 Lots of forest riding near Winterthur

	Day 8: Zofnigen → Baden		Distance: 61 Kilometers		Climbing: 295 Meters
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Points of Interest:

- ✦ Medieval bridge in Aarau
- ✦ Brugg’s mental institution and Cathedral
- ✦ Old town Baden and thermal baths


You will need to begin this morning by backtracking to Aarburg, but RWGPS will take you on a different road to avoid congestion.

You’ll pass through several large, economically important cities this morning, the first being Olten. Here you will notice the long wooden bridge which crosses the Aare. Although rebuilt several times, there has been a bridge at this spot ever since 1201. Olten’s importance grew in 1856 when it became a central hub for the newly created Swiss railroad. Afterwards, the city was quickly transformed and is now an important city for sales and service industries.

Further on is the even more important city of Aarau. This city’s history goes back to 1250 and was built by the Kyburg family, (more about this tomorrow when you go through their village). Aarau was long a city of skilled craftsmen and many of the streets in the old town were devoted to different trades. Even today you can still get a sense of this from the heraldry outside certain shops in the old town (a knife to indicate a barber shop, scales to indicate a grocery, etc.). In any case, the gabled streets of Aarau are worth a wander and the Migros supermarket has a cafeteria with a lot of good, healthy and affordable choices for lunch.

Brugg is another interesting city on the route. The name comes from the Swiss German word for “Bridge” and is named such because the town was purposely built at the narrowest point of the Aare to allow an easier access to the Swiss plains. The Hapsbourg family, before moving to Austria, lived in this area and their oldest family residence is just outside Brugg. When leaving town, you’ll notice some lovely modern buildings reminiscent of a university campus.



 Baden - The perfect small city

In fact, this is a local mental institution. If you're not intimidated, it's a good place to have a coffee.

You'll also likely see a gothic church in the distance. You should definitely have a look at the church's interior, as its reputed to have the most beautiful stained glass windows in Switzerland from the 14th century.

None of these cities however, compare to our overnight stop. Baden is dominated on the west by a stone castle in ruins, and the rest of the city is very picturesque with steep and narrow streets, a Medieval wooden bridge and one surviving gateway.

Baden has a long history of being a getaway-city. Indeed, it was the first destination for the Swiss railroad: a line was built from Zurich to Baden to allow the rich Zurichois to conveniently access the town's thermal spas. Indeed, these sulphur springs were first mentioned by Tacitus in the first century ! They are considered to be especially beneficial for cases of gout or rheumatic problemw and so will probably do your legs good. The main spa is right outside your hotel, but there are also thermal baths in the basement of your hotel.

Our hotel in Baden is in a wooded area below the town. Getting to the center of town (for supper or visit) is easily done by following the river south, (as you will do tomrrow using RWGPS). After walking 5-10 minutes on the sidewalk along the river, you'll see a large tower: this is an elevator. Just take it up and you'll be in the center of town !

Although the hotel restaurant is quite good, we recommend experiencing Baden's old town if the weather is nice. For something fun and different, you may also consider having supper and a few liters at Baden's outdoor beer garden. Best to make sure that it is open while you're in town: biergartenbaden.ch