

Montreux:

City of passion, joy, Music, Life and Love



Montreux lies on the north east shore of Lake Geneva at the fork in the Roman road from Italy over the Simplon Pass, where the roads to the Roman capital of Aventicum and the road into Gaul through Besançon separated. This made it an important settlement already in Roman times. In 1798, Napoleon liberated the region from the Bernese. In the 19th century, the tourist industry became a major commercial outlet, with the grand hotels of Montreux attracting the rich and cultured from Europe and America.

* It was a haven for Catherine Barkley and Lt. Frederic Henry in Ernest Hemingway's classic, *A Farewell to Arms*.

Montreux hosts several noteworthy festivals:

* The *Septembre musical de Montreux*, founded in 1946 and held every year since then.

* *Freddie Mercury's Montreux Memorial Day*, annually first week-end of September since 2003.

* The *Montreux Jazz Festival*, annually in July since 1967. It is held at the Montreux Music & Convention Centre, built in 1973 and has become a global phenomenon.

* The *Golden Rose Festival*, annually in spring (1961–2003), which awarded the *Golden Rose of Montreux*, an international award for television.

* The *Golden Award of Montreux*, annually in April, is traditionally, since 1989, the first international advertising and multimedia Competition in Europe - starting the global season for awarding creative excellence.

Montreux boasts one of the most beautiful walks along the lake, stretching from Villeneuve all the way towards Vevey. The main square of the town, *Place du Marché*, features a statue of Freddie Mercury facing Lake Geneva. Some of the numerous small villages



around Montreux include La Tour-de-Peilz, Clarens, Territet, and Villeneuve. The *Château de Chillon* provides a marvelous view of the entire Lake of Geneva and can be easily accessed via bus, walk or boat.

Deep Purple's famous song "*Smoke on the Water*" tells of the events of 1971, when a Frank Zappa fan with a flare gun set the Montreux Casino on fire. The destroyed Casino was reopened in 1975.

Montreux is the home of *Mountain Studios*, the recording studio used by several artists. "*Bonzo's Montreux*" by Led Zeppelin is named after the city where the drums session of John Bonham was recorded in 1976. In 1978, the band Queen bought the studio. It was then sold to Queen producer David Richards. In 2002 the *Mountain Studios* was converted into a bar as part of a complete renovation of the studio. David Richards has left Montreux to settle down somewhere else. Queen also appeared in 1984 and in 1986 at the *Golden Rose Festival* and Queen guitarist Brian May appeared in 2001 at the *Jazz Festival*. Montreux was also the subject of the 1995 Queen single *A Winter's Tale* on the album *Made in Heaven*, one of Freddie's last songs before his death.