

## Media Information

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### Exploring Nature in Austria's Creative West

Visitors to Vorarlberg marvel at how varied the small province is. From Lake Constance to Arlberg Mountain, the landscape is ever-changing. Each of the **six holiday regions** has its own character. Lake Constance, the small towns in the Rhine Valley and mountaintops with panoramic views distinguish the Bodensee-Vorarlberg region. Explorers of Bregenzerwald get to delve deep into cheese-making and into design culture. Kleinwalsertal is a particularly well-hidden gem: if you are travelling by road, this Vorarlberg valley can only be accessed via Germany. Hikers in Lech Zürs am Arlberg take delight in blooming meadows. Three mountain ranges – Verwall, Rätikon and Silvretta – form an impressive frame around Montafon. The valleys of Brandnertal and Klostertal, Biosphere Park Grosses Walsertal and the alpine city of Bludenz at their centre jointly constitute the sixth holiday region.

What should visitors check out in Vorarlberg? Here are our top tips from across all six regions:

#### Truly Taking in Nature in Kleinwalsertal

Kleinwalsertal's "**Natur bewusst erleben**" (Experience Nature Consciously) programme is supervised by experts and designed to offer insights into nature's distinctive traits and secrets. The initiative demonstrates that treating nature respectfully and really enjoying nature go hand in hand. On Tuesdays, an expert introduces interested visitors to his own permaculture exploits – and that's only one option. On Wednesdays, participants get to explore the geologically fascinating karst landscape at Gottesackerplateau. Thursdays are "Family Wilderness Days". "Mysterious Water Worlds" and "On Nature's Trail" are scheduled for Fridays. Nature explorers preferring to strike out on their own are sure to be captivated by the new adventure trail "Animals in the Wild". Once they have equipped themselves with their Researcher's Booklet and made their way to Gemsteltal, they can mine info columns and even an audio play for discoveries about wild animals.

#### Exploring Montafon's Alpenmosaik

Christened "**Alpenmosaik Montafon**", 34 hiking trails in the southern Vorarlberg valley of Montafon have been organised into one big network, structured in accordance with the valley's geology and equipped with discreet info columns. Hikers can choose trails down in the valley or up in the mountain ranges: Verwall, Silvretta or Rätikon. Each trail has its own unobtrusive wooden columns, where a wealth of written information and audio documents tailored to the specific location can be accessed via QR codes. Inquisitive minds can find out all about traditional Montafon architecture, mining history, legends, plants and animals.

#### Hiking Arlberg Trail

The new **Arlberg Trail** invites hikers to hike all the way around the Arlberg Mountain pass in three days. Departing from Lech, the trail leads to St. Anton, Stuben and back to Lech. On route, rocky terrains and lush pastures alternate. Small lakes make their appearance, as does a succession of

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marvellous views. Hikers conquer 52 kilometers and climb 6,038 metres. The net walking time is 18 hours. Along the way, ropeways whisk hikers up and down the mountain, when required. There are lots of options for getting a good night's sleep down in the valley.

### **Stand-up Paddle Boarding on Lake Constance**

Some love swimming in Lake Constance, others prefer staying on the surface of the lake. Those who like physical activity cannot do much better than to take a **stand-up paddle-board** for a spin. "Surfmax" in Hard is a great place to learn how to paddle while balancing on the board. First encounters with this new method of propulsion take place in the calm waters of Hard Binnensee, a sheltered bay. Once confidence and skill permit it, the board can be paddled out onto the open lake. And if you have great faith in your balance, even some yoga is on the cards – while afloat!

### **Swooshing downhill in Brandnertal**

Mountain biking is becoming ever more popular. Before one gets to experience that elusive flow sensation while racing downhill, a good few practice hours are usually in order. Bike parks represent ideal stomping and learning grounds for those keen to hone their technique. With its 30 kilometres of trails at every level, **Bikepark Brandnertal** is Vorarlberg's biggest. Experienced bike guides offer courses for beginners and old hands alike. Bikes for rent are available on site.

### **Watching Cheese-Making in Bregenzerwald**

In Bregenzerwald, outstanding cheese is produced on a number of alps, pastures at high elevations. Alpkäse, the resulting delicacy, has greatly contributed to the region's fame. If you are interested in finding out how milk is transformed into cheese and what one needs to keep an eye on when making hard cheeses, you will be pleased to know that several places are open to observers. In Au, for instance, guided hikes combined with a visit to the alpine dairy Alpsennerei Sattellegg and a tasting on site take place once a week. Master cheese-maker Werner Geiger accompanies hikers along "Grosser Alpgangweg" trail from Au village up to the alpine pasture. At 14 stops along the way, they learn about **alpine transhumance** and its importance for the cultivated landscape. Long-distance hikers of a foodie persuasion should look into "Käseweg Bregenzerwald" (Cheese Trail Bregenzerwald). This long-distance hike can be booked as a package including three hiking days, four over-night hotel stays and luggage transfers. It takes in alpine pastures and dairies as well as other places connected to the art of cheese-making.

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