two (sometimes three) round pins.

Local Transportation

Driving in Geneva it's possible but difficult because the city is excessively congested. Taxis in Geneva can be ordered by phone, hailed in the street or found at about 60 authorized taxi ranks in town, airport and main station. Fares between airport and city range from about CHF 28 to CHF 33 and depend on traffic conditions, time of day and number of passengers. Presently, the fare within Geneva, including airport, is the amount shown on the taximeter. The driver will request a small extra charge for luggage. Tip and VAT are included. Fares are supervised by the city police authority and are subject to change. In case of difficulties, note the cab's identity number and ask for a receipt. For buses and tramways the tickets must be purchased before boarding the vehicle, from vending machines located at all bus or tramway stops. As these tickets have different applications and fares according to age, please check with sales agents at CFF stations, TPG sales offices or an official point of sale.

* TPG Public Transport system of Geneva Tel.: +41 (0)900 02 20 21 (Frs. 1,19/min)

* International airport of Geneva Tel.: +41 (0)22 717 71 11

* Cornavin Station Tel.: +41 (0)22 157 22 22 (Frs. 1,19/min)

Health Info

No vaccines are required to enter Switzerland.

Climate

The city, which is only 375m above sea level, enjoys a mild central European climate with relatively low rainfall. Summer is usually pleasant. Between June and September, the weather temperature can reach 25°C. Fall usually has a settled weather with an average of 10°C. Winter is cold with an average temperature just above 0°C and much persistent low cloud and fog. It snows once in a while.

Public Holidays

Where to Eat

Le Neptune (Right Bank), a one star. Michelin, serves succulent fish and seafood dishes like lobster cannelloni steamed with lobster bisque. Other Michelin-starred **Le Béarn** is also a classic. Delicacies include a delicious Provence-style roast lamb with truffe soufflé. To taste local specialties such as raclette, rosti or fondue, **Les Armures** offers a picturesque setting in a rustic 15th-century stone building in the Old Town. Locals enjoy old-fashion charm of the **Brasserie de l'Hotel de Ville** and its traditional dishes like the cooked omble fish and the Longeole du val d'Arve sausages. For a trendy, minimalist and friendly atmosphere, **Le Comptoir's** eastern-influenced cuisine is full of flavor. Thai aficionados will like the elegant **Patara** restaurant. Set on Geneva's hills, **Le Lion d'Or** offers a delightful seasonal menu coupled with an outstanding view of the city. **Brasserie Lipp**, centrally located with its lovely flowered terrace and fountain is the perfect place for a late dinner.

Local Gift Ideas

For jewelry, watches or Swiss knives, head for Bucherer. The largest Rolex retailer with over 1,000 models also offers an on-the-spot watch service. Consider the auctions held at the Antiquorum, Christies or Sothebys. For chocolate addicts, the best coniseries are Rohr, Merkur, Du Rhône, Auer and Arn.

Leisure Time

For a view of Geneva, take the cable car up the Salève or a ferry ride on the lake. To discover the city, walk around the old town and pass the iconic Jet d'Eau to Maison Tavel, Geneva's oldest house. Not far, the Barbier-Muller museum displays beautiful so-called "primitive" artefacts.

On the right bank, the unmistakable International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum chronicles in detail the history of conflict in the 20th century. In the Plainpalais area, the modern art museum displays innovative works. Also in Plainpalais, the new Patek Philippe Museum has a small collection of watches while the Musée de l'Horlogerie is closed for renovation. The unique Baur Collection showcases 19 centuries of Chinese and Japanese art. Geneva hosts highly praised events such as the Motor Show, the Exhibition of Inventions and the Book Fair.

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