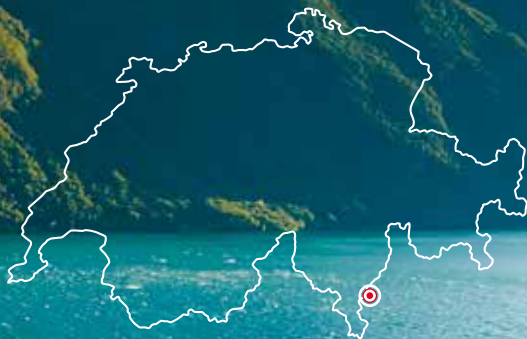


# SCHWEIZER ZOLLMUSEUM

MUSEE SUISSE DES DOUANES  
MUSEO DELLE DOGANE SVIZZERO  
SWISS CUSTOMS MUSEUM



# A VISIT TO THE BORDER

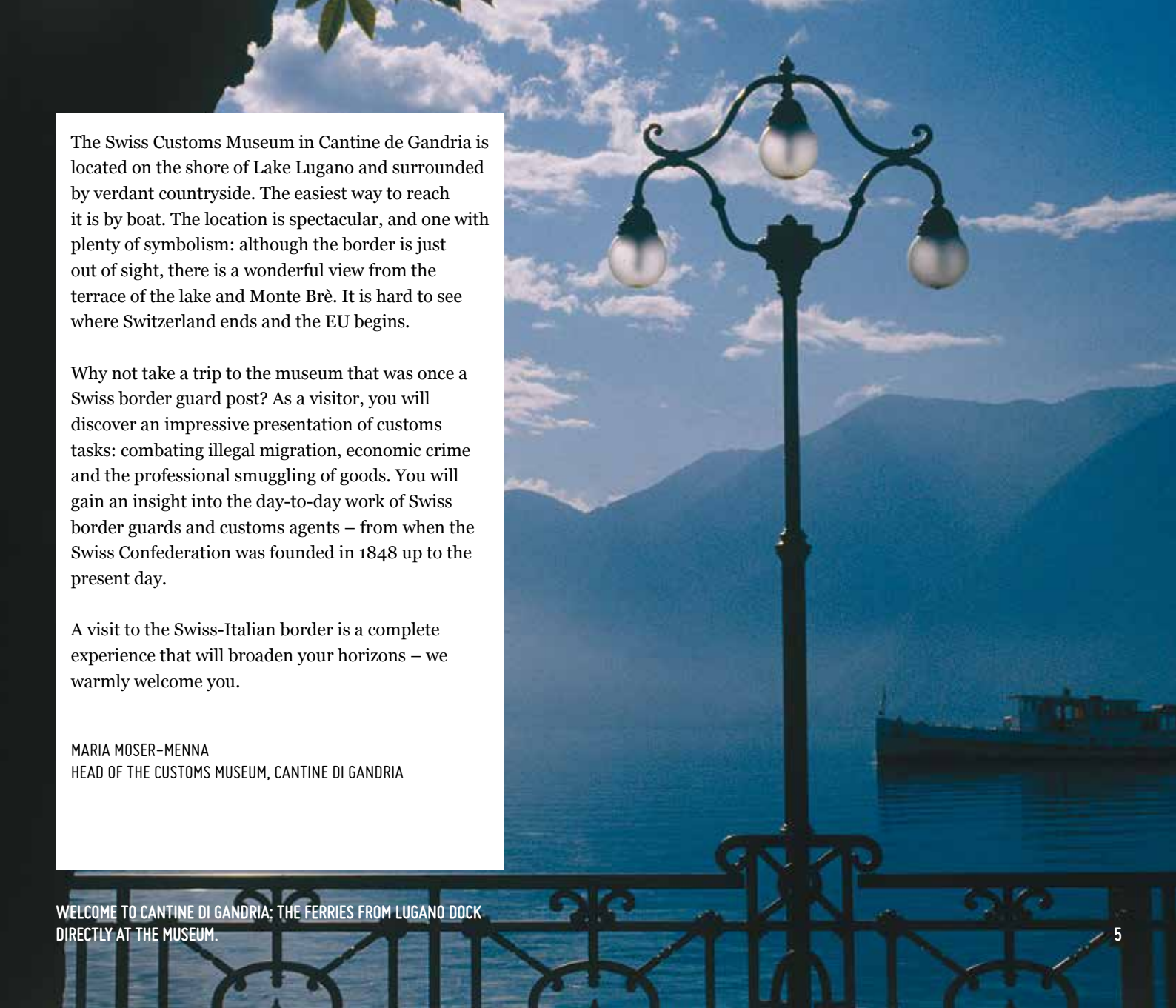


# VISITING THE SWISS CUSTOMS MUSEUM

Smuggling means finding the best possible hiding place for everything, which makes it a very creative business. In bygone days, ham, rice, salt, shoes, tobacco and gunpowder were smuggled into Switzerland, whereas nowadays it's drugs, weapons, counterfeits and cultural property. And items such as teddy bears, wetsuits, hot dogs, prostheses and wigs are used as hiding places. Smugglers are always coming up with new ideas.

It is not just goods that are smuggled, but forged documents too. Every year, Swiss Customs agents confiscate thousands of passports, identity cards, residence permits, driving licences and even registration plates.

There is even a funny side to some smuggling attempts. For instance, a Chinese mobile phone smuggler tried to cross the border with 94 iPhones stuck to his body. Of course his plan failed, and he has gone down in smuggling history. There are many anecdotes like these. In 1972, a man was walking boldly through the green channel marked «Nothing to declare» when he came to the customs agents' attention. Upon asking him to open his luggage, they discovered an original sketch by Alberto Giacometti worth an estimated CHF 1 million.



The Swiss Customs Museum in Cantine de Gandria is located on the shore of Lake Lugano and surrounded by verdant countryside. The easiest way to reach it is by boat. The location is spectacular, and one with plenty of symbolism: although the border is just out of sight, there is a wonderful view from the terrace of the lake and Monte Brè. It is hard to see where Switzerland ends and the EU begins.

Why not take a trip to the museum that was once a Swiss border guard post? As a visitor, you will discover an impressive presentation of customs tasks: combating illegal migration, economic crime and the professional smuggling of goods. You will gain an insight into the day-to-day work of Swiss border guards and customs agents – from when the Swiss Confederation was founded in 1848 up to the present day.

A visit to the Swiss-Italian border is a complete experience that will broaden your horizons – we warmly welcome you.

MARIA MOSER-MENNA  
HEAD OF THE CUSTOMS MUSEUM, CANTINE DI GANDRIA

WELCOME TO CANTINE DI GANDRIA; THE FERRIES FROM LUGANO DOCK  
DIRECTLY AT THE MUSEUM.



TIME OUT: THE GARDEN, WHERE HISTORICAL BOUNDARY STONES ARE DISPLAYED, IS PART OF THE EXHIBITION — A PERFECT SPOT FOR A PICNIC.

The current Customs Museum building was built in 1835 and served as a border guard post up until 1921.

The initiative and idea of converting the disused customs house in Cantine di Gandria to a museum about the border, customs and smuggling date from 1935 and are attributed to a Ticino border officer. The museum was opened in 1949.

The permanent exhibition on the ground floor shows the daily life of customs agents and their tasks in the early days. This is the museum's central exhibition and tells of the work and life of customs agents. The upper floors are dedicated to present-day topics. Special exhibitions with an international reach are also installed on these floors. After all, issues like identity, borders and migration are more topical than ever.

> [WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH](http://WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH) > SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS



THE SWISS CUSTOMS MUSEUM IS POPULARLY REFERRED TO AS THE «SMUGGLERS' MUSEUM» TODAY.

Smuggling thrived on the border with Italy until the middle of the 20th century. The majority of the smuggling took place during the war and in the immediate post-war period and involved mainly scarce and sought-after goods such as cigarettes, sugar, coffee, rice and salt.

The post was manned from 1856 by border guards who put a stop to the smuggler's game here. Because the living conditions for the border guards' families were too harsh – located right at the water's edge with ice-cold temperatures in winter – only bachelor border guards were deployed here from 1921 on.

Even today, the profession still involves a hint of adventure. Border guards never know what dangers they will encounter in their working day, but they have completely different tools available to them today.

- > [WWW.EZV.ADMIN.CH](http://WWW.EZV.ADMIN.CH)
- > [WWW.GWK.CH](http://WWW.GWK.CH)



EARLY DAYS: THE LIFE OF CUSTOMS AGENTS WAS HARD AT THE REMOTE BORDER GUARD POST, ESPECIALLY IN WINTER.

Syria, Sudan or Mali: At any given time, millions of people are forced to leave their home – 51 million are currently fleeing persecution, war and violence.

The hub for the international protection of refugees is in Switzerland, more specifically at the headquarters of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. The UNHCR's mandate is to ensure protection for refugees, coordinate relief efforts for them and find long-term solutions for their plight. The organisation fights for the human rights of refugees, for their right to asylum and to ensure that no refugee is forced to return to a country where he or she must face persecution. Since 1950, the UNHCR helps people to build a new life for themselves – an achievement that earned it the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 and again in 1981.

The Swiss Customs Museum raises current topics in its special exhibitions.

> [WWW.UNHCR.CH](http://WWW.UNHCR.CH)

> [WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH](http://WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH) > SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

A photograph of an exhibition space. A large, light-colored wall features the words 'FUGA', 'FLUCHT', and 'FUITE' stacked vertically in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. To the right, a television monitor is mounted on a wall that appears to be made of a material that has been torn or broken apart, revealing a blue wall behind it. A person's silhouette is visible in the background through the opening. The floor is dark and reflective.

FUGA  
FLUCHT  
FUITE

Thousands of tonnes of goods cross the Swiss border on a daily basis. Swiss Customs has the task of managing the border in such a way that it is as unobtrusive as possible for the economy and does not put companies in Switzerland at a competitive disadvantage.

Customs and the uniformed, armed Border Guard must facilitate border crossing as much as possible, but they must help to protect the health and safety of consumers through customs controls too. At the same time, they protect Switzerland as a business location by, for example, withdrawing counterfeit products from circulation.

In their work, customs agents do not focus on continuous controls but on ones that are effective. That means that they only intervene where risk analyses indicate that something might not be in order. In doing so, they work closely with national and international partners.

> [WWW.EUROPA.ADMIN.CH](http://WWW.EUROPA.ADMIN.CH) > SCHENGEN-DUBLIN







SMUGGLING: GOODS IMPORTED ILLEGALLY DAMAGE SWITZERLAND'S ECONOMY.

Not long ago, the noble elephant used to inhabit the grasslands of Botswana; today, its foot is used as a coffee table.

For the international protection of endangered animals and plants, Switzerland is one of 181 countries that have signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Customs agents help to protect endangered animals and plants by conducting controls and providing information. International cooperation is also making an impact: nowadays, elephant populations in southern Africa are growing again at a rate of 7% per year.

Every year, Swiss Customs reports hundreds of cases which violate the endangered species convention to the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (FSVO). In one of the biggest cases in the last few years, Swiss Customs was able to provide proof that a rogue trader had illegally imported 600 objects from all over the world.

- > [WWW.CITES.ORG](http://WWW.CITES.ORG)
- > [WWW.BLV.ADMIN.CH](http://WWW.BLV.ADMIN.CH)  
(FEDERAL FOOD SAFETY AND VETERINARY OFFICE)



While the price an individual pays for a holiday souvenir may be small, the profit the trader makes for stolen cultural property is huge. However, the damage done by the sale of stolen cultural property at a global level is irreparable.

Cultural property characterises a society's self-image. If they are torn from their natural context, they lose their value for the culture that has been robbed and for academia.

The Cultural Property Transfer Act (CPTA) has been in force in Switzerland since 2005. The CPTA makes an important contribution to the preservation of humanity's cultural heritage by preventing theft, looting and the illegal importation and exportation of cultural assets. Thanks to the intervention of Swiss Customs, cases of suspected cultural property smuggling can be examined. In the best-case scenario, this results in criminal convictions and the return of the illegally imported objects to their country of origin.

> [WWW.BAK.ADMIN.CH](http://WWW.BAK.ADMIN.CH) (FEDERAL OFFICE OF CULTURE)

> [WWW.ICOM.MUSEUM](http://WWW.ICOM.MUSEUM) (RED LIST OF ENDANGERED CULTURAL ASSETS)

Un bene culturale per ricordo  
ou souvenir des souvenirs de vacances?



PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY: ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TASKS OF ANY STATE IS PROTECTING ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE.



COUNTERFEITS: SWISS CUSTOMS AGENTS COMBAT PRODUCT PIRACY AND PROTECT THE ECONOMY IN THIS WAY.

The Swiss Customs Museum presents the tasks performed by Customs and the Border Guard and features interactive installations and short films in a variety of language versions.

However, the exhibition is not limited to the former border guard post. It continues into the garden which is located right by the lake, where historical boundary stones from all over Switzerland are displayed.

The museum garden is the perfect spot for a picnic (no barbecues), and food and beverages can be purchased at Grotto Descanso and Grotto Teresa in Cantine di Gandria 200 metres away.

The museum is also suitable for school excursions. The didactic workshop “Lara & Tim on their travels” can help to prepare the visit and study the topics.

> [WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH](http://WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH) > SCHOOL GROUPS

> GROTTO TERESA: +41 (0)91 923 58 95

> GROTTO DESCANSO: +41 (0)91 922 80 71

[GROTTODESCANSO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GROTTODESCANSO@GMAIL.COM)



**MORE THAN A MUSEUM: CANTINE DI GANDRIA IS A GREAT DAY-TRIP FOR YOUNG AND OLD, ESPECIALLY FOR SCHOOL GROUPS AND FAMILIES.**



INVISIBLE NATIONAL BORDER: IT PASSES THROUGH THE WATER AND  
BEHIND THE BORDER GUARD POST THROUGH THE DENSE FOREST.

The Swiss Customs Museum is located on the left bank of Lake Lugano in Cantine di Gandria beneath Monte Caprino and opposite Gandria and Monte Brè. The best way to get there is by ferry.

Take the ferry (Giardino/Centrale/Paradiso) from Lugano to Cantine di Gandria and walk 200 metres from there to the museum. Alternatively, you can go ashore directly at the museum's pier. The ferry crossing takes approximately 25 minutes.

Walking trails starting in Lugano can be combined with the ferry trip. We recommend walking along the path on the right bank of the lake from Castagnola to Gandria and taking the ferry from there to the Customs Museum. The walk takes approximately 45 minutes, and the ferry trip takes just under ten minutes. The walk from Arogno via Pugerna and Caprino to Cantine di Gandria is more demanding; it takes approximately three hours, and you will need sturdy footwear. This is one of the most scenic walking trails at Lake Lugano. After heavy rain, however, the trail is not walkable.

- > [WWW.SBB.CH](http://WWW.SBB.CH)
- > [WWW.LAKELUGANO.CH](http://WWW.LAKELUGANO.CH) (FERRY TIMETABLES)
- > [WWW.LUGANO-TOURISM.CH](http://WWW.LUGANO-TOURISM.CH) (HIKING ROUTES)



APPROXIMATELY **800,000** PEOPLE, 350,000 VEHICLES AND 20,000 HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES CROSS THE SWISS BORDER EVERY DAY.

OVER **28,000** PLANT SPECIES AND 5,000 ANIMAL SPECIES ARE CLASSED AS ENDANGERED, AND MANY ARE THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION.

SOME **20,000** PEOPLE VISIT THE CUSTOMS MUSEUM IN CANTINE DI GANDRIA EVERY YEAR.

APPROXIMATELY **4,500** EMPLOYEES CURRENTLY WORK FOR THE FEDERAL CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION.

THE SWISS BORDER IS **1,900** KILOMETRES LONG.

CUSTOMS IMPLEMENTS **200** PIECES OF LEGISLATION WHICH ARE NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO CUSTOMS, BUT TO CULTURE, THE ECONOMY AND SECURITY.

ABOUT **50%** OF SWISS CUSTOMS RECEIPTS COME FROM VALUE ADDED TAX AND JUST UNDER 5% COME FROM IMPORT DUTIES.

IN 2015, MORE THAN **214** CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS WERE INITIATED AGAINST OFFENDERS FOR THE ILLEGAL TRADE OF CULTURAL PROPERTY.

THE FERRY TRIP FROM LUGANO TO CANTINE DI GANDRIA TAKES **25** MINUTES.

EVERY YEAR, THE CONFEDERATION TAKES IN SOME CHF **21** BILLION VIA SWISS CUSTOMS.

ADMISSION TO THE SWISS CUSTOMS MUSEUM IS CHF **0**.

#### For the economy, security and health

Swiss Customs and the Border Guard work around the clock for the economy and for the public's health and safety. Their tasks are extremely varied. During inspections, they enforce over 200 acts, ordinances and other legislative texts on matters such as customs, weapons, narcotics, foodstuffs, foreign nationals, cultural property, trademark rights, species protection and precious metal control.

#### Imprint

© Swiss Customs Museum Cantine di Gandria

Design: Sonja Studer

Text: Sonja Studer, Schwarzschrift GmbH

Photos: Yannick Andrea, Mark Nolan,

Customs Museum Archive, Turistico del Luganese

06.2016 6000 D3048-16/860380749





Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Finance FDF  
Swiss Customs Administration



CONTACT:  
FEDERAL CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION FCA  
COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA  
MONBIJOUSTRASSE 40  
3003 BERN  
ZOLLMUSEUM@EZV.ADMIN.CH  
WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH

SWISS CUSTOMS MUSEUM  
MUSEO DOGANALE DI GANDRIA

OPEN EVERY DAY DURING THE  
SEASON FROM APRIL TO MID-OCTOBER  
FROM 1.30 PM TO 5.30 PM.  
ADMISSION IS FREE OF CHARGE.

WWW.ZOLLMUSEUM.CH