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## MASTER OF THE BOLD

**FAUSTO PUGLISI, CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
OF ROBERTO CAVALLI MAISON, ON  
FASHION'S EVOLVING LANGUAGE POST-  
PANDEMIC AND WHY THE UAE MAY JUST  
INSPIRE HIS FUTURE COLLECTIONS**

  
**FATHER'S DAY  
GIFT GUIDE**



## TRAVEL



# History Beckons



TEXT : BINDU GOPAL RAO

**M**y Swiss sojourn started with a few small towns and cities that allowed me to soak in the beauty of nature that I rounded off at Zurich, one of the larger cities in my trip. To confess, I assumed that this would be a cosmopolitan city. To my utter delight, however, I discovered that the city is so much more than what I thought and being surrounded by beautiful lakes and rivers, Zurich was a revelation.

## TIPS

- You can sign up for a walking tour at the tourist information office at the main station.
- Augustinergasse and Rennweg are some of the most colourful streets here.
- Niederdo-rfstrasse is a pedestrian street that has some hip cafés, restaurants and bars.







**WHILE ONE MAY ASSOCIATE ZURICH WITH EVERYTHING A MODERN, BIG CITY SHOULD BE, IT HAS AN INTERESTING MEDIEVAL PAST THAT IS AS INTRIGUING AS IT IS FASCINATING**



## TRAIN TRAIL

**W**ith a history that dates back several thousand years, the vestiges of the same are being preserved and this makes for a great option when taking an offbeat path to discover the city. I made some enquiries and found out that Zurich has a thriving Old City and guided walks were the best way to experience the same. Wasting no time, I signed up for a walk with my local guide Yvonne Rimle. Starting the walk at the central train station, she pointed out the first piece of history in the station itself. The vintage Mondaine clocks that dot the station have been the official clock of the Swiss Railways for several decades. The train station itself dates to 1847 and is called Zurich Hauptbahnhof (shortened as Zürich HB) and is the largest and busiest railway station in Switzerland. Outside the station is the large green hued statue of Alfred Escher, credited with building The Gotthard Tunnel, which is the 'north to south' connection in Switzerland. Being a politician and businessman, Escher started the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Swiss Life and Credit Suisse. This area is bustling with a tram station and the blue and white colours on the trams represent the colours of Zurich city. Continuing to walk along Bahnhofstrasse, the station street dotted with cafés, boutiques and art galleries, I notice the statue of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who is credited with founding public schools, financing orphan homes and educating orphan children too. An interesting feature of Zurich are the water fountains; a whopping 1225 inches tall, which is a source of fresh water and it is not uncommon to see tourists refilling their water bottles from them.

## ROMAN MUSINGS

Interestingly, the roots of present-day Zurich go back to 80 BC and the Roman influence gradually increased from 40 BC when Roman soldiers settled here. Soon, the settlements grew prosperous and manifested in several public buildings and residential and commercial districts on both sides of River Limmat. The old name of Zurich happens to be Turicom and the town had fortification gates until the 17th century that were demolished and in 1893, the whole town came together. The old town has remnants of an excavated Roman Bath that have been covered by a mesh. "The Roman bath was a community concept, but the locals found it very noisy," explains Rimle. Walking into the medieval quarter that dates to the 13th century, I see an eclectic combination of residences, shopping and entertainment. In the heart of the historic Old Town, I stopped to marvel at the Widder Hotel that has been beautifully renovated, and it is hard to believe that it was started in the 12th century.



ART'S SAKE: Sculptures from the Museum of Archeology in Zurich



## AMAZING ARCHITECTURE

Walking ahead, we come to a flight of stairs flanked by homes that have blue plaques on the outside. My guide explains that this indicates it is an old home that has been restored. What is unique are the doors of these homes that are a combination of wood and wrought iron and interestingly, no two doors are the same. At the end of the stairway is Lindenhof, a raised platform with a park from where panoramic views of the river and surrounding buildings are seen. This is where I also saw the home of Lenin, at Spiegelgasse 14 where he lived with his wife Nadezhda Krupskaya for a year during the World War I and a commemorative plaque outside the home indicates this. Incidentally, Lenin completed his work 'Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism' in Zurich. The old town is also home to some breathtakingly beautiful churches, including the **St. Peter Church**, which has a clock face that is 8.7m in diameter and is the largest in Europe.

## WATER WISE

The city has several water bodies, including the beautiful lake and River Limmat that has a 'ladies only' public swimming pool at Frauenbad Stadthausquai. The women's pool was built in the 19th century, when women wanted to learn swimming, so a separate pool was made while the men's public pool is at the Freibad am Schanzengraben. Looking out into the landscape framed by the famed Alps in the distance, the flowing river flanked by colourful heritage buildings and swans swimming, I could not help but admire the city where the past and present blended so perfectly. As I said goodbye to Yvonne, she pressed an envelope in my hand and to my utter delight, it was a postcard of the stained-glass windows that I had admired in Grossmünster church. And I knew my trip could not have ended on a better note.

