



bregenzerwald

Media Information Winter 2023/24

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Information & Service

The contents of this compilation were collected in Summer 2023 and any changes made known to us have been integrated since then. The contents are based on our own research and information provided by the partners.







Press text online

You can download the entire text online at www.bregenzerwald.at/en/media

Photos online

You can find a selection of matching photos – to be used in a touristic context and only in conjunction with a report about the Bregenzerwald – at www.bregenzerwald.at/en/media

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Available brochures

- The **Bregenzerwald Travel Magazine** (German only) appears twice a year – once in the summer and once in the winter – with around 50 pages of edited stories and reports. Regional and international authors report on people in and from the Bregenzerwald and about those things which give them pleasure and joy. The Bregenzerwald Travel Magazine is available online at www.bregenzerwald.at/en/stories-about-the-region. The website is also home to some of the magazine stories in English.
- The **Bregenzerwald Travel Guide** is published at the same time as the Travel Magazine every six months (winter and summer). The winter edition contains useful information about skiing areas, ski passes, ski schools and winter sporting activities – from cross-country skiing through to winter hikes, culture, architecture, culinary delights and wellness offers.

Research trips

Would you like to see the Bregenzerwald for yourself? Please feel free to contact Simone Gridling.

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Bregenzerwald in Vorarlberg

The Bregenzerwald is located in the most westerly part of Austria, in the state of Vorarlberg. Close to Lake Constance, a neighbour of Germany, Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein. Thanks to its location on the northern edge of the Alps, the diverse wintery worlds are blessed with an exceptional amount of snow.

If you value a sense of homeliness, diversity on a small scale, imaginative architecture and cuisine, the Bregenzerwald is the perfect holiday destination for you. You can perfectly combine enjoyable exercise in the wintry countryside with inspiring and pampering elements.

Creative enthusiasm

About 32,000 people live in the Bregenzerwald, in 23 villages in total. The Bregenzerwald locals have always made sure that their living space is carefully designed. The villages are strikingly attractive. The exciting combination of old and new wooden architecture takes you by surprise. You will also come across many and interesting new buildings in the skiing areas. The accommodation and food are of high quality. In the well-tended inns and restaurants, the chefs are masters of peppering up regional specialities, making them into magnificent creations. Milk products and cheeses such as the famous Bregenzerwald alpine- and mountain cheese come from farms and alpine dairies in the Bregenzerwald.

Snowy slopes

Skiers appreciate the sporty, friendly skiing areas in the Bregenzerwald. All skiing areas in the Bregenzerwald, in the neighbouring Großes Walsertal, Tyrol's Lechtal and several skiing areas in the Allgäu region in Germany are connected by the 3Valley ski pass. The 3Valley ski pass holders are also entitled to discounted day tickets for the SKI Arlberg skiing area. There is usually a good covering of snow; thanks to its position on the northern edge of the Alps, an above-average amount of snow falls in the Bregenzerwald. This is also to the advantage of ski tourers and freeriders.

TIP: Skiers can take the 'Auenfeldjet' to Lech Zürs from Warth-Schröcken, which is part of the Ski Arlberg ski area. Skiers are therefore able to travel from Warth-Schröcken via Lech Zürs to Stuben and St. Anton. The several cable-car links that have been established over recent years make Ski Arlberg the largest connected ski area in Austria.

Rambling and well-being

There are also plenty activities on offer for those who find winter enjoyment away from the piste. Winter hiking paths guide you through picturesque landscapes and to lovely viewpoints. Cross-country ski courses follow rivers, penetrate woods and take you across white plateaus. If you prefer, you can hike through the wintry valleys on snowshoes. There are toboggan runs aplenty. The wellness hotels offer baths, massages, and all sorts of pampering treatment, including for day visitors.

Cultural life

The various cultural locations – from hotels and inns, right through to museums – also host events in the winter. Insights into cheese-making and handiwork skills are offered by the members of the KäseStrasse Bregenzerwald.

The Werkraum Haus in Andelsbuch has been functioning as a showcase for the innovative Bregenzerwald artisanship and as a meeting place since the summer of 2013. The hall-like building was designed by the famous Swiss architect Peter Zumthor.

Selection. The ski resorts

From the gentle pistes marked blue through to the demanding slopes with black markings, skiers in the Bregenzerwald's skiing regions have at their disposal the slopes they desire. Thanks to its link to the Ski Arlberg region, Warth-Schröcken is part of the largest connected ski area in Austria.

Ongoing investments and the professional maintenance of the pistes ensure a high level of comfort and safety in all skiing areas. There are ski schools in the skiing areas. The services on offer range from courses for beginners and advanced learners alike, ski guiding and guided tours for off-piste skiers and ski tourers. Several skiing areas offer guided tours on certain dates throughout the whole of the winter. You can reserve individual guided tours at any time. The 3Valley ski pass is valid in all skiing areas and on the ski buses.

Vast: Damüls-Mellau

Characteristic: Mellau is located in the valley, whereas Damüls is located at an altitude of 1,429 metres. Skiers and freeriders appreciate the impressive panorama and the sheer endlessness of the ski slopes as well as the great combination of sunny south-facing slopes and north-facing slopes assured of snow. In Damüls, you hit the slopes as soon as you step out of your front door. From Mellau, skiers take the Mellaubahn, a ten-seater cable car, to reach the skiing area in a matter of a few minutes.

Parks and slopes: The Snowpark Damüls is a hotspot on the freestyle scene. It comprises the Mainpark, the Ugapark and the Kids' snow park. Moreover, the park plays host to events of both a sporting and an entertaining nature throughout the whole of the winter. The Easy Cheesy Land with fun park, located between Rossstelle and Gipfelbahn in Mellau, is the perfect practice area for newcomers to freestyle skiing and snowboarding.

Tips:

- The around three-hour **Ski Rundtour (circular tour)** takes visitors through the entire ski area and to special stations. Stops are particularly worthwhile at two vantage points with impressive views.
- The terrain which makes up the Damüls mountains is perfect for **freeriding and ski tours**. Fantastic deep snow slopes and attractive routes abound. You get the best views from the vantage points located at an altitude of up to 2,000 metres.
- Visitors can measure their speed and have their photos taken for analysis at the speed track. There's also a parallel slalom slope with video analysis and a photo point at the Sunnegg mountain station that offers a view of the Damülser Mittagsspitze.

Dates and meeting points:

- The lifts operate daily between 7 December 2023 and 7 April 2024. The **Vorarlberg FIS Ski Museum** in the parish house in Damüls provides insights into the history of skiing. The 'Kulisse Pfarrhof' is also the venue for cultural events in summer.

www.damuels-mellau.at

Varied: Warth-Schröcken

Characteristic: The high-altitude skiing area assured of snow is popular amongst off-piste skiers and fans of ski touring alike. Skiers can access Lech Zürs am Arlberg with the 'Auenfeldjet'. An additional plus point for some years, thanks to new cableways, all skiing

areas on the Arlberg are now connected, enabling skiers to move from Warth-Schröcken via Lech Zürs to Stuben and St. Anton. Guests in Warth-Schröcken have a choice of lift tickets: they can choose between the ski pass for Warth-Schröcken alone and the 3Valley ski pass for the regions of Bregenzerwald, Großes Walsertal, Lechtal and skiing areas in the Allgäu (Germany). Holders of 3Valley ski passes can also purchase a discounted Ski-Arlberg ski pass for single days. Alternatively, guests in Warth-Schröcken can buy the Ski-Arlberg ski pass which is valid for the entire Ski Arlberg area comprising 305 km of pistes.

Parks and slopes: Attractions include the ski-movie track next to the Steffisalp-Express, the giant slalom racing track next to the Sonnencruiser lift, the secured high-speed downhill run next to the Kuchllift and the Steffisalp fun slope.

Tips:

- The black pistes on the **Salober Northface** are just the job for those who love it really steep. The gradient of the black slope 253 'Ochsenkopf' exceeds 70 percent.
- The Dorfbahn was a new feature as of winter 2017/18. It quickly transports skiers from the centre of Warth to the skiing area.

Dates and meeting points:

The lifts operate daily between 8 December 2023 and 14 April 2024.

www.warth-schroecken.at

Great views: Au-Schoppernau/Diedamskopf skiing area

Characteristic: The Diedamskopf skiing area, popular amongst advanced skiers and families with children who can ski alike, is well-known for its magnificent mountain panorama, its innovative snow sports school including a children's adventure land, and the great opportunities it affords snowboarders. The valley station of the Diedamskopf cable car is located in Schoppernau and is easily accessible by taking the ski bus. Even in the winter months the summit of the Diedamskopf, which is only a few minutes' walk from the mountain station across a winter hiking path, functions as the base for paragliders and hang-gliders.

Parks and slopes: The Diedamspark is located close to the mountain station. The terrain features suitable rails, boxes and kickers for snowboarders and free skiers of all skill levels. The fun slope featuring waves, jumps, a tunnel and snail promises fun for the whole family. Skiers can have their very own giant slalom racing video made on the ski movie track on the Breitenalpe.

Tips:

- The Diedamskopf cable cars has implemented a sustainability initiative and installed an **e-station** with five pumps and ten charging stations next to the valley station.
- Those in good shape choose the 10-kilometre long **Diedams downhill run** into the valley, featuring a difference in altitude of 1,250 metres.
- Two evenings a week, you can take the Grunholz lift in Au to **ski** and toboggan **by floodlight**.

Dates and meeting points:

The lifts operate daily between 16 December 2023 and 1 April 2024.

www.diedamskopf.at

The family-friendly skiing areas

Schwarzenberg-Bödele: A lovely view of the Rhine Valley, Lake Constance and across the Bregenzerwald is revealed from the 'Bödele'. Choose any one of eleven lifts. The slopes are suitable for both advanced skiers and those new to the sport. Ski huts with a nostalgic flair are the perfect spots for taking some refreshment. / www.boedele-info.at

Egg-Schetteregg: In a tranquil side valley, accessible by car or bus from Egg-Großdorf, is the ski area featuring six lifts. The pistes are clearly laid out and wide and are equipped with a piste guidance system for children. 'Schettis Kinderland' with a magic carpet, ski carousel, igloo, tubing lane, etc. is free of charge. / www.schetteregg.at.

Hittisau/Riefensberg, Hochhäderich: Located above Hittisau/Riefensberg is the Alpenarena Hochhäderich featuring five lifts, cross-country ski runs and lovely winter hiking paths. The Almhof Hochhäderich with its spacious sun terrace functions as the central meeting place. / www.alpenarena.com

Riefensberg-Hochlitten: The family skiing area has four tow lifts. Three different racing tracks are available for private races, including one FIS-homologated slalom run for ladies and gents. www.skilifte-hochlitten.com

Varied: 3Valley ski pass and Ski Arlberg ski pass

Designed for skiers spending more than 2.5 days in the Bregenzerwald, the 3Valley ski pass offers you a variety of elements to ensure your skiing enjoyment. The 3Valley ski pass is valid for all skiing areas in the Bregenzerwald and in the neighbouring regions of Groß Walsertal, Allgäu in Germany and in the Lechtal in Tyrol. Holders of the ski pass can also use the ski buses which easily link the individual skiing areas.

Holders of the 3Valley ski pass can also travel to Lech Zürs am Arlberg and, hence, ski in the Ski Arlberg area for a supplement. / www.3taeler.at

→ Made-to-measure – SKI Bregenzerwald:

Spend your days full of skiing activities in the Bregenzerwald. Practical and with the price benefit of the low season: SKI Bregenzerwald includes three nights in an accommodation of your choice along with the 3Täler-Skipass (3Valleys Ski Pass) for three days (valid in all the region's ski areas and for trips with the ski and public buses). www.bregenzerwald.at/skibregenzerwald

→ Made-to-measure – the skiing week Bregenzerwald:

Out and about in your favourite skiing area or getting to know new slopes every day? The SKIwoche Bregenzerwald combines great variety with the price benefit of the low season. It includes seven nights and the 3Valleys Ski Pass for six days. It's valid in all the region's ski areas and for trips with the ski and public buses. www.bregenzerwald.at/skiwoche-bregenzerwald

Dance-inspired: the Ski! project's skiing courses

The Ski! project offers a different approach to skiing, in the form of an innovative teaching concept inspired by contemporary dance. Ski-filled days start and end in the practice room. The stuff you learn there forms the basis for more agile manoeuvres on the slopes, enabling a skiing technique which is gentler on your body. Skiing courses for all levels are held in Au-Schopfernau and the skiing area of Diedamskopf: also available are skiing and physiotherapy courses for returnees – particularly following breaks or injuries. / www.skiprojekt.at

Variety. Freeriding and skiing tours

Deep snow and nothing but tranquillity all around: freeriders and ski tourers discover the terrain away from the prepared slopes. The best option is to take a tour in the company of an informed expert. The ski schools offer courses for beginners and experts alike.

Pleasurable: variation skiing

Variation skiing is the pleasurable, leisurely form of skiing on unprepared slopes. For variation skiing, the skier needs to have the necessary skills, the correct equipment and a local guide. Courses for beginners and tours for more advanced skiers are offered by the ski schools. Equipment can be rented in the local sports shops. Avalanche search equipment, a probe and a shovel are obligatory.

Individual: off-piste free-riding

- **TIP:** The 'Seven Summits Freetour Mellau', a combination of freeriding and ski touring. Accompanied by a guide, the participants climb 7 peaks over 3 days and enjoy wonderful deep snow descents. The tour will take place from 18 to 21 January and 14 to 17 March 2024. The group size is 4 to 6 people per guide. The tour can also be booked on a date of your choice, on a daily basis or with a private guide for the entire route. / www.skischule-mellau.at/specials/skitouren
- Effortless ascents and long runs characterise the variation skiing days accompanied by Markus Moosbrugger, a ski and mountain guide at home in Schopfernau. The tours, which take between five and six hours, are available daily upon request. Participation costs from € 80 per person. / www.mitmoses.at
- Safe, accompanied off-piste skiing is also possible every Thursday (8 December 2023 to 7 April 2024) in the Damüls-Mellau skiing region. The tour offered by the ski school lasts around three hours, and is held with a minimum of three participants. The price: € 103 including rented avalanche search equipment, excluding ski pass. / www.skischule-mellau.at
- The freeriding course at the Skischule Damüls starts at 10 o'clock in the morning every Tuesday. It costs € 140 per person (does not include avalanche transceiver and a ski pass). / www.skischule-damuels.at

Impressive: take a skiing tour

The Bregenzerwald is famous for its wide range of enjoyable skiing tours, comprising the very gentle through to the more arduous. Following an ascent on skis and skins lasting between two and five hours, the descent involves skiing down magnificent slopes in the great outdoors. You can rent the appropriate equipment such as touring skis and avalanche search equipment from the local ski rental shops. The ski schools offer mountain and ski guides familiar with the features of the local terrain to guarantee your safety. / www.bregenzerwald.at/skitouren-bregenzerwald

- Visitors may, for example, take part in guided skiing tours from 10 a.m. every Thursday in **Damüls**. The tours cost € 140 per person for three or more participants (does not include avalanche transceiver). / www.skischule-damuels.at
- A taster skiing tour is available in **Mellau** every Friday. Participation in the four-hour programme costs € 127 per person, including avalanche transceiver. / www.skischule-mellau.at
- The **Schwarzenberg** Ski School and **Joe Berchtold** also offers guided skiing tours across the Bregenzerwald region. / www.skischule-schwarzenberg.at // www.joeberchtold.ski

TIP: Father Müller freeride tour

Father Johann Müller from Warth was probably the first skier in the Bregenzerwald. During the 1890s, he had skis sent to him from Sweden in order to get around more easily and quickly on the Alpine territory between Warth-Schröcken and Lech Zürs. The five-hour tour accompanied by skiing guides from Warth's ski schools follows in the footsteps of Father Müller and takes you across the terrain. Participants should be experienced in deep-snow skiing. Safety equipment is obligatory. / www.skischule-warth.com, www.skischule-salober.com, www.arlberg-snowsports.at and www.skischule-schroecken.com

Holidaying with children

Families can choose from a selection of numerous supervised programmes and attractive offers in the Bregenzerwald. The range extends from torch-lit rambles through to visits to farms and barns. The younger guests playfully learn the art of skiing at the ski schools.

Well supervised! Playful worlds of skiing for kids

- **Learning to ski with the magic wand** – four hours of one-to-one training, and children from the age of three can already ski the practice slope on their own. That is what is guaranteed by the ski schools in Schwarzenberg, which has developed a special method. Should a child need support somewhat longer, the ski instructor practices with the child until the set objective has been achieved.
- Kids playfully take their first steps on skis at the area of the **Au-Schoppernau snow sports school**. The ski courses for older children include an adventure and safety programme with a barbecue in the tepee and snow-rafting.
- **Pauli's Ski Arena** at the Salober-Jet's valley station in the **Warth-Schröcken** ski area is the perfect place for little skiers to practise. Four conveyor belts and a rope tow, an igloo, a ski carousel with snow-tubes, a platter lift and a two-seater chairlift offer variety. Great: special practice lift and point tickets are easy on the budget.
- The **Spielhaus** is new since last year in **Damüls**. It is located on the top floor of the multi-purpose building Alpenrose, is open daily between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and free of charge. The kids get to play on the play area, and the parents have a lounge area of their own to relax in.

➔ **Made-to-measure – learning skiing with the Kids' Snow deal**

A family skiing holiday is particularly worthwhile at certain times: between 13 and 20 January 2024, between 2 and 9 March 2024, and 9 and 16 March 2024, a four-day ski course and lift passes for six days are included in the accommodation rate for children between three and six years of age (born in 2018, 2019 or 2020). The only condition is seven nights' accommodation accompanied by at least one adult. Furthermore, the tourist information offices in participating villages organise numerous children's events. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/kids-snow-in-the-bregenzerwald

Friendly: children's guidance system in Schetteregg

The skiing area in Egg-Schetteregg is particularly popular amongst families with children. The freely accessible 'Schetti's Kids' Paradise' with ski carousel, magic carpet, climbing hill, etc. is a major attraction. Additionally, every piste has its own mascot, and provides information regarding what the child must be able to do in order to ski on this piste. The offers range from the snowplough turn on the hedgehog circuit to safe curving on the bear slope through to dynamic carving on the lynx piste. August's Land with its snow figures, ski tunnels, wave slope and jumps to whizz through happily is another highlight for young skiers. / www.schetteregg.at

Great for keeping an eye on the family: skiing at the village lifts

The village lifts with their clearly laid-out slopes are popular meeting places for families. People can keep an eye on each other and the next place to stop off for refreshments is usually very close by. Classic village lifts are to be found in Alberschwende (practice lift and T-bar lift), in Bizau (Hütten Practice Lift), in Hittisau (Hittisberg Ski Lift), in Reuthe (Reuthe Baienberg Ski Lift), in Sibratsgöll (Krähenberg Ski Lift), in Sulzberg (Sulzberg Village Lift) as well as in Thal near Sulzberg (Hagenberg Ski Lifts).

Mysterious: Walking in the glow of lanterns

Everything suddenly looks completely different in the dark and it's so romantic spending time outdoors in the light of lanterns.

- 'I'm going on a lantern-lit hike' is the motto for the hike in Au-Schoppernau. Participants hike through the village by the light of their lanterns in the company of Basti, the mascot. The hike starts at 5.30 p.m. and lasts around an hour. It takes place every Thursday from 28 December 2023 to 14 March 2024. Participation is free of charge.
- Night tours are available in **Mellau** every Thursday (middle of December 2023 to the middle of April 2024). The lantern walk starts at eight in the evening. The programme, which takes around one and a half hours, is free of charge.
- The cultural-historical walk by lantern light through **Bezau** takes visitors to the 'Deerofo' (the Oven) every Wednesday (end of December 2023 to the middle of April 2024). The around one-hour walk concludes with a small drink at this lovingly restored barn, which was once used as a drying oven by the whole village. The cost to take part in the walk is € 8, it's free for children.
- Hiking guide Marianne will be telling stories during the one-hour lantern walk in **Egg-Großdorf**. The evening excursion is particularly popular with families and starts at 6 p.m. every Tuesday from the end of December 2023 to the end of March 2024.

Interesting: life on the farm with the animals

- The **Meusburger Family** in Egg invites visitors to take a look at the modern free-stall barn where cows and their calves are made to feel particularly comfortable. Those interested can also take a look at the cheese store. The farm shop offers delicious food from the farm. The farm is open to visitors every Saturday from 9.30 a.m., from the end of December 2023 until the middle of March 2024.
- Both children and adults are able to experience life on the **Bertsch Family** farm in Mellau up close. Visitors may also help feed and milk the animals and learn more about the farmers' day at the stable. The farm will be open every second Monday from the middle of December 2023 to the middle of April 2024.
- At the **adventure farm in Au-Schoppernau**, visitors can pet the animals and watch the farmers as they feed, groom and milk the animals. Meet at 5.30 p.m. every Tuesday in front of Au-Rehmen church between 26 December 2023 and 3 April 2024. Length of visit: 1 hour, free of charge.
- Take a guided tour of a **sheepfold** at 4 p.m. every Wednesday in Au-Schoppernau (27 December 2023 to 27 March 2024). Over the course of the ninety-minute programme, participants find out interesting facts about sheep and the processing of wool, they can breathe in the fragrance of the mountain hay and listen to an exciting story about sheep. Kids from the age of four can participate. A small sheep's wool cushion, one drink and 'sheep biscuits' are included in the price of € 8 per person.

KUNO Kinderkultur

KUNO stands for an adventurous children's programme in the middle of the Bregenzerwald. Once a month, both young and old are invited to experience culture at the highest of levels. The programme includes music, theatre, dance, art, film and literature. / www.kunokinderkultur.at

Quiet. Hiking trails and cross-country trails

The magic of the tranquil winter landscape can be experienced in very different ways. By taking winter hikes and snow-shoe hikes, indulging in cross-country skiing and tobogganing. Anyone wishing to try out something new tries their hand at husky-drawn sledging, spends the night in an igloo or floats through the air on a paraglider.

Lively: Weave your way across the cross-country ski runs

All in all, the Bregenzerwald has a network of cross-country ski runs 320 km in length. They take you across river meadows, snow-covered forests, across expansive fields, past birch groves and past typical shingled houses. In Sulzberg and Hittisau, you cross the border into the Allgäu, in Bavaria, Germany.

The largest cross-country skiing areas are those in Hittisau-Balderschwang (80 km), Au-Schoppernau (63 km) and Sulzberg-Oberreute (40 km). Thanks to its connection to the West Allgäu network of cross-country ski runs, cross-country skiers in Sulzberg can access over 100 km of cross-country ski runs. Choose from skating cross-country runs and classic runs.

Nordic Sport Park Sulzberg: It accommodates 20 km of cross-country ski runs, the village lift and a tobogganing slope for the little ones, a connection ski run to the panorama ski run on the ridge of Sulzberg and well-tended winter hiking paths. A 4-km long stretch is floodlit until 8.30 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The cross-country biathlon school offers cross-country skiing courses. / www.dussafit.at and www.nordicsports4you.de

➔ **Made-to-measure – Cross-country and Wellness Week Bregenzerwald**

The Bregenzerwald is considered an insider tip with a total of more than 300 kilometres of cross-country ski trails. Be it classic or skating, you'll learn the most important techniques from experts in a cross-country skiing course so that you'll be able to discover the numerous trails in the area. Round off your sports activities with peace and relaxation at your **** hotel. The package deal is available between 7 January and 25 March 2024 (except 4 to 16 February 2024). The package includes four nights with half board, a voucher for a cross-country skiing course (two units of 50 minutes each) at the Langlauf-Biathlon-Schule (Cross-Country Biathlon School), Langlaufschule Au-Schoppernau (Cross-Country Skiing School Au-Schoppernau) or Ski- & Langlaufschule Mellau (Ski & Cross-Country Skiing School Mellau). / www.bregenzerwald.at/langlaufen-bregenzerwald

On target: try your luck as a biathlete

The combination of a racing pulse with precision is what makes the sport of biathlon so special. Anybody who's interested can try their hand at this combination of cross-country skiing and shooting at the Langlauf-Biathlon-Schule (Cross-Country Biathlon School). Courses for individuals, group courses and specially arranged programmes are available, e.g. with obstacle course. Dates and prices on request. / www.kreativbewegen.at

TIP: Kästle Nordic Ladies Days

The Bregenzerwald is going to be the venue of a Kästle cross-country skiing weekend for women. Simply try it out and enjoy spending time out in nature will be the motto for the event. With this in mind, women from '8 to 88' will be able to enjoy technical training courses in Hittisau, either in the classical or skating styles, from 12 to 14 January 2024. Trainers will be offering tips on how best to easily glide across the snow with others on the cross-country skiing tours. The women will be setting off using the latest cross-country equipment by the well-known ski brand of Kästle. The participants will be able exchange ideas and experiences over a meal at lunchtime and in the evening. The package with two overnight stays, two-day

cross-country skiing training, rental equipment, trail fee and meals is available for € 445 per person in a double room. / www.ladiesdays.at

Breakneck: Tobogganing into the valley

Be it during the day or in the evening: there are numerous toboggan runs to choose from. The toboggan runs are usually accessible by road or lift. Some are even floodlit.

- The 2.5-kilometre-long natural toboggan run in **Damüls** is always a popular destination. It's illuminated every Wednesday and Friday from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. Visitors can get to the starting point by taking the Uga chairlift.
- Visitors in **Mellau** are able to enjoy the two kilometre-long 'Dosegg' toboggan run, which has an 800-metre-long stretch that's illuminated.
- Visitors may enjoy the 1.7-kilometre-long natural toboggan run in **Bezau** until 11 o'clock at night every day. The toboggan run from Baumgarten to the Sonderdach is three kilometres long. Visitors can take the cable car to the starting point where toboggans are also available for hire. The bus trip with toboggan descent costs € 4 with toboggan hire or € 3 without.
- The 'von der Höhi' 700-metre-long toboggan run in **Warth** is lit daily until 10 p.m. A toboggan run where a tractor pulls the tobogganists up starts at 7 p.m. on Mondays and/or Thursdays and is accompanied by mulled wine and kids' punch. Toboggans are available to hire on these evenings.
- Evening tobogganing on the 650-metre-long slope at the Grunholz Lift directly in the village is possible in **Au** from 7 to 10 p.m. every Wednesday and Friday. The T-bar lift takes the special toboggans, which are available to hire at the valley station, up the slope.
- There's a snow tubing run with conveyor belt at the Alpen Hotel Post in **Au**. Snow tubes look like big inflatable swimming rings and are available to hire from the tourist office in Au-Schopfernau.

Scenic: Snow-shoe hikes

In many villages, hiking and mountain guides take guests on snow-shoe hikes. It is worth it: guided by an expert, you quickly learn how to walk in snow shoes, and safely arrive at places you would never have discovered on your own. Here is a selection:

- **Schwarzenberg – snowshoe hike into the nature reserve:** Daniel, the guide, takes visitors on tours through the Fohramoos nature reserve in the Bödele recreation area, starting at 9 a.m. every Wednesday (middle of December 2023 to middle of March 2024). The blanket of snow conceals a largely intact upland moor that is lined by bog forests. The 2-hour tour may be combined, if desired, with a stop-off at one of the ski huts in the Bödele recreation area. The tour takes place from four participants and costs € 35 per person (incl. hire snow shoes). / www.skischule-schwarzenberg.at
- **Schwarzenberg – animals and nature in winter – snowshoe hike:** The Fohramoos with its gnarled birches, low bog-pine and snow-covered mountain-pine forests presents itself in a mystical atmosphere. Animal tracks can be found in the snow. Hiking guide and herb expert Katharina Moosbrugger will be sharing stories about the local wild animals and their strategies for survival in winter every Saturday (beginning of December 2023 to the End of March 2024). The tour takes place from four participants and costs € 30 per person (excl. hire snow shoes). / www.naturerfahren.at
- **Hittisau snowshoe hike into the sunset:** it's possible for snowshoe hikers to explore the landscape covered in deep snow around Hittisau and experience the sunset every Monday from December to April. The hike starts between 2.30 and 4 p.m. Hikers return between 5 and 7 p.m. / www.bewegend.com

- **Hittisau – with snowshoes and torches to the Rappenfluh:** The torch-lit snowshoe tour takes participants to the legendary Rappenfluh at the foot of the Hittisberg. The hike takes place every Wednesday at 7 p.m. / www.bewegend.com
- **Mellau – adventure snow shoe hike with Erwin:** the four-hour hike leads into the romantic Mellental and to the mountain pasture settlement of Dös. A little refreshment will be available at the rustic Döser hut. The hike takes place every Thursday from the middle of December 2023 to the middle of March 2024 and is available for € 55 per person, including rental equipment and small snack. / www.mellau.com
- **Au-Schopperrau – Kanis snowshoe tour:** a snowshoe hike at the foot of the Kanisfluh is available every Tuesday. The bus departs for Mellau at 10 a.m.; the guests will be taking the cable car to Roßstelle where they leave the ski area behind them to walk past Alpe Kanis to Alpe Wurzach. Descent via Oberle and Auer Ried back to Au. The walk leads 280 metres uphill and 800 metres downhill. Route: 8.5 kilometres. Price per person: € 65, including snowshoes and poles, excluding bus and cable car ticket. / www.mitmoses.at
- **Schnepfau – snowshoe tour and igloo building:** groups are taken on a snowshoe hike and get to build an igloo. The programme lasts between three and five hours and takes place on inquiry daily. The minimum number of participants is six. / www.aktiv-zentrum.at

→ **Made-to-measure – Active winter in Bregenzerwald:**

The Bregenzerwald is particularly easy and delightful to discover between 7 January and 12 March 2024 (except 4 to 16 February 2024). The offer includes 3 nights' accommodation in an establishment of your choice, a guided snow-shoe hike with tobogganing, and all rental equipment. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/active-winter-in-the-bregenzerwald

Leisurely: winter hiking

Walking through the white, wintery world is a very special joy. Especially when you have so many paths to choose from. The travel guide describes the loveliest paths, which are all signposted in pink, making them easily visible in the snow. They are suitable for hikes between 1 and 4 hours, and range from the sunny Sulzberg up to the Diedamskopf at 2,000 m and into the Hochtannberg area (Warth-Schröcken).

→ **Made-to-measure – Winter hiking days Bregenzerwald:**

You hike through the wintery Bregenzerwald at your own pace. Three enjoyable days' hiking, two nights' accommodation in each of two different hotels and luggage transfer are included in the Winter Hiking Package Deal available between 7 January and 15 March 2024 (except 4 to 16 February 2024). The price includes four nights' accommodation with half-board, luggage transfer from hotel to hotel as well as pick-up and drop-off to and from Bregenz, Dornbirn or Oberstaufen train station. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/winter-hiking-in-the-bregenzerwald

Weird: The Georunde Rindberg in Sibratsgöll

This trail makes the power of nature visible and tangible at 13 stations: the round trip takes participants to the Parzelle Rindberg (Rindberg Lot), where a few years ago mountain slopes started to slip, which left a mark on the landscape. The hike, for example, takes in 'Felbers schiefes Haus' ('Felber's Crooked House'). The former holiday home slipped 18 metres during the landslide without suffering considerable damage. The save to walk on property bears witness to the events of the forces of nature and is home to the 'Gewaltige Natur' ('Powerful Nature') exhibition, which introduces visitors to the Nagelfluhkette Nature Park. Artistically designed installations for which the artists were awarded the Austrian State Prize

for Design in 2017 also used the landslide as the subject for their creations. The route was extended by five stations in autumn 2019. One is the carefully restored and stabilised Wendelinkapelle (Wendelin Chapel). The landslide caused it to slip by around 40 metres. But it is now accessible again and its slanted position is a permanent reminder of the natural phenomenon. Hikers may take a break on the inclined chairs in front of the little church and enjoy the magnificent view. The Georunde Rindberg (Geological Circuit) is not groomed in winter and can only be used with snowshoes. / www.bewegtenatur.at

Nordic: touring with huskies

Marc Van Landeghem lives in Schoppernau with his huskies. His tours start on the Hochtannbergpass near Warth-Schröcken and in Schoppernau. From here, visitors may travel with Marc's team of dogs across the snowy hills in the idyllic landscape. The trip takes one and a half to four hours, depending on the trail, and costs from € 400 for two. / www.huskytouren.at

Four-legged: hiking with dogs

Dogs also enjoy the snow. Their owners must, however, observe a few rules. They are **obliged to keep their dogs on leads** throughout the entire region: Au, Bezau, Bizau, Damüls, Langenegg, Langen (for attack dogs), Riefensberg, Schnepfau, Schoppernau, Schwarzenberg, Sibratsgfall, Schröcken and Warth. They are also obliged to keep their dogs on leads in certain municipal areas: Egg, Hittisau, Lingenau and Schwarzenberg.

There is currently **no obligation to keep dogs on leads** in Alberschwende, Andelsbuch, Doren, Krumbach, Langen, Mellau, Reuthe and Sulzberg.

Dogs with muzzles and on leads are permitted on **public buses**. Tickets must also be purchased for dogs.

Arctic: build an igloo

- Equipped with saws and shovels, participants set off from **Hittisau or Damüls** in order to build an igloo in the middle of a winter landscape. The programme starts at 9 a.m., and participants return to the village at 5 p.m. – or spend the night in the igloo. / www.bewegend.com
- Visitors are also able to try their hand at building an igloo with the experts from the Aktivzentrum Bregenzerwald around **Schnepfau**. Equipped with GPS and snowshoes, they may go off on an expedition. The igloo is built before nightfall. The minimum number of participants is six. / www.aktiv-zentrum.at/iglubau

Idyllic: Through the snow on a horse and carriage

Tucked up warm, you could plump for sliding across the snowy landscape on a horse-drawn sleigh. You can find all providers of horse-and-carriage rides in the Bregenzerwald Winter Travel Guide or our website www.bregenzerwald.at/en/winter-activities/horse-and-carriage-rides. You can also contact the local tourist information offices for options.

Airy: The dream of flying

Anyone wishing to make their dream of flying come true can find one of Europe's best flying areas in the Bregenzerwald, which is even popular during the winter. The 'Niedere' close to Andelsbuch and Bezau and the Diedamskopf close to Au-Schoppernau all offer the perfect conditions. Tandem flights are available from the Bregenzerwald flight training school. / www.gleitschirmschule.at

Inspiration, building culture and craftsmanship

The Bregenzerwald is widely known for its surprising blend of old and new wooden architecture and for its innovative craftsmanship. Entitled 'Umgang Bregenzerwald', village walks offer insights into special design features. The Werkraum Haus in Andelsbuch sees itself as a showcase for modern craftsmanship. Several hotels and holiday homes combine traditional and the modern features as well.

Contemporary architecture

Glass and wood are the building materials favoured by contemporary architects. Wood has always been used as a building material in the Bregenzerwald, since it grows in abundance in the forests. And so architects and craftsmen in the Bregenzerwald have acquired exceptional skills in dealing with wood. Then as now, they go to great lengths to ensure that the wood is cut at the right sign, and to leave it to dry out slowly in order to then process it in accordance with its true nature. The sun and the rain give the façades their colour over the years.

The new buildings are plain, occasionally even bordering on the provocative, with an amazing wealth of spatial and functional qualities. The high demands made on the aesthetics go hand-in-hand with those made on energy efficiency and sustainability. Renewable energy is used on a wide scale for heating and hot water: In many of the 23 villages, biomass power stations provide houses, hotels and restaurants with energy from the renewable raw material of wood. Wood chips and saw mill residue are used to heat rooms and water. In this way, businesses save a considerable amount of electricity and thousands of litres of heating oil every year. The considerably fewer CO₂ emissions and the short transport distances are also good for the environment: after all, heating material made from wood is plentiful in the Bregenzerwald. The ecologically valuable and practical building materials as well as the conscious use of energy have a pleasant effect on the indoor climate, for example.

Since the new houses are based on the principles of ancient building tradition, a stimulating dialogue arises. Private houses, hotels and public buildings built according to modern standards can be found in all the villages.

TIP: Umgang Bregenzerwald

How come the Bregenzerwald looks the way it does? What are the values and ideas behind that which the beholder sees and feels in the villages and the surrounding countryside? Twelve design paths provide the beholder with insights into the enthusiasm with which the locals of the Bregenzerwald go about their creative art. Six paths are passable on foot in the winter, since they are cleared or are winter hiking paths, i.e. those in Andelsbuch, Bizau, Hittisau, Krumbach, Mellau and Schopponau. The local tourist information offices can be contacted about the suitability of the paths in the winter in the other villages.

Around 10 modest, rust-coloured columns on each path draw the walker's attention to a building, to the artificial landscape, to details pertaining to craftsmanship or ecological details, to facets of artistic, culinary or touristic creations. Step by step, the beholder is granted insights into creative work in the Bregenzerwald, and discovers why things look the way they do. An accompanying folder and a book provide information about details, from the historic backgrounds through to the multi-faceted variants of the practical implementation.

Guided tours on the 'Design Trails' are held at 9.30 a.m. on Fridays between January and April. Each trip focuses on a different village. / A registration at the respective tourist office until 5 p.m. the day before in necessary. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/architecture/bregenzerwald-umgang

Craftsmanship and the 'Werkraum Bregenzerwald' (crafts studio/space)

The close, productive interplay between architecture and craftsmanship enjoys a long tradition in the Bregenzerwald. Many of the architects come from families of craftsmen, or are themselves trained craftsmen. This has a stimulating effect on the cooperation. Joiners, carpenters, smiths, stove fitters and painters are not simply the 'skivvies' – they are specialised partners in the development of the best solution. And so, parallel to the new architecture, an independent, design-orientated craftsmanship culture has developed in the Bregenzerwald, whose works are popular both at home and abroad.

Around 100 of the most innovative craftsmen – from the joiner through to the textile designer – have joined forces in the Werkraum Bregenzerwald. As a joint platform, the Werkraum organises exhibitions, competitions, lectures, and is dedicated to research and development. In late 2016, the Werkraum was included in UNESCO's international Register of Good Safeguarding Practices for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. /

www.en.werkraum.at

TIP: The Werkraum Haus

The Werkraum Haus opened in the centre of Andelsbuch in the summer of 2013. The building, which sees itself as a showcase for craftsmanship and design in the Bregenzerwald and as a meeting place, was designed by the famous Swiss architect Peter Zumthor.

The hall-like construction has a simple, spacious and transparent design. A glass façade surrounds the exhibition and events space, which covers 700 m², and which is structured by 14 hinged columns made from wood and three concrete towers. The flat roof is a grid construction made from wood. Changing exhibitions are held throughout the year in the Werkraum Haus for information and dates). The Werkraum Haus also accommodates a shop where visitors can purchase Werkraum products, and a restaurant. The Werkraum Haus is open from Tuesday to Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. /

www.en.werkraum.at

TIP: BUS:STOP Krumbach

An exciting project was concluded in the spring of 2014 in Krumbach. The village of Krumbach invited renowned architects from around the world to design seven bus stops – known in the local dialect as 'Wartehütle'. Since then, the new bus stops have not only been delighting the visitors who actually use them as bus stops, but have also been attracting the admiration of numerous fans of architecture from near and far. The seven participating architects come from Russia, Norway, Belgium, Spain, Chile, Japan and China, and each worked with a different firm of architects from Vorarlberg on a partnership basis.

In autumn 2014, the project was awarded a special prize at the 'Staatspreis für Architektur' ('State Prize for Architecture') for "a charming and successful example of the combination of architecture, art and the work of everyday building". It also won Iconic Award's 'Architect's Client of the Year', Munich. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/busstop-krumbach

Baroque Master Builder Museum in Au

Master builders, stucco plasterers and craftspeople from the Bregenzerwald built around 800 baroque buildings in southern Germany, Switzerland and Alsace during the 17th and 18th centuries. Mostly churches and monasteries – but also castles, palaces and town houses. Many of these master builders and craftsmen hailed from Au, where a guild of craftsmen had established itself. The new Baroque Master Builder Museum in Au-Schoppernau has been dedicated to the masters of that period and their remarkable achievements. The museum is being created in the former curate's house in Au-Rehmen. A famous portrait and miniature artist of the time lived in this building after it was built in 1780. It later fell into the possession of the curacy and thus provided the respective curate – the parish priest – a place to live. The

work has been carried out by craftspeople from the trades guild in Au. / www.barockbaumeister.at

Erlebnisbaumhaus Sulzberg

The Baldauf family has created a timber tree house with 50 square metres of living space, kitchen, shower and WC near the Oberköhler moor baths in Sulzberg. 'Rüster', as elm wood is called in the Bregenzerwald, was the material used to realise the structure. The ceilings, walls and floors have been finished in rough sawn timber, the furniture in oiled wood. The entire family was involved in the build that took around one and a half years. They put in around 3,500 hours of work themselves. Bernhard Baldauf, master joiner and journeyman carpenter, and his son were responsible for the woodwork and interior design. The steel structure was realised by the eldest son, who is a trained and qualified metal engineer. The plans were drawn up by architect Georg Bechter from Hittisau. All the other work was carried out by crafts- and tradespeople from the Bregenzerwald. A barbecue area has been set up at the foot of the tree house, which is located next to a large birch tree. / www.erlebnisbaumhaus.com

Sustainability for the environment.

The careful use of available resources enjoys high standing in Vorarlberg and the Bregenzerwald. Biomass power plants provide cosy warmth in many places.

Renewable energy

Hydroelectric power is the most important source of energy in Vorarlberg. The illwerke vkw operate numerous hydroelectric power stations with various outputs. 5 of which are located on the Bregenzerache in the Bregenzerwald. The power station in Andelsbuch is architecturally interesting and accessible as part of guided tours. The Art Nouveau building was constructed in 1908 and, in its day, was one of the largest, most modern power stations of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Several producers from the whole of Vorarlberg supply electricity produced from renewable energy to Ökostrom GmbH, a subsidiary of illwerke vkw. In addition to water, biomass and the sun are used as sources of energy. Biomass power stations heat the rooms and the water of many of the 23 villages. Many accommodations are also connected. These biomass power stations generate energy from wood, available in abundance in the Bregenzerwald.

Energy-saving measures and further hydroelectric power projects aim to ensure that Vorarlberg will be energy autonomous by 2050.

For the good of sustainability

The municipal biomass heating plants are also complemented by many privately run biomass heating plants such as those operated by the Gesundheitshotel Bad Reuthe, Wellnesshotel Warther Hof in Warth, Almhotel Hochhäderich and Hotel Am Holand in Au. The Gesundheitshotel Bad Reuthe, for instance, needed 200,000 litres of heating oil per year until it installed its own heating plant. That's now been completely replaced by biomass.

Numerous other hotels in the Bregenzerwald also apply environmentally aware measures. The village of **Damüls** is indicative of how committed the people in the Bregenzerwald are to the modern way of heat generation: around 95% of all private dwellings and hotel establishments in the catchment area of the biomass power station heat using biomass. **Au-Schoppernau** offers guided tours of the local biomass power plant as part of its weekly programme.

Certified buildings: hotels, apartments and a museum

Several hotels and apartment buildings in the Bregenzerwald have successfully navigated the certification process for the Austrian Ecolabel and are doing their utmost to make their operations as environmentally friendly as they possibly can. The following are proud recipients of the Austrian Ecolabel: AlpHus Apartments in Warth, Hotel Jägeralpe in Warth, Karin Beer Apartments in Schoppernau, Hotel Gasthof Krone in Hittisau, Hotel Gasthof Adler & Apartments in Schoppernau and the Frauenmuseum Hittisau (Women's Museum). The range that's available at Biohotel Schwanen in Bizau is certified organic. Known for its 'Wilde Weiber' ('Wild Women') natural cuisine, the venue has also been awarded the Biohotels Climate Positive Hotel prize.

Charging stations for electric cars

The number of charging stations for electric cars is growing constantly. They can be found at tourist offices, hotels and the valley station of the Diedamskopfbahn cable car in Schoppernau and the one in Bezau.

Saving and protecting

The northern part of the Bregenzerwald, known locally as 'Vorderwald', is one of the energy model regions of Austria. The eight communities have joined up to make the '**Energy region of**

the Vorderwald', and are dedicated to a future-compliant climate and energy policy. Their topics include energy efficiency, the promotion and the use of renewable sources of energy, the promotion of energy-conscious companies and environmentally friendly mobility.

Seven communities are **e5 communities**: Andelsbuch, Doren, Langenegg, Krumbach, Hittisau, Sulzberg and Egg. They are particularly committed to energy efficiency and climate protection, with Langenegg taking on the role as trailblazer. The community has already received several awards for its activities. Langenegg has made its commitment visible in the form of an artistically designed 'Energy Trail' and 'Energy Portals'.

Meeting points for culture vultures.

Exhibitions also held in the winter provide insights into historical and current topics. Concerts and reading salons extend a warm invitation to wind down eventful days in style.

Werkraum Haus celebrating its 10th anniversary: a showcase for craftsmanship

In 2013, the Werkraum Haus opened in Andelsbuch, a town known for its traditional craftsmanship. Its architect is Peter Zumthor, from Switzerland – an internationally renowned architect with close ties to craftsmanship. He met and came to appreciate the Bregenzerwald craftsmen in the Werkraum during the construction of the Kunsthaus Bregenz. Since then, many craftsmen from the Bregenzerwald have been working for the maestro from Switzerland. Peter Zumthor's design for the Werkraum Haus is founded on two basic ideas: on the one hand, the building serves as a meeting place. On the other hand, it is a major showcase for the culture of craftsmanship and design in the Bregenzerwald. This idea finds expression in a protruding roof made from wood and a façade made from glass. There is no distinction between inside and outside – the landscape flows through the building. The Werkraum Haus displays pieces by craftspeople who are members of the Werkraum and holds changing special exhibitions. In December 2016, the Werkraum Bregenzerwald became one of three destinations in Austria to be included in the 'UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices of Intangible Cultural Heritage'. / www.werkraum.at

Baroque Master Builder Museum in Au

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Diverse: Angelika Kauffmann Museum Schwarzenberg

This Bregenzerwälderhaus boasts a core that's more than 450 years old and an exterior that doesn't offer any clues to the fact that it's home to a modern museum space in the former service wing. It was built in 2007 to mark the 200th anniversary of the death of the artist Angelika Kauffmann. Changing exhibitions that focus on different subjects with original works by the famous painter of classicism are shown from May to October. The space is available for regional contemporary artists during the spring. www.angelika-kauffmann.com

Ambitious: Frauenmuseum Hittisau

The Frauenmuseum Hittisau (Women's Museum), which won the Österreichischen Museumspreis (Austrian Museum Prize) in 2017, is a fine example of modern wooden architecture by the architectural duo that is cukrowicz.nachbaur. It's the only museum dedicated to women in Austria and makes the cultural work of women visible. The museum presents changing exhibitions that take cultural-historical, contemporary artistic as well as social and political topics as their themes. A team of women from Hittisau intensively explore the subject matter presented at the exhibitions and convey it in a direct and authentic style.

‘Blitzblank’ is the extra-clean title of its latest exhibition: everything at the Women’s Museum will be revolving around cleaning – inside, outside, everywhere – until 27 October 2024. The show explores aspects of cleaning and cleanliness. In doing so, it asks questions relating to role models and gender attributions, economics and migration, ecology and sustainability, religion and spirituality. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Tuesday to Sunday. / www.frauenmuseum.at

Amazing. Franz Michael Felder Museum

Franz Michael Felder (1839-1869) was a farmer, writer and social reformer and is one of the most historically significant personalities from the Bregenzerwald. The exhibition in the centre of Schoppernaut is an exploration of his short life – he died at only 30. Excerpts of his work, original documents, audio stations, quotations and pictures are exhibited.

The opening times: Monday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., Friday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Sunday from 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. (closed on public holidays). / www.au-schoppernaut.at

Nostalgic: Vorarlberger FIS Skimuseum Damüls

Vorarlberg’s FIS Skimuseum Damüls is a small museum that focuses on local history and winter sports and that has found its home in Damüls’ former clergy house. The museum was certified by the FIS in 2017 and is thus Vorarlberg’s only FIS ski museum. Exhibits, mainly collected by Christian Lingenhöle from Bregenz, provide insights into the region’s more than 100 years of skiing history. Besides historic skis, the museum’s exhibits include equipment and a colourful selection of memorabilia. The second floor has been dedicated to the new ‘Nona’ special exhibition that’s set to run for two years and that focuses on the multifaceted potential that swings have to offer: visitors are invited to use the four solid-oak swings that were installed at scenic spots in the Damüls mountains in 2021. A tour explains to visitors why the swings are located in the mountains and how they are one way of relaxing in our digital age. / www.damuels.at/de/walsertal/kulisse-pfarrhof-fis-skimuseum-damuels.html

Wälderness in Hotel Gasthof Hirschen

A winter programme with an insider tip character: on selected Thursdays between December and April, exquisite dinner concerts are held in the style of a music salon. The Hirschen in Schwarzenberg is the authentic setting for these evenings featuring jazz-blues-rock and new folk music ensembles. The start is always at 7 p.m. The price includes a three-course menu. / www.hotel-hirschen-bregenzerwald.at/en

Original: Andelsbuch railway station

Andelsbuch railway station was built over a century ago. It is one of the last remaining historical railway buildings of the former Bregenzerwald railway.

In recent years, the building has been carefully renovated. Under the motto of ‘arrivals, stays and meetings’, the culture club hosts events such as concerts, readings and exhibitions all year round. / www.bahnhof.cc

Complex: Jöslar in Andelsbuch

Inn and cinema – the ‘Jöslar’ in Andelsbuch sees itself above all as a meeting place. Breakfast is served at the inn on Friday and Saturday mornings – with advance reservation – while warm sandwiches are available later on. DJs provide lively entertainment on some of the evenings. ‘GaumenKino’ is on the programme every first Sunday in the month. This is where three fine courses are served to accompany the presentation of cinematic delights. / www.joeslar.at

Treats. Cheese and delicacies

The Bregenzerwald has a considerable number of excellent restaurants and eateries for guests who enjoy fine dining in a harmonious setting. Cheese specialities, especially the aromatic alpine and mountain cheeses, are typical of the region. Visitors who like to combine exercise with regional delights will definitely enjoy one of the culinary winter hikes that are on offer.

With nature. For the good of nature.

Agriculture in the Bregenzerwald forms the backbone for the maintenance and the upkeep of the cultivated landscape. The basis of this – and what makes it special – is the three-layer cultivation of the fields, which has been practiced for centuries. Once the snow has melted, the cattle graze on the valley pastures. Then they go up to the mountain pasture, a kind of half-way station, then up to the high mountain pastures in mid-summer, and back down to the barn in stages. The advantage of this ‘nomadism’ is, in addition to maintaining the cultivated landscape, the optimum use of the fields. Moreover, the alpine pastures, with their many herbs, offer the healthiest possible diets for dairy cows. This makes for particularly delicious, aromatic milk – the perfect base for the tasty Bregenzerwald alpine cheese.

Safeguarding the future of closely-structured farming – a farmer has an average of 29 cows – is important for many branches in the Bregenzerwald. Hence, cooperation between the farming community, tourism and commerce is accordingly close. Initiatives such as the KäseStrasse Bregenzerwald make a valuable contribution towards this. There is a great awareness of using high-quality foods made on the farms. Equally great is the range of products: from excellent cheeses to delicious yoghurts, meat and bacon specialities, through to schnapps, and cosmetics made from whey.

In spring 2011, the three-stage farming method in the Bregenzerwald was inscribed in the list of **Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO**.

Cheese specialities

The **Bregenzerwald alpine- and mountain cheese** – a tasty hard cheese whose flavour intensifies the longer it matures – is the showpiece of all the cheeses. The cheese is produced in 15 village dairies and, in the summer months, on around 65 alpine pastures. The local specialities include unpasteurised-milk Emmenthal, camemberts, small cheeses made from cow’s, sheep’s and goat’s milk, as well as Bachensteiner, a fine red, semi-soft cheese.

Practically unknown outside of Vorarlberg is the so-called ‘Alpzieger’ made from whey, which owes its typical green colour to over 40 different herbs. A particular rarity is the ‘Gsig’ or ‘Sig’, whose brown colour means that it is also extolled as Bregenzerwald chocolate. It is caramelised lactose you can eat neat or which can be used to pep up desserts.

KäseStrasse Bregenzerwald (Cheese Route)

The KäseStrasse isn’t a street or a road in the usual sense: it is a union of experts from various disciplines. Throughout the whole year, the members – including alpine dairies, cheese restaurants, farms selling their produce directly from the farm – organise events, invite people to tasting sessions, and initiate the uninitiated into the secrets of cheese production. In addition to restaurants and alpine dairies, stations along the KäseStrasse include: the modern cheese cellar in Lingenau, where several thousand blocks of alpine cheese are left to mature, the cheese house in Andelsbuch, open seven days a week selling the entire range of cheeses and delicacies from the Bregenzerwald, the alpine dairy school in Egg, where you can make your own cream cheese in a blitz course. / www.kaesestrasse.at

Lingenau cheese cellar

Prepare to be amazed if you take a look into the modern cheese cellar in Lingenau – almost 50,000 loaves of cheese are stored here to mature. From your space in the foyer, you can watch a robot looking after the cheese. Each loaf is individually lifted from the 55-metre long shelves made from spruce wood, brushed with salt water, and replaced. A small shop is also housed there. / www.kaesestrasse.at

Rehmar Sennhus

The Alpine dairy in Rehmen has acquired an experienced Alpine dairyman in the form of Hermann Berchtold. He makes his blocks of cheese the traditional way, using cheese wires and cheese cloths – the way cheese is produced practically only in the Alps these days. In addition to the tasty Alpine cheese in various stages of maturity, Hermann Berchtold sells ‘Seagen’, a type of whey soup. It is rich in lactoprotein, is low in fat and is a great supplier of protein.

Excellent restaurants

The following restaurants and inns have received awards from Gault Millau:

- In Bizau: Biohotel Schwanen
- In Hittisau: Hotel Gasthof Krone, Wälder Stuba 1840 and Ernele in the Hotel Schiff
- In Krumbach: Restaurant s’Schulhus and Gasthof Adler
- In Langenegg: Hotel Krone
- In Schwarzenberg: Hotel Gasthof Hirsche, Gasthof Adler and Gasthaus Alte Mühle
- In Au: Gasthaus Löwen
- In Damüls: Hotel Alpenstern and Hotel Damülser Hof
- In Warth: Bibers in the Berghotel Biberkopf

Sonntagsgasthaus (The Sunday restaurant)

The Adler in Großdorf is only open on Sundays. Fans of cooking – amateur cooks and professional chefs from near and far – prepare their favourite dishes and serve up a three-course meal. Home-made bread and cake made according to the best-kept family recipes are par for the course at the Adler. Selected specialties from Italy – the second home of host Irma Renner – are also on the menu. / www.adler-grossdorf.at

TIP: Culinary winter hikes

Step by step from dish to dish. Take a hike through the Bregenzerwald’s impressive winter landscapes and enjoy mountain breakfast, lunch and dessert with regional specialities at a variety of mountain inns and restaurants while doing so. You can choose from hiking routes in Mellau-Bizau-Bezau and Sibratsgfall-Schönenbach, Sulzberg and in the high-altitude village of Damüls. The day tours cost from € 49 per person. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/culinary-winter-hikes-in-the-bregenzerwald

→ Made-to-measure – Winter Delights Bregenzerwald

The practical and attractive package deal for all those wishing to acquaint themselves with the merits of the Bregenzerwald in three days. The package deal includes three nights’ accommodation and a culinary winter day-long hike. The package deal is available between 7 January and 12 March 2024 (except 4 to 16 February 2024). / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/winter-delights-bregenzerwald

Frau Kaufmann kocht’. Cooking and dining together

Regional and seasonal specialities, prepared according to old recipes with a contemporary twist: this is the topic of the series of cookery courses by Karin Kaufmann. For her cookery courses, Karin Kaufmann has transformed the typical, lovingly renovated Bregenzerwald Engel

inn in Egg into a cookery school. Several courses per month are held. Karin Kaufmann has also established her own online shop in which she offers selected and home-made products as well as kitchen accessories. An online shop is available via the website. / www.fraukaufmann.at

Moor restaurateurs, Krumbach

Krumbach opened up its moors in 2009. Two restaurateurs from Krumbach saw this as the perfect excuse to dedicate themselves to the subject of moorlands. At least one dish related to the moors is included on their menus throughout the year. This is accompanied by a seasonal moor drink which, with its various fragrances and aromas from the moor, is a pleasant surprise. / www.krumbach.at

Sutterlüty supermarket chain: regional and climate-neutral

The Sutterlüty commercial enterprise, running 26 shops in Vorarlberg, has its headquarters in the Bregenzerwald. Cooperation and networking with regional partners as well as sustainability play an important role for the family-run company. The shelves hold around 3,000 products from Vorarlberg and the area around Lake Constance, making up around one-third of the turnover. The company builds its shops itself in accordance with green building standards. Sutterlüty is the first climate-neutral commercial enterprise globally, as of January 2016. The company has set itself the objective of becoming the supermarket with the smallest ecological footprint by 2025. / www.sutterluety.at

Well-being. For body and soul

The health and wellness hotels in the Bregenzerwald offer soothing programmes and treatments. Some wellness areas are also open to day visitors. Nourishing products are created from herbs, whey and honey.

The health experts

Recharging your batteries and giving yourself a treat: the health and wellness hotels in the Bregenzerwald create the right atmosphere for holidays that help you feel good. With subtle architecture, well thought-out offers and attentive hospitality. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/wellness-and-health/wellness-hotels

Yoga in the Bregenzerwald

The availability of yoga for its fans has grown continuously over recent years. Some of the wellness hotels offer yoga classes throughout the year, also for guests not staying at those specific hotels. Experienced yoga instructors at several locations are happy to welcome beginners and practitioners to their classes and individual lessons. Styles taught range from classical yoga to hot yoga, hormone yoga for women and yoga for children. It's best to contact the respective instructors in the event of any questions or special requests. It's also advisable to secure your place on the mat in advance as the courses are taught in small groups. / www.bregenzerwald.at/yoga-im-bregenzerwald

Cosmetics from nature

Natural remedies and beauty products look back on a long tradition in the Alpine region. That's why three experts have drawn on ancient knowledge and combined it with modern expertise.

- The **Metzler Family** rediscovered an old natural remedy in whey. Whey is a by-product of cheese-making, it's free from fat and protein and contains many nutrients and vitamins. The innovative family business produces fine body-care products and powders from whey that are also available for purchase online. / www.molkeprodukte.com
- **Susanne Kaufmann** has developed her own range of cosmetics. Clear visuals and essences from nature local to the Bregenzerwald region characterise her products. They are available for purchase at Hotel Post Bezau by Susanne Kaufmann, as well as from the online shop. / www.susannekaufmann.com
- The **Bentele Family**, at home in a new building with visitor centre in Alberschwende for the last two years, produces the WERBINA honey-care range. The honey the family uses and lovingly processes by hand is sourced from its own bee colonies. Honey is very well tolerated by the skin, revitalises and exudes a pleasant fragrance. / www.gsiberger.at
- Natural body care products **Phystine**. Harmonizing body care products. They are available at partner shops and in the online shop. / www.phystine.com

TIP: How cosmetics are created from whey

The Metzler family's property in Egg is where visitors can follow the production of cosmetics made from whey in a new building that features a visitors' gallery as well as a presentation barn where cows and goats live. The open gallery enables visitors to hear, see and smell how whey, medicinal plants and high-quality essences are used in the production of cosmetic and care products. It also offers insights into the special environmentally friendly system that the Metzler family has put in place: a solar-powered heating system with a large gravel storage tank under the new building's base plate that is used to meet its energy requirements. From the grass, the animal feed, the silo-free milk, to the cheese and whey which are used in the production of the cosmetics, everything is transparently processed, presented, offered for testing and sold in one place. / www.molkeprodukte.com

Heroes in green

Elisabeth Breidenbrücker from Bizau has devoted herself entirely to 'heroes in green', namely plant superheroes. She produces essences at her herb workshop for drop-by-drop enjoyment based on ancient knowledge and traditional European medicine. Such finely adapted herbal spirits as Aqua Vivo or Aqua Cielo deliver beneficial effects on the body, mind and soul.

Elisabeth Graf-Breidenbrücker offers workshops on herbal lore in cooperation with hotels in the Bregenzerwald on certain dates for all those who want to find out more about herbs and how to use them. / www.heldeningrün.com

Make your own soap

You have the chance to make your own soap in Au-Schoppernau. Selected fats and oils, sodium hydroxide and spring water from Schoppernau serve as the basis. Flowers and herbs from the garden of the head of the workshop and from surrounding mountain pastures are what give the bars of soap their colour, texture, caring and soothing characteristics.

The workshops are held at 7.30 p.m. every Tuesday between 17 January and 21 March 2023, and last two and a half hours. Participation including ingredients and manuscript featuring recipes costs € 58 per person. / www.au-schoppernau.at

What does the summer 2024 have in store?

Schubertiade Schwarzenberg: Between 15 and 23 June 2024, and again between 24 August and 1 September 2024, a multitude of concerts and master classes will be held as part of the Schubertiade Schwarzenberg. Excellent artists will be giving concerts in the Angelika Kauffmann Hall. Schubertiade package deals including hotel and concert tickets can be booked at Bregenzerwald Tourismus. / www.schubertiade.at/en and www.bregenzerwald.at/en

Bregenz Festival: The opera 'Der Freischütz by Carl Maria von Weber is being hosted on the floating stage by the Bregenz Festival between 20 July and 18 August 2024. Operas, orchestra concerts and various other performances can be seen and heard in the Festival Theatre and in other venues. / www.bregenzerfestspiele.com/en

Mountain experiences all-inclusive: In the Bregenzerwald, hiking paths lead you to the loveliest spots, and relate histories along the way. Atmospheric events are regularly held on the mountains. The Guest Card Bregenzerwald & Großes Walsertal is your 'ticket' to these mountain experiences. It is your unlimited ticket to take the cable car as often as you like, is valid for environmentally-friendly rides on the public buses, and is your permit to refreshing, relaxing times in the outdoor swimming pools. The Guest Card Bregenzerwald & Großes Walsertal is available to all visitors who spend at least three nights in the Bregenzerwald in participating 28 villages (between 1 May and 31 October 2024). It is included in the accommodation price. / www.bregenzerwald.at/en/guest-card

Overview of the Bregenzerwald

Facts	
Location	North-easterly part of the state of Vorarlberg, between Lake Constance and Arlberg
Villages	23 small villages
Inhabitants	32.000
Peaks	23 peaks with more than 2.000 m
Highest mountain	Braunarlspitze, 2.649 m
Area	550 km ²
Accommodations	16.000 beds, from the 4-star hotel through to the farm
Camping	6 campsites: Au, Bezau, Riefensberg, Egg-Schetteregg, Lingenau and Sibratsgfall
Arrival	
By train	Destination station in Austria: Bregenz or Dornbirn, good bus connections to the Bregenzerwald Attractive destination in Germany next to the boarder: Oberstaufen www.oebb.at and www.vmobil.at
By long-distance coach	Destination station in Austria: Bregenz or Dornbirn, good bus connections to the Bregenzerwald www.flixbus.at and https://fahrplan.vmobil.at/
By car	Due to the many entrances and exits, the recommendation is to choose a digital route planner Attention closed in winter: Warth - Lech and Damüls - Laterns Toll: Basically, a toll-free section in Vorarlberg between Hörbranz (border with D) and Hohenems, in between is the Dornbirn-Nord exit for the Bregenzerwald
By plane	Zürich (CH), Altenrhein (CH), Friedrichshafen (D), Memmingen (D), München (D), Innsbruck (A) Shuttle-transfer from and to the airport e.g. www.airport-drivers.com
Mobility on location	The Bregenzerwald is well connected with 18 rural bus services. The buses run daily, including on weekends and public holidays, from early to late, from village to village, to Bregenz and Dornbirn as well as to the neighbouring regions. The buses sometimes run to and from Dornbirn until just before midnight.
By plane	Zürich (CH), Altenrhein (CH), Friedrichshafen (D), Memmingen (D), München (D), Innsbruck (A) Shuttle-transfer from and to the airport e.g. www.airport-drivers.com
Safty	
Avalanche warning service	Before going out into the unprotected areas in the mountains, it is a must to find out about the current snow conditions. Current data from the Vorarlberg avalanche warning service can be accessed by phone and online: T +43 (0) 5574 201 1588 (tape), www.vorarlberg.at/lawine , www.snowsaf.at (information app)ärt
Medical care	Where is the nearest pharmacy? Which doctor's practice is on duty and when? Information is provided by the free "Wälderdoc" app, which can be downloaded from www.waelderdoc.at