

How to live like a tramp

- 1 Charlie Chaplin's quirky humour and iconic film moments – eating a shoe in *The Gold Rush*, accidentally entering a boxing ring in *City Lights* – are the stuff of cinema legend. Less known, however, is the personal life of The Tramp, who came dangerously close to his nickname after finding himself homeless during the 1950s. Banned from the USA and blacklisted by Hollywood during the McCarthy era for having suspected communist sympathies, he settled near Lake Geneva in Switzerland, and it's here that visitors can step into his shoes at the recently opened Chaplin's World. But this terrific interactive museum celebrates not just the film hero but the humanist.
- 2 "Chaplin wrote scripts to defend the poor and exploited," says curator Yves Durand. "His greatest talent was to make us laugh about the weakness of humankind."
- 3 And so his popular films tackled subjects like immigration, the Wall Street Crash, Hitler's Fascism and the Cold War – the latter ultimately landing him in hot water. "He was rich, famous and could easily have led a quiet bourgeois life, but refused to shy away from important issues." An early Angelina Jolie, then.
- 4 While visitors to Chaplin's World can walk right into replica film sets, such as the barber shop from *The Great Dictator*, it's the rare glimpse into the man's 7 that feels the most compelling.
- 5 "He continued to be monitored by the Swiss intelligence service at the request of the FBI for many years, despite there being no evidence for it," says Durand.
- 6 So it's no surprise Chaplin concluded that, "You need power only to do harm. Otherwise love is enough." Wise words.



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